

Regular Board of Education Meeting

Monday, June 16, 2025 6:00 PM

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



Agenda

{{Name: Agenda Item Name}}

1. GPS Board of Education Information

The meeting agenda will be kept current and available for public inspection in the office of the Secretary of the Board of Education at the Central Office during regular working hours.

District Vision: *Gering Public Schools provides a collaborative community, inspiring excellence and innovation in teaching and learning to empower student growth and leadership in school and life.*

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

The Open Meetings Act requires and the intention of the Board is that agenda items be sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of matters to be considered at the meeting. The Board of Education releases its agenda well in advance of most meetings and desires that all interested persons are fully informed. Any interested person who has a question or needs clarification about the sufficiency of a descriptive item should contact the Office of the Superintendent of Schools.

If anyone in attendance is interested in addressing our Board, you are welcome to do so. We simply request that you complete the appropriate form and turn it in to us now, so that you may be recognized during the 'Patron Comment' section of our meeting. These forms are located by the entry doors of the meeting room.

Agenda items are subject to reordering at the discretion of the board president. Board members may request specific agenda item(s) be moved to a different place on the agenda. Please attend the entire meeting to ensure you hear discussion on a particular agenda item.

2. Opening Procedures

2.1. Call to Order

The Board of Education reserves the right to enter into Executive Session for the protection of the public interest, or the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual, and if the individual has not requested a public meeting.

2.2. Roll Call

2.3. Pledge of Allegiance

2.4. Open Meetings Act

Pursuant to Section 84-1412 of the Nebraska Statutes, the public is hereby informed that a current copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act is posted in the Board meeting room on the north wall.

Notice of this meeting was published in the Star Herald on Thursday, June 5th and June 12th, 2025.

3. **Consent Agenda**

At this time, any Board member may request that any item in the consent agenda be removed from the consent agenda and be considered and voted on separately.

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

3.2. Approval of Claims/Bills

Fund Amount

01 General \$604,382.55

03 Employee Benefit \$539.00

05 Activity \$64,068.67

06 School Nutrition \$265,733.27

07 Bond \$41,573.55

08 Special Building \$15,450.00

Fund Totals: \$991,747.04

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

4.2. Summer Camp Update - Trevor Teichrob and Kyla Walker

5. Reports & Discussions

5.1. Board Committee Report: Curriculum & Personnel

5.2. Board Committee Report: Business & Facilities

5.3. Superintendent's Report

6. Public Comments: 204.12

7. Action Items

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

8. Board Comments

8.1. Tentative Upcoming Board Meeting/Event Dates

Future Board Meetings

Special Meeting: Tues, July 1st, 2025 @ 12:00 p.m. (Central Office)

Regular Meeting: Mon, July 14th, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m. (Freshmen Academy)

Special Meeting: Tues, July 29th, 2025 @ 12:00 p.m. (Central Office)

Tentative Committee Meeting Dates:

Curriculum/Personnel Committee: Tues, July 1st, 2025 @ 11:00 a.m. (Central Office)

Finance & Facilities Committee: Thurs, July 10th, 2025 @ 4:30 p.m. (Central Office)

9. Adjourn

Regular Board of Education Meeting

Monday, May 12, 2025 6:00 PM

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



Minutes

1. GPS Board of Education Information

Absent: Josh Lacy, **Present:** Brian Copsey, Matt Kautz, 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 6:00 p.m.

2.2. Roll Call

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 John Maser. After voting, motion Passed.

Josh Lacy: Absent, Brian Copsey: **Yea**, Matt Kautz: **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)

Stacey Boutain - SPED Teacher, Northfield Elementary
Peter Hernandez - SPED Teacher, GHS
Toni Becker - SLPA/SPED Teacher, Lincoln Elementary
Michelle Moore - Counselor, Lincoln Elementary
Caleb Moore - Math Teacher, GHS
Tony Simonsen - Counselor, Northfield Elementary
Stepheni Pitts-Welchlin - Preschool Teacher

3.4.ii. Certified Staff Resignation(s)

Brandy Foos - Preschool SPED, Lincoln Elementary

3.4.iii. Early Graduation Request -
Grayson Hawley

4. Celebration of Excellence

4.1. Student Success -
ESports
State Journalism
National Merit Finalist
Bulldogs Helping Bulldogs

Jennifer Sibal presented to the board. She honored all students involved in ESports, who won a state runner-up and a state title for their video games. Natalie Peterson was recognized for her National Merit Scholarship. She also honored the students who went to State Journalism.

4.2. Building Report - Northfield Elementary

Wendee Powell presented to the board about Northfield Elementary. She talked about their Tier 1 instruction for reading and math. She then had her Title 1 teacher present, Stanna Funk. She talked about what they were doing to implement the WORDS program. She had created a tutoring project that students could take advantage of. They saw significant growth with this project. Then, Micheal Macias presented about what he is doing with the E.L. (English Learners) program. He is trying to be more intentional during W.I.N. time. At just two days a week, he has seen significant growth in those students.

5. Reports & Discussions

5.1. Board Committee Report: Curriculum & Personnel

Tracy Wiese presented to the board: All positions are filled. We have seen a lot of growth in test scores. Working on the high school handbook. We have preschool expansions! We have gone from just having two classrooms, to now having ten! We now have the option to have half or full day at all schools for preschool.

5.2. Board Committee Report: Business & Facilities

Brian Copsey presented to the board: We have good "cash flow". We are currently below our budget. We will have a bid on our HVAC system in the high school auditorium. Our emergency shelter process was updated with Gering P.D.

5.3. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Regan presented to the board: Such an exciting week! In 5 days we get the honor of saying, "Congratulations Class of 2025" on Saturday morning. John, as a board member and father, it will be such a proud moment for you to be on stage and deliver diplomas to the senior class and, most importantly, to your son. I look forward to these moments for our Board and our families.

One of the messages to our 119 graduating seniors this week is about Believing in the Possibility and Pursuing Your Dreams. For my Board leadership, I think a lot of what we have accomplished this year is about believing in the possibility and pursuing the dreams of our future for Gering Public Schools. I am incredibly proud of our students. They are ready for their next chapter.

Speaking of next chapters, on Wednesday, May 28 at 6:00 p.m. we are hosting our community listening session with our Say Yes Committee and board leadership. Our focus

is Reimagining Gering Middle School: A Community Conversation. It's a time to listen and understand in open conversations with staff, families, and community members. I encourage you to join us in the conversation, bring a friend you may have had a conversation with about GMS a few months ago, and engage in the session for us to learn more about your perspective.

Another summer highlight: Gering Public Schools is launching a new Summer Food Program. We are partnering with JA Foods to have mobile meals available to families of need over the summer throughout 4 sites in Gering and Terrytown.

Food insecurity is a challenge in the Panhandle area. 1 in 5 children face hunger in Nebraska and our food insecurity rate of 12.2% surpasses the national average of 11.2%. Summer can be challenging for children, especially when they are home more in the summer, placing a strain on family budgets.

Stacy and her team have successfully designed a program with the Department of Education to serve families and our students weekly nutritious food options that they can bring home. More information will be shared at the end of this week.

Looking forward: May 28 is State Golf-a great opportunity to host school districts from the east side of the state in a fun, well-attended event.

Gering Middle School band concert tonight!

6. Public Comments: 204.12

Lonnie O'Brien presented to the board.

7. Action Items

7.1. Discuss, consider, and take action to adopt a resolution selecting the construction management at risk contract delivery system for a School Facilities Improvement Project as presented, including designating members of the Construction Manager at Risk Selection Committee.

A motion to adopt a resolution selecting the construction management at risk contract delivery system for a School Facilities Improvement Project as presented, including designating members of the Construction Manager at Risk Selection Committee was presented by Brian Copsey, seconded by Matt Kautz. After voting, motion Passed.

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

7.2. Review, revise, and ratify Policy 902.3 on Construction Management at Risk Contracts.

A motion to review, revise, and ratify Policy 902.3 on Construction Management at Risk Contracts was presented by John Maser, seconded by Tracy Wiese. After voting, motion Passed.

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

8. Board Comments

Matt Kautz - Congrats to Natalie! Thanks to Northfield for presenting.

John Maser - Congrats Natalie! Congrats to ESports and Journalism. Can't wait for summer.

Brian Copsey - Thanks for the public comment. Hope to see people at the meeting on the 28th. Great to hear about preschool's growth. Happy about the new food program. Excited about the E.L. program.

Tracy Wiese - Thanks for the public comment. Hopeful to come up with a more complimentary plan for GMS. Welcome back to Wendee! Links graduation is May 16th.

Greg Trautman - Thanks for public comment. Great to hear from Northfield and all the positive growth they have seen this year.

8.1. Tentative Upcoming Board Meeting/Event Dates

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Special Board of Education Meeting

Tuesday, May 27, 2025 12:00 PM

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



Minutes

1. GPS Board of Education Information

Absent: Brian Copsey, 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 12:01 p.m.

2.2. Roll Call

2.3. Open Meetings Act

3. Reports and Discussions

3.1. The Property Tax Request Authority - Stacy Rodriguez

Stacy Rodriguez presented to the Board. She discussed the LB 243 property tax request. We will know in June what our state aid is going to be for next year.

4. Action Items

4.1. Discuss, consider, and take action regarding the approval of a Food Service Management Company.

A motion to authorize SFE, Inc. to be approved as the Food Service Management Company for Gering Public Schools for the 2025-26 school year was presented by Tracy Wiese, seconded by John Maser. After voting, motion Passed.

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

4.2. Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action regarding the resignation of School Board Member Brian Copsey.

A motion to approve the resignation of School Board Member Brian Copsey was presented by Josh Lacy, seconded by Tracy Wiese. After voting, motion Passed.

Brian Copsey: Absent, 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 12:29 p.m.

May Check Listing

Payee Name	Amount	Fund
Eakes Office Solutions	\$2,093.84	1
FBG Service Corporation	\$222.00	1
Fresh Foods Inc.	\$551.80	1
Linweld	\$861.06	1
Pipe Works Plumbing, LL	\$360.86	1
RAKA Rentals	\$168.29	1
Redbird Flight Simulatio	\$6,500.00	1
Scotts Bluff County Electi	\$11,764.76	1
Fresh Foods Inc.	\$76.96	1
City Of Gering	\$45,468.59	1
Allo Communications	\$6,224.01	1
Bluffs Physical Therapy	\$7,607.12	1
Bytes Computer & Netwo	\$4,407.00	1
CDW Government, LLC	\$1,130.00	1
CharacterStrong LLC	\$3,098.10	1
Column Software, PBC	\$199.61	1
Dawn Garney	\$36.96	1
Dennis Supply Company	\$187.00	1
E3 Diagnostics, Inc.	\$509.00	1
Eakes Office Solutions	\$11,596.65	1
Emily Rose	\$58.03	1
ESU13	\$88,328.80	1
Foos, Brandy	\$157.50	1
Fresh Foods Inc.	\$8.00	1
Hullinger Glass & Locks, I	\$1,829.00	1
Jamie Selzer	\$336.96	1
Jostens, Inc	\$24.67	1
KSB School Law	\$636.50	1
Madison Keller	\$11.20	1
Moravek, Michael	\$143.58	1
NCS Pearson, Inc	\$43.70	1
Nebraska Choral Director	\$195.00	1
O'Reilly Auto Parts	\$65.94	1
Rebecca Chavez	\$12.60	1
SB Couny Pub Tran/Tri-Ci	\$16.00	1
Schindler Elevator Corpo	\$2,533.56	1
Taher, Inc	\$250.00	1
The Musician's Choice, LI	\$39.46	1

Tree Monkeys LLC	\$450.00	1
Wpci	\$171.00	1
Family Construction LLC	\$17,000.00	1
Ace Hardware	\$322.91	1
Charter Communications	\$135.00	1
City of Gering - Five Rock	\$300.00	1
City of Gering: LANDFILL	\$103.63	1
Creative Signs by Cozad	\$395.00	1
Das State Accounting - Co	\$292.87	1
Dennis Supply Company	\$1,655.79	1
Eakes Office Solutions	\$4,163.61	1
Firespring, Inc.	\$755.93	1
Frontier Overhead Door	\$2,187.50	1
Hi Performance Car Wash	\$33.25	1
Hometown Leasing	\$5,007.17	1
Jostens, Inc	\$808.94	1
Menards	\$2,020.48	1
NCSA	\$550.00	1
RAKA Rentals	\$104.85	1
Regan, Nicole	\$555.80	1
Russel's Transmissions	\$99.00	1
Scottsbluff Public School	\$13,003.97	1
Sherwin-Williams Comp	\$313.97	1
Tidal Wave Auto Spa	\$140.00	1
Twin City Roofing & Shee	\$1,042.50	1
Western Nebraska Paper	\$98.85	1
Cash-Wa Distributing of I	\$1,964.18	1
Visa	\$11,697.68	1
Ace Hardware	\$754.22	1
ACT	\$2,091.00	1
B&C Steel Corporation	\$204.96	1
Benzel Pest Control	\$71.50	1
Bethany Stoney	\$156.00	1
Blossom Shop	\$273.35	1
Border States Industries,	\$37.32	1
Buckboard Therapeutic F	\$780.00	1
Bytes Computer & Netwo	\$12,755.89	1
Column Software, PBC	\$200.71	1
Contractors Materials	\$299.60	1
Domino'S Pizza	\$218.22	1
Eakes Office Solutions	\$1,356.16	1

Fairfield Inn & Suites - Gr	\$420.00	1
Follett Content Solutions	\$484.09	1
Frank Parts Company	\$35.97	1
Fresh Foods Inc.	\$8.00	1
Hullinger Glass & Locks, I	\$232.50	1
Johnson Cashway _8920	\$9.38	1
Lebra Technologies Inc	\$800.00	1
Main Street Appliance	\$850.00	1
Northwest Pipe Fittings,	\$3,966.93	1
Paul Reed Construction	\$998.75	1
Rebecca Chavez	\$28.00	1
Scholastic	\$1,842.40	1
Taher, Inc	\$75.00	1
Thompson Glass, Inc.	\$570.00	1
Winsupply Scottsbluff Ne	\$312.27	1
Wpci	\$1,767.00	1
Regional Care, Inc.	\$269.50	3
Domino'S Pizza	\$67.73	5
Gering Bakery-Ahlers Bak	\$47.98	5
Holiday Inn Express - Linc	\$864.00	5
Logoz Llc	\$595.00	5
Mike'S Husker Stuff	\$80.00	5
UBuildABook	\$2,392.50	5
The Dugout	\$257.01	5
Fresh Foods Inc.	\$76.96	5
Ace Hardware	\$51.78	5
AllTeam Sportswear	\$2,424.00	5
Chadron Public Schools	\$50.00	5
Cobblestone Hotel & Suit	\$303.00	5
Comfort Inn - Lexington	\$544.00	5
Domino'S Pizza	\$202.97	5
<u>Exclaim.gg</u>	\$931.30	5
Fairfield Inn & Suites - Gr	\$175.95	5
Fresh Foods Inc.	\$55.89	5
Gothenburg High School	\$125.00	5
Hyannis Public Schools	\$9.00	5
Jordan Lee Knowlton	\$100.00	5
Legacy Cooperative	\$13.50	5
Logoz Llc	\$1,712.00	5
Mccook High School	\$90.00	5
Menards	\$26.91	5

Ogallala Public School	\$300.00	5
Quality Inn & Suites - Kea	\$510.00	5
Rickey D. Tank	\$120.00	5
Roma Italian Restaurant	\$660.00	5
Scottsbluff High School _	\$700.00	5
Taher, Inc	\$45.00	5
The MT Pit	\$119.10	5
Wal-Mart _18940	\$59.28	5
Weborg 21 Centre	\$75.00	5
Eakes Office Solutions	\$46.86	5
Alliance Public Schools	\$250.00	5
Awards Unlimited	\$209.82	5
B&C Steel Corporation	\$190.00	5
Fairfield Inn & Suites - Ne	\$330.00	5
Gothenburg Public Schoo	\$104.00	5
Jefferson County School	\$210.00	5
Legacy Cooperative	\$22.50	5
McCook High School	\$50.00	5
Nebraska FFA Associator	\$36.00	5
North Platte High School	\$140.00	5
Pepsi Cola Of Western Ne	\$134.75	5
Scottsbluff Screenprintin	\$75.00	5
Vertimax LLC	\$5,370.98	5
AllTeam Sportswear	\$423.00	5
Cobblestone Hotel & Suit	\$404.00	5
Fairfield Inn & Suites - Ne	\$940.00	5
Josh Guerue	\$721.00	5
Legacy Cooperative	\$94.50	5
Minatare Public Schools	\$50.00	5
Ogallala Public School	\$180.00	5
Sidney High School	\$100.00	5
Universal Dance Associat	\$3,241.00	5
Weborg 21 Centre	\$1,575.00	5
Kaelynn Stamper	\$154.06	5
Visa	\$9,141.58	5
Visa	\$51.94	5
All for KIDZ, Inc.	\$556.00	5
Domino'S Pizza	\$183.16	5
Gering Bakery-Ahlers Bak	\$46.18	5
Ace Hardware	\$4.04	6
Eakes Office Solutions	\$705.33	6

Frank Parts Company	\$27.95	6
Gering Public Schools	\$5,442.13	6
NMC, LLC	\$144.13	6
Eakes Office Solutions	\$207.99	6
Karee Klassen	\$21.00	6
Taher, Inc	\$110,746.01	6
Ace Hardware	\$21.59	6
Cash-Wa Distributing of I	\$5,731.44	6
Cindy McGaughy	\$80.35	6
Eakes Office Solutions	\$43.74	6
Lee Enterprises, Inc.	\$25.00	6
Menards	\$130.47	6
Taher, Inc	\$110,492.74	6
Gering Public Schools	\$5,035.82	6
Chelsea Brening	\$52.25	6
Janel Osthoff	\$53.45	6
Visa	\$16.00	6
Karee Klassen	\$21.00	6
Gilmore & Bell PC	\$2,250.00	7
Computershare Trust Cor	\$39,323.55	7
Inberg-Miller Engineers	\$15,450.00	8

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

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

Personal or Consumable
GERING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK
SCHOOL YEAR 2025-2026

Gering High School
 1500 U Street
 Gering, Nebraska 69341
 308-436-3121

Foreword

Section 1 Intent of Handbook

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

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

Section 2 Members of the Board of Education

Greg Trautman	Tracy Wiese
Josh Lacy	John Maser
Brian Copsey	Matt Kautz

Section 3 Administrative Staff

Name	Position	Contact Information
Nicole Regan	Superintendent	308-436-3125
Mario Chavez	Principal	308-436-3121
Crystal Palser	Assistant Principal	308-436-3121
Keaton Green	Assistant Principal	308-436-3121
Shawn Seiler	Activities Director	308-436-3121

Section 4 School Calendar/Health

[Click HERE to access the current school calendar.](#)

[Click HERE to access the Health Service Handbook](#)

Article 1 – Direction/Vision/Goals

Section 1 School Direction/Vision Statement

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

Gering Public Schools provides a collaborative community, inspiring excellence and innovation in teaching and learning to empower student growth and leadership in school and life.

Section 2 Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of the Gering Public Schools are to provide:

1. A curriculum that is based on state standards, comprehensive, coordinated, and sequential and is directed toward locally approved goals and standards for student learning. It draws upon research, best practice, and reputable theory and provides the foundation for standards-based instruction. The instructional program focuses on achievement and provides for the diverse learning needs of all students including learners with disabilities and high ability learners. Curriculum and instruction help students develop content and skill mastery, analytical thinking, problem solving, work ethics, creativity, and respect for diversity. It draws upon research, best practice, and reputable theory broad enough yet with sufficient depth to allow education for all of the students.
2. Assessment procedures and results that assist teachers in planning and providing appropriate instruction for all students. Assessment results also provide information for monitoring program success, and for reporting to parents, policy makers, and the community. The school periodically reviews procedures to improve assessment quality and increase student learning. The information assists schools in establishing and achieving improvement goals.
3. A library/media/technology program that provides a wide range of accessible print and electronic resources that expand opportunity for learning, contribute to information literacy, support the local curriculum, and enhance and enrich learning experiences for all students. The program provides materials through onsite and electronic access that complement, supplement, and enrich curriculum and instruction. It facilitates research, supports and encourages personal interest reading and the study of current events, and develops technological and other skills for accessing, evaluating, and using resources.
4. Instructional staff who have appropriate training and preparation to work with the students assigned to them, who are knowledgeable of principles of child growth and development and of the curriculum content for which they are responsible, who use teaching strategies that engage students actively in learning, and who help students understand and apply content across subject areas. Staff development activities that support the school's efforts in curriculum development, instructional improvement, assessment, and general school improvement to achieve school improvement goals.
5. Administration that exercises leadership in the development and implementation of school goals and policies. Administrators who demonstrate leadership in management and operation of the school system and in the improvement of curriculum and instruction. Building administrators who provide leadership to curriculum, instruction, assessment, and school improvement. They guide staff and students in achieving goals and fulfill other functions supportive of quality learning.
6. A systematic ongoing process that guides planning, implementation, and evaluation and renewal of school improvement activities to meet local and statewide goals and priorities. The school improvement process focuses on improving student learning. The process includes a periodic review by visiting educators who provide consultation to the school/community in continued accomplishment of plans and goals.

7. A school system that demonstrates accountability to the school community. School staff periodically assesses and reports student progress toward accomplishment of academic content standards. Results are used to plan and make needed changes to improve instruction for all students.
8. School facilities and a general environment that supports quality learning. Facilities and grounds are safe, orderly, and well maintained, and facilities that have adequate space, lighting, and furnishings. The system has plans or provisions for climate-controlled buildings to the extent feasible. The environment is emotionally safe and supportive and promotes respect, trust, and integrity.
9. A Board of Education that governs through orderly procedures which focus efforts of the school upon quality learning, result in equitable opportunities for learning for all students, and ensure accountability to the local community.
10. An activities program that is scheduled outside the regular school day, focuses on active participation of all students involved in the activity, and promotes a positive image of the school and community.
11. A welcoming environment for parents and the community.

Section 3 Surveys

School personnel rarely administer surveys of students. In the event that an external survey is conducted, the Principal or designee shall notify parents/legal guardians of students to be surveyed: the nature of the survey, the date and time when the survey shall be administered, and the purposes or uses for the survey results. School officials shall honor any parental/legal guardian's request to have his/her student exempt from participation in the survey.

Section 4 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 students will not be tolerated.

Section 5 Complaint Procedures

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

- **Step 1.** Schedule a conference with the staff person most immediately or directly involved in the matter.
- **Step 2.** Address the concern to the Principal if the matter is not resolved at Step 1.
- **Step 3.** Address the concern to the Superintendent if the matter is not resolved at Step 2.
- **Step 4.** Address the concern to the Board of Education if the matter is not resolved at Step 3. Written appeal should be made within five (5) days of the Superintendent's decision.

Conditions Applicable to All Levels of Complaint Procedure

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

Article 2 - School Day

Section 1 Daily Bell Schedule

Daily Bell Schedule		
Period	Time	Description
1	8:00 - 8:45	Period 1
Breakfast	8:45 - 8:55	10 Minutes
2	8:55 - 9:40	Period 2
3	9:45 - 10:30	Period 3
4	10:35 - 11:20	Period 4
Lunch	11:25 - 11:55	30 Minutes
5	12:00 - 12:45	Period 5
6	12:50 - 1:35	Period 6
7	1:40 - 2:25	Period 7
8	2:30 - 3:15	Period 8

Wednesday Bell Schedule

Period	Time	Description
1	8:00 - 8:37	Period 1
Breakfast	8:37 - 8:47	10 Minutes
2	8:47 - 9:24	Period 2
3	9:29 - 10:06	Period 3
4	10:11 - 10:48	Period 4
Lunch	10:53 - 11:23	30 Minutes
5	11:28 - 12:06	Period 5
6	12:11 - 12:49	Period 6
7	12:54 - 1:32	Period 7
8	1:37 - 2:15	Period 8

Section 2 Severe Weather and School Cancellations

The Superintendent may 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 radio and television stations and is also available online.

- **Decision to Close Schools** A decision to close school is made when forecasts by the weather service, law enforcement advisories or civil defense officials indicate that it would be unwise to hold school. 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).
- **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. Parents should have a plan in place to accommodate these circumstances.
- **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 absence for legitimate causes, provided parents properly notify the school of their decision. Parents may pick up their children in inclement weather 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.
- **Emergency Conditions** The school has a signal which, when activated, includes the necessity to either evacuate the building or to move to safer areas of the building. 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.

Section 3 Open-Closed Campus

All freshmen and sophomore students are required to remain on campus during the school day. Students leaving the building must first check out at the office. Upon return to school during the day, students are to sign in at the office. Freshman and Sophomores wanting to leave campus during lunch must be physically signed out by a parent or guardian through the front office.

Section 4 Identification Cards

Identification cards will be issued at the beginning of each school year. All students will be required to carry identification cards on their person during the school day and at all school activities. Students must be able to produce them upon the request of a school official. A five-dollar (\$5.00) fee will be charged for replacement card(s).

Section 5 Arrival to School/Dismissal from School

Students are expected to arrive at school no more than 15 to 20 minutes prior to the first class or school program in which they are participating. Prior to that time, the school is not responsible for supervision of the students. Students will be dismissed at the end of the last period of the school day unless there are other circumstances that keep them after school (early dismissal, activities, detention etc.). Upon dismissal, students must leave the school grounds and proceed home or to a previously designated location unless participating in a school-sponsored activity. The school is not responsible for supervision of students once the students are to have left school grounds. Certain days on the calendar are "shortened days," meaning that the school day starts or ends other than on the normal schedule. Parents are strongly encouraged to be aware of those days so their children are not left in an unsupervised situation or without a means to get home upon dismissal.

Section 6 Signing a Child In and Out of School

Parents or guardians are required to call in for their children if they are entering after their first class or leaving prior to their final class. The parent or guardian must report to the main office for this purpose. The sheet for signing a child in and/or out of school is located on the front counter. If a child is being signed out, the school secretary will call the appropriate classroom and indicate to the teacher that the child is leaving. Parents are not to go directly to the classrooms. The schools will only release children to adults designated by the parent on Infinite Campus. If there is a special circumstance, such as a court order limiting access to a student by a parent or guardian, affecting who a student can be released to, the parent must inform the Principal and provide the Principal with a copy of that order to maintain on file at the school. Students who leave before the end of the day must be signed out by a parent or guardian or an escort designated by the parent or guardian.

Section 7 Emergency Closing Procedures

Parents are requested to provide an emergency contact telephone number to have on file in the event of an emergency closing or any other general or individual situation that requires the immediate presence of a parent/guardian. In the event that parents do not have such a number or cannot be contacted, the parents have instructed their children concerning the procedure they are to follow should school be dismissed early. Realizing that the school might be unable to reach all parents, it is suggested that all children be advised as to what they are to do should they ever be dismissed early. It is recommended that parents give their children an alternate destination and that the building principal be made aware of this information.

Article 3 - Use of Building and Grounds

Section 1 Visitors

All visitors must report to the office, upon entering the main entrance, to sign in and receive a visitor’s pass. All visitors will be screened using the Raptor System. Visits by parents to classrooms are encouraged, provided that the visits do not disrupt the educational program or create a safety concern.

Section 2 Smoke/Vape-Free Environment

Smoking, vaping, and tobacco use are prohibited in our school buildings and on school grounds. When you attend school events, including athletic events, please abide by our District’s policy.

Section 3 Care of School Property

Students are responsible for the proper care of all books, equipment, supplies and furniture supplied by the school. Students are responsible for cleaning up any messes made from their food and drink. 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.

Fines are determined on books according to the following criteria:

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

School-issued items that are stolen or damaged from unlocked lockers are the responsibility of the student to whom they were issued. Students must pay all fines before they can receive school publications and final grades.

Section 4 Lockers

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

Section 5 Searches of Lockers and Other Types of Searches

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

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

Use of Metal Detectors - Board Policy 504.13

When the administration has reasonable cause to believe that weapons are in the possession of unidentified students, when there has been a pattern of weapons found at school or when violence involving weapons has occurred at the school or at school sponsored events, the administration shall be authorized to use stationary or mobile metal detectors in accordance with procedures approved by the Board. 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. School officials may conduct a search if there is a reasonable basis to believe that the search will uncover evidence of a crime or a school rule violation. The search is to be conducted in a reasonable manner under the circumstances. Illegal items or other items reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety of others or a threat to educational purposes may be taken and kept by school officials. Any firearm or other weapon will be confiscated and delivered to law enforcement officials as soon as practicable. Items which have been or are reasonably expected to be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process (that is, "nuisance items") may be removed from student possession. **(Add language to reflect vaping products and other drug related paraphanilla)**

Section 6 Video Surveillance

The Board of Education has authorized the use of video cameras on School District property to ensure the health, welfare and safety of all staff, students and visitors to District property, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment. Video cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the 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.

Section 7 Use of Telephone

The office will not be responsible for personal messages for students during the school day, nor will students be called from class for a telephone call or message except in an emergency. If you receive a phone call, a message will be taken and delivered to you at the earliest possible convenience. If you are asked to call back, you will have to do so before classes, at noon, or after school.

Section 8 Bicycles

Bicycles must be parked in the racks provided. All bicycles should be equipped with locks and licenses. The school is not responsible for damage or theft of parts while bicycles are on school property.

Section 9 Student Valuables

Students, not the school, are responsible for their personal property. Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money or items of value to school. 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 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.

Section 10 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 articles are lost at school, report that loss to office personnel.

Section 11 Accidents

Every accident in the school building, on the school grounds, at practice sessions, or at any athletic event sponsored by the school must be reported immediately to the Principal.

Section 12 Laboratory Safety Glasses

As required by law, approved safety glasses will be required of every student and teacher while participating in or observing vocational, technical, industrial technology, science, and art classes. All visitors to these areas must check out a pair of safety glasses when entering any of these areas.

Section 13 Insurance

Under Nebraska law the District may not use school funds to provide general student accident or athletic insurance. The District requires that all student participants in athletic programs have injury and accident insurance and encourages all students who are in classes with risk of personal injury or accident to have insurance coverage. The District does not make recommendations nor handle the premiums or claims for any insurance company, agent or carrier. Information about student insurance providers will be available in the school office or on school bulletin boards.

Section 14 Bulletins and Announcements

Bulletin boards are available for school-related and approved materials to be posted and displayed. Posters to be used in the halls or materials for distribution will need to be approved by the Principal's office. Posters are not to be attached to any painted wall surfaces. Place posters on glass, metal, brick and wood. The person or organization responsible for distributing the posters is responsible to see that all posters are removed within 48 hours after the event.

Section 15 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 coursework, 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.

Section 16 Media Center

The Mission of the Gering High School Media Center is to create a warm, safe and collaborative learning atmosphere that supports the district mission statement and the high school improvement goals. As the largest classroom in the school, we seek to provide equitable access to resources while promoting the integration of information literacy skills. The Media Center strives to foster a lasting appreciation of reading and lifelong desire to learn.

Media Circulation Center Policies

The Media Center has been maintained to service staff, students and community members. Our hours of operation are Monday-Thursday from 7:30-4 and Friday from 7:30-3:30 or by appointment. The Media Center is open during lunch periods for students who want to study, use technology or just relax. The Media Center does have a water only policy. No other food or drink is allowed unless provided as a pre-arranged group activity.

Check Out/Fine Policy

- Books are checked out for a period of 14 school days and renewals are allowed at the discretion of the Media Specialist.
- The maximum number of books to be checked out at one time is three.
- A fine of 5 cents per day per item may be applied for overdue items. The maximum fine will be \$5.00.
- If a book is lost, the student will pay the replacement cost of the book.
- A maximum of 3 holds can be placed on three different books. Ready holds expire in 7 days and pending holds expire in 21 days.
- If a student has overdue or lost items from the Media Center, the student will lose all privileges until the situation has been resolved.
- In the event that the student needs to borrow a Chromebook or a Chromebook charger from the library, a cell phone is required as collateral.

Other items such as headphones, Kindles, digital cameras, video cameras, markers, scissors, etc. have a loan period of three hours unless otherwise discussed with the Media Specialist.

Article 4 – Attendance

Section 1 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; staff is responsible for assisting in the enforcement of the rules and regulations. Students and parents are responsible for developing behaviors which will result in regular and punctual student attendance.

Section 2 Pre-arranged Absence:

Students and parents need to communicate pre-arranged absences with teachers and coaches prior to their date of departure. Communication should be done through email or telephone. Arrangements to complete make up work must be completed prior to the absence.

Section 3 Attendance and Absences Process

Click on the following links to access information on the Gering High School attendance process and attendance procedures::

[Gering High School Attendance Process Link](#)

[Gering High School Attendance Codes and Descriptions Link](#)

Tardy vs. Absent

A student late to class within the first 15 minutes of class will be counted tardy. A student missing more than 15 minutes of class will be counted as absent.

Tardies

A tardy is a failure by a student to be in his/her classroom when the tardy bell rings. Tardy students should report directly to class.

Teachers will record tardies on Infinite Campus. If students are seen loitering in the school, they will be escorted to their assigned classroom by school personnel. Teachers may require students to make up time after school for being tardy. Excessive tardies will be referred to the office by the teacher as a behavior referral and students may face consequences according to the GHS Progressive Discipline Policy.

Detentions may be served with the teacher to allow time for the student to attain any information missed due to the tardy. Date and time of the detention will be set at the teacher's discretion. The teacher will notify a counselor and an administrator for excessive tardies. Each class will be viewed independently; students who have multiple detentions from multiple teachers have the responsibility to communicate with those teachers to make up detention time. Failure to serve detention with the designated teacher may result in a consequence of insubordination and an automatic lunch detention will be assigned. Teachers will communicate with parents concerning excessive tardies of their student(s). A parent meeting will be scheduled with the teacher, student, counselor, and parent if students continue to be tardy excessively.

Section 4 Make-up Work

The student has the responsibility to contact teachers, initially, regarding make-up assignments. Written makeup work may be assigned for each day missed regardless of the type of absence. If makeup work is not completed, students will receive no credit for the work required. Students will have a minimum of one day for each day missed to complete make-up work, tests, exams, and/or quizzes for full credit for waived and excused absence. Teachers will have discretion on offering make-up work for unexcused absences.

Section 5 Truancy

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

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

Section 6 Transferring from Gering High School

If a student should find it necessary to withdraw from school, it is very important that he/she secure a clearance slip from the counseling office and have it signed by all of his/her teachers and parent/guardian. The slip is to be returned to the office after all individuals have signed it. Failure to check out of school in this manner will cause records to remain incomplete, making it difficult to send credits to another school.

Section 7 Withdrawal from School

A person who has legal or actual charge or control of a child who is at least sixteen years of age but less than eighteen years of age may withdraw such child from school before graduation must have an exit interview with the superintendent's designee. Any withdrawal form signed by the person making the written request shall be valid only if

the child signs the form unless the withdrawal is being requested due to an illness of the child making attendance impossible. The superintendent's designee signs the form that the interview was held, the required information was provided and discussed at the interview, and, in the opinion of the superintendent's designee the person making the written request does in fact have legal guardianship and the child is experiencing either financial hardship requiring the child to be employed to support the child's family or one or more dependents of the child or an illness making attendance impossible or impracticable. (Nebraska law LB -996)

Article 5 - Scholastic Achievement

Section 1 Grading System

Parents may check their child's academic progress, attendance, and behavior reports online using the Infinite Campus Portal on the Gering Public Schools website. www.geringschools.net. Students will receive letter grades on report cards and transcripts.

[6-12 Grading and Reporting Guidelines Link - Click Here](#)

Section 2 High School Yearly Course Sequence

High school students in all grade levels are required to register in the following courses (sequence of some courses may vary):

9th Grade	Math, English, Science, Social Studies, Information Technology, Physical Education, Freshman Success and 2 electives
10th Grade	English, Science, Math, US History, Physical Education and 3 electives
11th Grade	English, American Government, Science, Math, and 4 electives
12th Grade	English, Personal Finance, and the equivalent of 8 periods to meet elective requirements

Flex Periods Full-Time Student Status

~~Students Seniors and Juniors~~ will be eligible for flex periods with the following criteria:

- Students who are taking two dual credit courses will be eligible for one flex period.
- Students who are taking three or more dual credit courses will be eligible for two flex periods.
- Counselors and administration may grant flex periods due to unique circumstances surrounding their class schedules (ie WNCC on campus schedule conflicts, course selection/rotation conflicts)

Student must be in good academic standing, have no behavior issues and must attend school regularly (no excessive absences or tardies)

Dual Credit Registration

WNCC registration for high school students takes place in April for fall classes and in November for spring classes. The registration process involves meeting with school counselors and WNCC college advisors. In order

to register, students must complete a WNCC registration form and a GHS contract for college course enrollment. Information for completion of this process will take place prior to registration for WNCC classes.

Dual Credit Contract

Students and parents must sign and adhere to the GHS/WNCC Dual credit contract. Contracts will be available each semester during WNCC Dual Credit registration. Students will not be enrolled until a signed contract is turned into the counseling office.

Course Placement Testing

Either the ACT or WNCC ACCUPLACER test is used for placement in courses requiring an assessment score prerequisite. The test is administered to:

- Students enrolling in English or Mathematics courses
- Students enrolling in courses with English, Reading, or Math prerequisites

The high school counselors have a parameter sheet explaining the scores needed for college class entrance requirements.

Dual Credit Orientation

All students taking a dual credit course(s) at WNCC must attend the dual credit orientation prior to starting classes.

Grades and Credits

In order for a course to be transferable, a student must earn a minimum grade of 70% in a college course.

GHS Dual Credit Academic Probation

Students enrolled in WNCC courses who are under 70% at any point in time of the semester will be required to attend a supervised study hall during their flex period, study hall, lunch period or before and after school as well as a weekly check in with their assigned GHS counselor. Students who fail to follow this process may lose their eligibility for a flex period during the current or future semesters.

WNCC Academic Probation and Suspension

It is very important that students do their absolute best in their college classes. Students are considered to be making satisfactory progress if they have a WNCC GPA of 2.00 (70%) or higher. The purpose of academic probation is to warn students of their unsatisfactory academic progress. Academic probation may also pose a problem in obtaining financial aid for college after high school. Students are placed on academic suspension after they are on probation for one semester and satisfactory academic progress has not been made.

WNCC Portal

Each student taking a college class will log into their WNCC portal. To log in, a student would go to www.wncc.edu, then click on "My WNCC" in the upper right-hand corner of the page. If students are taking a class on the WNCC campus, it is important to get logged onto the portal as quickly as possible as classroom materials will be accessed through Blackboard. Students can view their schedule, instructor name, grades, and request transcripts on the portal. See counselor or WNCC advisor for further information.

Transferology and Transfer Nebraska

Transferology is a nation-wide network designed to help students explore their college transfer options. The website for Transferology is www.transferology.com. Students wanting to transfer within the state of Nebraska should visit www.transfer.nebraska.edu. Dual credit grades lower than a "C" on the college level may not transfer to other colleges, or apply to a specific program of study.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records at elementary and secondary schools that are subject to FERPA's requirements. These rights transfer to the student when he or she attends a postsecondary institution at any age. Under FERPA, an eligible student must provide a signed and dated written consent before a school discloses personally identifiable information, such as financial aid records, grades, transcripts, account balance, student conduct, or placement scores from the student's education records. Students should be responsible for knowing the status of their progress. We

realize that there may be situations when parents may want to access their son's/daughter's grades. Students have access to grades on their WNCC portal. If parents want access to grades or other personally identifiable information, their son or daughter will need to sign a release of information agreement. This form is found in the portal. Parents wishing to access student information for dual enrollment through GHS will need to work through GHS Infinite Campus for progress monitoring; however, grades and attendance are only updated at midterm and semester. Parents wishing for full access will need to access the student's WNCC portal.

Academic Help

Any student taking a class through WNCC has access to the tutoring opportunities in the Math Center and the Writing Center. These centers are typically open during the day and evening.

Student Code of Conduct (including Academic Integrity)

Students are encouraged to go on the WNCC website to view the college's policies relating to academic integrity. Students are expected to know and understand the College's policies relating to student conduct and academic integrity and are held accountable for doing so. Please refer to the student handbook found on WNCC's web page.

Transportation

GHS students will be responsible for their own transportation to WNCC courses taken on the WNCC campus.

Tuition

Gering Public Schools will pay the tuition for students enrolling in dual credit courses on the GHS Campus and taught by a GHS instructor AND those courses that are required as part of a student's Career Pathway. Although GPS will pay tuition, it is essential that all students qualifying for the free and reduced lunch program apply for the Access College Early College Scholarship program. If a student drops a course before or after the WNCC drop deadline they are responsible to pay back the tuition and fees incurred by the course enrollment(s) to GHS.

Textbooks

Textbooks will be loaned to students for all dual credit classes offered at Gering High School (GHS) and those that are taught at WNCC and required as part of a career pathway. If you want to purchase the textbook, you may do so at your own cost.

Gering Public Schools will pay for tuition/fees at WNCC if the class is a requirement of the student's career pathway. If the class is one the student elects to take outside of the career pathway, tuition/fees/materials are the student's responsibility. Dual credit classes taught by GHS staff are paid by Gering Public Schools.

Since Gering Public Schools (GPS) pays tuition for the on-campus WNCC classes required as part of a Career Pathway, each student must adhere to the college schedule concerning attendance. If the college is having school, but GHS is not, you must attend class at the college. When the college has a vacation, but GHS is holding school, you need not attend college class but you must attend classes at GHS.

If you are dropped from a dual credit class during the semester because of poor attendance, you choose to drop the course prior to the WNCC drop deadline, or you fail the class for the semester, you will be liable for the course tuition and fees, and will be expected to reimburse GPS. You will not receive your diploma until the money is repaid.

Drops

Students selecting to drop a course prior to the WNCC drop deadline will receive a "W" at WNCC and will take a replacement course at GHS through the online learning program. If a student selects to drop a course before or after the WNCC drop deadline, they must enroll in a credit recovery course to replace the grade of the WNCC course. If a student does not complete a credit recovery course to replace the WNCC course, the student will receive an "F" on their transcript for the WNCC course. Students are **liable for and must reimburse GPS for the cost of your course tuition, any textbook or textbook codes and/or applicable fees** if the student: (1) is dropped from a dual credit class during the semester because of poor attendance, (2) chooses to drop the course, (3) or fails the class for the semester. Seniors will not receive their diplomas until those costs are paid in full.

TUITION REFUND POLICY

Tuition refunds are based on the percent of course time that has elapsed. After the No Penalty Drop/Add Period ends, course fees are not subject to refund.

Time Elapsed	Percent Refunded
6.25%.....	100%
12.50%.....	50%
25%	25%
More than 25%.....	None

NOTES:

- To be eligible for a refund, students must complete and submit a signed copy of the WNCC Drop/Add Form.

Credits

College (WNCC) credits earned and how they will be computed to high school credits:

- One credit course at WNCC will be computed as two and a half credit courses on a GHS transcript.
- Two through four credit courses at WNCC will be computed as five credit courses on a GHS transcript.
- Beyond 4 credit courses at WNCC will be computed as a ten-credit course on a GHS transcript.

Title IX Policy 504.24

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>).

Section 3 Graduation Requirements

All senior students who have met a prescribed curriculum established by the Board of Education are expected to participate in commencement exercises and related events. Students who have not met all graduation requirements will not be allowed to participate in the commencement exercises. Students who have not paid all of their fees and fines and/or made up all of their detentions will have their diploma withheld until the above has been rectified.

To be eligible for graduation from Gering High School, a student must have earned a minimum of 250 semester hours credit in grades 9 through 12 inclusive. A minimum of 40 earned semester hours credits must be earned during the school year in which the student intends to graduate. Credit hours will be computed in accordance with the Nebraska Department of Education.

Graduation Requirements

Satisfactory completion of the following courses must be presented in the candidate's record:

English	40 semester hours
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Social Sciences	30 semester hours
Science	30 semester hours
Math	30 semester hours
P.E. and Health	15 semester hours
FAFSA Requirement	https://www.education.ne.gov/fafsa/

In addition to all academic course requirements all graduating seniors must complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid as per the Nebraska Department of Education. Students and families have several options to opt out of this requirement. Information about the FAFSA requirement can be found at the following website: <https://www.education.ne.gov/fafsa/>. Options to opt out can be found at the following link: [FAFSA Opt-Out Form Link](#)

Exceptions to these requirements may be made by the Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, who will support the recommendation with justifiable reasons. A complete record of the recommendation and of the action taken upon it by the Board shall be included in the minutes. The candidates for graduation shall be presented to the Board of Education for approval.

A student who has not met the requirements for graduation but who has attended school regularly may, with the recommendation of the Superintendent, be granted a Certificate of Attendance.

Section 4 Schedule Changes

Students wishing to change their schedules must do so within one week of each semester. All schedule changes require parental permission and approval of a school counselor. Students who drop classes after the one week time period may receive a withdrawal/fail grade in the class. Students who withdraw from a class must take an online recovery course in its place. Final approval of all schedule changes will be made by the GHS Administration. Administration can approve schedule changes at any time during the school year.

Section 5 Report Cards

Report cards are issued at the end of each semester. Letter grades are used to designate a student's progress. A grade of "F"(failing), "WF" and "WP" carries no credit.

Section 6 Incompletes

No incompletes will be granted, all coursework is expected to be done by the end of the semester. Exceptions to this policy may be made upon recommendation from the Student Assistance Team (SAT), due to a 504 Plan, IEP plan, or administrative discretion.

Section 7 Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences will be held at the midterm of the 1st and 2nd semester. Refer to the school calendar for the schedule. Progress reports will be available for parents. Conferences with teachers, at any other time, are possible by making arrangements with the teacher.-

Section 8 Academic Honors for Graduation

Gering Public Schools will be utilizing the Latin Honors System which grants students summa cum laude, magna cum laude, and cum laude titles based on their cumulative grade point average at the end of eight semesters of high school. This allows students who earn at or above a clearly defined cumulative GPA to be recognized for their academic achievement. These changes are meant to further encourage students to challenge themselves in high school. Student course selection should have rigor but should also include courses that match with their interests and post-secondary goals. In order to be eligible for graduation honors, a student must complete all Gering High School graduation requirements and must be registered as a full-time

Gering High School student during their entire senior year. In order to be recognized, seniors must meet the following criteria:

Summa Cum Laude with Distinction- A student in this category must have achieved a cumulative 4.0 grade point average and a 30 or higher on the ACT during his/her high school career.

Summa Cum Laude- A student in this category must have achieved a cumulative 4.0 grade point average during his/her high school career.

Magna Cum Laude- A student in this category must have achieved a cumulative GPA between 3.75-3.99 grade point average during his/her high school career.

Cum Laude- A student in this category must have achieved a cumulative GPA between 3.5-3.74 grade point average during his/her high school career.

Section 9 Honor Roll

There are three honor roll designations for students attending Gering High School. If a student maintains an A average they qualify for the Superintendent's Honor Roll. If a student's GPA is between 3.5 and 3.9 they qualify for the Principal's Honor Roll. If they maintain a GPA between 3.0 and 3.4 they qualify for Secretary's Honor Roll. To be on the honor roll, **seniors must carry 4 subjects**, juniors ~~and seniors~~ must carry **at least 5 subjects**, sophomores and freshmen must carry **8 subjects per semester**. If a course carries no GPA weight then the course cannot be included in the average or the course minimum for the semester honor roll designation; examples of these courses are: Bulldog Time, Building Aide, Shop Aide, Work Study and Flex Periods.

Section 10 National Honor Society

To be considered for National Honor Society, a student must meet the following criteria:

- Be a sophomore, a junior, or a senior
- Have demonstrated excellent scholarship and be enrolled in at least ~~six~~ **five** academic courses with GPA weight.
- Have a cumulative GPA of 3.7

All candidates must also have strong moral character, be active in service to the school and community, and exhibit positive leadership actions. Requirements are given to all faculty members who are asked to comment on any student they feel should or should not be invited into membership; these comments are used only as guidelines. A faculty committee then reviews the criteria for each eligible candidate, and invitations are extended to new members based on the consensus of the committee. Acceptance into the National Junior Honor Society does not automatically qualify a student for National Honor Society.

Removal from National Honor Society

A student may be removed from the NHS by action of the Principal upon a determination by the NHS Faculty Committee that the student:

1. Engaged in conduct prior to induction which was not known at the time of induction and which, if known, would have caused denial of induction;
2. Engaged in conduct after induction which is grounds for a student to be long-term suspended or expelled from school under the student code of conduct; which is grounds for suspension or removal from any extracurricular activity of the school, or which would cause denial of induction if such conduct had taken place prior to the time of induction.

The student may appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent by giving written notice of appeal to the Superintendent within ten calendar days of receipt of the Principal's removal decision. The appeal procedures shall be established at the discretion of the Superintendent such as to allow a fair opportunity for the student's views and information to be considered. The decision of the Superintendent on the appeal shall be final.

Section 11 Academic Integrity

1. Policy Statement

Students are expected to abide by the standards of academic integrity established by their teachers and school administration. Standards of academic integrity are established in order for students to learn as much as possible from instruction, for students to be given grades which accurately reflect the student's level of learning and progress, to provide a level playing field for all students, and to develop appropriate values.

Cheating and plagiarism violate the standards of academic integrity. Sanctions will be imposed against students who engage in such conduct.

Definitions

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

"Cheating" means intentionally to misrepresent the source, nature, or other conditions of academic work so as to accrue undeserved credit, or to cooperate with someone else in such misrepresentation. Such misrepresentations may, but need not necessarily, involve the work of others. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- Tests (includes quizzes and other examinations or academic performances):
 - Advance Information: Obtaining, reviewing or sharing copies of tests or information about a test before these are distributed for student use by the instructor. For example, a student engages in cheating if, after having taken a test, the student informs other students in a later section of the questions that appear on the test.
 - Use of Unauthorized Materials: Using notes, textbooks, pre-programmed formula in calculators, or other unauthorized material, devices or information while taking a test except as expressly permitted. For example, except for "open book" tests, a student engages in cheating if the student looks at personal notes or the textbook during the test.
 - Use of Other Student Answers: Copying or looking at another student's answers or work, or sharing answers or work with another student, when taking a test, except as expressly permitted. For example, a student engages in cheating if the student looks at another student's paper during a test. A student also engages in cheating if the student tells another student the answers during a test or while exiting the testing room, or knowingly allows another student to look at the student's answers on the test paper.
 - Use of Other Students to Take Tests. Having another person take one's place for a test, or taking a test for another student, without the specific knowledge and permission of the instructor.
 - Misrepresenting Need to Delay Test. Presenting false or incomplete information in order to postpone or avoid the taking of a test. For example, a student engages in cheating if the student misses class on the day of a test, claiming to be sick, when the student's real reason for missing class was because the student was not prepared for the test.
2. Papers (includes papers, essays, lab projects, and other similar academic work):
 - Use of Another's Paper: Copying another student's paper, using a paper from an essay writing service, or allowing another student to copy a paper, without the specific knowledge and permission of the instructor.
 - Re-use of One's Own Papers: Using a substantial portion of a piece of work previously submitted for another course or program to meet the requirements of the present course or program without notifying the instructor to whom the work is presented.
 3. Assistance from Others: Having another person assist with the paper to such an extent that the work does not truly reflect the student's work. For example, a student engages in cheating if the student has a draft essay reviewed by the student's parent or sibling, and the essay is substantially re-written by the student's parent or sibling. Assistance from home is encouraged, but the work must remain the student's.
 4. Failure to Contribute to Group Projects. Accepting credit for a group project in which the student failed to contribute a fair share of the work.
 5. Misrepresenting Need to Delay Paper. Presenting false or incomplete information in order to postpone or avoid turning in a paper when due. For example, a student engages in cheating if the student misses class on the day a paper is due, claiming to be sick, when the student's real reason for missing class was because the student had not finished the paper.
 6. Alteration of Assigned Grades. Any unauthorized alteration of assigned grades by a student in the teacher's grade book or the school records is a serious form of cheating.
 7. "Plagiarism" means to take and present as one's own a material portion of the ideas or words of another or to present as one's own an idea or work derived from an existing source without full and proper credit to the source of the ideas, words, or works.

8. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - Failure to Credit Sources: Copying work (words, sentences, and paragraphs or illustrations or models) directly from the work of another without proper credit. Academic work frequently involves use of outside sources. To avoid plagiarism, the student must either place the work in quotations or give a citation to the outside source.
 - Falsely Presenting Work as One's Own: Presenting work prepared by another in final or draft form as one's own without citing the source, such as the use of purchased research papers or use of another student's paper.
 - "Contributing" to academic integrity violations means to participate or assist another in cheating or plagiarism. It includes but is not limited to allowing another student to look at your test answers, to copy your papers or lab projects, and to fail to report a known act of cheating or plagiarism to the instructor or administration.
9. Sanctions

The following sanctions will occur for academic integrity offenses:

 1. Academic Sanctions
 - a. First Offense- The instructor will refuse to accept the student's work in which the cheating or plagiarism took place, assign a grade of "F" or zero for the work, and require the student to complete a test or project in place of the work within such time and under such conditions as the instructor may determine appropriate. In the event the student completes the replacement test or project at a level meeting minimum performance standard, the instructor will assign a grade which the instructor determines to be appropriate for the work. Credit for the class may be withheld pending successful completion of the replacement test or project.
 - b. Second and Subsequent Offenses- A zero "0" will be assigned for the student's work in which the cheating or plagiarism took place with no opportunity to complete a test or assignment in place of the work.
 - Report to Parents and Administration- The instructor will notify the Principal of the offense, and the instructor or Principal will notify the student's parents or guardian.
 2. Student Discipline Sanctions
 - a. Academic integrity offenses are a violation of school rules. The Principal may recommend sanctions in addition to those assigned by the instructor, up to and including suspension or expulsion. Such additional sanctions will be given strong consideration if a student has engaged in a serious or repeated academic integrity offense or other rule violations, and if the academic sanction is otherwise not a sufficient remedy, such as for offenses involving altering assigned grades or contributing to academic integrity violations.

Section 12 Transcripts

Students requesting transcripts must provide the office with a 24-hour notice. Students are responsible for making sure they have the necessary courses and credits to meet graduation requirements.

Article 6 - Support Services

Section 1 Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS):

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
- Having 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 Intervention Support (PBIS) model. PBIS is a program designed 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.

Section 2 Special Education Services

What Does Special Education Mean?

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

Students Who May Benefit A student verified as having autism, behavior disorders, deaf-blindness, developmental delay, hearing impairments, mental handicaps, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairments, other health impairments, specific learning disabilities, speech-language impairments, traumatic brain injury or visual impairments, who because of these impairments needs special education and related services.

How are Students with Disabilities Identified? Referrals are made by teachers or parents to a Student Assistance Team. If the student assistance team or comparable problem-solving team feels that all viable alternatives have been explored, a referral for multidisciplinary evaluation is completed. An evaluation is conducted to assist in the determination of whether a student has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services the student needs. The evaluation is conducted only with written consent of a parent or guardian. A multidisciplinary evaluation team (MDT) will then meet to determine whether the student is eligible for special education.

Independent Evaluation If a parent disagrees with an evaluation completed by the school district, the parent has a right to request an independent educational evaluation at public expense. Parents should direct inquiries to school officials to determine if the school district will arrange for further evaluation at 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.

Reevaluation Students identified for special education will be reevaluated 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 will obtain parental consent prior to conducting any reevaluation of a student with a disability.

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

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

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

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

<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SPED/sped.html>.

Section 3 Students with Disabilities: Section 504

Accommodations and related services are made available to students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973..

Under Section 504, parents have the following rights:

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

Section 4 Multi-Tiered Student Support Services (MTSS)

The staff of Gering Senior High Schools recognizes that students can have experiences that may affect their academic and social life. The primary goal of the Student Assistance Team is preventative in nature designed to help students before their experiences become overwhelming. Experiences may include:

Depression	Suicide
Dropping Out	Self Esteem
Students Not Living at Home	Test Anxiety
Abuse	Death
Divorce	Under Achievement
Time Management	Single Parent Families
Eating Disorders	Failing Grades

Absenteeism/Tardiness

Students in need of information or help may be referred by various concerned individuals including: self, peers, family, or school staff. Referral forms can be obtained from any staff member (which will include cooks, custodian staff, secretaries, library aides, coaches, teachers, or administrators). Completed forms can be

returned to any staff member. After the referral, information will be gathered to help identify the problem(s) the student is experiencing. The Student Assistance Team will then meet to formulate an appropriate plan of action.

Once a problem has been identified and the extent of the problem is known, the student will be encouraged to accept the needed help. Team members will help students consider possible options and encourage them to make decisions that will resolve their problem in a positive way. At some level parents may be involved in the process.

The next step involves providing help for the student. The assistance recommended will vary with the type and severity of the problem. Finally, student assistance programs will provide support for students as they make adjustments in their lifestyles and seek to make appropriate life decisions.

In cases of extreme physical, mental, or family circumstances, the Student Assistance Team may elect to allow students to have a schedule that deviates from the listed requirements.

Section 5 Guidance Services

The mission of Gering Senior High School's guidance program is to provide a system designed to anticipate and facilitate the educational, career, and personal/social needs of students. A curriculum approach to providing services focuses on the prevention of problems by providing all students with appropriate age level skills and guidance information. Among the many responsibilities of school counselors, the following are primary: Counseling students, consulting with staff members, and integrating guidance services into the school's instructional program. Counselors will meet the developmental needs of all students as well as respond to the special needs and interests of individual students.

The guidance delivery system will ensure that the skills of the counselor are used to optimum advantage; that the work of the psychologists, nurses, and administrators support and enrich the guidance program; that the classroom teacher's already important guidance role is strengthened; and, that parents and community resources are kept informed and encouraged to participate in the development of students.

Section 6 Alternative Education

The Gering Alternative Program (GAP) provides programming for Gering students in grades 9 through 12 and students integrating into the school at times not conducive to the school calendar. GAP also provides programming for students that may need alternative instruction or educational settings.

Valley Alternative Education School

Students who have a need for an alternative educational plan may be referred to VALTS.

The Student Assistance Team based upon a predetermined set of criteria will determine priority for the VALTS positions.

Criteria for Admission:

1. Referred by the student's home district.
2. Expressed desire to be part of the program (self-referral).
3. Expressed desire to achieve graduation.
4. Referred to by high school MTSS.
5. Complete a series of academic/interest/aptitude tests prior to placement (administered by VALTS).
6. Reasonable student expectation to complete the program within one year of graduation class.
7. Agrees to abide by conditions and rules established for the program.
8. Completion of a successful intake interview.

LINKS

Gering Public Schools stand-alone Alternative High School for students who need an alternative educational plan may be referred to LINKS.

Criteria for Admission:

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

Section 7 Transportation Services

The school district maintains bus service for the convenience of its students and parents. Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. Students who live outside the radius of one mile from Gering Freshman Academy, may apply for a bus pass. Students must ride the bus assigned and leave the bus only at their designated stop. Violations of the rules by a student will result in disciplinary action.

Students who miss a bus for any high school activity, event or field trip, are not to drive to the location using their own or another vehicle. Students shall report to the high school office for determination as to whether the student will attend school or the activity.

Article 7 - Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco

Section 1 Drug-Free Schools

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.

Section 2 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 Gering Public Schools has determined that the possession or use by students of tobacco, tobacco products or vapor products, alcohol, narcotics, or other dangerous and/or illegal drugs 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 substantial interference with school purposes.

Students who possess or use tobacco, tobacco products or vapor products, alcohol or narcotics, or other dangerous drugs, 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. Where there is "reasonable suspicion" that a student has been using alcohol, the administration may request the student to submit to a "breathalyzer" test to determine use. If the student refuses such a test or does not admit to use where there is "reasonable suspicion" of use, the student may be subject to the disciplinary consequences as described in the GHS Parent Student Handbook.

Breathalyzers will be used at other school activities (in or out-of-town) when a reasonable suspicion exists that a student has been consuming alcohol prior to or during the event. Any positive test will result in parents being notified and school disciplinary consequences following the GHS Parent Student Handbook.

Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

Section 1 Purpose of Student Conduct Rules

The student conduct rules are established to maintain a school atmosphere that is conducive to learning, to aid student development, to further school purposes, and to prevent interference with the educational process. Violations of the rules will result in disciplinary action.

Gering's discipline plan is designed to be progressive. Students who are repeatedly referred to the principal's office for additional disciplinary measures will be disciplined according to the charts listed below. The initial responsibility for the disciplining of a student, who is disobedient or disrespectful in class, is the classroom teacher. Each time a student receives an office behavior referral he/she will receive a specific number of points. Any points received shall be cumulative throughout the school year. Accumulation of 90 or more points throughout the school year, may result in a recommendation to the Board of Education for expulsion from Gering Public Schools or mandatory reassignment.

The Nebraska Student Discipline Act will be used to guide the investigation, recommendation, and enforcement of any student discipline procedures. https://www.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Student_Discipline_Act.pdf

Purpose of the Act: The purpose of the Student Discipline Act is to assure the protection of all elementary and secondary school students' constitutional right to due process and fundamental fairness within the context of an orderly and effective educational process. The sanctions defined in the act shall be interpreted at all times in the light of the principles of free speech and assembly protected under the Constitution of Nebraska and the United States Constitution and in recognition of the right of every student to public education. [Ref. § 79-255]

Generally. The school board or board of education may authorize the emergency exclusion, short-term or long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment of any pupil from school for conduct prohibited by the board's rules or standards established pursuant to the Student Discipline Act if such sanction complies with the procedures required by the Act. [Ref. § 79-257]

Delegation of Authority. The school board or board of education may authorize the delegation to other school officials of responsibilities directed to the principal or superintendent by the act. [Ref. § 79-261(3)]

Authorized Actions by Administrators and Teachers. Administrative and teaching personnel may take actions regarding student behavior, other than those specifically provided in the Student Discipline Act, which are reasonably necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or prevent interference with the educational process.

Section 2 Progressive Discipline Levels

Parents will be notified at levels C through G

Police may be notified for any illegal activity

- A. Detention
- B. Detentions
- C. 5 or Fewer Days of In-School Suspension
- D. 5 or Fewer Days of Out-of-School Suspension
- E. 6-19 Days of Out-of-School Suspension
- G. Recommend Expulsion and/or Mandatory Reassignment

The Progressive Discipline Policy aims to ensure an orderly and effective educational process. Administrative and teaching personnel may take actions regarding student behavior, other than those specifically provided in the Progressive Discipline Policy, which are reasonably necessary to keep the student(s), to aid the student, to further school purposes, or to prevent interference with the educational process.

Students that reach 90 or more behavior demerits during one academic year, may be recommended for mandatory reassignment or expulsion.

Progressive Discipline Table

Offense	Category	Behavior	1st Offense	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
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		Demerits		Offense	Offense	Offense	Offense
INAPPROPRIATE PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION	I	4	A	A	B	C	D
DRESS CODE VIOLATION	I	4	A	A	B	C	D
LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS	I	4	A	A	B	C	D
OTHER I	I	4	A	A	B	C	D
DISRUPTION OF CLASS/SCHOOL/ ASSEMBLY	II	8	A	B	B	C	D
INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR OR GESTURES	II	8	A	B	B	C	D
PROFANITY OR VULGARITY	II	8	A	B	B	C	D
FAILURE TO ATTEND DETENTION TIME	II	8	C	C	D	D	E
CELL PHONE VIOLATION	II	8	A	B	B	C	D
SKIPPING CLASS	II	8	A	B	B	C	D
OTHER II	II	8	A	B	B	C	D
DISORDERLY CONDUCT	III	10	B	B	C	C	D
INDECENT MATERIAL	III	10	B	B	C	C	D
JEOPARDIZING THE SAFETY OF ONESELF OR OTHERS	III	10	B	B	C	C	D
MISUSE OF SCHOOL MATERIAL OR	III	10	B	B	C	C	D

EQUIPMENT								
INSUBORDINATION	III	10	B	B	C	D	D	
ACADEMIC VIOLATION	III	10	B	B	C	C	D	
FALSE CALL OR FORGERY OF NOTE	III	10	B	B	C	D	E	
USE OR POSSESSION OF TOBACCO OR VAPOR PRODUCT	IV	14	D	D	E	E	G	
CARELESS DRIVING OR SPEEDING	IV	14	B	C	D	D	E	
VANDALISM LEVEL I	IV	14	C	D	E	E	G	
THEFT LEVEL I	IV	14	C	D	E	E	G	
OTHER IV	IV	14	C	D	E	E	G	
HARASSMENT	V	21	D	D	E	E	G	
VANDALISM LEVEL II	V	21	D	D	E	E	G	
THEFT LEVEL II	V	21	D	D	E	E	G	
GROSS MISBEHAVIOR (DETRIMENTAL)	V	21	D	D	E	E	G	
OPEN AND PERSISTENT DEFIANCE OF AUTHORITY	V	21	D	D	E	E	G	
OTHER V	V	21	D	D	E	E	G	
THEFT LEVEL III	V	28	D/E	E	G			

FIGHTING LEVEL I	VI	28	D/E	E	G		
DANGEROUS ITEM	VI	28	D/E	E	G		
INDECENT BEHAVIOR	VI	28	D/E	E	G		
THREATENING BEHAVIOR	VI	28	D/E	E	G		
UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL OR DRUGS	VI	28	D/E	D/E	E/G		
POSSESSION OF ALCOHOL OR DRUGS OR PARAPHERNALIA	VI	28	E	E	E/G		
OTHER VI	VI	28	DEG	DEG	DEG		
FIGHTING LEVEL II	VII	42	E/G	G			
EXTORTION	VII	42	E/G	G			
FALSE FIRE ALARM	VII	42	E/G	G			
POSSESSION OF A WEAPON OTHER THAN A FIREARM	VII	42	E/G	G			
POSSESSION OR USE OF FIRECRACKERS	VII	42	E/G	G			
TERRORISTIC THREATS	VII	42	E/G	G			
OTHER VII	VII	42	E/G	G			
ASSAULT	VIII	90	E/G	G			
ARSON	VIII	90	G				
BOMB THREAT	VIII	90	G				

ASSAULT ON EMPLOYEE OR STAFF MEMBER	VIII	90	E/G	G			
POSSESSION OR USE OF EXPLOSIVES	VIII	90	G				
USE OF ANY INSTRUMENT AS A WEAPON	VIII	90	G				
POSSESSION OR USE OF A FIREARM	VIII	90	G MANDATORY EXPULSION FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR				
OTHER VIII	VIII	90	E/G				

Section 3 Other Forms of Student Discipline: Administrative and teaching 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 be 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 Inappropriate Public Displays of Affection (IPDA)

Students are not to engage in inappropriate public displays of affection on school property or at school activities. Such conduct includes kissing, touching, fondling or other displays of affection that would be reasonably considered to be embarrassing or a distraction to others.

Section 5 Student Appearance

Student Appearance: Students at Gering Public Schools are expected to dress in a way that is appropriate for the school setting. Students should not dress in a manner that is dangerous to the health and safety of anyone or that interferes with the learning environment or teaching process in our school. Following is a list of examples of attire that will not be considered appropriate, such list is not exclusive and other forms of attire deemed inappropriate by the administration may be deemed inappropriate for the school setting: Clothing that shows an inappropriate amount of bare skin or underwear (midriffs, spaghetti straps, sagging pants, tank tops) or clothing that is too tight, revealing or baggy, or tops and bottoms that do not overlap or any material that is sheer or lightweight enough to be seen through, or otherwise of an appropriate size and fit so as to be revealing or drag on the ground. Shirts and tops must have necklines that will be close to the collar bones in the front and back revealing no cleavage.

- a. Shorts, skirts, or skorts that do not reach mid-thigh or longer.
- b. Clothing or jewelry that advertises or promotes beer, alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs.
- c. Clothing or jewelry that could be used as a weapon (chains, spiked apparel) or that would encourage "horse-play" or that would damage property. (e.g. cleats).
- d. Headwear including hats, caps, bandannas, and scarves.
- e. Clothing or jewelry which exhibits nudity, makes sexual references or carries lewd, indecent, or vulgar language, or exhibits violence.

- f. Clothing must be “in reasonably good repair”. Therefore, wearing jeans with large or excessive holes will not be permitted, whether skin is revealed or not (other examples: frayed shorts, or torn clothing, holes in clothing)
- g. Clothing or jewelry that is gang related

Consideration will be made for students who wear special clothing as required by religious beliefs, disability, or to convey a particularized message protected by law. The final decision regarding attire and grooming will be made by the Principal or Superintendent. In the event a student is uncertain as to whether a particular item or method of grooming is consistent with the school's guidelines, the student should contact the Principal for approval and may also review such additional posting of prohibited items or grooming which may be available in the Principal's office.

Coaches, sponsors, or teachers may have additional requirements for students who are in special lab classes, students who are participants in performing groups, or students who are representing the school as part of an extracurricular activity program.

The progressive discipline policy will be used to address violations of the student appearance rules.

Section 6 Electronic Devices

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

Definitions.

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

Possession and Use of Electronic Devices

It is our belief that we need to teach young men and women at Gering High School to manage their technology in a way that is not disruptive to their work or their education. It is the administration's expectation that students follow the individual teacher's classroom rules. Teachers have discretion to write a referral based on violations of their classroom rules.

Violations - Prohibited Use of Electronic Devices. Students shall not use electronic devices for:

1. Activities which disrupt the educational environment;
2. Illegal activities in violation of state or federal laws or regulations;
3. Unethical activities, such as cheating on assignments or tests;
4. Immoral or pornographic activities;
5. Activities in violation of Board or school policies and procedures relating to student conduct and harassment;
6. Recording others (photographs, videotaping, sound recording, etc.) without direct administrative approval and consent of the person(s) being recorded, other than recording of persons participating in school activities that are open to the public; “sexting;” or activities which invade the privacy of others. Such student misuses will be dealt with as serious

school violations, and immediate and appropriate disciplinary action will be imposed, including, but not limited to, suspension and expulsion from school.

Electronic Device Regulations

- Electronic Devices will not be used for any reason in school restrooms, locker rooms, or classrooms. Use in these areas may result in disciplinary action.
- Electronic Devices may be used by permission of the administration or counselors within GHS offices.
- Electronic Devices may be used in the cafeteria (during assigned lunch or breakfast), hallways (during passing time).
- When students enter their assigned classroom, they will be expected to place their device(s) in the assigned storage location designated by the classroom instructor. At the end of each class period, students will be allowed time to retrieve their phone/electronic device prior to the end of the class period.
- Students violating the electronic device policy will be referred to the office for disciplinary action.

Disposition of Confiscated Electronic Devices: Electronic devices possessed or used in violation of this policy may be confiscated by school personnel and returned to the student or parent/guardian at an appropriate time. If an electronic device is confiscated, the electronic device shall be taken to the school's main office to be identified, placed in a secure area, and returned to the student and/or the student's parent/guardian in a consistent and orderly way.

Penalties for Prohibited Use of Electronic Devices: Students who receive a "sexting" message are to report the matter to a school administrator and then delete such message from their electronic device. Students shall not participate in sexting or have any "sexting" message on their electronic devices regardless of when the message was received while on school grounds or at a school activity. Students who violate the prohibitions of this policy shall be subject to the imposition of appropriate disciplinary action.

Reporting to Law Enforcement. Violations of this policy regarding the prohibited use of electronic devices that may constitute a violation of federal or state laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, the Nebraska Child Protection Act or the Nebraska Child Pornography Prevention Act shall be reported to appropriate legal authorities and law enforcement.

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

Section 7 Harassment and Bullying Policy:

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 other's' 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 occurring are to promptly report the problem to their teacher or to the Principal so the problem can be addressed. Students who make reports of bullying activity will not be retaliated against for making the report.

Section 8 Acceptable Use Policy for Electronic Resources

The use of school electronic resources and accounts is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use may result in the cancellation or suspension of your privilege. Students using electronic resources are required to follow all district policies and procedures.

District Accounts

Gering Public Schools accounts and services are to be used for educational purposes only. No GPS accounts or services are to be used for commercial purposes, political reasons, advertising purposes, or lobbying. Students may not use their GPS email account to sign up for any other accounts or services. Students may not use their District accounts to enter into any contracts on behalf of GPS. Students may not post, enter, or store any personal information about themselves or others. All accounts and network storage are the property of Gering Public Schools. GPS reserves the right to inspect and govern any District account and all included information to ensure proper use. GPS will strive to provide the best security possible for all student accounts and information.

Passwords and Safety

Account safety and security are essential to the continued use of technology in the District. Access to electronic resources is intended exclusively for the authorized individuals. All passwords are private and must not be shared with anyone. Do not trespass into another's account or files, including attempting to log into any unauthorized accounts. Do not attempt to electronically or physically obtain passwords to any other person's accounts. Users must log out after each session, and must never leave a computer while an account is logged in.

Student Conduct

Users must abide by the rules of proper online etiquette. Users must act in a polite manner while using any online service or account. Using district technology for the use of entertainment or recreational games is prohibited. Users may not take part in any criminal acts using District technology or accounts. Such acts include, but are not limited to, "Hacking" or attempting to gain access to other computer systems without authorization, threatening or harassing digital communications, cyber-stalking, child pornography, vandalism, unauthorized tampering with computer systems, using another person's identity online, identity theft, and fraud. Users may not copy, sell, or distribute any copyrighted materials without the expressed written consent of the author or publisher. Users must not plagiarize in any form. Users must not publicly defame any other person through publishing online material. Obscene, profane, vulgar, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful or otherwise inappropriate language cannot be used on any form of online communication or district accounts. Users may not create, search, retrieve, save, or circulate viruses, malware, offensive material, sexually explicit material, illegal material, or other harmful information. Users may not develop, download, upload or install any software on District devices without consent of an administrator or teacher. Tampering in any way with District files, programs, settings, or other digital information is prohibited.

System Integrity

Users may not attempt to bypass any security filters or internet filters. Users may not attempt to gain access to unauthorized District files or other digital information. Unnecessary files located on an individual's own network storage or account should be deleted regularly. Do not attempt to access, alter, or destroy other's online property or files. Do not vandalize, destroy, or tamper with any District technology including but not limited to computers, printers, Chromebooks, projectors, and tablets.

1. Gering Public Schools provides internet content filtering in an attempt to prevent access to websites that contain obscene, pornographic, violent, or otherwise harmful materials. Due to the limitations of content filtering, it is impossible to block all inappropriate sites.
2. 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.
3. 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, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by negligence, errors, or omissions.
4. Gering Public Schools 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 Internet is at your own risk. GPS specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its
5. Failure to follow this Acceptable Use Policy may result in suspension of account privileges. Students who violate the Acceptable Use Policy will also be subject to the school's discipline policy.

Section 9 Reporting Student Law Violations:

Cases of law violations or suspected law violations by students will be reported to the police and to the student's parents or guardian as soon as possible.

When a Principal or other school official releases a minor student to a peace officer (e.g., police officer, sheriff, and all other persons with similar authority to make arrests) for the purpose of removing the minor from the school premises, the Principal or other school official will take immediate steps to notify the parent, guardian, or responsible relative of the minor regarding the release of the minor to the officer and regarding the place to which the minor is reportedly being taken. An exception applies when a minor has been taken into custody as a victim of suspected child abuse; in that event the Principal or other school official shall provide the peace officer with the address and telephone number of the minor's parents or guardian.

In an effort to demonstrate that student behavior is always subject to possible legal sanctions regardless of where the behavior occurs it shall be the policy of the Gering Public Schools to notify the proper legal authorities when a student engages in any of the following behaviors on school grounds or at a school sponsored event:

1. Knowingly possessing illegal drugs or alcohol.
2. Assault.
3. Vandalism resulting in significant property damage.
4. Theft of school or personal property of a significant nature.
5. Automobile accident.
6. Any other behavior which significantly threatens the health or safety of students, staff or other persons or which is required by law to be reported.

Article 9 - Extracurricular Activities Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations and Section 12 Student Fees Policy

Section 1 Extracurricular Activity Philosophy

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

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

these groups. Such experiences contribute to the knowledge, skill and emotional patterns that they possess, thereby making them better individuals and citizens.

Section 2 Safety

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

Section 3 Warning for Participants and Parents

The purpose of this warning is to bring your attention to the existence of potential dangers associated with athletic injuries. Participation in any intramural or athletic activity may involve injury of some type. The severity of such injury can range from minor cuts, bruises, sprains and muscle strains to more serious injuries to the body's bones, joints, ligaments, tendons, or muscles, to catastrophic injuries to the head, neck and spinal cord. On rare occasions, injuries can be so severe as to result in total disability, paralysis or death. Even with appropriate coaching, appropriate safety instruction, appropriate protective equipment and strict observance of the rules, injuries are still a possibility.

Section 4 Extracurricular Activity Code of Conduct

Purpose of the Code of Conduct. Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege. The privilege carries with it responsibilities to the school, team, student body, and the community. Participants are not only representing themselves, but also their school and community in all of their actions. Others judge our school on the student participants' conduct and attitudes and how they contribute to our school spirit and community image.

The student participants' performances and devotion to high ideals and values make their school and community proud. Consequently, participation is dependent upon adherence to this Code of Conduct and the school district's policies, procedures, and rules.

Scope of the Code of Conduct.

Activities Subject to the Code of Conduct: The Code of Conduct applies to all extracurricular activities.

Extracurricular activities include activities or organizations which are supervised or administered by the school district which do not count toward graduation or grade advancement, and in which participation is not otherwise required by the school.

Extracurricular activities include but are not limited to the following: all sports, cheerleading, dance team, Pep Band, vocal, band, speech and debate, play productions, Mock Trial, DECA, FCCLA, Spanish Club, Art Club, Student Council, Student Advisory Board, National Honor Society, and other school sponsored organizations and activities.

A participant means a student who participates in, has participated in, or will participate in an extracurricular activity.

When: The Code of Conduct rules apply to conduct which occurs at any time during the school year and also includes the time frame which begins with the official starting day of the fall sport season established by the NSAA and extends to the last day of the spring sport season established by the NSAA, whether or not the student is a participant in an activity at the time of such conduct.

The rules also apply when a student is participating or scheduled to participate in an extracurricular activity that is held outside the school year or the NSAA season. For example, if DECA or FCCLA student plans to participate in a conference in July and commits a Code of Conduct infraction in June, the student may be suspended from participating in the conference. Conduct during the summer months may also affect a student's participation under the team selection and playing time guidelines.

Where: The Code of Conduct rules apply regardless of whether the conduct occurs on and off school grounds. If the conduct occurs on school grounds, at a school function or event, or in a school vehicle, the student may also be subject to further discipline under the general student code of conduct. A student who is suspended or expelled from school shall not be permitted to participate in activities during the period of the suspension or expulsion, and may also receive an extended activity suspension. Students assigned In School Suspension are eligible to practice. They are ineligible to participate in public performance or games while the student is in In School Suspension.

Grounds for Extracurricular Activity Discipline. Students who participate in extracurricular activities are expected to demonstrate cooperation, patience, pride, character, self-respect, self-discipline, teamwork, sportsmanship, and respect for authority. The following conduct rules have been determined by the Board of Education to be reasonably necessary to aid students, further school purposes, and prevent interference with the educational process. Such conduct constitutes grounds for suspension from participation in extracurricular activities and grounds for other restrictions or disciplinary measures related to extracurricular activity participation:

1. Willfully disobeying any reasonable written or oral request of a school staff member, or the voicing of disrespect to those in authority.
2. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, harassment or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school or extracurricular activity purposes or making any communication that a reasonable person would interpret as a serious expression of an intent to harm or cause injury to another.
3. Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property, repeated damage or theft involving property or setting or attempting to set a fire of any magnitude.
4. Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to any person, including a 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 another person shall not constitute a violation.
5. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of, or with the intent of, obtaining money or anything of value from a student or making a threat which causes or may be expected to cause a disruption to school operations.
6. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon or that has the appearance of a weapon, or bringing or possessing any explosive device, including fireworks, on school grounds or at a school function or event, or in a manner that is unlawful or contrary to school activity rules.
7. Selling, using, possessing or dispensing alcohol, tobacco/vapor products, narcotics, drugs, a 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. (Note: Refer to "Drug and Alcohol Violations" for further information).
8. Public indecency.
9. Sexual assault or attempting to sexually assault any person. Engaging in sexual conduct, even if consensual, on school grounds or at a school function or event.
10. 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;
11. Engaging in any activity forbidden by law which constitutes a danger to other students, interferes with school purposes or an extracurricular activity, or reflects a lack of high ideals.
12. Repeated violation of any of the school rules.
13. Truancy or failure to attend assigned classes or assigned activities; or tardiness to school, assigned classes or assigned activities.
14. The use of language, written or oral, or conduct, including gestures, which is profane or abusive to a school employee, school volunteer, or student. 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, national origin, or religion.
15. 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 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 or of an extracurricular activity; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that a reasonable observer would interpret as advocating illegal drug use.

16. Willfully violating the behavioral expectations for those students riding Gering Public School buses or vehicles used for activity purposes.
17. Failure to attend scheduled practices and meetings. If circumstances arise to prevent the participant's attendance, the validity of the reason will be determined by the coach or sponsor. Every reasonable effort should be made to notify the coach or sponsor prior to any missed practice or meeting.
18. All other reasonable rules or regulations adopted by the coach or sponsor of an extracurricular activity shall be followed, provided that participants shall be advised by the coach or sponsor of such rules and regulations by written handouts or posting on bulletin boards prior to the violation of the rule or regulation.
19. Failure to comply with any rule established by the Nebraska School Activities Association, including, but not limited to, the rules relating to eligibility.
20. Any activity that is deemed by the Gering High School administration to not demonstrate high ideals.

All terms used in the Code of Conduct have a less strict meaning than under criminal law and are subject to reasonable interpretation by school officials.

Consequences

Students may be suspended from practices or participation in interscholastic competition or participation in co-curricular activities for violations of the Code of Conduct. The period of suspension or other discipline for such offenses shall be determined by the school administration.

The disciplinary consequence will be determined based on consideration of the seriousness of the offense, any prior violations, the student's compliance with the self-reporting obligations, the student's level of cooperation and willingness to resolve the matter, and the student's demonstration of a commitment to not commit future violations.

Section 5 Gering Public School Random Drug Testing Program

Students who participate in school sponsored competitive extracurricular activities at the secondary school (Grades 7-12) level are eligible for random testing. Students who do not consent to participate in the testing program shall not be eligible to participate in school sponsored competitive extracurricular activities. Students may volunteer for participation in the testing program even if they do not participate in a school sponsored competitive extracurricular activity.

The following shall result from a positive test result:

- The student's parents or guardians will be contacted and a meeting will be held to discuss the positive test result, with the object of collaborating on a plan to assist the student in avoiding future substance abuse.
- The student's privilege of participating in extracurricular activities will be restricted as follows:
 - For a first offense the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities **not to exceed three events or a period of two weeks**. The student may not return to participate in extracurricular activities until the student shows proof that the student: (a) is participating in substance abuse counseling with a qualified professional and is following the recommendations of the counselor and (b) tests negative in a District-administered drug test.
 - For a second offense, the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for 9 weeks. The student may not return to participate in extracurricular activities until the student shows proof that the student: (a) is participating in substance abuse counseling with a qualified professional and is following the recommendations of the counselor and (b) tests negative in a District-administered drug test, and (c) agrees to submit to monthly District-administered drug test during the next twelve-month period.
 - For a third offense, the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for one calendar year. The student may not return to participate in extracurricular activities until the student shows proof that the student: (a) is participating in substance abuse counseling with a qualified professional and is following the recommendations of the counselor and (b) tests negative in a District-administered drug test, and (c) agrees to submit to monthly District-administered drug test during the next twelve-month period.

- o For a fourth offense, the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for the remainder of the student's secondary school career.
- The parents or guardians are responsible for the costs of the rehabilitation program, which includes the substance abuse counseling and follow-up.
- Positive results will not lead to the imposition of any academic consequence or disciplinary action, other than the above described limitations on the privilege to participate in extracurricular activities.
- Refusal to submit to a drug test will result in the same consequences as a positive drug test result.
 - o For a first offense the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities **not to exceed three events or a period of two weeks**. The student may not return to participate in extracurricular activities until the student shows proof that the student: (a) is participating in substance abuse counseling with a qualified professional and is following the recommendations of the counselor and (b) tests negative in a District-administered drug test.
 - o For a second offense, the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for 9 weeks. The student may not return to participate in extracurricular activities until the student shows proof that the student: (a) is participating in substance abuse counseling with a qualified professional and is following the recommendations of the counselor and (b) tests negative in a District-administered drug test, and (c) agrees to submit to monthly District-administered drug test during the next twelve-month period.
 - o For a third offense, the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for one calendar year. The student may not return to participate in extracurricular activities until the student shows proof that the student: (a) is participating in substance abuse counseling with a qualified professional and is following the recommendations of the counselor and (b) tests negative in a District-administered drug test, and (c) agrees to submit to monthly District-administered drug test during the next twelve-month period.
 - o For a fourth offense, the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for the remainder of the student's secondary school career.

Section 6 Drug and Alcohol Offenses and/or Violations

Students whom are cited by law enforcement for drug and/or alcohol offenses from the first day of fall activities through the last day of the school year will face the following consequences:

First Offense: For the first offense, the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities not to exceed three events or a period of two weeks.

Second Offense: For the second offense, the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities for nine weeks.

Third Offense: For the third offense, the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities for ONE CALENDAR YEAR.

Fourth Offense: The student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for the remainder of the student's secondary school career.

Self-Reporting. A student who violates the Code of Conduct must self-report. The self-report must be made to the principal, athletic director, or the head coach or sponsor of an activity in which the student participates. The student's parent or guardian may initiate the self-reporting process, but the student will be later required to give a written statement of the self-report.

The self-report must be made :

- (1) before the end of the next school day after the conduct occurred and
- (2) before participation in an extracurricular or co-curricular activity.

In making a self-report, the student must identify the events that took place, the conduct which the student engaged in, and will be required to put this information in a written statement.

All students are expected to be honest and forthright with school officials. In the event the coach or activity sponsor or any school administrator asks a student participant for information pertaining to compliance (or lack of compliance) by the student or other student participants with the Code of Conduct or eligibility conditions for

participation in activities, the student is expected to fully, completely, and honestly provide the information. Students may be disciplined for a failure to be honest and forthright.

Reduction for Self-Reporting: If the student has self-reported, the first violation shall be reduced to one week for the first violation. A commensurate reduction (approximately one-half, as determined by the administration) for a second or subsequent violation shall be given for self-reporting.

More Serious Violations: In the event of more serious drug or alcohol violations, such as students engaging in use of especially serious drug offenses (cocaine, meth, etc.) or procuring alcohol for minors, the consequence of the violation is not restricted by the foregoing, and may be established in the good discretion of the administration.

Steroid Offenses: A student who possesses, dispenses, delivers, or administers anabolic steroids shall be prohibited from participating in any extracurricular activity for the following minimum periods:

- First Violation: 30 consecutive days.
- Second or Any Subsequent Offense: One calendar year.

When Suspensions Begin: All suspensions begin with the next scheduled activity in which the student is a participant, after the determination by school officials of the sanction to be imposed; provided that the school officials shall have the discretion to establish a time period for the suspension that makes the suspension have a real consequence for the student. During a suspension, participants may be required or permitted to practice at the sole discretion of the coach or activity sponsor. Suspensions will be carried over to the next season when the suspension has not been fully served or when determined appropriate for the suspension to have a real consequence for the student.

Letters and Post-Season Honors: A student who commits a Code of Conduct violation is subject to the following:

1. Eligible to letter, provided the student meets the criteria of the coach or sponsor.
2. Not eligible to receive honors during the sport or activity in which they are participating at the time of the offense and/or in sports or activities in which they have been suspended due to a code violation. The coach/sponsor, with the Athletic Director's approval, may make an exception if the student has self-reported or otherwise demonstrated excellence in character allowing for such honors.

Determining a Violation Has Occurred: A violation of the Code of Conduct will be determined to have occurred based on any of the following criteria:

1. When a student is cited by law enforcement and school officials have a reasonable basis for determining that grounds for the issuance of the citation exist.
2. When a student is convicted of a criminal offense. Conviction includes, without limitation, a conviction, a plea of no contest, and an adjudication of delinquency by a juvenile court.
3. When a student admits to violating one of the standards of the Code of Conduct.

Procedures for Extracurricular Discipline: The following procedures are established for suspensions from participation in extracurricular activities:

1. Investigation. The school official(s) considering the suspension will conduct a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances and determine whether the suspension will help the student or other students, further school purposes, or prevent an interference with a school purpose.
2. Meeting. Prior to commencement of the suspension, the school official(s) considering the suspension or their designee will provide the student an opportunity to give the student's side of the story. The meeting for this purpose may be held in person or via a telephone conference.
3. The student will be given oral or written notice of what the student is accused of having done, an explanation of the evidence the school has, and the opportunity to explain the student's version. Detail is not required where the activity participant has made a self-report or otherwise admits the conduct. Names of informants may be kept confidential when determined to be appropriate.
4. The suspension may be imposed prior to the meeting if the meeting cannot reasonably be held before the suspension is to begin. In that case the meeting will occur as soon as reasonably practicable. The student is responsible for cooperating in the scheduling of the meeting.

1. Notice Letter. Within two school days (two business days if school is not in session), or such additional time as is reasonably necessary following the suspension, the Athletic Director or the Athletic Director's designee will send a written statement to the student and the student's parents or guardian. The statement will describe the student's conduct violation and the discipline imposed. The student and parents or guardian will be informed of the opportunity to request a hearing.
2. Informal Hearing Before Superintendent. The student or student's parent/guardian may request an informal hearing before the Superintendent. The Superintendent may designate the Athletic Director or another administrator not responsible for the suspension decision as the Superintendent's designee to conduct the hearing and make a decision. A form to request such a hearing must be signed by the parent or guardian. A form will be provided with the notice letter or otherwise be made available by request from the Principal's office.

The request for a hearing must be received by the Superintendent's office within five days of receipt of the notice letter.

If a hearing is requested:

- a. The hearing will be held within ten calendar days of receipt of the request; subject to extension for good cause as determined by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.
- a. The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee will notify the participants of the time and place of the hearing a reasonable time in advance to allow preparation for the hearing.
- b. Upon conclusion of the hearing, a written decision will be rendered within five school days (ten calendar days if school is not in session). The written decision will be mailed or otherwise delivered to the participant, parents or guardian.
- c. A record of the hearing (copies of documents provided at the hearing and a tape recording or other recordation of the informal hearing) will be kept by the school if requested sufficiently in advance of the hearing by the parent/guardian.

No Stay of Penalty. There will be no stay of the penalty imposed pending completion of the due process procedures

Opportunity for Informal Resolution. These due process procedures do not prevent the student or parent/guardian from discussing and settling the matter with the appropriate school officials at any stage.

Section 8 Eligibility

Academic Standards Participation in extracurricular school activities is encouraged and desirable for all students. At the same time, the primary mission and responsibility for each student is to establish a firm academic foundation. A student participating in extracurricular school activities must show evidence of sincere effort towards scholastic achievement. To be eligible for participation in extracurricular activities students must:

1. Be enrolled in at least 20 credit hours in the semester of participation.
2. Student received 20 credit hours in the immediate preceding semester.
3. Students are chronically absent when missing 10 or more days of school. Students that are chronically absent from school, may be ineligible for participation in extracurricular activities.

Extracurricular academic requirements do not apply to the following:

- a. Instructional field trips which are a part of the scheduled course learning experience; or
- b. Activities or events which are a consideration in determining the student's grade.

Section 9 Attendance

Student participants are expected to meet the following attendance expectations:

1. Attend school regularly. Students who have "excessive absences" as determined under the school's attendance policy are ineligible to participate in extracurricular activity contests or performances. Students who have excessive absences in the semester of participation may be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activity contests or performances.
2. Be on time for all scheduled practices, contests and departure for contests. In the event a participant is unable to attend a practice or contests the participant should contact the coach or sponsor in advance.

3. On the day of a contest, performance or other activity, be in attendance for the full day. A student who is not in attendance the full day is ineligible for practice, the contest, performance, or activity. When events occur during the regular school day only eligible participants will be dismissed or students with prior administrative approval will be excused for the event.

Exceptions may be made for extenuating circumstances, such as doctor/dentist appointments or family emergencies. The exception must be approved by the Principal or Activities Director.

Every attempt should be made to be in attendance the day of a contest. Sleeping in to rest up for the game will not be considered an extenuating circumstance, nor will going home ill and then returning to play in the contest later that day.

Section 10 Relationships between Parents and Coaches/Sponsors

Parenting and coaching are very difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding between coaches and parents, both are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a more positive experience for everyone.

Parents have the right to know the expectations placed on them and their children. Coaches and sponsors have the right to know that if parents have a concern, they will discuss it with the coach at the appropriate time and place.

Parents' Role in Interscholastic Athletics and Other Extracurricular Activities

Communicating with your children

- Make sure that your children know that win or lose, scared or heroic, you love them, appreciate their efforts and are not disappointed in them. This will allow them to do their best without fear of failure. Be the person in their life they can look to for constant positive reinforcement.
- Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic ability, competitive attitude, sportsmanship, and actual skill level.
- Be helpful but don't coach them. It's tough not to, but it is a lot tougher for the child to be flooded with advice and critical instruction.
- Teach them to enjoy the thrill of competition, to be "out there trying," to be working to improve their skills and attitudes. Help them develop the feeling for competing, for trying hard, for having fun.
- Try not to relive your athletic life through your child in a way that creates pressure. If they are comfortable with you win or lose, then they are on their way to maximum enjoyment.
- Don't compete with the coach. If your child is receiving mixed messages from two different authority figures, he or she will likely become disenchanted.
- Don't compare the skill, courage, or attitude of your child with other members of the team.
- Get to know the coach(es). Then you can be assured that his or her philosophy, attitudes, ethics, and knowledge are such that you are happy to have your child under his or her leadership.
- Always remember that children tend to exaggerate, both when praised and when criticized. Temper your reaction and investigate before overreacting.

Communicating with the coach

Communication you should expect from your child's coach includes:

- Philosophy of the coach
- Expectations the coach has for your child
- Locations and times of all practices and contests
- Team requirements
- Procedure should your child be injured
- Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation
- Communication coaches expect from parents
- Concerns expressed directly to the coach
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
- Specific concerns in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations

- Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:
 - The treatment of your child, mentally, and physically
 - Ways to help your child improve
 - Concerns about your child's behavior
 - Injuries or health concerns. Report injuries to the coach immediately!!
 - Tell the coach about any health concerns that may make it necessary to limit your child's participation or require assistance of trainers. Students are sometimes unwilling to tell coaches when they are injured, so please make sure the coach is told.
- Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:
 - Playing time
 - Team strategy
 - Play calling
 - Other student-athletes (except for reporting activity code violations)
- Appropriate procedures for discussing concerns with the coaches:
 - Do not confront a coach before or after a contest or practice (these can be emotional times for all parties involved and do not promote resolution)
 - Call to set up an appointment with the coach

What should a parent do if the meeting with the coach did not provide satisfactory resolution?

- Call the athletic director to set up a meeting with the athletic director, coach, and parent present. At this meeting, an appropriate next step can be determined, if necessary.

Section 11 "Team Selection" and "Playing Time"

"Team selection" and "playing time" decisions are the responsibility of the individual coach or sponsor of the activity. Consistent, however, with the purposes of the activities program, the coaches and sponsors shall follow the following established guidelines for team selection and playing time decisions, along with such other guidelines as each individual coach and sponsor may develop which are not inconsistent with these established guidelines:

1. School Representative. Student participants must demonstrate that they can and will represent themselves and their school in a manner which reflects the development of high ideals and appropriate values, which shall include good citizenship in the school and in the community.
2. Success. Student participants must demonstrate that they can make the activity program more successful, both from a standpoint of competitive success and success in promoting a positive school spirit. Characteristics for purposes of these criteria include the student's: (1) talent or skill, (2) desire to improve the student's own skills or talents as well as those of others in the activity, and (3) attitude of respect towards teammates, the coach, the school, and the community.

Section 12 School Dances

A school sponsored dance is a school activity subject to all provisions of the Student Activity Code and is a privilege available to students meeting all requirements for participation. In addition to all rules of student conduct in the Student handbook, students attending dances shall adhere to the following rules of conduct:

1. Attendees: Only students of Gering Public Schools and their guests may attend.
2. Students currently attending Gering High School or another Nebraska high school who have not been restricted from attending extracurricular activities at Gering High School or their own school are generally considered appropriate dates or invited guests.
3. No students below the 9th grade or individuals 21 years of age or older are allowed to attend GHS dances.
4. Some school dances may be restricted to students attending specified grades levels at Gering Public Schools
5. The school reserves the right to exclude persons who may or do cause a disruption or detract from the event. Dates or invited guests not attending our school are expected to follow the same rules of conduct which apply to our students.

6. Rules for dances may restrict students and their guests from leaving dance until the dance ends without written parental permission on a form provided.
7. Students or their guests who engage in inappropriate behavior, whether on or off of the dance floor, may be asked to leave.
8. Prohibited Substances: Alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and tobacco/vapor products are prohibited. Anyone using prohibited substances or showing the effects of use will not be allowed admission or, if discovered after admission, be removed from the dance. Their parents may be contacted.
9. Students and their dates may be required to submit to a breathalyzer prior to gaining entrance. Those who choose not to submit to a breathalyzer will not gain entrance. Law enforcement will be contacted if there is reasonable suspicion that the student or a student's date is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
10. Appropriate Attire: Students and their guests must meet the dress code requirements established for each dance. Teachers or administrators will make the final decision as to whether or not a student's attire is appropriate. Students will be asked to change unacceptable items, which may mean that the student may have to return home to change the inappropriate clothing. It is advisable to check in advance of the dance with the Principal or staff sponsor for the event if you are uncertain about your attire.

Eligibility for Selection as Royalty: Nomination and selection as royalty for school sponsored dances is an honor awarded by students to those of their peers that exemplify the highest standards of integrity and achievement. Students nominated for dance royalty must have demonstrated through their conduct, academic achievement and activities that they have represented, and will represent, themselves, their classmates, and their school in a manner which reflects outstanding effort, commitment to their school and fellow students, and integrity and good citizenship in the school and in the community. The students selected to be the "royalty" for the Homecoming and Prom or any other school sponsored dance or activity shall meet that general standard as determined by the administration and, in addition, meet the following specific academic, activity and conduct standards: Achievement, Citizenship and Conduct Qualifications:

- The student must have exhibited sportsmanship and leadership in activity endeavors and participation.
- The student must have exhibited a cooperative and respectful attitude toward fellow students, teammates, opponents, sponsors, coaches, and officials.
- The student must have a cumulative grade average of a B or its equivalent.
- The student must not have had excessive violations of school policies:
 - o Excessive Category I, II, III discipline referrals
 - o Fewer than two Category IV, V, or VI referrals.
 - o Repeated violations of the activity code of conduct.
 - o No drug, alcohol, or tobacco/vapor product offenses disciplinary referrals in the last 24 months
 - o No failed drug test in the last 24 months
 - o The student may not, within twenty-four months of the of the dance, have engaged in criminal violations involving: (i) alcohol, drugs or tobacco; (ii) driving law violation in which the penalty is a loss of four points or more under the point system; (iii) a Class I, II, III, or IIIA or Class W misdemeanor; or (iv) a felony. Criminal violations will be deemed to have occurred where:
 - A student was cited by law enforcement and school officials have a reasonable basis for determining that grounds for the issuance of the citation exist or (b) a student is convicted of a criminal offense. Conviction includes, without limitation, a plea of no contest and an adjudication of delinquency by the juvenile court.

Royalty Candidate Eligibility and Selection: The determination of whether a student meets the foregoing conduct and citizenship qualification standards shall be made by a committee appointed by the Principal for each dance at which royalty is to be selected ("Royalty Candidate Eligibility and Selection Committee"). The committee will ordinarily include the Principal, Activity Director and the certificated staff sponsors.

Pre-Qualification of and Acceptance by Student: All students nominated for dance royalty shall meet with the Principal. At the meeting the Principal will review the eligibility requirements for the honor of dance royalty. The student will be required to confirm that the student meets all eligibility requirements. The student will be required to confirm his or her acceptance of the nomination for dance royalty and the responsibilities of such an all school

honor. The Principal or designee may contact local, county and/or state law enforcement and judicial authorities to confirm a student's eligibility for the honor of being nominated for or awarded dance royalty.

Specific Dance Royalty Eligibility and Selection Requirements:

Homecoming Queen & King:

- Only a senior girl shall be eligible to be Queen, and only a senior boy shall be eligible to be King.
- To be eligible, a candidate must agree to attend the entire Homecoming Dance and represent the school properly.
- Every student organization in GHS is contacted and asked to nominate a candidate from within their organization. If the organization has both male and female members, they may nominate a male and female candidate. Single gender organizations may only nominate candidates of that gender.
- Each organization will provide an alternate as well. If a student has already been nominated from another organization, the alternate will be added from the second organization. The interest is to provide as many students as possible with the opportunity to be selected for this honor.
- During Homecoming week, the student body will vote for all the candidates; this reduces the royalty to six finalists.
- The queen and king will be chosen from the qualified nominees by secret vote of the student body during Homecoming week.

The Student Council sponsors will count all ballots for both elections.

Winter Royalty

Winter Royalty is held during the winter season. The crowning for Winter Royalty is done at either a basketball game or a wrestling match. G-Club and GGAA will select senior students as candidates. The student body will vote for the royalty candidates. GGAA sponsors Winter Royalty. The dress is semi-formal. The Gering Girls Athletic Organization (GGAA) and G-Club organize the Winter Royalty Coronation and Dance. The following procedures are used for the nomination and election of the Winter Royalty:

- GGAA nominates six senior girls and G-Club nominates six senior boys.
- Any senior who has not been selected as Homecoming King/Queen or attendant will be eligible for Winter Royalty.
- The members of each organization (GGAA and G-Club) will vote for six candidates from the list of eligible senior members in their organization.
- The top six vote getters are placed on the ballot. If there is a tie for the final position, all persons tied will go onto the ballot.
- The six queen candidates nominated by GGAA and the six king candidates nominated by G- Club are placed on the ballot.
- Student Council members will distribute the ballot so that the entire student body and teachers can vote for one candidate for king and one candidate for queen.
- The final candidates are announced as soon as possible after the balloting has occurred.
- To be eligible, a candidate must agree to attend the entire Winter Royalty Dance and represent the school properly.

Prom Royalty

- Only a Senior girl shall be eligible to be Queen and a Senior boy shall be eligible to be King.
- The candidates may not have been previously selected as royalty at another school sponsored dance.
- The Senior Class Officers will nominate three queen and king candidates subject to a determination of eligibility by the Royalty Eligibility Committee.
- To be eligible, a candidate must agree to attend the entire Prom Dance and represent the school properly.

The queen and king will be chosen from the qualified nominees by secret vote of the junior and senior students.

Section 13 Student Fees Policy

The Board of Education of Gering Public Schools has adopted this 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 and state and federal law. This generally means that the District's policy is to provide free instruction for courses which are required by state law or regulation and to provide the staff, facility, equipment, and materials necessary for such instruction, without charge or fee to the students.

The District does provide activities, programs, and services to children which extend beyond the minimum level of constitutionally required free instruction. Students and their parents have historically contributed to the District's efforts to provide such activities, programs, and services. The District's general policy is to continue to encourage and, to the extent permitted by law, to require such student and parent contributions to enhance the educational program provided by the District.

Under the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act, the District is required to set forth in a policy its guidelines or policies for specific categories of student fees. The District does so by setting forth the following guidelines and policies. This policy is subject to further

interpretation or guidance by administrative or Board regulations which may be adopted from time to time. The Policy includes Appendix "1," which provides further specifics of student fees and materials required of students for the current school year. Parents, guardians, and students are encouraged to contact their building administration or their teachers or activity coaches and sponsors for further specifics.

- Guidelines for non-specialized attire required for specified courses and activities. Students have the responsibility to furnish and wear non-specialized attire meeting general District grooming and attire guidelines, as well as grooming and attire guidelines established for the building or programs attended by the students or in which the students participate. Students also have the responsibility to furnish and wear non-specialized attire reasonably related to the programs, courses and activities in which the students participate where the required attire is specified in writing by the administrator or teacher responsible for the program, course or activity.
- The District will provide or make available to students such safety equipment and attire as may be required by law, specifically including appropriate industrial-quality eye protective devices for courses of instruction in vocational, technical, industrial arts, chemical or chemical-physical classes which involve exposure to hot molten metals or other molten materials, milling, sawing, turning, shaping, cutting, grinding, or stamping of any solid materials, heat treatment, tempering, or kiln firing of any metal or other materials, gas or electric arc welding or other forms of welding processes, repair or servicing of any vehicle, or caustic or explosive materials, or for laboratory classes involving caustic or explosive materials, hot liquids or solids, injurious radiations, or other similar hazards. Building administrators are directed to assure that such equipment is available in the appropriate classes and areas of the school buildings, teachers are directed to instruct students in the usage of such devices and to assure that students use the devices as required, and students have the responsibility to follow such instructions and use the devices as instructed.
- Personal or consumable items & miscellaneous
 - Extracurricular Activities. Students have the responsibility to furnish any personal or consumable items for participation in extracurricular activities.
 - Courses
 - General Course Materials. Items necessary for students to benefit from courses will be made available by the District for the use of students during the school day. Students may be encouraged, but not required, to bring items needed to benefit from courses including, but not limited to the following: pencils, paper, pens, erasers, notebooks, protractors and math calculators. A specific class supply list will be published annually in a Board-approved student handbook or supplement or other notice. The list may include refundable damage or loss deposits required for usage of certain District property.
 - Damaged or Lost Items. Students are responsible for the careful and appropriate use of school property. Students and their parents or guardian will be held responsible for damages to school property where such damage is caused or aided by the student and will also be held responsible for the reasonable replacement cost of school property which is placed in the care of and lost by the student.
 - Materials Required for Course Projects. Students are permitted to and may be encouraged to supply materials for course projects. Some course projects (such as projects in art and shop classes) may be kept by the student upon completion. In the event the completed project has more than minimal value, the student may be required, as a condition of the student keeping the completed project, to reimburse the District for the reasonable value of the materials used in the project. Standard project materials will be made available by the District. If a student wants to create a project other than the standard course project,

- or to use materials other than standard project materials, the student will be responsible for furnishing or paying the reasonable cost of any such materials for the project.
- Music Course Materials. Students will be required to furnish musical instruments for participation in optional music courses. Use of a musical instrument without charge is available under the
 - District's fee waiver policy. The District is not required to provide for the use of a particular type of musical instrument for any student.
 - Parking. Students may be required to pay for parking on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities, and may be subject payment of fines or damages for damages caused with or to vehicles or for failure to comply with school parking rules.
 - Extracurricular Activities--Specialized equipment or attire. Extracurricular activities means student activities or organizations which are supervised or administered by the District, which do not count toward graduation or advancement between grades, and in which participation is not otherwise required by the District. The District will generally furnish students with specialized equipment and attire for participation in extracurricular activities. The District is not required to provide for the use of any particular type of equipment or attire. Equipment or attire fitted for the student and which the student generally wears exclusively, such as dance squad, cheerleading, and music/dance activity (e.g. choir or show choir) uniforms and outfits, along with T-shirts for teams or band members, will be required to be provided by the participating student. The cost of maintaining any equipment or attire, including uniforms, which the student purchases or uses exclusively, shall be the responsibility of the participating student. Equipment which is ordinarily exclusively used by an individual student participant throughout the year, such as golf clubs, softball gloves, and the like, are required to be provided by the student participant. Items for the personal medical use or enhancement of the student (braces, mouth pieces, and the like) are the responsibility of the student participant. Students have the responsibility to furnish personal or consumable equipment or attire for participation in extracurricular activities or for paying a reasonable usage cost for such equipment or attire. For musical extracurricular activities, students may be required to provide specialized equipment, such as musical instruments, or specialized attire, or for paying a reasonable usage cost for such equipment or attire.
 - Extracurricular Activities--Fees for participation. Any fees for participation in extracurricular activities for the current school year are further specified in Appendix "1." Admission fees are charged for extracurricular activities and events.
 - Postsecondary education costs. Students are responsible for postsecondary education costs. The phrase "postsecondary education costs" means tuition and other fees only associated with obtaining credit from a postsecondary educational institution. For a course in which students receive high school credit and for which the student may also receive postsecondary education credit, the course shall be offered without charge for tuition, transportation, books, or other fees, except tuition and other fees associated with obtaining credits from a postsecondary educational institution.
 - Transportation costs. Students are responsible for fees established for transportation services provided by the District as and to the extent permitted by federal and state laws and regulations.
 - Copies of student files or records. The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee shall establish a schedule of fees representing a reasonable cost of reproduction for copies of a student's files or records for the parents or guardians of such student. A parent, guardian or student who requests copies of files or records shall be responsible for the cost of copies reproduced in accordance with such fee schedule. The imposition of a fee shall not be used to prevent parents of students from exercising their right to inspect and review the student's' files or records and no fee shall be charged for or retrieve any student's files or records. The fee schedule shall permit one copy of the requested records be provided for or on behalf of the student without charge and shall allow duplicate copies to be provided without charge to the extent required by federal or state laws or regulations.
 - Participation in before-and-after-school. Students are responsible for fees required for participation in before-and-after-school or pre-kindergarten services offered by the District, except to the extent such services are required to be provided without cost.
 - Participation in summer school or night school. Students are responsible for fees required for participation in summer school or night school. Students are also responsible for correspondence courses.
 - Breakfast and lunch programs. Students shall be responsible for items which students purchase from the District's breakfast and lunch programs. The cost of items to be sold to students shall be consistent with

applicable federal and state laws and regulations. Students are also responsible for the cost of food, beverages, and personal or consumable items which the students purchase from the District or at school, whether from a “school store,” a vending machine, a booster club or parent group sale, a book order club, or the like. Students may be required to bring money or food for field trip lunches and similar activities.

- Waiver Policy. The District’s policy is to provide fee waivers in accordance with the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act. Students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches under United States Department of Agriculture child nutrition programs shall be provided a fee waiver or be provided the necessary materials or equipment without charge for: (1) participation in extracurricular activities and (2) use of a musical instrument in optional music courses that are not extracurricular activities. Participation in a free-lunch program or reduced-price lunch program is not required to qualify for free or reduced-price lunches for purposes of this section. Students or their parents must request a fee waiver prior to participating in or attending the activity, and prior to purchase of the materials.
- Distribution of Policy. The Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee shall publish the District’s student fee policy in the Student Handbook or the equivalent (for example, publication may be made in an addendum or a supplement to the student handbook). The Student Handbook or the equivalent shall be provided to every student of the District or to every household in which at least one student resides, at no cost.
- Student Fee Fund. The School Board hereby establishes a Student Fee Fund. The Student Fee Fund shall be a separate school district fund not funded by tax revenue, into which all money collected from students and subject to the Student Fee Fund shall be deposited and from which money shall be expended for the purposes for which it was collected from students. Funds subject to the Student Fee Fund consist of money collected from students for the following (1) participation in extracurricular activities, (2) postsecondary education costs, and (3) summer school or night school.

**GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GERING, NE**

**STUDENT FEES
2023-24**

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	\$ 35.00

Approved 7/17/23

Article 10 State and Federal Programs

Section 1 Notice of Nondiscrimination

The Gering Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, marital status, religion, or disability in the admission, access to its facilities or programs or activities, treatment, or employment.

Section 2 Designation of Coordinators

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

Law, Policy or Program	Issue or Concern	Coordinator
Title VI	Discrimination or harassment based on race, color, or national origin; harassment	Superintendent
Title IX Policy 504.24	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	Superintendent
Homeless student laws	Children who are homeless	Superintendent
Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities	Safe and drug free schools	Superintendent

The Coordinator may be contacted at: 1519 10th Street, Gering, Nebraska 69341-2999, (308) 436- 3125.

Section 3 Anti-discrimination & Harassment Policy

Elimination of Discrimination. The Gering Public Schools hereby gives this statement of compliance and intent to comply with all state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination or harassment and requiring accommodations. This school district intends to take necessary measures to assure compliance with such laws against any prohibited form of discrimination or harassment or which require accommodations.

Preventing Harassment and Discrimination of Students

Purpose: Gering Public Schools is committed to offering employment and educational opportunities to its employees and students in a climate free of discrimination. Accordingly, unlawful discrimination or harassment of any kind by administrators, teachers, co-workers, students, or other persons is prohibited. In addition, the Gering Public Schools will try to protect employees and students from reported discrimination or harassment by non-employees or others in the work place and educational environment.

For purposes of this policy, discrimination or harassment based on a person's race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability or age is prohibited. The following are general definitions of what might constitute prohibited harassment.

In general, ethnic or racial slurs or other verbal or physical conduct relating to a person's race, color, religion, disability, or national origin constitute harassment when they unreasonably interfere with the person's work performance or create an intimidating work, instructional, or educational environment.

Age harassment (40 years of age and higher) has been defined by federal regulations as a form of age discrimination. It can consist of demeaning jokes, insults, or intimidation based on a person's age.

Sexual harassment is defined by federal and state regulations as a form of sex discrimination. It can consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature by supervisors or others in the work place, classroom or educational environment.

Sexual harassment may exist when:

Submission to such conduct is either an explicit or implicit term and condition of employment or of participation and enjoyment of the school's programs and activities;

Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used or threatened as a basis for employment related decisions such as promotion, performance, evaluation, pay adjustment, discipline, work assignment, etc., or school program or activity decisions such as admission, credits, grades, school assignments or playing time.

The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, class room or educational environment.

Sexual harassment may include explicit sexual propositions, sexual innuendo, suggestive comments, sexually oriented "kidding" or "teasing", "practical jokes", jokes about gender-specific traits, foul or obscene language or gestures, displays of foul or obscene printed or visual material, and physical contact such as patting, pinching or brushing against another's body.

Complaint and Grievance Procedures:

Employees or students should initially report all instances of discrimination or harassment to their immediate supervisor or classroom teacher. However, if the employee or student is uncomfortable in presenting the problem to the supervisor or teacher, or if the supervisor or teacher is the problem, the employee or student is encouraged to go to the next level of supervision. In the case of a student, the Principal would be the next or alternative person to contact.

If the employee or student's complaint is not resolved to his or her satisfaction within five (5) to ten (10) calendar days, or if the discrimination or harassment continues, or if as a student you feel you need immediate help for any reason, please report your complaint to the Superintendent of Gering Public Schools. If a satisfactory arrangement cannot be obtained through the Superintendent, the complaint may be processed to the Board of Education.

The supervisor, teacher or the Superintendent will thoroughly investigate all complaints. These situations will be treated with the utmost confidence, consistent with resolution of the problem. Based on the results of the investigation, appropriate corrective action, up to and including discharge of offending employees, and disciplinary action up to expulsion against a harassing student, may be taken. Under no circumstances will any threats or retaliation be permitted to be made against an employee or student for alleging in good faith a violation of this policy.

TITLE IX Statement from the District:

"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. "

- o Title IX Coordinator: Superintendent and/or Designee
- o Address: 1519 10th Street, Gering, NE 69341
- o Email: nregan@geringschools.net
- o 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>).

Section 4 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 the following: (a) an understanding of diverse cultures and races, the manner in which the existence of diverse cultures and races have affected the history of

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

Section 5 Notice to Parents of Rights Afforded by Section 504 of
the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 SEE ARTICLE 6 SECTION 3 Section 6 Notification of
Rights Under FERPA (STUDENT RECORDS)

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) afford 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 rights 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 the school district to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write 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
 - a. 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 a 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 and effectively provide the function or service for which they are responsible. Contractors, consultants and volunteers are permitted to have access to education records where they are performing a function or service that would otherwise be done by a school employee. Their access is limited to education records in which they have a legitimate educational interest; which means records needed to effectively provide the function or service for which they are responsible.

The District forwards education records (may include academic, health and discipline records) that have requested the records and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student has already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer.

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

Section 7 Notice Concerning Directory Information

The 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., 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 school 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.

Additional Notice Concerning Directory Information

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 designates such student work as directory information and as non-education 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.

Section 8 Notice Concerning Disclosure of Student Recruiting Information

The No Child Left Behind Act requires that the District provide military recruiters and institutions of higher education access to secondary school students' names, addresses, and telephone listings. Parents and secondary students have the right to request that the District not provide this information (i.e., not provide the student's name, address, and telephone listing) to military recruiters or institutions of higher education, without their prior written parental consent. The District will comply with any such request.

Section 9 Notice Concerning Staff Qualifications

The No Child Left Behind Act gives parents/guardians the right to get information about the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teachers. Upon request, the District 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, the District 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.

Section 10 Student Privacy Protection Policy

It is the policy of Gering Public Schools to develop and implement policies which protect the privacy of students in accordance with applicable laws. The District's policies in this regard 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 and Right to Opt-Out of Specific Events."

Right of Parents to Inspect Instructional Materials: Parents have the right to inspect, upon reasonable request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for their child. Reasonable requests for inspection of instructional materials shall be granted within a reasonable period of time after the request is received. Parents shall not have the right to access academic tests or academic assessments, as such are not within the meaning of the term "instructional materials" for purposes of this policy. The procedures for making and granting a

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

Rights of Parents to be Notified of and to Opt-Out of Certain Physical Examinations or Screenings. The general policy and practice of the District is to not administer physical examinations or screenings of students which require advance notice or parental opt-out rights under the applicable federal laws, for the reason that the physical examinations or screenings to be conducted by the District will usually fit into one of the following exceptions: (1) hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings; (2) physical examinations or screenings that are permitted or required by an applicable State law; and (3) surveys administered to students in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. For physical examinations or screenings which do not fit into the applicable exceptions, the District will follow the procedures set forth in the section entitled: "Notification of and Right to Opt-Out of Specific Events."

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

clinical, aptitude, or achievement information about student, or to generate other statistically useful data for the purpose of securing such tests and assessments, and the subsequent analysis and public release of the aggregate data from such tests and assessments; (v) the sale by student of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education-related activities; (vi) student recognition programs.

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

Annual Parental Notification of Student Privacy Protection Policy: The District provides parents with reasonable notice of the adoption or continued use of this policy and other policies related to 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 will directly notify the parents of the affected children, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when any of the following activities are scheduled, or are expected to be scheduled:

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

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

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

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

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
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).

Section 11 Parental Involvement Policies

A. 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. It is the District's policy to foster and facilitate, to the extent appropriate and in their primary language, parental information about,

and involvement in the education of their children. Policies and regulations are established 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 student's well-being.
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 or other school experience and should be accompanied by a 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, if needed, of the content and effectiveness of the parental involvement policy.

B. Title I Parental Involvement Policy:

The District's Title I Parental Involvement Policy is established in compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act. The District has a parental involvement policy applicable to parents of all children. The parental involvement policy applicable to parents of all children is not replaced by this Title I Parental Involvement Policy and shall continue to be applicable to all parents, including parents participating in Title I programs.

It is the policy of the District to implement programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents in Title I programs consistent with the Title I laws. Such programs, activities, and procedures shall be planned and implemented with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.

Expectations for Parental Involvement: It is the expectation of the District that parents of participating children will have opportunities available for parental involvement in the programs, activities, and procedures of the District's Title I program. The term "parental involvement" means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities,

including ensuring—(A) that parents play an integral role in assisting their child’s learning; (B) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child’s education at school; (C) that parents are full partners in their child’s

education and are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and (D) the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in this parental involvement policy. The District intends to meet this expectation through the following activities:

1. Involving parents in the joint development of the District’s Title I plan and the processes of school review and school improvement.
2. Providing coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance.
3. Building the schools’ and parents’ capacity for strong parental involvement.
4. Coordinating and integrating parental involvement strategies under Title I with parental involvement strategies under other programs.
5. Conducting, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parental involvement policy in improving the academic quality of the schools served under the Title I program, including identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in Title I programs, with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background, and use the findings of such evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary, the parental involvement policies of the District.
6. Involving parents in the activities of the schools served under Title I. Policy Involvement: Each school served under the Title Program will:
 1. Convene an annual meeting, 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 the Title I program and to explain the requirements of the Title I program.
 2. Offer a flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning or evening. If sufficient funds are provided for this purpose, the District may assist parental involvement in such meetings by offering transportation, child care, or home visits.
 3. Involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs.
 4. Provide parents of participating children: (1) timely information about programs under Title I, (2) a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet; and (3) if requested by parents, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.
 5. If the District operates a school-wide program under Title I and such plan is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, submit any parental comments on the plan when the school makes the plan available to the District.

Shared Responsibilities for High Student Academic Achievement: As a component of the District’s parental involvement policy, each school served under the Title I program will jointly develop with parents for all children served under the Title I program a school-parent compact that 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 standards. Such compact shall: (1) describe the school’s responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the children served under Title I to meet the State’s student academic achievement standards and the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their children’s learning, such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, and

television watching; volunteering in their child’s classroom; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children and positive use of extracurricular time; and (2) address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum: (i) parent-teacher

conferences in elementary schools, at least annually, during which the compact shall be discussed as the compact relates to the individual child's achievement; (ii) frequent reports to parents on their children's progress; and (iii) reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observation of classroom activities.

Building Capacity for Involvement: To ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the District, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, each school participating in the Title I program and the District: (1) shall provide assistance to participating parents, as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the State's academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards, State and local academic assessments, the requirements of Title I and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children; (2) shall provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement; (3) shall educate teachers, student service personnel, principals, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school; (4) shall, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, the Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teacher Program, and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children; (5) shall ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand; (6) may involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training; (7) may provide necessary literacy training from funds received under Title I if the District has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for such training; (8) may pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions; (9) may train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents; (10) may arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend such conferences at school, in order to maximize parental involvement and participation; (11) may adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement; (12) may establish a district-wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in programs supported under Title I; (13) may develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities; and (14) shall provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under Title I as parents may request.

Accessibility: In carrying out the parental involvement activities for this Title I Parental Involvement policy, the District shall provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under Title I in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language such parents understand.

Use, Distribution, and Updating of this Policy: This Title I Parental Involvement Policy shall be incorporated into the District's Title I plan, shall be distributed to parents of participating children, shall be made available to the local community, and shall be updated periodically to meet the changing needs of the parents and the school.

Section 12 Homeless Students Policy

Homeless children for purposes of this Policy generally include children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, as further defined by applicable federal and state law.

No Stigmatization or Segregation of Homeless Students: It is the District's policy and practice to ensure that homeless children are not stigmatized or segregated by the District on the basis of their status as homeless.

Homeless Coordinator: The Homeless Coordinator shall serve as the school liaison for homeless children and youth and shall ensure that: (1) homeless children are identified by school personnel; (2) homeless children enroll in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, school; (3) homeless children and their families receive educational service for why they are eligible and referrals to health, dental, and mental health services and other appropriate services; (4) the parents or guardians of homeless children are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children; (5) public notice of the educational rights of

homeless children is disseminated where such children receive services under the federal homeless children laws, such as schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens; (6) enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with law; and (7) the parents or guardians of homeless children, and any unaccompanied youth, are fully informed of transportation services available under law. The Homeless Coordinator shall coordinate with State coordinators and community and school personnel responsible for the provisions of education and related services to homeless children. The Homeless Coordinator may designate duties hereunder as the Homeless Coordinator determines to be appropriate.

Enrollment of and Services to Homeless Children: A homeless child shall be enrolled in compliance with law and be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school in which the homeless child has been placed. Placement of a homeless child is determined based on the child's "school of origin" and the "best interests" of the child. The "school of origin" means the school that the child attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child was last enrolled. Placement decisions shall be made according to the District's determination of the child's best interests, and shall be at either: (1) the child's school of origin for the duration of the child's homelessness (or, if the child becomes permanently housed during the school year, for the remainder of that school year) or (2) the school of the attendance area where the child is actually living. To the extent feasible, the placement shall be in the school of origin, except when such is contrary to the wishes of the homeless child's parent or legal guardian. If the placement is not in the school of origin or a school requested by the homeless child's parent or legal guardian, the District shall provide a written explanation of the placement decision and a statement of appeal rights to the parent or guardian. If the homeless child is an unaccompanied youth, the Homeless Coordinator shall assist in the placement decision, consider the views of the unaccompanied youth, and provide the unaccompanied youth with notice of the right to appeal. In the event of an enrollment dispute, the placement shall be at the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute in accordance with the dispute resolution process. The homeless child shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which the District has determined to place the child, even if the child is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documentation. The District shall immediately contact the school last attended by the homeless child to obtain relevant academic and other records. If the homeless child needs to obtain immunizations or medical records, the District shall immediately refer the parent or guardian of the homeless child to the Homeless Coordinator, who shall assist in obtaining necessary immunizations or medical records. The District may nonetheless require the parent or guardian of the homeless child to submit contact information. Transportation will be provided to homeless students, to the extent required by law and comparable to that provided to students who are not homeless, upon request of the parent or guardian of the homeless child, or by the Homeless Coordinator in the case of an unaccompanied youth, as follows:

(1) if the homeless child's school of origin is in the District, and the homeless child continues to live in the District, transportation to and from the school or origin shall be provided by the District; and (2)

if the homeless child lives in a school other than the District, but continues to attend the Gering Public Schools based on it being the school of origin, the new school and Gering Public Schools shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs for providing the child with transportation to and from the school of origin and, if they are unable to agree, the responsibility and cost for transportation shall be shared equally.

Section 13 Breakfast and Lunch Programs

The District has agreed to participate in the National School Lunch Program and accepts responsibility for providing free and reduced-price meals to eligible children in the schools under its jurisdiction. The District provides the United States Department of Agriculture's required nondiscrimination statement:

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.

The school food authority assures the State Department of Education that the school system will uniformly implement the following policy to determine children's eligibility for free and reduced-price meals in all National School Lunch Programs. In fulfilling its responsibilities, the school food authority:

1. Agrees to serve meals free to children from families whose income meets eligibility guidelines.

2. Agrees to serve meals at a reduced price to children from families whose income falls between free meal scale and the poverty guidelines.
3. Agrees to provide these benefits to any child whose family's income falls within the criteria in Attachment A after deductions are made for the following special hardship conditions which could not reasonably be anticipated or controlled by the household: Unusually high medical expenses; shelter costs in excess of 30 percent of reported income; special education expenses due to the mental or physical condition of a child; disaster or casualty losses.
4. In addition, agrees to provide these benefits to children from families who are experiencing strikes, layoffs and unemployment which cause the family income to fall within the criteria set forth in federal guidelines.
5. Agrees there will be no physical segregation of, nor any other discrimination against, any child because of his inability to pay the full price of the meal. The names of the children eligible to receive free and reduced-price meals shall not be published, posted or announced in any manner and there shall be no overt identification of any such children by use of special tokens or tickets or any other means. Further assurance is given that children eligible for free or reduced-price meals shall not be required to do the following: work for their meals, use a separate lunch room, go through a separate serving line, enter the lunchroom through a separate entrance, eat meals at a different time, or eat a meal different from the one sold to children paying the full price.
6. Agrees in the operation of child nutrition programs, no child shall be discriminated against because of race, sex, color, or national origin.
7. Agrees to establish and use a fair hearing procedure for parental appeals to the school's decisions on applications and for school officials' challenges to the correctness of information contained in an application or to be continued eligibility of any child for free or reduced-price meals. During the appeal and hearing the child will continue to receive free or reduced priced meals. A record of all such appeals and challenges and their dispositions shall be retained for three (3) years. Prior to initiating the hearing procedures, the parent or local school official may request a conference to provide an opportunity for the parent and school official to discuss the situation, present information, and obtain an explanation of data submitted in the application and decisions rendered. Such a conference shall not in any way prejudice or diminish the right to a fair hearing. The hearing procedure shall provide the following:
 - o A publicly-announced, simple method for making an oral or written request for a hearing.
 - o An opportunity to be assisted or represented by an attorney or other person.
 - o An opportunity to examine, prior to and during the hearing, the documents and records presented to support the decision under appeal.
 - o Reasonable promptness and convenience in scheduling a hearing and adequate notice as to the time and place of the hearing.
 - o An opportunity to present oral or documentary evidence and arguments supporting a position without undue interference.
 - o An opportunity to question or refute any testimony or other evidence and to confront and cross-examine any adverse witnesses.

The hearing be conducted and the decision made by a hearing official who did not participate in the decision under appeal or in any previous conference.

The parties concerned and any designated representative thereof be notified in writing of the decision of the hearing official.

0. Agrees to designate the Superintendent to review applications and make determinations of eligibility. This official will use the criteria outlined in this policy to determine which individual children are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.
0. Agrees to develop and send to each child's parent or guardian a letter as outlined by State Department of Education including an application form for free or reduced-price meals at the beginning of each school year. Applications may be filed at any time during the year. All children from a family will receive the same benefits.

The following information will be available in the office of the Superintendent:

- Eligibility criteria for free and reduced meals
- Parent letter and application

- Public release
- Collection procedure

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:
 1. Must be made to Gering Public Schools.
 2. Must have student's full name in memo.
 3. If more than one student is on a single check, the check must specify how much money is to be deposited into each account. 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.

Section 14

POLICY 503.9 GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS GERING, NE 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:
 1. 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.
 2. 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, though 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 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:
 1. 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
 2. 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:
 1. ensure that homeless children and youths have access and reasonable proximity, to available education and related support services; and
 2. 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:
 1. homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
 2. 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;
 3. 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;

4. 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;
5. receive individualized counseling from counselors to prepare and improve their readiness for college, including college selection, application, financial aid, and on-campus supports;
6. 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;
7. 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;
8. enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance state and federal law; and
9. 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—
 1. in any case in which a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; or
 2. 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

1. In determining the best interest of the child or youth the district shall 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.

1. If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school, 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 the dispute. Unaccompanied youths shall be assisted by the LEL in enrolling immediately.

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 evaluations 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.

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.



Learners Today
LEADERS TOMORROW

Classified Staff Handbook

2025-26 School Year

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Notice of Nondiscrimination

(Board Policies 103, 402.1, 501)

Gering Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, disability or other protected conditions or statuses in its educational programs, activities or employment policies as required by the Nebraska Equal Education Opportunity Act, Title VI and Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, Section 504 Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies:

Students: Julie Siebke, Director of Student Services, 1519 10th Street, Gering, NE 69341
(308) 436-3125 (jsiebke@geringschools.net).

Employees and Others: Stacy Rodriguez, Director of Business & Finance,
1519 10th Street, Gering, NE 69341, (308) 436-3125 (srodriguez@geringschools.net).

The Superintendent of Gering Public Schools will coordinate compliance. Complaints or concerns involving discrimination or needs for accommodation or access should be addressed to the Superintendent of Schools.

Any person who believes she or he has been discriminated against, denied a benefit or been excluded may grieve such matters using the adopted grievance procedures of the Gering Public School District. Such procedure shall provide for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging acts of discrimination.

For further information about anti-discrimination laws and regulations, or to file a complaint of discrimination with the Office for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education (OCR), please contact OCR at One Petticoat Lane, 1010 Walnut Street, #320, Kansas City, Missouri 64106, (816) 268-0550 (voice), or (877) 521-2172 (telecommunications device).

Equal Employment Opportunity

(Board Policies 402.01, 406.02, 412.02)

The Gering Public School District shall provide equal opportunity to employees and applicants for employment in accordance with applicable equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination laws, directives and regulations of federal, state, and local governing bodies. Opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment includes hiring, placement, promotion, transfer or demotion, recruitment, advertising or solicitation for employment, treatment during employment, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and layoff or termination. The school district shall be non-discriminatory in major job categories where women, men, minorities, and persons with disabilities are underrepresented. Employees

will support and comply with the district's established equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination policies. Employees shall be given notice of this policy annually. The Director of Curriculum and Assessment and/or Director of Business Services shall serve as the non-discrimination compliance coordinator.

Individuals who file an application with the school district will be given consideration for employment if they meet or exceed the qualifications set by the board, administration, and the Nebraska Department of Education for the position for which they apply. In employing individuals, the district shall consider the qualifications, credentials, and records of applicants without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, or disability.

Advertisements and notices for vacancies within the district shall contain the following statement: "The Gering Public School District is an equal employment opportunity (EEO/non-discrimination) employer." This statement shall also appear on application forms.

Inquiries by employees or applicants for employment regarding compliance with equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination laws and policies, including but not limited to complaints of discrimination, shall be directed to the non-discrimination compliance coordinator by writing to Kory Knight, Non-Discrimination Compliance Coordinator, Gering Public Schools, 1519 10th Street, Gering, NE, 69431; or by phone 308-436-3125.

Inquiries by employees or applicants for employment regarding compliance with equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination laws and policies, including but not limited to complaints of discrimination, can also be directed in writing to the Director of the Kansas Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 10220 North Executive Hills Blvd, 8th Floor, Kansas City, MO, 64153, 816-880-4200; or the Nebraska Equal Opportunity Commission, State Office Building, 301 Centennial Mall South, 5th Floor, PO Box 94394, Lincoln, NE, 69509, 402-471-2024.

Introduction

Gering Public Schools serves approximately 2,000 students with an average student-to-teacher ratio of 18:1. The district believes that quality education begins with a quality staff and collaborative partnerships with local businesses and community agencies.

All three K-5 elementary schools offer both all-day and half-day early childhood programming. Gering Middle School serves students in grades 6-8 and Gering High School serves grades 9-12. The High Ability Learner (HAL) program serves intellectually gifted students in grades 3-12, and our comprehensive special education (SPED) program provides a wide variety of services for our students with special needs.

Career Academies and work-based learning opportunities are in place at the high school. In addition, LINKS is a specialized program that provides an alternative, flexible learning environment for high school students.

The representative for Nebraska's 3rd District, Adrian Smith, graduated from Gering High School in 1989. Since the first graduating class, Gering Public Schools, in cooperation with the community, has strived to prepare students to pursue their goals for the future.

School Mission Statement

Educational Philosophy of Gering Public School

(Policy 102)

Gering Public Schools exist to equip today's learners with the skills necessary to be tomorrow's leaders. The vision of the district is to provide a collaborative community, inspiring excellence and innovation in teaching and learning to empower student growth and leadership in school and life.

The district seeks to satisfy this mission by developing and maintaining:

1. Qualified and competent administrative, teaching, paraprofessional, and other support staff;
2. A supportive learning environment which includes:
 - A welcoming and inviting structure that is emotionally safe, nurturing, supportive, and disciplined; respect, trust, integrity, and regard for self and others; and honors diversity;
 - Learning as the central purpose with students engaged in meaningful, relevant, and productive learning experiences; and
 - Implementation of policies and practices that result in an orderly environment with emphasis on consistent school-wide positive behaviors.
3. Safe, clean and supportive facilities and learning environments;
4. Comprehensive support programs and services that meet the diverse needs of all students;

5. Integrated, planned curriculum that:

- Prepares students to achieve state standards and such additional standards as are established by the Board of Education;
- Is appropriate for the developmental level of the students;
- Addresses diverse learning needs;
- Instills a passion for learning and the importance of life-long learning;
- Develops problem solving and critical thinking skills, decision making skills, data gathering, and critical use information;
- Develops expected work ethics, as well as group participation and leadership skills;
- Incorporates character education and multicultural education, including respect for diversity;
- Provides for application of technology in all learning areas;
- Provides access to advanced courses;
- Implements an organized schedule that is functional and meets student needs in all curriculum areas.

Board of Education

Members serve four-year terms, and receive no compensation for their work. Elections are held every two years. Board members act within the framework of rules set forth by the Nebraska State Board of Education and State and Federal laws. Current members are as follows:

Name:	Board Committee:	Service Details:	Email:
Greg Trautman, <i>President</i>	Curriculum & Personnel, Policy, MSI	Elected in 2022; current term expires in 2026.	gtrautman@geringschools.net
Tracy Wiese, <i>Vice President</i>	Curriculum & Personnel	Elected in 2021; current term expires in 2028.	twiese@geringschools.net
Josh Lacy	Facilities & Finance	Elected in 2017; current term expires in 2028.	jlacy@geringschools.net
Brian Copey	Facilities & Finance, MSI	Elected in 2015; current term expires in 2026.	bcopsey@geringschools.net
Matt Kautz	Facilities & Finance, Policy, MSI	Elected in 2024; current term expires in 2028	mkautz@geringschools.net
John Maser	Curriculum & Personnel, Policy	Elected in 2022; current term expires in 2026.	jmaser@geringschools.net

District Facilities

Building:	Address:	Phone Number:	Hours of Operation:
Central Office	1519 10th Street	(308) 436-3125	7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Geil Elementary	1600 D Street	(308) 436-2545	8:05 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.
Lincoln Elementary	1725 13th Street	(308) 436-2350	8:05 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.
Northfield Elementary	1900 Flatten Ave.	(308) 436-5555	8:05 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.
Gering Middle School	800 Q Street	(308) 436-3123	8:00 a.m.-3:15 p.m.
Gering High School	1500 U Street	(308) 436-3121	8:00 a.m.-3:15 p.m.

Administrative Staff

Building:	Name:	Position:	Email:
Central Office	Dr. Nicole Regan	<i>Superintendent of Schools</i>	nregan@geringschools.net
	Jennifer Sibal	<i>Director of Communications</i>	jsibal@geringschools.net
	Julie Siebke	<i>Director of Student Services</i>	jsiebke@geringschools.net
	Kory Knight	<i>Director of Curriculum</i>	kknight@geringschools.net
	Stacy Rodriguez	<i>Director of Business & Finance</i>	srodriguez@geringschools.net
	David Ferreyra	<i>Payroll Administrator</i>	dferreyra@geringschools.net
	Richard Evans	<i>Director of Technology</i>	revans@geringschools.net
	D'Angelo Murillo	<i>Director of Maintenance</i>	dmurillo@geringschools.net
Geil Elementary	Angela Morris	<i>Building Principal</i>	amorris@geringschools.net
Lincoln Elementary	Jesse Neugebauer	<i>Building Principal</i>	jneugebauer@geringschools.net
Northfield Elementary	Wendee Powell	<i>Building Principal</i>	wpowell@geringschools.net

Gering Middle School	John Wiedeman	<i>Building Principal</i>	jwiedeman@geringschools.net
	Jon Hutchison	<i>Assistant Principal</i>	jhutchison@geringschools.net
	Barb Harder	<i>Assistant Activities Director</i>	bharder@geringschools.net
Gering High School	Mario Chavez	<i>Building Principal</i>	mchavez@geringschools.net
	Crystal Palser	<i>Assistant Principal</i>	cpalser@geringschools.net
	Keaton Green	<i>Assistant Principal</i>	kgreen@geringschools.net
	Shawn Seiler	<i>Activities Director</i>	sseiler@geringschools.net

For other staff contacts, visit the district website at www.geringschools.net

School Calendars and Schedules

The school district calendar can be found [here](#).

Staff scheduling is determined by Administrative Staff, and communicated accordingly upon hire. On occasion, temporary adjustments may be required on occasion to meet the needs of the district.

Mandatory Attendance Days: Gering Public Schools has the right to identify blackout periods when leave requests cannot be approved. Blackout periods include events such as mandatory training days, district-wide professional development days, etc. and will be communicated in writing by the Superintendent of Schools. When possible, these dates will be reflected in advance on staff work calendars for planning purposes.

In the event a blackout period must be added to the calendar after the start of the school calendar year, at least a 3-business days written notice shall be provided prior to the implementation of a blackout period.

The district understands that emergencies occasionally arise, and requests for an accommodation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Staff members are expected to submit these requests in writing to the Superintendent of Schools and Building Administrator with as much notice as possible for consideration.

District Summer Hours: The district will open normal business hours during the summer month. **Those hours are from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.**

Summer hours will be Monday-Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with an unpaid 30-minute lunch break.

Deviations from this schedule must be approved through the Superintendent of Schools and Business Manager.

School Closure: The safety of students and staff is very important to the District. We also recognize that certain staff members are essential to district operations; therefore, in the event of school closure, 12-month classified employees, administrators and secretaries need to report to work as soon as safely possible in order to answer the phones and help students that come to school to make arrangements for safe rides back home.

Additionally, in the event of inclement weather, district maintenance and custodial teams will be responsible for the removal of snow from sidewalks and parking lots to ensure patron safety.

Once those issues have been handled, staff should consult with the supervising administrator on finishing the work day at the school office or taking work home to finish. If employees cannot get to work or choose to not work the remainder of the day, they have the following options to cover lost wages:

- Accrued personal leave may be applied (full-time employees only).
- Vacation leave may be applied (12-month employees only).

Decision To Close Schools and Communication: The Superintendent of Schools will decide if school is open or closed for that day. Once notified, Administrative Staff will start their building calling chain when applicable. Additionally, the Director of Communications or other designated staff members will generate an Infinite Campus message (phone call and/or text message) to all district staff and families, and notify local news media when inclement conditions warrants such action. The information is broadcast regularly by radio and television stations.

Weather-Related Closure or Impacts: 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) whether to have school or not.

The decision to cancel school is never an easy one, but the decision will always be made with student and staff safety at the forefront. In some instances, schools will be open, but certain services may be canceled (bus transportation, student activities, etc.).

If the school district does not close despite inclement conditions, but a staff member does not report for the scheduled workday time off will be considered personal leave or unpaid.

Severe Weather During the School Day: The Superintendent of Schools is authorized by the Board of Education to close school in case of severe weather. 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. If school is closed during the day, staff will be notified by Administrative Staff and families will be notified via media broadcast and Infinite Campus messenger when possible.

Certified staff and administrators will be responsible for remaining with students until all students have safely left school or the administration has made arrangements for remaining students.

If, because of inclement conditions, students and employees are dismissed early, employees will be compensated for the remainder of the scheduled workday.

Chapter I: Records

Personnel Records

All personnel records on all current employees shall be kept at the Central Office. A file shall be kept for all resigned or retired employees, including such essential information as seems appropriate to the administration and/or supervisor.

All personnel files will be considered confidential and will not be available to persons other than the employee and those authorized. Information contained in the employee's file may be viewed at the employee's request. All written materials filed (except for those prohibited by law) shall be made available for inspection by the employee in the presence of an administrator and/or supervisor. Upon request, an employee will be provided a copy of his/her employee file.

Chapter II: Orientation

The first eight weeks that you work for Gering Public Schools will be considered your orientation period. During this period of time, you will work closely with your supervisor and other district personnel to learn how to do your job. You will learn about our policies, procedures, benefits and rules of the workplace. After your eight-week orientation period, your Supervisor/Principal will reflect on your job duties.

This employee handbook provides information you need to know, and you are encouraged to read it thoroughly and ask questions at any time.

EEO – Equal Employment Opportunities

Gering Public Schools provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy or other protected conditions. In addition, we comply with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment.

Immigration Reform and Control Act (I-9)

In compliance with the Immigration and Control Act of 1986, we require all newly hired employees to present documented proof of identity and eligibility to work in the United States. Employees will be required to furnish this information within three working days of hire date.

Chapter III: Employee Classification, Recruitment, Hiring and Wages

Employee Classification

Classified Staff are employees who are in positions which do not require a Nebraska Department of Education teaching certificate. Classified employees shall include the non-instructional (classified) staff of Gering Public Schools, also known as Educational Service Employees who are categorized according to job duties as follows:

1. Maintenance and Custodial employees keep the physical plant open, heated, lighted and ready for use or keep the grounds, buildings and equipment at their original condition through repair or replacement. Part time custodial staff is included in this group. Maintenance employees are under the supervision of the Director of Warehouse/Maintenance. Custodians report to the building administrators and/or the Director of Warehouse/Maintenance. Assignments are determined by the Superintendent and are designated to Maintenance and Custodial employees through the Director of Warehouse/Maintenance.
2. Administrative Assistant employees engage in accounting/fiscal office management and clerical assistance to the administration.
3. Para-professionals provide instructional services in the classroom under the direction of the classroom teachers and/or building principal.
4. Non-certified coaches and sponsors of extra-curricular activities.

Recruitment and Selection

This district secures quality personnel through effective recruitment.

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools and or his/her designees to determine personnel needs of the school district and locate suitable candidates.

There shall be no discrimination against any employee or applicant for employment by reason of race, color, national origin, creed, marital status, sex or age. A personal interview will be required of selected candidates.

It shall be the duty of the Superintendent to see that persons nominated for employment meet all qualifications established by law and board policy for the type of position for which nomination is made.

All vacant positions will be posted internally for at least three (3) working days to allow school district employees to apply for the position posted. It is not required that applicants from within the district be selected to fill the vacancy. The primary concern is to select the most qualified applicant for the position available.

Should the position not be filled internally or from applications on file, employment notices will be prepared and circulated.

When appropriate, applications will be screened by the Central Office and may be referred to the appropriate building administrators or supervisors.

Hiring

Recommendations

Building administrators or supervisors will recommend classified employees for hiring. The district shall strive to employ the most qualified individuals available.

Release of Information

Before being accepted for paid employment to work directly with Gering Public Schools' students, Gering Public Schools, as a matter of procedure, will conduct a background check to confirm that no substantiated criminal charges have been filed against the potential candidate. All employees are subject to pre-employment drug testing per Board Policy #404.08.

Credit for Past Employment

New employees to the district will be placed on the Classified Salary Schedule according to their previous years of experience, which are applicable to the position for which they are hired. If an employee does not possess previous experience, he/she will be placed on the first step of the position.

Transfer

Any classified employee wishing to transfer from one position to another shall submit an online internal application to the Superintendent or designee. All transfers will be considered by the

building principal or supervisor but are not guaranteed. A meeting will be held between the appropriate staff to determine salary placement on the schedule.

Involuntary Transfers

Determining the location where a classified employee's assignment will be performed is the responsibility of the Superintendent based upon recommendations from the building principal and supervisors. In making position assignments, building administrators and supervisors, along with the Superintendent, shall consider the qualifications of the employee and the needs of the District.

A meeting will be held between the employee and his/her building principal or supervisor to discuss an involuntary transfer. If involuntarily transferred to a lesser compensated position, the employee will be paid according to the salary schedule and position.

Wages (Board Policy 412 & 413)

A salary schedule will be developed annually for all classified positions. The basic compensation of each employee shall be set forth in the salary schedule as approved by the Gering Public Schools Board of Education or be compensated at the discretion of the Superintendent/Business Manager. Please note that we consider wage and salary information to be CONFIDENTIAL.

Compensation and Related Benefits

The Board of Education will establish the compensation package for the classified employees. All employees are paid monthly on or before the 20th of each month. If the 20th falls on a weekend, payment will occur on the Friday prior to the 20th.

Payroll checks are deposited directly into your checking or savings account, unless we notify you otherwise. All employees are required to participate in the direct deposit program as this process ensures that your paycheck is deposited. You will be provided a pay stub each month. If you believe there is an error on your paycheck, please report it immediately to the payroll office. Once a determination has been made, necessary corrections will occur.

Our payroll period varies, and staff will be notified of payroll periods for each year at the start of the school year. Each hourly employee is required to use the time clock software provided in each building; and in order for us to have accurate records, it is imperative that each employee use the time clock software diligently. If the employee should have a problem using the time clock software, the supervisor should be notified. The supervisor will then notify the payroll department so that a manual adjustment can be made to the time clock software. If the employee fails to clock in or clock out, a timesheet correction form must be filled out by the supervisor or principal within 48 hours. Under no circumstance should anyone ever clock in and out for another employee. This action provides grounds for immediate dismissal from Gering Public Schools for both parties involved. If an employee habitually fails to clock in or out following supervisory notification, disciplinary action may be taken.

Salary Checks and Deductions

Salary checks are based on hours worked multiplied by the hourly wage indicated on the employee's salary worksheet.

Gering Public Schools is required to deduct federal and state withholding taxes (income taxes) based on information you provide on your W-4. Deductions for Social Security and Medicare are also deducted at the rate established by the federal government. Retirement, based on employee's eligibility, will be deducted at the rate established by NPERS.

We are also required to withhold and remit court-ordered garnishments.

Other voluntary deductions including health and life insurance, savings bonds, annuities, etc. must be provided by the employee within 30 days of his/her start date.

Any changes per the employee to payroll including tax withholdings, insurance annuities, etc., must be received by the payroll department in the Central Office by the first day of the month preceding the pay date for that month. Any mid-year changes to any Section 125 Plan items (health insurance, dental insurance, cancer insurance, AFLAC, Select Flex child care and Select Flex medical reimbursement) can only be made if there is a qualifying "change in status".

Overtime Pay

Fair Labor Standards Act mandates payment of 1 ½ times an employee's regular rate on any hours worked over 40 by a nonexempt employee in a work week. Gering Public School's workweek is considered 40 consecutive hours Monday through Sunday. **Any overtime must be approved by the employee's supervisor (superintendent, or director of business) before working over the 40 hour limit.**

Chapter IV: Laws

Nondiscrimination (Board Policy 402.1)

The decision to hire an applicant is to be based solely on the applicant's qualifications and his/her ability to meet the school district's standards of performance. Nowhere in the selection process is the applicant's race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy or other protected conditions used as disqualifying factors. Gering Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment of employment in its programs or activities.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The following grievance procedure shall be used for resolution of complaints of alleged violation of Gering Public Schools.

1. Complaints shall be filed with the building administrator. All complaints shall be made in writing, unless the complainant's disability prevents such action, in which case it may be done verbally. Grievance Procedure Forms can be obtained from the Superintendent.
2. Complaints shall contain the following: (a) name of the complainant, (b) address and phone number of the complainant, (c) a brief description of the alleged violation and (d) resolution requested by the complainant.
3. The Business Manager shall review complaints. Investigations shall be thorough but informal, and the complainant will be given an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint.
4. The Business Manager will make a decision on the complaint within thirty (30) days of the filing of the complaint, unless such time period is extended by agreement of the complainant. The decision will be put in writing and forwarded to the complainant.
5. The complainant will be given ten (10) days from the date the Business Manager's decision is sent to the complainant to accept or reject the proposed resolution. If the complainant does not respond with an acceptance or rejection, the resolution will be accepted. In the event the complainant rejects the proposed resolution, the complainant will be given an opportunity to file a request for reconsideration. The Business Manager will forward this request for reconsideration, along with all

supporting documentation, to the Superintendent of Schools who will make a decision within ten (10) days.

Facilities for Milk Expression (Board Policy 404.11)

Each building will designate a private area, other than a restroom, for an employee for breastfeeding or to express breast milk for her nursing child in a place which is shielded from view and free from intrusion from co-workers and the public.

Chapter V: Attendance, Absences

Attendance

Regular attendance contributes significantly towards better team effort and productivity. Each employee is very important to the smooth operation of Gering Public Schools. Consistent attendance is an essential component of solid employee performance. Occasionally, it may be necessary for you to be absent from work as a result of illness, injury or other personal reasons. Employees who will be absent are expected to notify their building administrator or supervisor immediately. An absence must be created in SmartFindExpress by the employee/supervisor upon return to work. Compensation for sick days, personal days or vacation will not be processed until the payroll department receives the approved absence from SmartFindExpress.

Days of absence will be applied directly to an employee's leave. If an employee exhausts all leave, the absence is required to be approved as an unpaid absence by the superintendent.

Arrival to Duty Assignments

Schools have different starting and ending times for each day. Classified working assignments may or may not be related to the regular school day. Classified employees are expected to know their duty dates and times and are expected to report to work on time. Adjustments to any classified employee's schedule must be approved by the building principal, supervisor, Superintendent, or district director.

Leaving School

Employees are to be on duty at all times during their assigned work day. Employees may not leave school or their assigned area during duty hours without approval of the principal.

Employees who leave the school during their designated lunch period must check out at the principal's office or designated area. Employees who leave during the work hours for an approved absence must clock out and check out with the principal's office or their supervisor when leaving, and check back in and clock back in upon returning. Employees who need to leave during the school day for reasons of illness or emergency are to check out with the principal's office or their supervisor.

Chapter VI: Benefits

Medical/Health Insurance

Gering Public Schools offers Insurance benefits to employees who are deemed full time under the PPACA guidelines. The district pays 35% of a "single" premium for any qualifying employee. Classified staff who are not deemed full time under the PPACA guidelines have the opportunity to participate in the school district's health care program by assuming the obligation for their own monthly premium payments.

Flexible Benefit Plan (SelectFlex)

The Flexible Benefit Plan or SelectFlex is available to all employees. Gering Public School has established this plan to allow our employees to select a tax benefit in exchange for a reduction in cash compensation that would otherwise be payable. SelectFlex allows you to allocate funds to either or both a Medical Reimbursement Account and a Dependent Care Assistance Account. These accounts are then used to reimburse you for eligible medical expenses and dependent care expenses, respectively on a pre-tax basis. Enrollment for SelectFlex is held every year prior to September 1st. Annual re-enrollment is required, and late applications will be denied per IRS regulations. Any questions concerning the plan should be directed to the Payroll Department.

Worker's Compensation

All employees of the school district are covered by Worker's Compensation Insurance. To be eligible for compensation, the injury to an employee must arise from and in the course of employment in the school district. Employees injured during the course of employment and eligible for compensation are required to report **ALL** accidents or injuries to their supervisor immediately. **An Incident Report must be completed and forwarded to the Payroll Department.** Failure on the part of the employee to report an injury within twenty-four (24) hours may prejudice and defeat a claim for compensation.

Long Term Disability

Long Term Disability Insurance is provided for classified employees who are scheduled to work more than twenty (20) hours per week. After the exhaustion of all accumulated sick leave, employees are eligible to apply for Long Term Disability Insurance. The LTD Insurance plan is provided by the employer. Please inform the Central Office of any health-related issues that may qualify you for this benefit.

Retirement

All classified employees who are hired for positions that are 20 hours or more per week on an ongoing, regular basis are required to participate in the Nebraska Public Employees Retirement System.

All members of the Retirement System will contribute the required percentage of 8% established by NPERS. The school district will match that contribution 101%. A member who terminates employment with Gering Public Schools may:

1. Leave the account on an inactive basis
2. Receive a refund of the account. An application for refund must be filled out with the Nebraska Retirement System, P.O. Box 94816, Lincoln, NE 68509. For full details or questions, please call the Retirement System at (800) 245-5712.

For more information please visit <https://npers.ne.gov/>

Tax Sheltered Annuities

Employees may participate in an annuity program of their choice from a list of approved service provider companies. For further information, please contact the Payroll Department.

Requests for participation should be made through a service provider company. The employee must complete a Salary Reduction Agreement Form provided by either their service provider or by Gering Public Schools. The service provider company must also complete a maximum exclusion allowance (MEA) form. Arrangement for Tax Sheltered Annuities is made through the Payroll Department. New or modifications to existing annuities may be done at any time. The required paperwork must be submitted to the Payroll Department by the first day of the month preceding the pay date for that month.

Life Insurance

Gering Public Schools offers life insurance to employees who are scheduled to work 20 hours or more per week. This program provides an opportunity for employees to purchase term life insurance at a monthly group rate. For the cost of this insurance, please contact the Payroll Department.

COBRA

Employee's Rights to Continue Group Health Coverage: On April 7, 1986, a federal law was enacted (Public Law 99-272, Title X) requiring that most employers sponsoring group health plans offer employees and their families the opportunity for a temporary extension of health coverage (called "continuation coverage") at group rates in certain instances where coverage under the plan would otherwise end. This notice is intended to inform you, in summary fashion, of your rights and obligations under Continuation Coverage provisions of the law.

If you are an employee of Gering Public Schools, covered by Blue Cross/Blue Shield (BCBS), you have a right to choose this continuation coverage if you lose your group health coverage because of a reduction in your hours of employment or the termination of your employment. In the event of termination for gross misconduct, continuation coverage is not provided.

Under the law, the employee has the responsibility to inform the Payroll Department at Gering Public Schools and the BCBS Administrator of a divorce, legal separation, or a child losing dependent status under BCBS within thirty (30) days of the date of the event or date coverage would end under the plan because of the event, whichever is later. Gering Public Schools has the responsibility to notify the BCBS Plan Administrator of the employee's death, termination or reduction in hours of employment or Medicare entitlements.

When the Payroll Department is notified that one of these events has occurred, she/he will in turn notify you that you have the right to choose continuation coverage. Under the law, you have at least sixty (60) days from the date you would lose coverage because of the event described above, or the date notice of your election rights are sent to you, to inform the BCBS Administrator that you want continuation coverage.

If you do not choose continuation of coverage, your group health insurance will end. If you choose continuation coverage, Gering Public Schools is required to give you coverage which, as of the time coverage is being provided, is identical to the coverage provided under the plan to similarly situated employees or family members.

The law requires that you be afforded the opportunity to maintain coverage for three (3) years unless you lose group health coverage because of termination of employment or reduction in hours. In that case, the required continuation coverage period is eighteen (18) months.

However, the law also provides that your continuation coverage may be terminated for any of the following reasons:

- Gering Public Schools no longer provides group health insurance coverage to any of its employees.
- The premium for your continuation coverage is not paid on time.
- You become covered by another group plan, unless the plan contains any exclusion of limitations with respect to any pre-existing condition you or your covered dependents may have.
- You become enrolled in Medicare.
- You extend your coverage for up to 29 months due to your disability and there has been a final determination that you are no longer disabled.

If you have any questions about the law, please contact the Payroll Department at (308) 436-3125.

Staff Passes

All employees of Gering Public Schools shall have the opportunity to procure a yearly activity pass for school activities. To be eligible to receive an activity pass, the individual must work a minimum of two (2) activity events in a capacity as assigned by the Activities Director. An individual who wishes to obtain activity passes for his/her children must work an additional activity for each child. A schedule will be established during the first two (2) weeks of each season whereby assignments will be made according to the needs and desires of the staff.

Leaves

If you know that you will not be able to attend work at the time you are scheduled, please notify your building principal or supervisor in advance. If you are unable to give advance notice, you must telephone your building principal or supervisor as soon as possible. If you are personally unable to contact your building principal or supervisor, you are responsible for asking someone else to do so. Depending on the circumstance, your building principal or supervisor may request that you also contact the Superintendent. It is your responsibility to notify your building principal or supervisor each time you are unable to report for work.

If you are absent from work and we do not hear from you or someone notifying us on your behalf after three (3) consecutive workdays, we will conclude that you have voluntarily terminated your employment with the school district.

If you have pre-arranged personal leave, you may not convert it to other leave after the fact.

Sick Leave (Board Policy 415.2)

Starting with the 2021-22 school year, sick leave for classified staff will be granted at a specific rate per each month worked.

- 9 month employees or those who work less than 40 hours per week -- Sick leave will be accumulated at a rate of 0.416 days per month worked.
- 10 and 12 month employees who work 40 hours per week -- Sick leave will be accumulated at a rate of 0.67 days per month worked.

When an employee has accumulated thirty-six (36) days of sick leave at the end of his/her employment year, the Board of Education will grant that employee an additional thirty (30) days of sick leave for a maximum of sixty-six (66). The additional thirty (30) days is a one-time addition. The Board of Education will buy back unused sick leave at the rate of 60% of your daily standard rate up to \$80 per day up to 30 days not to exceed \$2,400. This applies to any employee who leaves the District after 15 years of consecutive service who notified the District of his/her decision to leave by February 1.

The maximum leave that can be used daily is the amount required for you to reach your scheduled hours. You cannot extend your scheduled hours by utilizing additional leave.

We expect our employees not to abuse our sick leave policy. You are required to call your building administrator or supervisor at the start of each workday for which you are scheduled but are unable to attend due to sickness.

Gering Public Schools may require medical certification to support a request for leave because of a serious health condition and may require second or third opinions (at the employer's expense) and a fitness for duty report to return to work. The school district's general policy will be to require medical certifications and fitness for duty reports, and periodic reports on intent to return and periodic re-certifications, when deemed appropriate.

Family illness days will be deducted from sick leave. The term "family" shall mean: spouse, father, father-in-law, mother, mother-in-law, son, son-in-law, daughter, daughter-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, grandchild or person in the same house as part of the family of someone whom the employee is guardian or holds power of attorney during a serious illness. This time may be extended by personal leave.

Maternity Leave

1. All policies, rules, and regulations applicable to employees who are granted sick leave shall be applicable to employees applying for maternity leave.
2. Written notification for maternity leave shall be submitted to the building principal where the employee is assigned early enough so that arrangements can be made for a long term substitute. The employee will meet with the Payroll Office to complete any required paperwork.
3. Sick leave benefits for maternity shall begin when the doctor certifies that the employee is no longer able to perform her duties. The paid leave ends when the doctor certifies that the employee is fully recovered from disability resulting from delivery and recovery there from.
4. When the doctor certifies that the employee has fully recovered from the temporary disability, the employee is expected to return to employment, unless the employee requests to take unpaid leave entitled to them under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993. If the employee chooses to take FMLA leave, she will be entitled to unpaid leave for no more than a total of 12 weeks, accumulated between the above paid leave with unpaid leave.

Sick Leave Bank

This wording is in accordance with Board Policy 410.09 Sick Leave Bank, adopted by the Board on March 15, 2010.

Adoption leave

Employees who have been with the district for more than twelve months are entitled to twelve weeks of unpaid leave for adoption or foster care of a child. Paid sick leave, family leave and personal leave shall be substituted for the unpaid leave until the paid leave time has been exhausted.

Personal Leave

Nine month employees will earn one personal leave day per year and 10 and 12 month employees will earn two personal leave days per year. For the breaks for Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas/New Years, Spring break, Easter or Memorial Day, not more than one (1) personal day may be used the day before or after such school recess or holiday; the Superintendent shall have the authority to grant additional days. Compensation for personal leave will not be processed until the payroll department receives the approved absence from SmartFindExpress.

Military Leave

Military Leave will be granted to any employee who is a member of the U.S. Armed Services Active Reserve or National Guard for temporary field training or emergency duty. You will be paid your regular salary for the time away from work up to a maximum of fifteen (15) work days in any one (1) calendar year, without loss of school district pay that you would normally receive for that period.

Please submit a copy of your military Leave and Earnings Statement (L.E.S.) to your building administrator or supervisor when you return to work. A military leave is considered separate from vacation time. However, you cannot take your vacation directly before or immediately after military leave. A minimum of two weeks, either before or after, must separate ordinary vacation leave from military leave.

Family Military Leave Act (Board Policy 415.7)

The Nebraska Legislative Bill 497 (LB 497), Family Military Leave Act, authorizes 30 days of unpaid leave to an employee who meets the employment criteria, requests leave and is the spouse or parent of a person called to military service lasting 179 days or longer.

Any employee who takes family military leave will be entitled to regain the position he/she held when the leave period began. An employer will not be able to discharge, fine or discriminate against any employee who takes unpaid family military leave. During the leave period, employees will be able to maintain their benefits at their own expense.

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) – (Board Policy 415.3)

FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid, job protected leave to “eligible” employees for certain family and medical reasons, during any twelve (12) month period.

The school districts’ applicable “leave year” is a “rolling” twelve-month period, measured backward from the date an employee last used any FMLA leave. Employees are eligible if they have worked for Gering Public Schools for at least one year, and for 1,250 hours over the previous twelve (12) months, and if there are at least 50 employees of the District within 75 miles of the employee’s work site.

Reasons for taking leave: Unpaid leave must be granted for any of the following reasons:

- To care for the employee’s child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee’s spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of the employee’s job.

At the employee or employer's option, certain kinds of paid leave may be substituted for unpaid leave. For example, in the case of leaves for serious health conditions, you will likely be required to substitute your accrued paid vacation leave, personal leave, or medical and sick leave, if any, for the unpaid FMLA leave.

Special rules apply to instructional employees who request intermittent or reduced schedule leaves, or leaves near the end of an academic term.

Advance Notice and Medical Certification

The employee may be required to provide advance leave notice and medical certification. Taking leave may be denied if requirements are not met. The school district has leave applications and medical certifications forms, which are to be used. *Forms are available from the Central Office.*

- The employee ordinarily must provide thirty (30) days advance notice when the leave is "foreseeable."
- An employer may require medical certification to support a request for leave because of a serious health condition, and may require second or third opinions (at the employer's expense) and a fitness for duty report to return to work. The school district's general policy will be to require medical certifications and fitness for duty reports, and periodic reports on intent to return and periodic re-certifications, when deemed appropriate.

Unlawful Acts by Employers:

FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:

- Interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided by FMLA;
- Discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

Enforcement

- The U.S. Department of Labor is authorized to investigate and resolve complaints of violations.
- An eligible employee may bring a civil action against an employer for violations.

FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any State or Local law or collective bargaining agreement which provides greater family or medical leave rights.

Bereavement Leave

Classified employees are entitled to Bereavement Leave. Bereavement leave allowances are provided as indicated below. However, the Board recognizes that the need for such leave may vary among individuals and will consider extending the leave in special or unusual circumstances. Application for extending this leave can be made to your building administrator or supervisor.

A total of up to five (5) consecutive days on full pay is allowed for each classified employee that is employed full-time for absence in case of a death in the immediate family. Immediate family is defined as wife, husband, father, father-in-law, mother, mother-in-law, son, son-in-law, daughter, daughter-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, grandchildren, grandparent, or a person in the same home as part of the family, or someone for whom the employee is guardian or holds power of attorney. Staff members who suffer the death of a child, step-child or spouse will have five (5) bereavement days plus an additional five (5) bereavement days will be deducted from the employee's sick leave balance. This time may be extended by personal leave.

Employees may be excused, without loss of pay, for the length of service, to attend funeral services of relatives other than those listed above or to attend funeral services of friends with the approval of the Superintendent. Bereavement leave is not limited to five (5) days in one year, but covers each death in the immediate family that occurs during the year.

Bereavement days are awarded congruently with the length of each individual's working day.

Legal and Civic Duties

Employees of the district are encouraged to fulfill their citizenship obligation of jury duty. Employees who receive a subpoena for appearance in court or who are required to serve on Jury Duty shall receive full pay for such absence from duty provided that they comply with the stipulations listed below.

1. The employee must not be a litigant in the court action.
2. The employee must present a copy of the jury summons to your supervisor and attach a copy of that summons to a normal leave request form. Forward both documents to the Central Office.
3. The employee will reimburse the district from any stipend received for services on the jury in an amount equal to or less than wages paid by the district. Reimbursement from part-time employees will be individually determined.

Paid Holidays

All nine and ten month employees are entitled to receive six paid holidays per school year. Employees normally scheduled to work on a holiday will be compensated for their scheduled hours. These holidays are:

9 & 10 Month (Paras & Secretaries)

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Labor Day | Christmas Day |
| Thanksgiving Day | New Year's Day |
| Day after Thanksgiving Day | Good Friday |
| Memorial Day (Secretaries Only) | |

Only twelve (12) month employees who work eight hours per day are eligible for ten (10) paid holidays. These employees are considered full-time. The Gering Public Schools are closed for ten (10) holidays each year. The following are the paid holidays we observe:

12 Month (Custodians, Central Office Staff, Maintenance Crew)

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Labor Day | New Year's Eve Day |
| Thanksgiving Day | New Year's Day |
| Day after Thanksgiving Day | Good Friday |
| Christmas Eve Day | Memorial Day |
| Christmas Day | Independence Day |

If a holiday falls on a Sunday, it will be observed the following Monday. If it falls on Saturday, it will be observed the preceding Friday.

If a holiday occurs during your vacation, you are entitled to an extra day of vacation time.

Employees will not be allowed to work on a paid holiday unless an emergency exists and administrative approval is provided through the Superintendent and/or Business Manager at the Central Office.

Religious Holidays

The Gering Public Schools respect the right of each employee to worship as his or her faith dictates, but it is economically impossible for us to provide time off with pay for all religious holidays. Employees may apply for a vacation day(s), or take a personal day(s) toward any religious holidays they wish to observe. If an employee has no paid time left, he or she may request the day off without pay. However, we expect all employees to make arrangements with their building administrator or supervisor at least one week in advance.

Professional Leave

Professional leave may be granted to classified employees for the purpose of attending meetings and conferences directly related to their assignments. Attendance for professional leave is permitted at full pay if such absence is approved by the classified employee's building administrator or supervisor and planned in the budget.

Unexcused Absence and Lateness

We expect all of our employees to report to work on time for each workday and to continue to work until the end of that workday. Lateness will not be tolerated. An unsatisfactory attendance record and the taking of unauthorized break periods will result in disciplinary action.

Misuse of Leaves

When a building administrator or supervisor suspects misuse of leave, he/she may require verification that the leave was used for the purpose intended. Misuse of leave may be grounds for disciplinary action or dismissal from Gering Public Schools.

Chapter VIII: Discipline and Termination/Resignation

Disciplinary Procedures

Gering Public Schools believes discipline is not meant to be punishment in any way. However, when it becomes necessary to improve an employee's performance or behavior from unacceptable to acceptable, our Progressive Discipline Policy enables us to do so in a fair and consistent way. Normal steps in the disciplinary process are outlined here. However, based on the seriousness of the offense, administration may enter into any level of disciplinary action or termination.

1. Discussion: This is a verbal discussion in which the building administrator or supervisor has a face-to-face conference with you to discuss your poor work performance or conduct and the need for correcting it.
2. Assessment: If there is little or no improvement after the discussion, the next step is a written assessment. The building administrator or supervisor completes a report. You have the right to read and discuss the report and comment in writing. The Superintendent may be present at the request of the building administrator, supervisor or you.
3. Discipline: After step two, if there is no marked improvement, the building administrator or supervisor will complete another written record of the second disciplinary action. The Superintendent may be present at the request of your building administrator or supervisor.
4. **Termination: After step three, if there is no marked improvement, you may be terminated. The building administrator or supervisor, along with the Superintendent, will conduct a review. An employee conference will be held and a determination of action will be made. The action may range from the continued opportunity to improve or dismissal. Each situation will be reviewed on an individual basis.**

Administration reserves the right to enter into any level of disciplinary action or termination based on the severity of the offense and the employee's work record.

Termination by Employer (Board Policy 414.4)

Termination may be made without prior notice or prior discipline, and it may be made without cause. When a decision is made to terminate, a conference will be held between the employee and the building administrator or supervisor. A written review of the documentation will be presented to the employee. The employee will have the opportunity to respond in writing on the termination form. Documents will be signed at the conclusion of the conference. Copies will be filed with the building administrator or supervisor and the Superintendent. A copy will be furnished to the employee. The terminated employee will receive his/her final paycheck within two weeks of the termination date or the next regular payday, whichever comes first.

Some examples of inappropriate conduct which may result in termination include but are not limited to the following:

1. Unauthorized absences
2. Commitment or conviction of any criminal act
3. Conduct unbecoming any employee in public service
4. Disorderly or immoral conduct
5. Unacceptable work performance
6. Elimination of the position (Reduction In Force)
7. Insubordination
8. Other reasons deemed appropriate by the administration or Board of Education

Resignation by Employee (Board Policy 414.1)

Whenever possible, classified and exempt employees are expected to give two (2) weeks' notice of intent to resign their employment in order to provide the district sufficient time to find a replacement. Written notice of resignation should be addressed to the appropriate building administrator or supervisor. An exit interview opportunity will be provided when an employee resigns.

Accrued vacation & sick time cannot be used during the two-week notice to resign employment.

If an employee submits a resignation of employment notice, personal or sick leave will not be applicable in order to minimize operational disruptions.

Right to Terminate at Will

Just as a classified employee may decide to quit his/her employment, the district reserves the right to terminate employment with or without cause and with or without notice at any time at its sole discretion.

Chapter IX: Grievance

Your complaints and issues, large or small, are of concern to Gering Public Schools. For this reason we have provided for you an effective means to bring your problems and complaints to the attention of the district.

Should a grievance arise between an employee of Gering Public Schools and his/her building administrator or supervisor, such grievance shall be taken up for settlement under the following procedure within seven (7) working days following the incident.

1. The employee(s) shall present the grievance orally to the employee's immediate supervisor of record, with or without a representative of the employee's choice present.
2. If a satisfactory adjustment of such grievance is not reached within three (3) workdays, it may be presented in writing to the building principal or immediate supervisor, or supervisor of record. The principal or supervisor will present a decision in writing to the employee(s) within five (5) work days.

3. If a satisfactory adjustment of such grievance is not reached, it may be presented in writing to the Superintendent of Schools, or his or her designated representative, who will, within five (5) days, present a decision in writing to the employee.
4. If a satisfactory adjustment of such grievance is not reached, it may be presented in writing to the Board of Education. The decision of the Board of Education will be rendered in writing within thirty (30) days.

Chapter X: Breaks, Uniforms and Employee Identification Badges

Lunch Breaks

Classified employees who work more than an entire day (six (6) hours or more) shall receive at least a thirty (30) minute lunch break per day. **Lunch breaks are mandatory and cannot be used at the end of a workday to leave for the remainder of the day.** Lunch breaks should be scheduled so as to not disrupt building or departmental functions. Lunch breaks are uncompensated time. They do not count towards the number of hours you are required to work each day. If you leave the building for your lunch break, you are required to clock out on the time clock during the time you are gone.

Leaving the Building

Classified employees who leave the building for any personal errand are required to have prior approval by immediate supervisor and clock out on the time clock software during the time you are gone.

Employee Dress

Employees are expected to dress appropriately for work. Please check with your building administrator or supervisor for guidelines.

Employee Identification Badges

All employees are provided district picture identification badges through the Central Office. The badges are to help staff and students recognize authorized individuals and to increase school safety. Employee Identification Badges are required to be worn by all Gering Public Schools employees when on duty. The badges may be attached to either a lanyard or to your clothing using an alligator clip. **The badges are to be in full display at all times.**

Chapter XI: Expenses

Travel/Reimbursement (Board Policy 402.8)

The board will reimburse employees for normal expenses for hotel, food, registration and transportation costs incurred while attending an authorized conference or other activities whose purpose is related to the instructional or operational improvement of the district. Your building administrator or supervisor must approve arrangements for attendance in advance, in writing.

Specific guidelines for travel reimbursement are as follows:

1. Each building administrator or supervisor may allow travel expenses for personnel under their direct supervision at a cost up to the limitations of their building budget.
2. Complete the appropriate Travel Voucher Form (available from the Business Office).
3. District vehicles are available for travel. If airline transportation is used, the most economical fare available will be allowed.
4. Meal receipts will be submitted to the accounts payable clerk upon your return. Your reimbursement will not exceed established per diem rates.
5. Lodging at actual costs. Receipts are required.
6. Registrations and other fees may be allowed. Receipts are required.
7. Other expenses may be allowed at actual costs. Receipts are required.

In-district Travel

Some employees are required by the administration to have transportation available during the employee's scheduled hours of work. The Board of Education will reimburse this expense according to the following guidelines:

1. Mileage to be reimbursed at a rate specified by Internal Revenue Service Guidelines. No mileage for commuting from home will be reimbursed.
2. Mileage will be reimbursed by a daily log. Any random travel which is required by the district should be logged daily and submitted monthly to the building principal.

3. Requests for reimbursement will be turned in at the end of each month and paid on a monthly basis. Reimbursement requests must be submitted to Central office no later than the 10th day of the following month. Failure to submit mileage on time will result in forfeiture of payment.

Compensation for Time Spent Traveling

Time spent traveling shall be considered hours worked if:

1. An employee is required to travel during regular working hours;
2. An employee is required to drive a vehicle or perform other work while traveling;
3. An employee is required to travel as a passenger on a one-day assignment away from the official duty station; or
4. An employee is required to travel as a passenger on an overnight assignment away from the official duty station during hours on non-work days that correspond to the employee's regular working hours.

Chapter XII: Safety, Health and Asbestos

Workplace Safety

The school district is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy work environment. This district recognizes its responsibility in protecting and conserving its human and financial resources.

Employee Protection

A letter addressed to the Business Manager shall make a request for reimbursement for personal property damaged in an assault upon that employee. The letter shall include a full statement describing the assault, listing all damages incurred and noting the date, hour and witness(es).

Health Examinations

Any employee whose assigned responsibilities require by statute a health examination, or any employee whose condition of health is thought to be essential to the welfare of pupils or employees may be required at any time to submit to a health examination by a physician or

surgeon to be determined whether the employee can perform the essential functions of the employee's position with or without reasonable accommodations.

Blood Borne Pathogens (Board Policy 404.04, 508.03)

For your own safety, you will be provided with information and training on Blood Borne Pathogens. This training will teach you how to take the necessary precautions against coming into contact with HIV or Hepatitis-B. Please protect yourself by learning these important steps. Remember, if circumstances place you in a situation where there is blood or other body fluid that you could come in contact with, you should treat the blood or body fluids as if they are infected. Your training will instruct you as to what to do in this case.

Gering Public Schools provides inoculations for our employees who work in "higher risk" positions with the Hepatitis-B vaccinations. Depending upon your position, you have the option of receiving the vaccination soon after you begin your employment.

Chronic Infectious Diseases – Not Commonly Transmitted by Casual Contact

The definitions of Chronic Infectious Diseases are those, which are carried throughout life by the infected person and have the potential to be transmitted. Disease-causing agents/organisms, which have not been commonly associated with casual contact transmittal, may include, but are not limited to Human Immunodeficiency (HIV) or Hepatitis B.

In the event it becomes known that an employee, or other frequent contact at Gering Public Schools, becomes infected with a chronic infectious disease not commonly associated with casual contract transmittal, the Superintendent of Schools shall make decisions about changes in the employment/education program of an employee on a case-by-case basis, relying on the available scientific and medical advice.

In regard to communicable/contagious disease, which is commonly associated with casual contact transmittal, the Superintendent of Schools will refer to Nebraska Statutes.

The person infected with a chronic infectious disease that is not spread by casual everyday contact, will be entitled to similar treatment by the school as other students and employees. The school shall provide a sanitary environment and establish and enforce routine guidelines for handling body fluids that are recommended by universal precautions.

Communicable/Infectious Diseases Commonly Transmitted by Casual Contact

The definition of Communicable/Infectious diseases is those which are carried for a limited period of time by the infected person and have the potential to be transmitted by casual, everyday contact.

The following are some of the common communicable/infectious disease for which employees will be excluded from work:

Measles (Rubeola)	Three-Day Measles	Ringworm	Chickenpox	Hepatitis A
Impetigo	Mumps	Head Lice	Scabies	Pinkeye
Shingles	Strep Infections			

Employees with a communicable disease may return to work when the signs and symptoms disappear and when the minimum isolation period, as recommended by the Nebraska State Health Department, has elapsed.

Asbestos (Board Policy 905.05)

Gering Public Schools has complied with the 1987 Asbestos-Containing Materials in Schools Rule. Each building has been inspected and the Asbestos Management Plan for the building is kept in the principal's office, as well as the Central Office. Interested persons may review the plan(s) during regular business hours.

Chapter XIII: Staff Development

Gering Public Schools provides various staff development opportunities for classified employees. Staff members are expected to participate in these staff development activities as a means of on-the-job training. Employees are encouraged to share information on staff development activities with their supervisors as a means of continuously developing the district's awareness of and participation in quality staff development activities.

Chapter XIV: Evaluations and Conduct

Transfer/Reassignment

The assignment of any classified employee may be changed during the year when deemed advisable by the Superintendent or designees.

Duties

The duties of all classified employees shall be defined in accordance with the job descriptions.

The job descriptions are of a general nature and duties assigned to an employee are not restricted to the items listed within the job description. Each employee will be responsible to the supervisor to whom they are assigned.

Evaluations

Building administrators and supervisors shall perform, at a minimum, a formal annual evaluation of all classified staff. New employees will provide a reflection after their 8-week orientation period. Evaluation of support staff employees on their skills, abilities and competence shall be an ongoing process. The goal of the formal evaluation of classified staff shall be to maintain employees who meet or exceed the District's standards of performance, to clarify each employee's role, to ascertain the areas in need of improvement, to clarify the immediate priorities of the District and to develop a working relationship between the supervisor and employee. Building principals and supervisors are responsible for submitting Employee Evaluation Reports to the Superintendent or designee no later than June 1st of each year. Building principals and supervisors are to conference with employees regarding their evaluations

Conduct (Board Policy 401)

District employees have many opportunities to contribute to the positive, caring image of the school system. Courtesy, tact, patience, friendliness, cooperation and an optimistic attitude are highly valued attributes of employees along with proficiency and skill in job assignments. All employees are expected to treat everyone with respect and understanding. Efforts by employees to contribute to the positive educational environment in the buildings are greatly appreciated.

Classified employees are expected at all times to conduct themselves in a positive manner in order to promote the best interests of the district. Appropriate employee conduct includes:

1. Treating all visitors and co-workers in a courteous manner
2. Refraining from behavior or conduct that is offensive or undesirable.

3. Reporting to administration suspicious, unethical or illegal conduct.
4. Reporting to administration any threatening or potentially violent behavior by co-workers.
5. Wearing clothing appropriate for the work being performed.
6. Performing assigned tasks efficiently and in accord with established quality standards.
7. Reporting to work punctually as scheduled and being at the proper work station, ready for work, at the assigned start time and throughout the work day.
8. Giving proper advance notice whenever unable to work and reporting absence according to established procedures.
9. Adhering to the district-wide no tobacco restriction.
10. Maintaining cleanliness and order in the workplace.
11. Following all district policies approved by the Board of Education.

The responsibility for acceptable conduct and attire rests with the employee. Building principals or supervisors shall advise employees as to the acceptable and expected standards of the job.

Drug Free Schools/Workplace (Board Policy 404.07)

Gering Public Schools is committed to providing a working 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. Acknowledgement of understanding and receipt of board standards and policies forms must be filled out by each employee. The school district further finds that, aside from the workplace, the unlawful manufacturing, sale, distribution, possession, being under the influence or unlawful use of illicit drugs or alcohol by employees of the school district, constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes, is connected with the school district and presents a variety of risks which are unacceptable, and will constitute a reason for disciplinary action. In the event of any non-compliance by any employee, the employee may be disciplined. This may include ending employment. Any employee of this school district who has been charged or convicted of any violation of law involving illicit drugs or drug paraphernalia or alcohol must immediately report such charge or conviction to the Superintendent of Schools or the Superintendent's designee. Failure to report may result in disciplinary action.

Definitions:

“School premises” shall mean any property, whether owned, leased or in any other manner under the control of the Board of Education of the school district. “Outside of the Workplace” shall mean at all times other than on “school premises” or as part of the school activities.

Tobacco-Free Workplace

It is the intent of the Board of Education of the Gering Public Schools to create a tobacco-free environment within the Gering Public Schools. Because we value our students and employees, the promotion of health, safety and well-being is one of our utmost concerns.

A policy has been implemented banning the use of all tobacco products on all Gering Public Schools property and in all school-owned vehicles. Tobacco use by the general public or adult employees is prohibited. All rules and regulations which deny student use of tobacco, both inside buildings and on school grounds, remain in force. Appropriate signs will be placed at the entrance of buildings and other appropriate locations, advising all persons that our buildings and grounds are a tobacco-free environment. The school district will provide information to employees concerning tobacco use cessation programs.

Unlawful Acts by Employees

The Gering Public Schools Board of Education recognizes the value of providing an educational setting that is safe and secure and that provides proper role modeling for our students, staff and visitors.

The school setting should promote good citizenship through the behaviors that are modeled and taught. To encourage this action and to address any violations of good citizenship, the following standards will apply:

Any employee charged or convicted in any unlawful act, in violation of federal, state or local criminal or other applicable law at any time or place, whether on or off duty, may be subject to disciplinary action if, in the judgment of the Superintendent of Schools or the Superintendent's designee, the charge or conviction in the unlawful act constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes.

Any employee who has been charged or convicted of any unlawful act shall immediately report such charge or conviction to the Superintendent of Schools or the Superintendent's designee. Generally, speeding tickets and such infractions need not be reported.

Preventing Harassment and Discrimination of Employees, Students and/or Volunteers

(Board Policy 404.12)

Gering Public Schools is committed to complying with all state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination and to taking any necessary measures to assure compliance with such laws against any prohibited form of discrimination. Unlawful discrimination or harassment of any kind by employees of Gering Public Schools is prohibited. In addition, Gering Public Schools will try to

protect employees, students and volunteers from discrimination or harassment by non-employees and others in the workplace.

For purposes of this policy, discrimination or harassment based on a person's race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital status, or pregnancy, or other protected conditions is prohibited. The following are general definitions of what might constitute prohibited harassment.

- In general, ethnic or racial slurs or other verbal or physical conduct relating to a person's race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy, or other protected conditions constitute harassment when they unreasonably interfere with the person's work performance or create an intimidating work environment.
- Age harassment has been defined by federal regulations as a form of age discrimination. It can consist of demeaning jokes, insults, or intimidation based on a person's age.
- Sexual harassment has been defined by federal and state regulations as a form of sex discrimination. It can consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature by supervisors or others in the workplace. Sexual harassment may exist when:
 1. Supervisors or managers make submissions to such conduct either an explicit or implicit term and condition of employment (including hiring, compensation, promotion or retention);
 2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used by supervisors or managers as a basis for employment related decisions such as promotion, performance evaluation, pay adjustment, discipline, work assignment, etc.
 3. The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working classroom or educational environment.
- Sexual harassment may include explicit sexual propositions, sexual innuendo, suggestive comments, sexually oriented "kidding" or "teasing", "practical jokes", jokes about gender – specific traits; foul or obscene language or gestures; displays of foul or obscene printed or visual material; and physical contact, such as patting, pinching or brushing against another's body.

Complaint and Grievance Procedures to Respond to Harassment and Discrimination

- An employee who is affected by a violation of Gering Public Schools' anti-harassment and discrimination policy should initially report all instances of discrimination or harassment to the employee's immediate supervisor. However, if the employee is uncomfortable in presenting the problem to the immediate supervisor, or if the immediate supervisor is the problem, the employee is permitted and encouraged to go to the next level of supervision. The failure on your part to report the harassment may deprive you of certain legal rights.

- If the employee's complaint is not resolved to his or her satisfaction within five (5) to ten (10) working days, or if the discrimination or harassment continues, the employee should report the complaint to the Superintendent of Schools. If a satisfactory arrangement or resolution of the complaint or grievance cannot be obtained through the Superintendent, the complaint may be submitted to the Board of Education of Gering Public Schools.
- All persons to whom a complaint or grievance is reported, are to thoroughly investigate all complaints. These situations will be treated with the utmost confidence, consistent with resolution of the problem. Based on the results of the investigation, appropriate corrective action up to and including discharge of offending employees, etc. may be taken. Under no circumstance will any employer threaten or retaliate against an employee for alleging a violation of this policy.

Nepotism (Board Policy 402.04)

More than one family member may be an employee of the school district. Prior to any interview or in-district transfer that would result in one family member supervising another family member; the board must be made aware of nepotism concerns.

Employee Conflict of Interest (Board Policy 402.03)

Employees' use of their position with the school district for financial gain shall be considered a conflict of interest with their position as employees and may subject employees to disciplinary action.

Employees have access to information and a captive audience that could award the employee personal or financial gain. No employee may solicit other employees or students for personal or financial gain to the employee without the approval of the Superintendent.

If the approval of the Superintendent is given, the employee must conduct the solicitations within the conditions set by the Superintendent. Further, the Superintendent may, upon five (5) days notice, require the employee to cease such solicitations as a condition of continued employment.

Employees shall not act as an agent or a dealer for the sale of textbooks or other school supplies. Employees shall not participate for personal financial remuneration in outside activities wherein their position on the staff is used to sell goods or services to students or to parents. Employees shall not engage in outside work or activities where the source of information concerning the customer, client or employer originates from information obtained because of the employee's position in the school district.

It shall also be a conflict of interest for an employee to engage in any outside employment or activity that is in conflict with the employee's official duties and responsibilities. In determining whether outside employment or activity of an employee creates a conflict of interest, situations

in which an unacceptable conflict of interest shall be deemed to exist shall include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

1. The outside employment or activity involves the use of the school district's time, facilities, equipment, and supplies or the use of the school district's badge, uniform, business card or other evidence of office to give the employee's immediate family an advantage or monetary benefit that is not available to other similarly situated members or classes of members of the general public. For purposes of this section, a person is not "similarly situated" merely by being related to an employee who is employed by the school district.
2. The outside employment or activity involves the receipt of, promise of, or acceptance of more or other consideration by the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family from anyone other than the school district for the performance of any act that the employee would be required or expected to perform as part of the employee's regular duties or during the hours during which the employee performs service or work for the school district.
3. The outside employment or activity is subject to the official control, inspection, review, audit or enforcement authority of the employee during the performance of the employee's duties.

If the outside employment or activity is employment or activity in (1) or (2) above, the employee must cease the employment of the activity. If the activity or employment falls under (3), then the employee must:

- Cease the outside employment or activity; or
- Publicly disclose the existence of the conflict and refrain from taking any official action or performing any official duty that would detrimentally affect or create a benefit for the outside employment or activity. Official action or official duty includes, but is not limited to, participating in any vote, taking affirmative action to influence any vote, or providing any other official service or thing that is not available generally to members of the public in order to further the interests of the outside employment or activity.

It shall be the responsibility of each employee to be aware of and take the necessary action to eliminate a potential conflict of interest should it arise.

Use of Cell Phones

Cell phone use is allowed during non-contact time with students and needs to be used in an area where students are not present. In the case of emergencies, please see the building principal or administrator concerning use of cell phones.

Internet, Computers and Network Resources (Board Policy 402.14, 606.06)

The Board supports the use of computers, technology and the Internet in the District's instructional program as a resource to educate and inform. The use of these resources shall be consistent with the curriculum adopted by the School District and shall be employed in an appropriate and responsible manner to meet the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities and developmental levels of students.

Procedures and Guidelines

The Superintendent shall develop and implement appropriate procedures to provide guidance for computer use and internet access. Guidelines shall address teacher supervision of computer use, ethical use of electronic media, and the District's ownership and right of administrative review of electronic files and communications. The term "electronic media" includes, but is not limited to, the internet, e-mail and other technological resources.

These guidelines shall prohibit utilization of networks for inappropriate or illegal activities, the intentional spreading of embedded messages (viruses) or the use of other programs with the potential of damaging or destroying programs, data or equipment. Guidelines will describe the District's limitation of liability and will establish that the use of computers, technology and the internet is a privilege, not a right. Violation of the procedures and guidelines will result in cancellation of those privileges and appropriate disciplinary action.

Technology Protection Measure

The District will implement a technology protection measure that will block or filter internet access to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic or of a harmful nature to minors. Operation of this measure will be monitored and enforced during use of computers by minors.

Audit of Use

Users with network access shall not utilize District resources to establish electronic mail accounts through third-party providers or any other nonstandard electronic mail system. Participation in chat rooms is prohibited without specific prior approval by the system administrator. The Superintendent shall establish a process to determine whether the District's education technology is being used for purposes prohibited by law or for accessing prohibited materials. The process may include, but not be limited to:

- Utilizing blocking/filtering software.

- Turning off the "auto load images" feature of the Internet browser.
- Using a proxy server to control accessible websites.

Staff Use

A written staff agreement form will be required for all employees having access to electronic media. Staff shall confine e-mail use to work-related purposes and only limited, incidental personal use. The agreement form will refer to the procedures and guidelines for use of computers and the internet, describe prohibitions and limitations on the use of these resources and state the employee's responsibility for the security of individual passwords.

Disregard of Rules

Individuals who refuse to sign required acceptable use documents or who violate District rules governing the use of District technology shall be subject to loss or restriction of the privilege of using computers, technology or the internet and related resources.

Responsibility for Damages

Individuals shall reimburse the Board for repair or replacement of District property lost, stolen, damaged, or vandalized while under their care.

Advertising and Promotion

Except as may be expressly authorized by the Board of Education, no employee shall permit any commercial advertising to be announced, distributed, or otherwise promoted in or through the schools; endorse a specific brand product; or recommend, prescribe, or suggest that students use performance-enhancing products, including dietary supplements which are intended to be ingested, inhaled or injected.

Confidentiality

Employees should not discuss school matters outside the job nor discuss confidential or personal information about students or staff. Requests from anyone, including fellow building staff members, for personal information about students should be referred to the principal.

Professional Boundaries (Board Policy 403.9)

School district employees are responsible for conducting themselves professionally and for teaching and modeling high standards of behavior and civic values, both at and away from school. Employees are required to establish and maintain professional boundaries with students. They may be friendly with students; but they are the students' teachers, not their friends, and they must take care to see that this line does not become blurred. This applies to employees' conduct and interactions with students and to material they post on personal websites and other social networking sites including, but not limited to, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. The posting or publication of messages or pictures or other images that diminish an employee's professionalism or ability to maintain the respect of students and parents may impair his or her ability to be an effective employee. Employees are expected to behave at all times in a manner supportive of the best interests of students.

Staff members are required to be educators and adult authority figures to children and students. The relationship with students is not as peers, social equals, or friends.

Even the appearance of inappropriate boundaries may significantly damage an educator's reputation. The best way for educators to protect themselves from false accusations is to avoid behavior that can be misconstrued.

Observing the following professional boundaries will help protect students, staff members, and the school.

- Private meetings with students
 - Never remain alone with a student behind a closed door;
 - Never remain alone with a student in a classroom outside of the regular school day without informing the principal;
 - Do not permanently cover classroom windows in a way that restricts viewing from the outside. All school rooms in which staff and students interact should have unobstructed windows allowing clear views of the room;
 - Coaches should never meet alone with students behind closed doors – especially if the room lacks windows or has covered windows;
 - If you must have a difficult conversation with a student – and you are concerned that a student may misinterpret or misrepresent what occurred in your meeting – ask a fellow staff member to be present for the meeting.
- Guidelines for Staff Members, Coaches, and Extra-Curricular Program Managers
 - Staff members should avoid driving individual students to or from games, practices, or events unless there is some type of medical or weather emergency;
 - When traveling with a team, a coach or other adult school representative should never be alone in a room with a student;
- Fraternization with Students – In general, the role of the school staff member is that of an authority figure rather than that of a peer or friend.

- Avoid counseling students in non-school matters;
 - Avoid meeting students away from school grounds unless part of a school-sponsored event;
 - Do not regularly transport students in your personal car or ride with them in their car;
 - Never allow students to have access to your personal vehicle;
 - Do not tell sexually-themed jokes, make sexual comments or provide students with access to sexually-oriented material;
 - Do not make comments about a student's body;
 - Do not have any discussions with students regarding romantic or sexual activities;
 - Never invite students to your home unless it is a school sponsored activity and another adult staff member is present at all times; and
 - Never touch a student in a manner that a reasonable person could interpret as inappropriate.
- The Growing Role of Personal Technology
 - Social Networking – remember that the role of school staff members is an adult authority figure to minors, not as a friend or social peer. Do not “friend” or “follow” students on social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.
 - Telephone, Texting, and Email – do not provide your home phone number or cell phone number to students. If you must communicate electronically with students, make conversations brief and limit the content to school matters only. Avoid corresponding with students via email or text, especially one-on-one. If students have your email or phone number, students (or the school provides a school email), limit communications to school matters only, and only communicate with groups and include other adults, like colleagues, administrators, and parents into the conversations.

Staff and District Social Media Use (Board Policy 403.10)

A. General Use and Conditions

1. Staff must comply with all board policies, contract provisions, and applicable rules of professional conduct in their social media usage. They must comply with the board's policy on professional boundaries between staff and students at all times and in both physical and digital environments.
2. Staff must obtain the consent of their building principal or the superintendent prior to posting any student-related information in order to make sure that the publication does not violate the Federal Education Records Privacy Act or any other laws. Staff must also comply with all applicable state and federal record retention requirements, even with regard to personal social media usage.
3. Staff must comply with all applicable laws prohibiting the use or disclosure of impermissible content, such as copyright laws, accountability and disclosure laws, and any other law governing

the use of resources of a political subdivision. Questions about appropriate content should be referred to the staff member's supervising administrator.

Chapter XV: Other

Accidents and Safety

All injuries to students and adults that occur on district-owned grounds or in district-owned buildings, or during the job duties off premises, no matter how trivial, should be reported to the supervisor or principal immediately. Depending on the seriousness of the injury, the injured person should either be taken to his/her doctor or to the hospital.

Collection of Meal Charges

The Gering Public School food service department utilizes a computerized point-of-sale system, Infinite Campus. Staff is provided an account through the enrollment process. Money deposited into this account can be used for the purchase of breakfast, lunch, milk and ala carte items.

Gering Public Schools expects all staff members to be responsible for monitoring their individual Café account and maintaining a positive balance. The building Principal's office will notify the individual staff member of negative account balances. In the event a staff member's account reaches a negative balance of \$10, no extra meals or ala carte items can be charged.

Transportation Supervision

Coaches and activity sponsors will travel to and from all away events on school-provided transportation. Coaches/Sponsors should not drive their own vehicles to any event unless adequate supervision (another coach/sponsor) is provided for the bus also going. This should only be done for unusual circumstances and will need to be pre-approval by the Activities Director.

The buses and other transportation vehicles should be recognized as a part of the entire activity system and no conduct should be allowed that reflects adversely on the individual, team, or school. Team members should never stick or throw anything out of the windows of a bus used to transport activity participants. When a bus or other school transportation vehicle returns after an away event, the team should remove any garbage that they bring onto or find on the transportation vehicle. Coaches/sponsors are required to check the condition of the transportation vehicle before it leaves or is parked for the evening.

All players are to use school-provided transportation. If a parent wishes to take a student-athlete home from an away event, he/she must follow the proper protocol established in the student handbook and supported by the activities department. Under no circumstances is a student to ride home with another student.

In the case of both female and male participants riding together to or home from an event, coaches/sponsors will designate the front of the transportation vehicle for one group and the back for the other. Coaches/sponsors are expected to be seated between the two groups. On the return trip home from the event, coaches/sponsors may allow the groups to switch places.

Gering Middle School



6th, 7th, and 8th Grade 2025-2026

PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK

Gering Middle School
800 Q Street
Gering, NE 69341
(308) 436-3123

Gering Middle School strives to empower our students to achieve excellence through exploration and enrichment

EMPOWER TO EXCELLENCE

Gering Middle School, in partnership with the community, is committed to providing an educational program responsive to young adolescents' individual needs and characteristics. The focus of our transition is for young adolescents to **explore and enrich** their educational experiences while at the Middle School. Our goal is to help students be better equipped to understand their strengths and potential as they enter into their high school career and beyond.

We strive to prepare all Gering students to be college and/or career ready when they complete their education at Gering Public Schools and lead highly influential lives in the community in which they choose to live. Our exploration course offerings at Gering Middle School will provide students with hands-on learning and real-world opportunities to enhance their educational experiences and provide a seamless transition to great Career Academy Pathways offered at Gering High School.

Gering Middle School is organized into academic teams at each grade level (6-8) from the core areas: language arts, math, science and social studies. Exploratory courses include art, STEM, family and consumer science, careers, journalism, yearbook, introduction to agriculture, introduction to medical sciences, leadership, band, choir, business and technology, and industrial technology.

We strive to create an environment for all students that is safe, positive, encouraging and supportive.

As the "Home of the Bulldogs," our school serves approximately four hundred thirty students in grades six through eight. We are located between the old Oregon Trail and the North Platte River in historic Gering, Nebraska. Gering Middle School is home to over thirty teachers, two administrators and two counselors, who all work hard everyday to provide students with a safe, welcoming environment and the best school experience and education possible.

Extracurricular clubs and programs are available for student involvement. We strive to have something for everyone. District sports for grades 7-8 include: football, volleyball, wrestling, cross-country, basketball, and track. Students can also participate in a variety of extracurricular activities and clubs during their time at GMS.

**GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Greg Trautman, President

Brian Copsey

Tracy Wiese

Josh Lacy

John Maser

Matt Kautz

GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Nicole Regan, Superintendent of Schools

Julie Siebke, Director of Student Services

Kory Knight, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Stacy Rodriguez, Business Manager

John Wiedeman, Middle School Principal

Jon Hutchison, Middle School Assistant Principal

Mario Chavez, High School Principal

Crystal Palser, High School Assistant Principal

Keaton Green, Assistant Principal

Shawn Seiler, Director of Activities

Barb Harder, Assistant Director of Activities

Angela Morris, Geil Elementary Principal

Jesse Neugebauer, Lincoln Elementary Principal

Wendee Powell, Northfield Elementary Principal

D'Angelo Murillo, Director of Warehouse and Maintenance

GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Learners Today, Leaders Tomorrow

Direction Statement:

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

Vision:

Gering Public Schools provides a collaborative community, inspiring excellence and innovation in teaching and learning to empower student growth and leadership in school and life.

GRIT: Gratitude, Responsibility, Integrity, Trust

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)
1st Sem: 83 Days
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
2nd Sem: 87.5 Days
Students: 12.5 Staff: 14

308-436-3125

WWW.GERINGSCHOOLS.NET

ALL OTHER CALENDAR SCHEDULING CAN BE FOUND at www.westernconferencene.org

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Intent of Handbook:

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

Although the information found in this handbook is detailed and specific on many topics, the handbook is not intended to be all encompassing so as to cover every situation and circumstance that may arise during any school day, or school year. This handbook does not create a "contract." The administration reserves the right to make decisions and make rule revisions at any time to implement the educational program and to assure the

well being of all students. The administration will be responsible for interpreting the rules contained in the handbook. Should a situation or circumstance arise that is not specifically covered in this handbook, the administration will make a decision based upon all applicable school district policies, and state and federal statutes and regulations.

Mutual Respect

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

Complaint Procedure

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

- Step 1. Schedule a conference with the staff person most directly involved in the matter.
- Step 2. Address the concern to the Principal if the matter is not resolved at Step 1.
- Step 3. Address the concern to the Superintendent if the matter is not resolved at Step 2.
- Step 4. Address the concern to the Board of Education if the matter is not resolved at Step 3.

Conditions Applicable to All Levels of Complaint Procedure

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

Designation of Directors

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

Law, Policy or Program	Issue or Concern	District Designee
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	Superintendent
Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities	Safe and drug free schools	Superintendent

The Superintendent or Director of Student Services may be contacted at 1519 10th Street or (308) 436-3125.

Anti-Discrimination & Harassment Policy

Gering Public Schools hereby gives this statement of compliance and intent to comply with all state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination or harassment and requiring accommodations. This school district intends to take necessary measures to assure compliance with such laws against any prohibited form of discrimination or harassment or which require accommodations.

Preventing Harassment and Discrimination of Students Purpose: GMS is committed to offering employment and educational opportunity to its employees and students in a climate free of discrimination. Accordingly, unlawful discrimination or harassment of any kind by administrators, teachers, coworkers, students or other persons is prohibited. GMS will try to protect employees and students from reported discrimination or harassment by non-employees or others in the workplace and educational environment. For purposes of this, discrimination or harassment based on a person's race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability or age is prohibited.

The following are general definitions of what might constitute prohibited harassment:

- In general, ethnic or racial slurs or other verbal or physical conduct relating to a person's race, color, religion, disability or national origin constitute harassment when they unreasonably interfere with the person's work performance or create an intimidating work, instructional or educational environment.
- Age harassment (40 years of age and higher) has been defined by federal regulations as a form of age discrimination. It can consist of demeaning jokes, insults or intimidation based on a person's age.
- Sexual harassment is defined by federal and state regulations as a form of sex discrimination. It can consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature by supervisors or others in the workplace, classroom or educational environment.

Complaint and Grievance Procedures:

Employees or students should initially report all instances of discrimination or harassment to their immediate supervisor or classroom teacher. However, if the employee or student is uncomfortable in presenting the problem to the supervisor or teacher, or if the supervisor or teacher is the problem, the employee or student is encouraged to go to the next level of supervision. In the case of a student, the Principal would be the next or alternative person to contact.

If the employee or student's complaint is not resolved to his or her satisfaction within five (5) to ten (10) calendar days, or if the discrimination or harassment continues, or if as a student you feel you need immediate help for any reason, please report your complaint to the Superintendent of Gering Public Schools. If a satisfactory arrangement cannot be obtained through the Superintendent, the complaint may be processed to the Board of Education.

Title IX Statement from the District:

"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: Dr. Nicole Regan, 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>).

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

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

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

Notification of Rights Under FERPA

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the district receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies their 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 the school district to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. 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 a 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 and effectively provide the function or service for which they are responsible. Contractors, consultants and volunteers are permitted to have access to education records where they are performing a function or service that would otherwise be done by a school employee. Their access is limited to education records in which they have a legitimate educational interest; which means records needed to effectively provide the function or service for which they are responsible.

In regards to education records requests; the district forwards education records (may include academic, health and discipline records) that have been requested in which the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student has already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer.

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 Staff Qualifications

The No Child Left Behind Act gives parents/guardians the right to get information about the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teachers. Upon request, the District 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, the District will give timely notice to you if your child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet the requirements of the Act.

Notice Concerning Directory Information

The 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., 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 school 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.

Homeless Students Policy

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, though 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 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 supports;
 - 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 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, 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 the dispute. Unaccompanied youths shall be assisted by the LEL in enrolling immediately.
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 evaluations 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.

Breakfast and Lunch Programs

The District has agreed to participate in the National School Lunch Program and accepts responsibility for providing free and reduced price meals to eligible children in the schools under its jurisdiction. The District provides the United States Department of Agriculture's required nondiscrimination statement:

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.

The school food authority assures the State Department of Education that the school system will uniformly implement the following policy to determine children's eligibility for free and reduced price meals in all National School Lunch Programs.

Acceptable Use of Computers, Technology and the Internet

Gering Public Schools recognizes the value of computer and other electronic resources to improve student learning and enhance the administration and operation of its schools. To this end, Gering Public Schools encourage the responsible use of computers, computer networks (including the Internet), and other electronic resources in support of the mission and goals of the Gering District. It is the policy of Gering Public Schools to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)]. It is the policy of Gering Public Schools to maintain an environment that promotes ethical and responsible conduct in all online network activities by staff and students. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee, student, or other individual to engage in any activity that does not conform to the established purpose and general rules and policies of the network. Within this general policy, Gering Public Schools recognizes its legal and ethical obligation to protect the wellbeing of students in its charge.

The following uses of school-provided electronic resources, including Internet and email, are not permitted:

- To access, upload, download, or distribute pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material
- To transmit obscene, abusive, sexually explicit, or threatening language;
- To violate any local, state, or federal statute;
- To vandalize, damage, or disable the property of another individual or organization;
- To access another individual's materials, information, or files without permission; and,
- To violate copyright or otherwise use the intellectual property of another individual or organization without permission.
- To distribute or forward "chain letters" via email.

Any violation of District policy and rules may result in loss of District-provided access to the Internet. Additional disciplinary action may be determined in keeping with existing procedures and practices regarding inappropriate language or behavior. When and where applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

Students may:

- Design and post web pages and other material from school resources.
- Use direct communications such as email, online chat, or instant messaging with a teacher's permission.
- Use the resources for any educational purpose.

Violations of these rules may result in disciplinary action, including the loss of a student's privileges to use the school's information technology resources.

Supervision and Monitoring

School and network administrators and their authorized employees monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that uses are secure and in conformity with this policy. Administrators reserve the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on the school's information networks in order to further the health, safety, discipline, or security of any student or other person, or to protect property. They may also use this information in disciplinary actions and will furnish evidence of crime to law enforcement.

Enforcement of Policy

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or "Internet filters") shall be used to block or filter Internet, or other forms of electronic communications, access to inappropriate information.

Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors.

Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled for adults or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bonafide research or other lawful purposes.

A Gering Public School staff member may override the technology protection measure that blocks or filters Internet access for a student to access a site with legitimate educational value that is wrongly blocked by the technology protection measure that blocks or filters Internet access.

Gering Public School staff will monitor students' use of the Internet by either direct supervision or by monitoring Internet use history to ensure enforcement of policy.

Inappropriate Network Usage

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of Gering Public Schools online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking", and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

Education, Supervision and Monitoring

It shall be the responsibility of all members of Gering Public Schools staff to educate, supervise and monitor appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children's Internet Protection Act, the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, and Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act.

Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of the Director of Technology or designated representatives.

The Building Principal or designated representatives will provide age appropriate training for students who use Gering Public Schools Internet services. The training provided will be designed to promote Gering Public School's commitment to the standards and acceptable use of Internet services as set forth in the Gering Public Schools Network Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy;

Student safety with regard to:

1. safety on the Internet;

2. inappropriate behavior while on online, on social networking Web sites, and in chat rooms; and
3. cyberbullying awareness and response.

Compliance with the E-Rate Requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act ("CIPA")

Following receipt of this training, the student will acknowledge that he/she received the training, understood it, and will follow the provisions of the Gering Public Schools Network Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy. Curriculum materials and a Scope and Sequence can be found at Common Sense Media: <https://www.commonsense.org/education>.

Disclaimers

Gering Public Schools and its individual schools, administrators, faculty, and staff thereof, make no warranties of any kind for the service provided and will not be held responsible for any damage suffered by users. This includes the loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, and intrusion by computer virus or service interruption.

Use of any information obtained via network access is at the risk of the user, and Gering Public Schools specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained.

Gering Public Schools cannot guarantee complete protection from inappropriate material. Furthermore, it is impossible for the district or content filter to reflect each individual or family's opinions of what constitutes "inappropriate material". If a student mistakenly accesses inappropriate information, he/she should immediately notify a district staff member.

Gering Public Schools is not liable for an individual's inappropriate use of the district's electronic communications systems, for violations of copyright restrictions or other laws, and for other costs incurred by users through use of Gering Public Schools electronic communication systems.

The district will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the district's electronic communication systems.

MINOR: The term "minor" means any individual who has not attained the age of 17 years.

TECHNOLOGY PROTECTION MEASURE: The term "technology protection measure" means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are:

OBSCENE, as that term is defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code;

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY, as that term is defined in section 2256 of title 18, United State Code; or Harmful to minors.

HARMFUL TO MINORS: The term "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

- Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
- Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
- Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

SEXUAL ACT; SEXUAL CONTACT: The terms "sexual act" and "sexual contact" have the meaning given such terms in section 2246 of title 18, United States Code.

Due Process: Long-Term Suspension, Expulsion, or Mandatory Reassignment

If a principal makes a decision to discipline a student by long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment, the following procedures shall be followed: [ref. 79-4, 181]

- A. Written Charge and Summary of Evidence. [ref.79-4, 181(1)]
 - a. File with the Superintendent. On the date of the decision, a written charge and a summary of the evidence supporting such charge shall be filed with the superintendent.
 - b. Send Written Notice. The school shall, within two (2) days of the decision, send written notice by registered or certified mail to the student and his or her parent or guardian informing them of the rights established under the Student Discipline Act.
- B. Written Notice: Written notice must include:
 - a. Violation and Summary of Evidence. The rule or standard of conduct allegedly violated and the acts of the student alleged to constitute a cause for long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment, including a summary of the evidence to be presented against the student; [ref.79-4,181(2)(a)]
 - b. Recommended Penalty. The penalty, if any, which the principal has recommended in the charge and any other penalty to which the student may be subject; [ref. 79-4, 181(2)(b)]
 - c. Right To Hearing. A statement that, before long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment for disciplinary purposes can be invoked, the student shall have a right to a hearing, upon request, on the specified charges; [ref. 79-4, 181(2)(c)]
 - d. Hearing Procedures. A description of the hearing procedures provided by the act, along with procedures for appealing any decision rendered at the hearing; [ref. 79-4,181(2)(d)]
 - e. Examine Evidence and Witnesses. A statement that the principal, legal counsel for the school, the student, the student's parent, or the student's representative or guardian shall have the right to:
 - i. Examine the student's academic and disciplinary records and any affidavits to be used at the hearing concerning the alleged misconduct and
 - ii. Know the identity of the witnesses to appear at the hearing and the substance of their testimony; [ref. 79-4, 181(2)(e)]
- B. Request for Hearing Form. A form on which the student, the student's parent, or the student's guardian may request a hearing to be signed by such parties and delivered to the principal or superintendent in person or by registered or certified mail as prescribed in Sections 79-4,181 (outline II.J.4) and 79-4,185 (outline II.J.5.a)
- C. Suspension Until 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: [ref. 79-4, 181(3)]
 - a. The date the disciplinary action takes effect if no hearing is requested;
 - b. If a hearing is requested, the date the hearing examiner makes the report of his/her findings and a recommendation of the action to be taken to the superintendent, or
 - c. If the principal determines that the student must be suspended immediately to prevent or substantially reduce the risk of:
 - i. Interference with an educational function or school purpose or [ref. 79-4, 181(3)(a)]
 - ii. A personal injury to the student himself or herself, other students, school employees, or school volunteers. [ref. 79-4,181(3)(b)]
- D. Discussions Prior to Hearing. Nothing in the Student Discipline Act shall preclude the student, parent, guardian, or representative from discussing and settling the matter with appropriate school personnel prior to the hearing stage. [ref. 4, 181]

Procedures if Hearing Is Not Requested

If a hearing is not requested by the student or the student's parent or guardian within five (5) school days following receipt of the written notice, the punishment recommended in the charge by the principal or his/her designee will automatically go into effect upon the fifth (5th) school day following receipt of the written notice by the student or his/her parent or guardian as required above under Section 79-4, 181 [ref. 79-4,184].

Procedures If a Hearing Is Requested

- A. Request For Hearing. A hearing must be requested within five (5) school days after receipt of the written notice. [ref. 79-4, 182(1)]
 - a. Request For Hearing Beyond Five Days. If a hearing is requested for more than five (5) school days but not more than thirty (30) calendar days following the actual receipt of written notice, the hearing shall be held but the imposed punishment shall continue in effect pending final determination. [ref. 79-4, 185]
- B. Appointment/Qualifications of Hearing Examiner. If a hearing is requested, the superintendent must appoint a hearing examiner. [ref. 79-4, 182(1)]
 - a. Qualifications: The hearing examiner can be any person designated by the school district's superintendent, school board, or counsel, if such person:
 - i. Has not brought the charges against the student
 - ii. Is not a witness at the hearing, and
 - iii. Has no involvement in the charge [ref. 79-4,182(2)]
 - b. General Duties. [ref 79-4, 183]
 - i. Impartiality - In addition to other duties, it is the duty of the hearing examiner to remain impartial throughout all deliberations.
 - ii. Availability - The hearing examiner must be available, prior to any hearing held pursuant to the act, to answer any questions the principal, the student, or the student's parent or guardian may have regarding the nature and conduct of the hearing.
- C. Notice of Time/Place For Hearing. Within two (2) school days after being appointed, the hearing examiner must give written notice to the principal, the student, and the student's parent or guardian of the time and place for the hearing. [ref. 79-4,182(1)]
 - a. The hearing shall be scheduled within a period of five (5) school days after it is requested, but such time may be changed by the hearing examiner for good cause. [ref. 79-4,182(3)]
 - b. No hearing shall be held upon less than two (2) school days' actual notice to the principal, the student, and the student's parent or guardian, except with the consent of all the parties. [ref. 79-4,182(3)]
- D. Right To Examine Records/Statements. The principal or legal counsel for the school, the student, and the student's parents or guardian, or representative shall have the right to examine the records and written statements referred to in the Student Discipline Act and the statement of any witness in the possession of the school board at a reasonable time prior to the hearing. [ref. 79-4,182(4)]

Grounds for Short-Term Suspension, Long-Term Suspension, Expulsion or Mandatory Reassignment (Nebraska Student Discipline Act)

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 long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment where it occurs on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by the school and being used for a school purpose or in a vehicle being driven for a school purpose by a school employee or an employee's designee, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event.

1. Willfully disobeying any reasonable written or oral request of a school staff member, or the voicing of disrespect to those in authority.
2. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, harassment, or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes or making any communication that

reasonable recipient would interpret as a serious expression of an intent to harm or cause injury to another;

3. Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property of substantial value, repeated damage or theft involving property, or setting or attempting to set a fire of any magnitude;
4. Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to any person, including any school employee, school volunteer, or student. Personal injury caused by accident, self-defense, or other action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect some other person shall not constitute a violation of this subdivision;
5. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of or with the intent of obtaining money or anything of value from such student or making a threat which causes or may be expected to cause a disruption to school operations;
6. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon or that has the appearance of a weapon or bringing or possessing any explosive device, including fireworks;
7. 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.
8. 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;
9. Public indecency or sexual conduct;
10. 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;
11. 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;
12. Engaging in any activity forbidden by law which constitutes a danger to other students or interferes with school purposes. This conduct may result in an expulsion regardless of the time or location of the offense if the conduct creates or has the potential to create a substantial interference with school purposes, such as the use of the telephone or internet off-school grounds to threaten.
13. Repeated violation of any rules established by the school district or school officials if such violations constitute a substantial interference with school purposes;
14. Truancy or failure to attend assigned classes or assigned activities; or tardiness to school, assigned classes or assigned activities;
15. 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;
16. 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.
17. Willfully violating the behavioral expectations for those students riding Gering Public Schools buses.

18. 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.
19. 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 a one year expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis, provided that such modification is in writing.
20. 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:
 - a. Prior written permission to bring the firearm or other dangerous weapon to school is obtained from the student's teacher, building administrator and parent.
 - b. The purpose of having the firearm or other dangerous weapon in school is for a legitimate educational function.
 - c. A plan for its transportation into and from the school, its storage while in the school building and how it will be displayed 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.
 - d. The firearm or other dangerous weapon shall be in an inoperable condition while it is on school grounds.

Reporting Student Law Violations

Cases of law violations or suspected law violations by students will be reported to the police and to the student's parents or guardian as soon as possible. When a Principal or other school official releases a minor student to a peace officer (e.g., police officer, sheriff, and all other persons with similar authority to make arrests) for the purpose of removing the minor from the school premises, the Principal or other school official will take immediate steps to notify the parent, guardian, or responsible relative of the minor regarding the release of the minor to the officer and regarding the place to which the minor is reportedly being taken. An exception applies when a minor has been taken into custody as a victim of suspected child abuse; in that event the Principal or other school official shall provide the peace officer with the address and telephone number of the minor's parents or guardian. In an effort to demonstrate that student behavior is always subject to possible legal sanctions regardless of where the behavior occurs, it shall be the policy of the Gering Public Schools to notify the proper legal authorities when a student engages in any of the following behaviors on school grounds or at a school sponsored event:

- Knowingly possessing illegal drugs or alcohol.
- Assault.
- Vandalism resulting in significant property damage.
- Theft of school or personal property of a significant nature.
- Automobile accident.

- Any other behavior which significantly threatens the health or safety of students, staff or other persons or which is required by law to be reported.

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 and 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, ESU's, 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 judgments, give legal advice, or present parties with solutions to their problems.
- **Confidentiality, Privileged, and Voluntary Communications:** Pursuant to Neb. Reb. 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.

GENERAL STUDENT INFORMATION

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

Absence/Tardy Procedure

Section 79-201 of the Nebraska School Law states that "every person residing in a school district within the State of Nebraska who has legal or actual charge or control of any child not less than seven, nor more than sixteen years of age, shall cause such child to attend regularly the public, private, denominational, or parochial day

school each day that such school is open and in session...” Punctual and regular attendance is important since absence from school is the greatest single cause of lack of achievement in school.

- It is the parent’s/guardian’s responsibility to notify the school each time their child is absent or tardy. Normal School hours for students are **8:00 a.m. until 3:15 p.m.** Parents should call the school office (436-3123) starting at 7:30 AM and on through the day of your student’s absence.
- Attendance will be tracked by counting periods missed.
- Attendance totals will be recounted at the end of each week.
- When the student reaches five (5) days of absence, the principal or her/his designee will contact the parent to inform them of their child’s attendance record.
- When a student has missed ten (10) days, a letter will be sent home asking the parent or guardian to contact the school to set up a meeting. A copy of this letter may be sent to the County Attorney, who may set up a truancy hearing. A meeting may be held that will include the student, the parent/guardian, a school administrator and a school counselor. This meeting will serve to draw up a new attendance agreement.
- Three unexcused tardies per day will count as an absence.
- If attendance is addressed in a 504 or an IEP plan, that plan will supersede this attendance policy.
- A student shall be considered absent if he/she is more than 20 minutes late to any class.

We understand that there may be circumstances that prevent students from attending school. We will accept letters from providers seeing students on days a student is absent.

As a courtesy, once a student has reached 10, 15 or 20 days of absences, a computer-generated attendance letter will be mailed home to inform you of your child’s attendance record.

GMS ATTENDANCE CODES FOR 2025-2026

LOCAL CODE	STATE CODE	DESCRIPTION	STATUS	EXCUSE
ADM		ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION/WAIVED	ABSENT	EXEMPT
ACT		SCHOOL SUPERVISED ACTIVITY	PRESENT	EXEMPT
ISS		IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION	PRESENT	EXEMPT
OSS		OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION	ABSENT	EXEMPT
TRDY	04	TARDY	TARDY	EXCUSED
MED	07	MEDICAL WITH DOCTOR DOCUMENTATION	ABSENT	EXCUSED
BER	10	BEREAVEMENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
PAR	10	PARENT ACKNOWLEDGED ABSENCE	ABSENT	EXCUSED
ILL	07	ILLNESS	ABSENT	EXCUSED
UNV	12	UNVERIFIED	ABSENT	UNKNOWN
CUT	11	SKIPPED/CUT CLASS	ABSENT	UNEXCUSED

STATUS OPTIONS:	ABSENT RELEASE	TARDY	PRESENT	EARLY
EXCUSE OPTIONS:	EXEMPT	U: UNEXCUSED	E: EXCUSED	?: UNKNOWN

Local Codes Highlighted in RED will count toward attendance letters

Make-Up Work

Students are allowed 2 days to make up assignments for every day of excused absence.

Academic Integrity

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

- **Cheating** means intentionally to misrepresent the source, nature, or other conditions of academic work so as to accrue undeserved credit, or to cooperate with someone else in such misrepresentation. Such misrepresentations may, but need not necessarily, involve the work of others. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:
 - **Tests** (includes tests, quizzes and other examinations or academic performances):
 - **Advance Information**: Obtaining, reviewing or sharing copies of tests or information about a test before these are distributed for student use by the instructor. For example, a student engages in cheating if, after having taken a test, the student informs other students in a later section of the questions that appear on the test.
 - **Use of Unauthorized Materials**: Using notes, textbooks, pre-programmed formulas in calculators, or other unauthorized material, devices or information while taking a test except as expressly permitted. For example, except for "open book" tests, a student engages in cheating if the student looks at personal notes or the textbook during the test.
 - **Use of Other Student Answers**: Copying or looking at another student's answers or work, or sharing answers or work with another student, when taking a test, except as expressly permitted. For example, a student engages in cheating if the student looks at another student's paper during a test. A student also engages in cheating if the student tells another student answers during a test or while exiting the testing room, or knowingly allows another student to look at the student's answers on the test paper.
 - **Use of Other Student to Take Test**. Having another person take one's place for a test, or taking a test for another student, without the specific knowledge and permission of the instructor.
 - **Misrepresenting Need to Delay Test**. Presenting false or incomplete information in order to postpone or avoid the taking of a test. For example, a student engages in cheating if the student misses class on the day of a test, claiming to be sick, when the student's real reason for missing class was because the student was not prepared for the test.
- **Papers** (includes papers, essays, lab projects, and other similar academic work):
 - **Use of Another's Paper**: Copying another student's paper, using a paper from an essay writing service, or allowing another student to copy a paper, without the specific knowledge and permission of the instructor.
 - **Re-use of One's Own Papers**: Using a substantial portion of a piece of work previously submitted for another course or program to meet the requirements of the present course or program without notifying the instructor to whom the work is presented.

- Assistance from Others: Having another person assist with the paper to such an extent that the work does not truly reflect the student's work. For example, a student engages in cheating if the student has a draft essay reviewed by the student's parent or sibling, and the essay is substantially re-written by the student's parent or sibling. Assistance from home is encouraged, but the work must remain the student's.
- Failure to Contribute to Group Projects. Accepting credit for a group project in which the student failed to contribute a fair share of the work.
- Misrepresenting Need to Delay Paper. Presenting false or incomplete information in order to postpone or avoid turning in a paper when due. For example, a student engages in cheating if the student misses class on the day a paper is due, claiming to be sick, when the student's real reason for missing class was because the student had not finished the paper.
- Alteration of Assigned Grades. Any unauthorized alteration of assigned grades by a student in the teacher's grade book or the school records is a serious form of cheating.
- Plagiarism means to take and present as one's own a material portion of the ideas or words of another or to present as one's own an idea or work derived from an existing source without full and proper credit to the source of the ideas, words, or works. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:
 - Failure to Credit Sources: Copying work (words, sentences, and paragraphs or illustrations or models) directly from the work of another without proper credit. Academic work frequently involves use of outside sources. To avoid plagiarism, the student must place the work in quotations and give a citation to the outside source.
 - Falsely Presenting Work as One's Own: Presenting work prepared by another in final or draft form as one's own without citing the source, such as the use of purchased research papers or use of another student's paper.
 - Contributing to academic integrity violations means to participate or assist another in cheating or plagiarism. It includes but is not limited to allowing another student to look at your test answers, to copy your papers or lab projects, and to fail to report a known act of cheating or plagiarism to the instructor or administration.

The following sanctions will occur for academic integrity offenses:

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

Academic Progress

At the teacher's discretion, parents may be informed as to the student's progress via a telephone call or email. Parents are encouraged to sign up for access to the Infinite Campus Portal. This tool is an excellent resource for parents to stay up to date on their student's academic progress, behavior and attendance. Contact the Gering Middle School Office for assistance with this process at 308-436-3123.

Accidents or Injuries

Please report accidents or injuries to the classroom teacher or to an administrator. The teacher or administrator will file an accident report. An administrator will call the school nurse to examine the injury.

Arrival At School/Dismissal From School

Students are expected to arrive at school no more than 20 minutes prior to the first class or school program in which they are participating. **Prior to that time, the school is not responsible for supervision of the students.** Students will be admitted to the school building 20 minutes prior to the first class. Students will not be permitted to enter earlier unless the Principal determines it to be necessary due to inclement weather or other factors. Students are to enter through their assigned entrance and proceed to designated areas.

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

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

Asbestos Management Plan

Gering Public Schools has conducted asbestos inspections in all of its facilities as required by Section 203 of Title 15, Chapter 53, subchapter II, of the Toxic Substance Control Act. 15 U.S.C. 2643, of 1986. Management plans requiring those inspections are available for your review in the Central Administration Office at 1800 Eighth Street, Gering, Nebraska during regular business hours.

Positive Behavior Support

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

- 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 (PBIS) model. PBIS is a program designed 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. GMS theme for PBIS is GRIT, which stands for Gratitude, Responsibility, Integrity, and Trust.

Bell Schedule

The daily schedule will be devised to optimize time allotted for educational instruction and the full utilization of educational staff shared between buildings. The daily schedule may be subject to change in order to meet constraints imposed by additions to the curriculum or changes in personnel.

BELL SCHEDULE (MTThF)

	WIN	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6
6th Grade	8:00-8:20	8:23-9:37	9:40-10:54	10:57-11:27 (Lunch)	11:30-12:44	12:47-2:01	2:04-3:15
7th Grade	8:00-8:20	8:23-9:37	9:40-10:54	10:57-12:11	12:14-12:44 (Lunch)	12:47-2:01	2:04-3:15

	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8
8th Grade	8:00-8:54	8:57-9:51	9:54-10:48	10:51-11:45	11:48-12:42	12:45-1:15 (Lunch)	1:18-2:22	2:25-3:15

BELL SCHEDULE (Early-Release Wednesdays)

	WIN	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6
6th Grade	8:00-8:30	8:33-9:32	9:35-10:34	10:37-11:07 (Lunch)	11:10-12:10	12:13-1:13	1:16-2:15
7th Grade	8:00-8:30	8:33-9:32	9:35-10:34	10:37-11:37	11:40-12:10 (Lunch)	12:13-1:13	1:16-2:15

	WIN	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8
8th Grade	8:00-8:30	8:33-9:14	9:17-9:58	10:01-10:41	10:44-11:24	11:27-12:07	12:10-12:40 (Lunch)	12:43-1:33	1:36-2:15

Bicycles

Bicycles must be parked in the racks provided and should be locked and licensed. The School District assumes no responsibility for the safety or security of these vehicles.

BIST (Behavior Intervention Support Team)

An evidenced-based program adopted by the Gering School District to help staff implement the following systems.

- A communication system or regular meetings, checklists for student/administrator referral, informal feedback and check ups.
- A proactive, rather than reactive, behavior system which fits with the goals of Positive Behavior Support.
- A common language which builds skills 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 Goals for Life

1. I can be angry or upset and make good choices.
2. I can be okay when others are not okay.
3. I can do what I don't want to do. I can be productive and follow directions even when I don't want to.

BIST Placement Steps

Classroom Seat, Safe Seat, Buddy Room, Team Focus or Recovery Room, Principal's Office, Home

Students must earn their way back into the previous step by processing with the teacher and/or meeting pre-established goals. After the Team has notified the parents, they may make the recommendation to the principal to place a student in Team Focus or the Recovery Room. The final decision for placement lies with the principal.

Bulletins and Announcements

Bulletin boards and display cases are available for school-related and approved materials to be posted and displayed. Posters to be used in the halls or materials for distribution will need to be approved and initiated by the Principal. Posters are not to be attached to any painted wall surfaces. The person or organization responsible for distributing the posters is responsible to see that all posters are removed within 48 hours after the event. Personal messages and/or picture posters are NOT to be attached to student lockers without Administrative approval.

Cafeteria

Gering Public School 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.

At the start of the school year, a letter is sent home with students including an application for free or reduced lunches and breakfasts. We encourage you to complete the form and return it as soon as possible

Benefits from the prior year expire on **September 19** of the current school year and a new application must be submitted. Any charges incurred from that point until the new form is approved are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Guidelines for Collecting Delinquent Meal Charges

The Gering Public School food service department utilizes a computerized point-of-sale system through 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 a la carte items. Parents can check their child's account balance and make deposits in the Parent Portal at <http://www.geringschools.net/parents/>.

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:
 - i. Must be made to Gering Public Schools.
 - ii. Must have the student's full name in the memo.
 - iii. If more than one student is on a single check, the check must specify how much money is to be deposited into each account. 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.
4. Account Balance Information: Gering Public Schools expects parents to be responsible for monitoring their student's cafeteria 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 or on the Family Portal. 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 a la carte items can be charged.

Free and Reduced eligible students are entitled to one reimbursable meal. Extra meals and a la 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. **The cafeteria will open for breakfast approximately 20 minutes prior to the start of each school day.**

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. Fines are determined on books according to the following criteria:

Lost or Severely Damaged Book:	Replacement cost
Missing one or both covers:	Replacement cost
Missing Page:	50¢ per page (up to replacement cost)
Torn Page:	20¢ per page (up to replacement cost)
Marks that cannot be erased:	20¢ per mark (up to replacement cost)

School-issued items that are stolen or damaged from unlocked lockers are the responsibility of the student to whom they were issued. Students must pay all fines before they can receive school publications and final grades.

Band Fees

Students participating in band and borrowing a school issued instrument will be responsible for paying a non-refundable \$20 cleaning fee for use of this instrument before the instrument will be issued and/or sent home with the student.

Chromebook Insurance Charge

Gering Public Schools is assessing a \$20 insurance charge to cover incidental damage that may occur to a Chromebook. **This fee does not cover intentional or malicious damage to the Chromebook.** Lost or misplaced Chromebooks will result in the student being assessed the full cost of a replacement Chromebook.

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 coursework, 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.

Dances

Student dances are to be sponsored by school organizations. The following rules must be followed:

- There must be at least 10 adult chaperones provided by the organization, two of which must be school staff members.
- Dance hours may not last longer than 9:00 P.M.
- Students must show their student I.D. to enter.
- No students from other schools may enter.
- The doors to the dance close 30 minutes after the dance begins. Students may not enter the dance after that time unless accompanied by parent/guardian.
- Students are not allowed to leave the dance early unless a parent / guardian comes into the dance to get them.
- The sponsoring organization will be responsible for decorations and clean up.
- Sponsors have the final determination on selection of music and themes.
- Dances will be scheduled for Monday - Friday. Dances will NOT be held on weekends.

Deliveries

No deliveries to students of flowers, balloons, pizzas, gifts or other items will be permitted during regular school hours or without prior administrative approval.

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. The consistent message of the program is that the use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful.

Electronic Resources

Students will have many opportunities to use the Internet and other electronic resources as part of their educational opportunities in Gering Public Schools. Students using electronic resources must be careful to follow District Policy and Procedures. (See Acceptable Use Policy for Electronic Resources - page 14) **WARNING:** Students are reminded that anytime you share information electronically, it is **no longer private information**. Examples may include, but are not limited to: Twitter, Facebook, computers, cell phones (including text messages), personal blogs, and any/all other electronic devices. Students are thus notified that the school administration, while possibly not initially involved in securing information in the sharing process of electronic information, will follow normal investigative procedures if a possible school violation and/or activity suspension may be involved.

Emergency Closing Procedures

Parents are requested to provide an emergency contact telephone number to have on file in the event of an emergency closing or any other general or individual situation that requires the immediate presence of a parent/guardian. In the event that parents do not have such a number or cannot be contacted, it will be assumed that the parent has instructed their children concerning the procedure they are to follow should school be dismissed early. Realizing that the school might be unable to reach all parents, it is suggested that all children be

advised as to what they are to do should they ever be dismissed early. It is recommended that parents give their children an alternate destination and that the building principal be made aware of this information.

If conditions allow and supervision is available in the event of an early dismissal, the child will be held in school until the normal dismissal time. If the parent or guardian has not arrived to pick up the child by the normal dismissal time, law enforcement or child protective services may be contacted to ensure the safety of the child.

Fire and Evacuation Drills

Detailed instructions for building evacuation drills can be found on the bulletin board of each classroom. Students should study these instructions and be familiar with all exits. Fire drills will be held throughout the school year. Other drills relative to the evacuation or safe sheltering of students may be held as needed.

Gering Public Schools Grades 6-12 Grading and Reporting Guidelines

Philosophy

At Gering Public Schools, we believe that grades should reflect the level of student achievement in the knowledge and skills specified by grade level or course objectives and outcomes. In other words, grades should reflect student learning. We also believe that if we wish to maximize student learning, we as educators must provide timely feedback, track progress toward mastery, and use relevant data to guide instruction.

Collective Commitments

1. We are committed to giving students multiple opportunities to master essential standards and supporting all students.
2. We are committed to collecting and evaluating data to improve educational outcomes for instruction and student learning.
3. We are committed to giving students specific and timely feedback.
4. We are committed to aligning like courses in structure and grading so that students have similar opportunities for success no matter the instructor assigned.
5. We are committed to ensuring that grades communicate student learning and mastery of essential standards.

Key Terms

- **Essential Standard (Need to Know):** A carefully selected subset of the total list of grade or course-specific standards that students must know and be able to do in order to be prepared to enter the next grade level or course
- **Non-Essential Standard (Nice to Know):** The remaining standards from the list of grade or course-specific standards that students will have exposure to but will not be required to master during the course or grade level
- **Guided Practice:** An opportunity for students and teachers to work together on new concepts step-by-step to ensure understanding of the skill
- **Independent Practice:** Work assigned to students once skills have been taught and guided practice opportunities have been given; can be completed during class time or may be assigned as homework
- **Formative Assessment:** An assessment meant to *monitor student learning* in order to provide ongoing feedback to students regarding their strengths and weaknesses; formative assessments are low stakes, which mean they have low or no point value (Ex.- bell ringer, exit ticket, short quiz)
- **Summative Assessment:** An assessment meant to *evaluate student learning* at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it to some standard or benchmark; summative assessments are high stake assessments, which mean they have a high point value (Ex.- chapter test, final project, essay, semester final)
- **Learning Target:** Concrete goals written in student-friendly language that clearly describe what students will learn and be able to do

Grading Scale/GPA

Gering Middle School and Gering High School will use the letter grading system as follows:

Percentage	Letter Grade	GPA Value (High School Only)
90-100%	A	4
80-89%	B	3
70-79%	C	2
60-69%	D	1
59% or Below	F	0

Makeup Work

When a student is absent from school, it is the student's responsibility to check with each teacher for missing work. Each individual teacher will communicate the way by which makeup work should be obtained. Students will have 2 days for each excused absence to complete their makeup work. Teachers have the discretion to extend makeup work time for extenuating circumstances. A student may not be entitled to extra days for unexcused absences.

Grading Categories

To provide consistency across grade levels and departments, 6-12 teachers will utilize the following grading categories. If a category is not relevant to the course taught, it may be omitted. (Ex.- PE)

Grading Category	Middle School	High School
Daily Work bell ringers, exit tickets, checks for understanding, independent work, homework	60%	45%
Assessments tests, quizzes, major projects	40%	45%
Semester Finals	NA	10%

****Dual credit courses may dictate different grading standards and requirements.**

Naming of Assignments in IC: Gradebook entries should align with and reflect an understanding of the lesson/learning target (avoid using generic names for gradebook entries ex. p.12)

Participation: Participation may be assessed but must be tied to skills, learning targets, or essential standards. This connection should be documented in Infinite Campus.

Extra Credit: Extra credit should not be assigned for things like participating in canned food drives, bringing additional school supplies, not using bathroom passes, etc. Any extra credit given should be an extended learning opportunity tied to skills or standards.

Use of Infinite Campus

Gradebook Entries: Each teacher will enter a minimum of one grade per week in the daily work category. Students should have ample opportunities to demonstrate learning of the essential standards prior to summative assessments being given. Exceptions to this rule may include when a major project, essay, or test requires a more intensive grading process.

Gradebook Updates: Infinite Campus gradebooks should be updated on a weekly basis (By Tuesday of the following week that grades were taken; unless for a major project/test that requires more intensive grading

processes).

Infinite Campus Comments: When using flags as shown, clear, individual comments should be used to communicate the reason for the flag.

IC Gradebook Flags

Flag	Assignment Definition	Usage
Turned In (T)	Turned in, but not yet graded; no penalty assigned	Teacher discretion
Missing (M)	Not turned in;calculated as a zero until the assignment is turned in and graded	Use when assignment is past due, but can still be turned in for a grade; if attendance isn't a factor; remove flag if full credit is to be given; enter a "zero" if the assignment can no longer be submitted for a grade (See grading/attendance section for more details)
Late (L)	Turned in after the due date; no penalty assigned	Use to communicate timeliness/work habits; the grade is included in the overall average
Incomplete (I)	Turned in, but only partially finished; no penalty assigned	Use to indicate an assignment is not complete enough to score; the code should be removed when the assignment is revised, and then a new grade should be entered
Cheated (Ch)	Turned in, but calculated as a zero despite any score entered	Teacher discretion and in coordination/communication with administration
Exempt (X)	Removes assignment from grade calculation	Used to indicate an assignment is excused and does not need to be completed; teacher discretion
Dropped Lowest Score (Dr)	Assignment with lowest percentage will be removed from grade calculation	Teacher discretion

Guidance and Counseling Services

The mission of Gering Middle School's guidance program is to provide a system designed to anticipate and facilitate the educational, career, and personal/social needs of students. A curriculum approach to providing services focuses on the prevention of problems by providing all students with appropriate age level skills and guidance information. Among the many responsibilities of school counselors, the following are primary: Counseling students, consulting with staff members, and integrating guidance services into the school's instructional program. Counselors will meet the developmental needs of all students as well as respond to the special needs and interests of individual students.

The guidance delivery system will ensure that the skills of the counselor are used to optimum advantage; that the work of the psychologists, nurses, and administrators support and enrich the guidance program; that the classroom teacher's already important guidance role is strengthened; and, that parents and community resources are kept informed and encouraged to participate in the development of students.

Hall Passes

Teachers wishing to have unscheduled students in their rooms or elsewhere for special conferences will make out a dated, timed, and signed hall pass and give it to the student before he/she is to use the pass. Teachers receiving the request must also sign and write the time before it is valid. Anytime you have a hall pass, you are to return to your room before the end of the period, and this pass is to be signed and timed by the teacher. We also use E-Hall Pass. Students are granted 2 passes per day.

Health Services

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 when the child is ill and needs to stay home.

In addition, parents/and or guardians have the following notification responsibilities:

- Students from out of state must have a physical/vision exam which was done within the last (six) 6 months of entering school. Students must provide a current immunization report that is compliant with the State of Nebraska guidelines. 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 one (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 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.

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 health care 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 Services 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, Midol, 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 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 NOT carry medication on their person. The only medications allowed to be self carried will be asthma medications and an EPI pen or emergency diabetic medications and students must have 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 staffed with a full-time licensed 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.
5. Parents/guardian shall be the responsible party to bring in meds. The nurse must verify pill/dose count and have parent/guardian sign form.

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 diseased person. Day of onset of specific symptom is counted as "day zero"; the day after onset is "day 1"

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 the 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): Excluded until treated as documented by physician. No exclusion of contacts. Careful hand washing is essential.
6. Fifth Disease: Exclude until fever and malaise are gone. May return with a 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 is 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: Excluded until brought under treatment as documented by physician. No exclusion of contacts. Good personal hygiene is essential. Avoid common use of toilet articles.
10. Influenza: Excluded 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): Excluded for duration of illness. Return with documented physician approval. No exclusion of contacts. Chemoprophylaxis appropriate for family and intimate contacts.
13. Measles (Rubeola): Excluded 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: Excluded until physician approves return.
18. Ringworm: Excluded 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 the same campus from date of diagnosis of first case until 23 days after rash onset of the last known case or until rubella immunization received or laboratory proof of immunity is presented. Report immediately by telephone all cases to the 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): Excluded 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 is 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.

In addition, 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. Students 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. Nausea and/or Vomiting: If a student has nausea and/or vomiting, then remaining out of school for 24-hours is strongly recommended.
4. MRSA (Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus): May return with documented physician approval.

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.

Procedures for Students Who Become Injured or Ill at School

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.

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, an 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 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 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

Student Age Group	Required Vaccines
Ages 2 through 5 year enrolled in a school based program not licensed as a childcare provider	4 doses of DTaP, DTP, or DT vaccine, 3 doses of Polio vaccine, 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 MMR or MMRV given on or after 12 months of age, 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 12th 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 the 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 in Title 173: Control of Communicable Diseases - 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.

This protocol is in effect for the school day hours (7:30 AM-3:30 PM) and after school programs. 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.

The Gering School District employs nurses 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. Basic first aid will be administered to a student. If more extensive care is needed, the parent/guardian (or emergency contact) will be notified, and/or the school will call 911.

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.

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 live 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:
 - 1) chronic head lice infestation or
 - 2) 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:
 - 1) With chronic head lice infestation cases, the nurse will secure documentation of repeated and unsuccessful head lice management measures.
 - 2) 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.
 - 3) 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.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 a 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 a 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 avoid 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 in 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.

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 only 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 to come back.	Any nits farther away than one quarter to one half on the hair shaft are ALREADY 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 Management, P.O. Box 95065, Lincoln, NE 68509-5065. There is a fee per certificate.

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.

Home Work

Students may be required to do homework for several classes. This work is to be ready when class starts. All homework will be completed and turned in according to that grade level team's policy. If a student fails to complete homework or make-up homework on their own time, they may be assigned a specified time to do so.

Honor Roll

Each nine weeks, the honor roll is announced. This is done in recognition of the pupils who have achieved high scholastic ratings in their class work. To be placed on the Honor Roll, students must maintain an average of **3.00** or above for the grading period. All elective and core subjects are used in the computation of grade point for honor roll.

Identification Badges

Students will be issued identification badges at the beginning of the school year. These I.D. badges will be used for various computerized electronic accounting, security and procurement purposes. Students are expected to keep their badges on their person at all times during school hours or at school functions or activities, and be willing to produce their badges upon request by school officials. Lost or damaged I.D. badges must be replaced at a \$5.00 cost to the student.

Incompletes

A grade of "Incomplete" will be given when a student's work for a nine-week period or semester is not finished. Unfinished work, causing the incomplete, must be finished within a two-week period of time. Exceptions to this policy may be made upon recommendation from the Student Assistance Team, due to a 504 Plan, or an IEP.

Infinite Campus

Gering Public Schools utilizes Infinite Campus, a student information system that allows parents/guardians to access their child's records online. By filling out a brief form and getting a password from the Gering Middle School front office, parents will be able to access information about their GMS student and any other of their children in other GPS buildings. Due to privacy concerns, parents must present a photo ID when requesting any student records.

Injuries at School/Insurance

The Gering Public Schools does not pay 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 especially if their son or daughter will be participating in athletics.

Every accident in the school building, on the school grounds, at practice sessions, or at any athletic event sponsored by the school must be reported immediately to the Principal.

Lockers

Each student is assigned a locker with a combination lock to be used for coats, backpacks, school materials, and other necessary supplies. If a locker does not lock securely, students shall inform the office so that better security arrangements may be made. Students will be held responsible for the content and appearance of their lockers. A damage fee may be assessed for destruction of lockers. Lockers are the property of Gering Public Schools and are subject to search without notice if school administrators feel there is reasonable cause for the search. Students are encouraged to leave valuables at home and minimize the amount of money they bring to school. Please have your child mark their personal items for easy identification. The school assumes no responsibility for articles lost or stolen.

Loitering

Students are reminded that unless they are in organized sports, activities, or under the direct supervision of school personnel, they must vacate the premises by 3:45 PM or one-half hour after dismissal. On early-release Wednesdays, students participating in athletics should not return to school grounds until 3:45 PM, when there will be coach supervision.

Lost and Found

Students who find lost articles are asked to take them to the office, where the articles may be claimed by the owner. If articles are lost at school, report that loss to office personnel. The lost and found area will be cleaned out at the end of each nine week period. Items not claimed will be given to local charities.

Media Center

The GMS Media Center will be open Monday through Friday from 7:45 AM – 3:45 PM. If students wish to work in the media center before or after this time, they may make arrangements with the Media Director. Teachers may request an extension of hours in order to accommodate student schedules.

Fine Policy

Students who borrow media center materials are fully responsible for returning them on time and for their care. Fines will be assessed for overdue and damaged materials. Lost materials will be assessed at full purchase.

Media Notification

Representatives of the media, (newspaper, radio, and television), frequently visit our school to gather information, pictures and stories about various topics. Occasionally, due to family, religious, legal or other reasons, parents/guardians do not want their children to receive this publicity. If, as a parent/guardian, this is your wish, forms are available at the school which, when completed, will be kept on hand and referred to when members of the media visit our school. Media personnel will be asked to avoid featuring any child for whom this form is on file. Please note that this procedure cannot apply to public events or to extracurricular programs or activities.

Medication Policy

It is recognized that many children are only able to attend regular school because of the effective use of medication in the treatment of chronic disabilities and acute illnesses. Any student who is required to take medication during the regular school day must comply with school regulations. The following regulations have been developed for the protection of every child receiving medications.

1. Prescription medications must be brought to school by an adult in a prescription container, properly labeled, including the child's name, physician's name, dosage including dates and times for administration. All medication must be accompanied by a signed permit from the parent and physician. The permit must be renewed annually or whenever the medication prescription changes or expires.
2. Over-the-counter medications will be given when brought in by the parent and accompanied by a note giving staff permission to administer the medication on a short-term basis.
3. If emergency medication, such as an inhaler, needs to be carried by a student, written permission needs to be on file at the school from the parent and physician. This permit must be renewed annually. Otherwise, students may not carry medication on their person during the school day. Medications must be kept in the office. No loose capsules, tablets, aspirin or unidentified non-labeled substance will be accepted for dispensing to students by school staff.
4. Gering Middle School is staffed with a full-time nurse. In her absence, the school staff will do everything they can to ensure that medication is given at appropriate times by trained staff members; however, there may be times that a dose may be missed. The student has a responsibility to remember that they need to take their medication.

Parent-Teacher Conferences:

Parent-teacher conferences will be held one time per semester for parents and teachers to discuss the progress of their child. Other conferences may be scheduled as needed by contacting individual teachers or the school office.

Personal Learning Plan & Career Exploration

To spark interest in possible pursuits beyond high school, GMS Career Exploration courses expose students to the Nebraska Career Clusters via the Nebraska Middle School Career Education and Engage! curricula. Throughout the year, students also complete a variety of interest inventories to promote self-awareness related to personal interests, knowledge, and skills.

Pre-Arranged Absences

Please contact the front office to report any pre-arranged absences for your child. If possible, teachers will provide school work ahead of time that is expected to be completed prior to or during the absence. All work missed during the absence will be expected to be completed upon return to school.

Promotion/Retention

Students will be promoted to the next grade level at the end of each school year based on the student's achievement and attendance. Students who cannot demonstrate proficiency at their grade level will be considered for retention. Acceptable student proficiency will be based on the following:

1. Promotion from 6th, 7th and 8th grade: Students must successfully complete 2 of the 4 core subjects (Math, English, Science, Social Studies). This means that if a student fails 3 of the 4 core subjects, they could be retained at grade level.

2. Students who are unable to meet the proficiency requirements will have additional opportunities to demonstrate proficiency. Such opportunities may include, but shall not be limited to a mandatory summer school program focused on areas of deficiency or other such alternatives conducted by the district outside of the regular school day. Students must also meet the school attendance policy to be considered for promotion.
3. When a student is not successful in completing 2 of the 4 core subjects for a quarter, both the student and parent(s)/guardian will be informed. A conference will be held immediately after that quarter with the student, parent(s)/guardian, teacher(s), counselor, psychologist, and administrator to determine the interventions necessary to support the student's success.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued at the end of each quarter. Letter grades are used to designate a student's progress. A grade of "I" (incomplete) received at the end of a grading period must be made up within two weeks or missing assignments will receive grades of "0" and those grades will be averaged into the final grade. No incompletes will be given at the end of the fourth quarter, as all coursework must be completed by the end of the fourth quarter.

(Response to Intervention)

Multi-Tiered Student Support Team (MTSS) Team

MTSS is a system of service delivery 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). At its foundation, MTSS includes measuring the performance of all students, and basing educational decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, and intervention on student response to each tier of instruction.

Gering Middle School recognizes that students can have experiences that may affect their academic and social life. The primary goal of the MTSS is preventative in nature designed to help students in preventative and responsive manners.

Students in need of information or help may be referred by various individuals, including self, peers, family, or school staff. Referral forms can be obtained from any staff member. Completed forms can be returned to any staff member. 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.

Once a problem has been identified and the extent of the problem is known, the student will be encouraged to accept the needed help. Team members will help students consider possible options and encourage them to make decisions that will resolve their problem in a positive way. At some level, parents may be involved in the process.

The next step involves providing help for the student. The assistance recommended will vary with the type and severity of the problem. Finally, student assistance programs will provide support for students as they make adjustments in their lifestyles and seek to make appropriate life decisions.

In cases of extreme physical, mental, or family circumstances, the MTSS team may elect to allow students to have a schedule that deviates from the listed requirements.

Safety Glasses

As required by law, approved safety glasses will be required of every student and teacher while participating in or observing vocational, technical, industrial technology, science, and art classes where applicable. All visitors to these areas must check out and wear a pair of safety glasses when entering any of these areas.

Searches

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

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

1. School officials may conduct a search if there is a reasonable basis to believe that the search will uncover evidence of a crime or a school rule violation. The search is to be conducted in a reasonable manner under the circumstances.
2. Illegal items or other items reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety of others or a threat to educational purposes may be taken and kept by school officials. Any firearm or other weapon will be confiscated and delivered to law enforcement officials as soon as practicable.
3. Items which have been or are reasonably expected to be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process (that is, "nuisance items") may be removed from student possession. These items may not be returned to the student, depending on the circumstances surrounding the situation.

Severe Weather and School Cancellations

The Superintendent of Schools is authorized by the Board of Education to close public schools in the event 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 radio and television stations.

Decision to Close Schools. A decision to close school is made when forecasts by the weather service, law enforcement advisories or civil defense officials indicate that it would be unwise to hold school. If possible, a decision about the next school day will be made the night before. However, an early decision is not always possible because of uncertain weather conditions. If necessary, school officials will make periodic assessments of conditions during the night and will make any school closure decisions by 6:00 AM, if possible. In any case, an announcement will be made via school social media sites and 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).

School Closure 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 via social media and through local media outlets. Parents should have a plan in place to accommodate these circumstances.

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 absence for legitimate causes provided parents properly notify the school of their decision. Parents may pick up their children in inclement weather during the school day.

What Not To Do

Parents should not attempt to come to school during a tornado warning, as 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.

Emergency Conditions

The school has a signal which, when activated, includes the necessity to either evacuate the building or to move to safer areas of the building. 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.

Signing A Child In And Out Of School

Parents or guardians are required to sign their children in and/or out of school if they are arriving after their first class or leaving prior to their final class. The parent or guardian must report to the main office for this purpose. The sheet for signing a child in and/or out of school is located on the front counter at the main office. If a child is being signed out, the school secretary will call the appropriate classroom and indicate to the teacher that the child is leaving. Parents are not to go directly to the classrooms. The school will only release children to adults designated on Infinite Campus.

If there is a special circumstance, such as a court order limiting access to a student by a parent or guardian, affecting who a student can be released to, the parent must inform the Principal and provide the Principal with a copy of that order to maintain on file at the school.

Students are to stay on or within the boundary of the sidewalk. When students leave the campus without authorization, the school will:

1. Notify parents or person(s) designated by parents immediately
2. Communicate with parents or designee that
 - a. Parent or designee should begin to search for the student, and
 - b. School will notify the police department
 - c. If parents or designee cannot be reached, verification and search procedures will still be implemented by school and/or police officials. The police will be informed if the student is potentially dangerous to self or others.

Smoke-Free Environment

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

Special Education Services

What Does Special Education Mean?

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

Students Who May Benefit

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

How are Students With Disabilities Identified?

Referrals are made by teachers or parents to a Student Assistance Team. If the student assistance team or comparable problem solving team feels that all viable alternatives have been explored, a referral for multidisciplinary evaluation is completed. An evaluation is conducted to assist in the determination of whether a student has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services the student needs. The evaluation is conducted only with written consent of a parent or guardian. A multidisciplinary evaluation team (MDT) will then meet to determine whether the student is eligible for special education.

Independent Evaluation

If a parent disagrees with an evaluation completed by the school district, the parent has a right to request an independent educational evaluation at public expense. Parents should direct inquiries to school officials to determine if the school district will arrange for further evaluation at 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.

Reevaluation

Students identified for special education will be reevaluated 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 will obtain parental consent prior to conducting any reevaluation of a student with a disability.

Individual Education Program (IEP)

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

Special Education Placement

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

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

More Information

Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of the District's special education policy, the Parental Rights in Special Education brochure, or a copy of the Nebraska Department of Education Rule 51 (special education regulations and complaint procedures) or Rule 55 (special education appeal procedures) may contact the Superintendent. A notice of parental rights, Rules 51 and 55 and more information about special education are also available at the Nebraska Department of Education's website: <http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SPED/sped.html>.

Students with Disabilities: Section 504

Accommodations and related services are made available to students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Under Section 504, parents have the following rights:

1. Have your child take part in, and receive benefits from, public education programs without discrimination because of your child's disability.
2. Have the school district advise you of your rights under federal law.
3. Receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation or placement of your child.
4. Have your child receive a free appropriate public education. This includes the right to be educated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate. It also includes the right to have the school district make reasonable accommodations to allow your child an equal opportunity to participate in school and school-related activities.

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

Student Council

The Gering Middle School Student Council is an organization representing the student body. Representatives to the student council are elected in the fall. To be elected, students must be of good character, have leadership ability, and maintain at least average citizenship and scholastic grades. Students may be requested to resign their position if their citizenship or scholastic average falls below minimum acceptable standards as established by the student council.

Student Records

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, major field of study, 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.

Surveys

Surveys of students are occasionally administered by school personnel. In the event that an external survey is conducted, the Principal or designee shall notify parents/legal guardians of students to be surveyed, the nature of the survey, the date and time when the survey shall be administered, and the purposes or uses of the survey results. School officials shall honor any parent/legal guardian's request to have his/her student exempt from participation in the survey.

Telephones

The office will not be responsible for personal messages for students during the school day, nor will students be called from class for a telephone call or message except in an emergency. If a student receives a phone call, a message will be taken and delivered at the earliest possible convenience.

Textbooks/Chromebooks

Textbooks and Chromebooks are assigned to your personal care. You are held accountable for them and will be required to pay for loss or excessive damage. Students may be asked to place their name in ink on the inside front cover of each book when they are issued.

Title I Information

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 programming, meaning all students can benefit from Title I. 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.

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

Transcripts

Students requesting transcripts must provide the office with a 24-hour notice. Students are responsible for making sure they have the necessary courses and credits to meet graduation requirements.

Transferring from Gering Public Schools

If a student should find it necessary to withdraw from school, it is very important that s/he secure a clearance slip from the principal's office and have it signed by all of his/her teachers and parent/guardian. The slip is to be returned to the office after it has been signed by all individuals. Failure to check out of school in this manner will cause records to remain incomplete, making it impossible to send credits to another school.

Transportation Services

Transportation to and from school is provided to students in accordance with law and Board policy. Students may also be transported on field trips and when participating in school activities. Students are expected to follow the behavioral expectations for riding school buses. All buses are equipped with audio and video recorders.

Behavior on School Buses

While riding school buses you are expected to follow the same student conduct rules which apply when you are on school property or attending school activities, functions or events. There are also special conduct rules for riding school buses. These rules also apply to riding other school vehicles.

1. Rules for Getting On and Off the Bus

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

2. Rules on the Bus

- a. Be respectful of the bus driver. Immediately follow all directions of the driver and any paraeducator or adult on the bus.
- b. Sit in your seat facing forward. Use seat belts in vehicles in which they are available.
- c. Talk quietly and use appropriate language.
- d. Keep all parts of your body inside the bus.
- e. Keep your arms, legs and belongings to yourself.
- f. No fighting, harassment, bullying, intimidation or horseplay.
- g. Do not throw any object.
- h. No eating, drinking, use of tobacco, vaping, alcohol, drugs or flammables.
- i. Do not bring any weapon (real or imitation) or dangerous objects on the school bus.
- j. Do not damage the school bus.

3. Getting the Driver's Assistance

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

4. Consequences for Rule Violations

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

Video Surveillance

The Board of Education has authorized the use of video cameras on school district property and district vehicles to ensure the health, welfare and safety of all staff, students and visitors to district property, and to safeguard district facilities, school buses 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 or in district vehicles. 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.

Visitors to the Building

Visitations by individuals wishing to observe the instructional program at Gering Public Schools are welcomed, so long as such visits have the purpose of gaining an insight into the educational or instructional dynamics within the school setting. Individuals wishing to observe in the school must submit a request in writing to the building principal **24 hours prior** to the visitation.

Student age visitors are NOT permitted in Gering Middle School without the accompaniment of a parent or guardian.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

General Requirements for Activity Participation

Any student participating in a school activity must exhibit good citizenship in the school and in the community. Activities in the school shall be organized and administered to contribute to the health, worthy use of leisure time, citizenship, and character objectives of education.

A student must be in attendance the **ENTIRE** school day in order to participate in a practice, game or activity. If, however, she/he secures the administration's permission prior to the absence, participation may be acceptable

When activities occur during regular school hours, only eligible participants or those students with prior administrative approval will be excused for the event. While at the event/activity, any non-participating student must remain under the direct supervision of a parent/guardian.

Activity Participation - Extra-Curricular Guidelines

The following procedures are designed to put into practice the following philosophies:

1. Extracurricular Program: Students who participate in Gering Public Schools' extracurricular program receive benefits not accorded the student who does not participate in extracurricular activities; therefore, students have an additional responsibility to represent the school and its programs in a manner symbolic of the goals, objectives, mission, and philosophy of the Gering Public Schools.
2. Student Misconduct: A policy that has significant consequences for inappropriate student behavior sends a strong message to students that they need to reflect upon their behavior at all times and to make appropriate decisions. This policy may also provide students with a rationale to resist negative peer pressure.

Extracurricular Activities governed by this policy include but is not limited to football, volleyball, softball, cross country, soccer, tennis, basketball, wrestling, swimming, track, golf, speech & debate, Harmony, treble choir, mixed chorus, instrumental band, jazz band, National Honor Society (Middle School and High School), all school play, musical, Mock Trial, cheerleading, Student Council, and other clubs and organizations. This listing is not intended to be all-inclusive and at times may apply to additional activities that exhibit similar characteristics to those listed.

The following student conduct shall constitute grounds for suspension of the privilege to participate in extracurricular activities.

1. Possessing, chewing, vaping or smoking tobacco during the season

2. Engaging in the unlawful possession, selling, dispensing, or use of a controlled substance as defined in section 28-401, or alcohol as defined in section 53-1-3 or being under the influence of a controlled substance or alcohol.
3. Student misconduct that may result in in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension.
4. Serious student misconduct as defined in section 79-267 of the State of Nebraska School Laws and the Student Parent Handbook (“...grounds for long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment...”)

Affected students are those who participate in extracurricular activities and have been cited by law enforcement officers or are determined to have committed one of the above-mentioned conducts.

Affected students, Item 1, will be handled in the following manner:

1. First offense: Suspension from all activities pending enrollment in a tobacco/vaping cessation class/online course and subject to consequences in the Discipline Policy.
2. Second and subsequent offenses: Suspension from all activities pending completion of a tobacco/vaping cessation class/online course cessation and subject to consequences in the Discipline Policy.

Affected students, Items 2-3, will be handled in the following manner:

1. First offense: Suspension from all public events, not to exceed three events or a period of two weeks.
 - a. Students shall practice with the team.
 - b. An event is a scheduled day.
 - c. Students must complete a sport or an activity in good standing for events to be considered.
2. Second offense: A second such infraction will result in the student being suspended from all activities for a period of 9 weeks. Students may be reinstated after complying with the following: E-1 and successful completion of an 8-hour drug/alcohol education class or counseling.
3. Subsequent Offenses: Suspension from all activities for one calendar year and successful completion of an 8-hour drug/alcohol education class or counseling.

The policy governs infractions that occur throughout the school year, inclusive of extracurricular activities that extend into August and June. Violations that occur out of season will take effect at the start of the student’s participation in an activity. Decisions affecting students will be made by the School Principal or designee. Appeals to the decision may be made to the Superintendent of Schools according to the District’s Public Complaint Procedure (District Policy 1312).

GERING MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT CONTROL AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

The Board believes that any unit of society must have rules and regulations designed to establish order and to protect all members of the community in the exercise of their rights and responsibilities. The Superintendent of Schools is directed to establish rules and regulations of conduct which are fundamentally fair, justly applied, and consistent with the laws and constitution of the State of Nebraska and the United States. The Board of Education also authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to delegate to other school officials the authority and responsibility to administer these rules and regulations and develop additional rules and regulations within the limits of Nebraska Statutes, Board of Education Policy and administrative regulations.

These rules and regulations should prohibit any misconduct during the school day:

- A. on school grounds
- B. by a participant in school activities
- C. as a spectator at school activities involving Gering participants
- D. off school grounds, if there is a substantial interference with school purposes that causes or creates a reasonable likelihood that it will cause a substantial disruption in, or material interference with, any school function, activity or purpose, or that interferes with the health, safety, wellbeing, or the rights of self or others.

Students shall be expected to regard staff members as individuals, employed to provide direct or indirect contributions to learning. While students are to have considerable latitude in making choices for them, they shall be required to respect the rights of staff members (and other students as well) and interference with those rights

shall not be condoned. No student shall have the right to interfere with the efforts of instructional staff to coordinate or assist in learning, to disseminate information for purposes of learning, or to otherwise implement a learning program. Nor shall a student have a right to interfere with the motivation to learn or the learning activities and efforts of other students. The Gering Middle School administration 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.

Violations of school rules and procedures will be handled to aid in maintaining and promoting an orderly environment within which students can learn and grow. The administration of discipline is designed to maintain order and be uniform, fair and unbiased. Application of specific disciplinary measures can be found in the section entitled "Progressive Discipline Procedures" and will serve as a guide toward holding students accountable for their actions in a fair and consistent manner. The administration of the progressive discipline procedures cannot be absolute for all students in all situations; therefore, the administration will consider mitigating circumstances when assigning discipline to individual students. In the event that a student's offense does not fall within a defined category, the administration will assign discipline at a level consistent with like offenses. In all cases the staff and administration at Gering Middle School will adhere to the student's due process rights.

Discipline procedures will be handled case by case. Consequences may vary from student to student and situation to situation. When students are assigned to the office, actions taken are solely at the discretion of the administrator. Students who have been suspended or expelled from school may NOT be on any school grounds or at school activities without permission from an administrator.

Alternative Education Plan for Expelled Students

In the case of an expelled student, an alternative education plan will be provided to the student according to provisions outlined in Board Policy 505.04 and pertinent regulations and procedures.

Definition of Discipline

Discipline shall be regarded as a process designed to teach, model, and use appropriate strategies to reinforce the behaviors necessary to ensure a safe and productive learning environment by changing unacceptable behavior to acceptable behavior, and to hold students accountable for inappropriate behaviors.

Detentions

Teachers may detain students after school hours. Before assigning students to detention, the teacher will inform the student of the conduct that allegedly constitutes the violation, and the student will be given an opportunity to explain his/her version of the incident. An assigned staff member will help with detention during designated times of the day.

All students will bring work to detention and will not be allowed to sleep. In addition to detention, teachers may require a student to come either before school or remain after school with prior notice given to the student. Students must make arrangements for their own transportation.

A student who is unable to achieve self-discipline and has a rapid accumulation of detentions will be subject to short-term removal from class. Detention will be held in a designated room three days per week (Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays). Students who do not report to detention at their appointed time will be assessed additional consequences.

Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs)

It is of critical importance that Gering Middle School maintains a safe, predictable learning environment conducive to the learning of all students. By maintaining and adhering to the schoolwide expectations related to the use of personal electronic devices (PEDs), we will work to ensure that every student is provided the opportunity to access high levels of learning and feel safe at school.

We believe that PEDs (e.g., cell phones, earbuds, smartwatches), do not serve an academic purpose and have the potential to lead to the following negative outcomes for students:

- Disengagement from class activities
- Disengagement from positive personal relationships with staff and students
- Cyberbullying
- Elopement from class and other attendance-related activities
- Verbal or physical altercations or other safety-related activities

As such, GMS will be a PED-free campus. This means that students will be asked to store all PEDs in their backpacks/lockers between the hours of 8:00 AM-3:15 PM. Any requests for temporary access to a PED must be made directly to school administration. A final decision on any exception will be made by GMS administration to ensure the policy is being implemented in a consistent, equitable manner.

In the event a student is in violation of the stated expectations, the PED will be confiscated and stored in the main office. The following consequences will be utilized for repeat offenses.

Consequences

- 1st Offense - Student may pick up PED in main office after 3:20 PM
- 2nd Offense - Parent/guardian will be notified to pick up PED between 3:20-4:00 PM
- 3rd Offense - Parent/guardian must conference with an administrator prior to picking up the PED.
- 4th Offense - Student will be removed from instructional space and receive a 1 day in-school suspension (ISS). Parent/guardian must conference with an administrator prior to picking up the PED.
- 5th Offense - Student will be removed from instructional space and receive a 1 day out-of-school suspension (OSS). Parent/guardian must conference with an administrator prior to picking up the PED. An individual student/parent plan will be created.

Students may use PEDs when authorized pursuant to an Individual Education Plan (IEP), a Section 504 Accommodation Plan, or a Health Care Plan, or pursuant to a plan developed with the student's parent when the student has a compelling need to have the device (e.g., a student whose parent is in the hospital could be allowed limited use of the cell phone for family contacts, so the family can give the student updates on the parent's condition).

Definitions

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

Prohibited Use of Electronic Devices

Students shall not use electronic devices for any of the following: (a) activities which disrupt the educational environment; (b) illegal activities in violation of state or federal laws or regulations; (c) unethical activities, such as cheating on assignments or tests; (d) immoral or pornographic activities; (e) activities in violation of Board or school policies and procedures relating to student conduct and harassment; (f) recording others (photographs,

videotaping, sound recording, etc.) without direct administrative approval and consent of the person(s) being recorded, other than recording of persons participating in school activities that are open to the public; (g) "sexting;" or (h) activities which invade the privacy of others. Such student misuses will be dealt with as serious school violations, and immediate and appropriate disciplinary action will be imposed, including, but not limited to, suspension and expulsion from school.

Disposition of Confiscated Electronic Devices

Electronic devices possessed or used in violation of this policy will be confiscated by school personnel and returned to the student or parent/guardian at an appropriate time. If an electronic device is confiscated, the electronic device shall be taken to the school's main office to be identified, placed in a secure area, and returned to the student or student's parent/guardian between 3:20-4:00 PM.

Inappropriate cell phone use during non-school hours or off school grounds but related to school activity or having a nexus to the learning environment, may result in consequences up to recommendation for expulsion. Inappropriate cell phone use during school hours may result in consequences up to recommendation for expulsion. Examples are but not limited to; possession of and/or photos taken of exposed individuals, threats against another person and those uses considered illegal by law. Student cell phones, including, but not limited to, text messages and digital photos, may be searched by the District, under limited circumstances. Specifically, school officials may not search students' cell phones, including the accessing and reading of their text messages and digital photos, unless those officials (1) have a reasonable suspicion, based on objective and articulable facts, that the search will provide evidence that the particular student was violating either the law or a school rule; and (2) the scope of the search is reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the nature of the infraction.

Penalties for Prohibited Use of Electronic Devices

Students who receive a "sexting" message are to report the matter to a school administrator and then delete such message from their electronic device. Students shall not participate in sexting or have any "sexting" message on their electronic devices regardless of when the message was received while on school grounds or at a school activity. Students who violate the prohibitions of this policy shall be subject to the imposition of appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, provided that at a minimum the following penalties shall be imposed:

1. Students found in possession of a "sexting" message shall be subject to a one (1) day suspension from school.
2. Students who send or encourage another to send a "sexting" message shall be subject to a five (5) day suspension from school.

Chromebooks

Students who do not follow guidelines for the appropriate use of school-issued Chromebooks will face school consequences as follows:

- 1st offense: Parent Contact; formal warning.
- 2nd offense: Loss of Chromebook privileges for 5 school days and a formal office referral.
- 3rd offense: Loss of Chromebook privileges the length to be determined by GMS administration; formal office referral. GMS administration reserves the right to take away Chromebook privileges at any point.

School Email

Students who use school email for personal use and/or in an inappropriate way may be subject to losing their email privileges.

Transmitting or Distributing Inappropriate Material

Students who create or distribute information via cell phone, e-mail, or through a web site that results in or is likely to result in the disruption of the educational process, advocates a violation of the Gering Middle School Code of Conduct (i.e. recording a fight), or is sexually explicit (commonly called "sexting") may face additional

disciplinary actions such as in-school suspension and/or out of school suspension as deemed appropriate by administration.

Reporting to Law Enforcement

Violations of this policy regarding the prohibited use of electronic devices that may constitute a violation of federal or state laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, the Nebraska Child Protection Act or the Nebraska Child Pornography Prevention Act shall be reported to appropriate legal authorities and law enforcement.

Responsibility for Electronic Devices

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

Fighting

Fighting, either physical or verbal, is prohibited on school property or at school-sponsored events. A student shall not threaten, cause or attempt to cause physical injury to any student or to a school employee. The school insists that students seek the assistance of teachers, counselors, and administrators to resolve conflicts. Students who engage in fighting will be disciplined, a conference involving the student, parent, and administrator will be held prior to the student's return to school and the police will be notified. Multiple instances of fighting, or whenever a staff member is injured, will result in mandatory reassignment or expulsion. (Nebraska School Law Section 79-4, 170-9-4, 205)

Possession of Firearms on School Grounds

Any person who possesses a firearm in a school, on school grounds, in a school owned vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event shall be guilty of the offense of unlawful possession of a firearm on school grounds. (LB 988)

1. Unlawful possession of a firearm on school grounds is a Class IV misdemeanor. Any firearm possessed in violation of this offense shall be confiscated without warrant by a police officer or may be confiscated without warrant by school administrative or teaching personnel.
2. After the firearm is no longer needed as evidence, it shall be destroyed in such manner as the court may direct.
3. Students possessing firearms on school grounds will be disciplined according to category VI "Possession of Firearms" of the progressive discipline policy.

Gang Activity or Association

For the purpose of these policies, a gang is a group of three or more people who:

1. Interact together to the exclusion of others;
2. Claim a territory or area;
3. Have a name;
4. Have rivals/enemies;
5. Exhibit antisocial behavior and are often associated with crime or a threat to the community. The type of dress, apparel, activities, acts, behavior or manner, or grooming displayed, reflected, or participated in by the student shall not:
 - a. Lead school officials to believe that such behavior, apparel, activities, acts, or other attributes are gang related or would disrupt or interfere with the school environment or activity and/or educational objectives;
 - b. Present a physical safety hazard to self, students, staff members, or other employees;

- c. Create an atmosphere in which the well-being of a student, staff member, or other person is hindered by undue pressure, behavior, intimidation, overt gesture, or threat of violence, or
- d. Imply gang membership or affiliation by written communication, marks, drawing, painting, design, or emblem upon any school or personal property or on one's person.

If the student's dress or behavior is in violation of these regulations, the principal or designee will ask the student to make the appropriate correction. If the student refuses, the parent/guardian will be notified and asked to make the necessary correction. The principal or designee will make the final decision and take appropriate corrective or disciplinary action.

Harassment and Bullying Policy

A top priority 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.

Students are expected to conduct themselves as good citizens at all times, free of any bullying or harassing behavior toward others. Harassment of another student, school employee, agent or official on the basis of the person's gender, race, color, age, religion, national origin, marital status or disability is strictly prohibited. Students are prohibited from using electronic devices (e.g., computers, cell phones, tablets, iPods, etc.) and mediums (e.g., social media, internet, apps, etc.) to bully, harass or threaten any student or staff member. If a student violates this requirement and the violation results in a material and substantial disruption of the educational process, the offending student may face disciplinary actions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Students should be advised that this form of disruption of the educational process may subject them to disciplinary actions, even if the student originally accesses the computer device or Internet site while off-campus or after school hours.

Bullying and Harassment

Bullying is defined to mean 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, subject to the general rule regarding prohibited use of electronic devices stated above. Bullying is further defined to include any intentional, hostile or offensive verbal, written, graphic, demonstrative, or physical act that has the purpose of exerting domination over another student through the act of intimidating, frightening, oppressing, or adversely controlling the student and that is disruptive of the educational process.

Bullying is behavior during 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. 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. Bullying and 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 victims 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.

Behavior is considered **bullying** when the following four elements are present

1. Unwanted aggressive behavior
2. Intended to hurt someone physically, verbally, emotionally, or electronically

3. Imbalance of power socially, physically, or emotionally
4. Repeated or likely to be repeated over time

In student-friendly language, when someone says or does something intentionally to be hurtful and they keep doing it even when you tell them to stop or show them you're upset, that behavior would be considered **bullying**.

Gering Public Schools encourages parents to play an active role in monitoring and managing bullying behavior. Please consider utilizing the following parent actions when bullying behavior is present:

Step 1: Schools are mandated to have a bullying policy. Ask the school for a copy of their bullying policy. If the bullying is unlawful, the police can be contacted.

Step 2: Keep record of the incidents: date, location, all who were involved, and what happened. Save emails, texts, and screenshots of electronic incidents. Identify the part(s) of the policy not being enforced.

Step 3: Ask for help to solve the bullying rather than laying blame. First, discuss with teacher and principal the part(s) of the policy not being followed. If necessary, discuss with the superintendent the part(s) of the policy not being followed.

Harassment is further defined as any intentionally harmful, demeaning, or disparaging acts, words, symbolic representations, or behaviors used by a student or students against others that is disruptive of the educational process. This includes, but is not limited to, bullying, verbal, physical, visual, or graphic actions such as name-calling, taunting, mocking, slandering, humiliating, defaming, teasing, pestering, and making derogatory remarks, demeaning jokes, disparaging drawings, or notes. Harassment is defined as behavior which is: severe, pervasive, or persistent; creates a hostile environment at school; is sufficiently serious that it interferes with or limits a student's ability to participate in or benefit from school services, activities, or opportunities; and is based on a student's race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or religion. Bullying and harassment based on protected class is unique and may require additional investigation. The appropriate district staff member or coordinator will promptly investigate bullying complaints that violate the district's antidiscrimination policies pursuant to the district's complaint policies.

Pop and Candy

Consumption of pop, candy or other snack items shall be confined to designated areas.

Profanity

Profanity is not an acceptable manner of expressing oneself. Use of profanity will result in disciplinary action from the principal or the assistant principal's office.

Skateboards, Hoverboards, Scooters, Skate Shoes

Skateboards, scooters, hoverboards, or skate shoes are not allowed in the hall or school lockers. These are not to be ridden in or around the school. Please leave these items at home.

Smoking, Tobacco and Vaping

Students who are found to be in possession of tobacco or vaping products, tobacco or vaping paraphernalia/contraband, or any smoking object/device, including but not limited to electronic cigarettes, advanced personal vaporizers, vape pens, vape mods, and all similar devices on school property (including school vans, trucks, and/or buses) during the school day, as well as after school hours, will be subjected to the following discipline procedures.

Students with smoking, tobacco and vaping violations will be assigned consequences as follows:

- 1st Offense: 3-5 days of OSS, depending on whether the student is a first-time offender and a mandatory completion of Health On-line Educational course titled: Nicotine 101-This is an innovative online course that educates students the harmful effects of various forms of nicotine so they can make healthy, informed choices.

- 2nd Offense: 5-10 days OSS and completion of Accountability Project regarding the harmful effects of various forms of nicotine. Parent Contact Made
- All other offenses: 10 days OSS up to possible expulsion

Solicitations

In consideration of the large number of youth organizations that use raffles or some other types of solicitation as fund raising activities, and in the interest of fairness, fund raising activities will be restricted solely to school sponsored organizations. Any fundraising activity that takes place on school property must have administrative approval.

Standards of Student Conduct Pertaining to Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco and Vaping Products

These standards are in addition to standards of student conduct elsewhere adopted by board policy or administrative regulation. The District's standards prohibit the possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs or alcohol on school premises, in school vehicles, or as a part of any of the school's activities on or off school premises. Conduct prohibited at places and activities as hereinabove described shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

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

Disciplinary Sanctions

Violation of any of the above prohibited acts will result in disciplinary sanction being taken within the bounds of applicable law, up to and including expulsion and referral to appropriate authorities for criminal prosecution. In particular, students should be aware that:

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

Intervention

The District does not have the authority or responsibility to make medical or health determinations regarding chemical dependency. However, when observed behavior indicates that a problem exists which may affect the student's ability to learn or function in the educational environment, the school has the right and responsibility to refer the student for a formal chemical dependency diagnosis based on behavior observed by school staff.

Administration

The administration is authorized to adopt such administrative rules, regulations or practices necessary to properly implement this policy. Such regulations, rules or practices may vary the procedures set forth herein to the extent necessary to fit the circumstances of an individual situation. Such rules, regulations and practices may include administrative forms, such as checklists to be used by staff to record observed behavior and to determine the proper plan of action.

Pursuant to school 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 Gering Public Schools has determined that the possession or use by students of tobacco, vaping or tobacco products, alcohol, narcotics, or other dangerous and/or illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia shall be prohibited:

1. during the school day
2. on school grounds
3. by a participant in school activities
4. as a spectator at school activities involving Gering participants.

Students who possess or use vaping products, tobacco products, alcohol, 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. Students involved in extracurricular activities shall be subject to additional disciplinary actions. 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. This information will be provided to each student at the beginning of the school year.

Student Appearance

Students at Gering Public Schools are expected to dress in a way that is appropriate for the school setting. Students should not dress in a manner that is dangerous to the health and safety of anyone or interferes with the learning environment or teaching process in our school. Following is a list of examples of attire that will not be considered appropriate, such list is not exclusive and other forms of attire deemed inappropriate by the administration may be deemed inappropriate for the school setting:

- A. Clothing that shows an inappropriate amount of bare skin or underwear (midriffs, spaghetti straps, sagging pants) or clothing that is too tight, revealing or baggy, or tops and bottoms that do not overlap or any material that is sheer or lightweight enough to be seen through (leggings, tights, yoga pants), or otherwise of an appropriate size and fit so as to be revealing or drag on the ground
- B. Leggings, tights, yoga pants are permitted only if worn with a shirt whose length reaches the bottom of your fingers
- C. Shorts, skirts, or skorts that do not reach mid-thigh or longer.
- D. Clothing or jewelry that advertises or promotes beer, alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs.
- E. Clothing or jewelry that could be used as a weapon (chains, spiked apparel) or that would encourage "horse-play" or that would damage property (e.g. cleats).
- F. Headwear including hats, caps, bandanas, hoods, and scarves;
- G. Clothing or jewelry which exhibits nudity, makes sexual references or carries lewd, indecent, or vulgar double entendre.
- H. Clothing or jewelry that is gang-related.

Consideration will be made for students who wear special clothing as required by religious beliefs, disability, or to convey a particularized message protected by law. The final decision regarding attire and grooming will be made by the Principal or Superintendent. In the event a student is uncertain as to whether a particular item or method of grooming is consistent with the school's guidelines, the student should contact the Principal for approval, and may also review such additional posting of prohibited items or grooming which may be available in the Principal's office.

Coaches, sponsors or teachers may have additional requirements for students who are in special lab classes, students who are participants in performing groups or students who are representing the school as part of an extracurricular activity program.

On a first offense of the dress code, the student may call home for proper apparel. If clothes cannot be brought to school, the student will be allowed to change into another clothing item provided by the school. If the student

refuses to change, s/he may be assigned to in-school suspension for the remainder of the day. Students will not be allowed to leave campus to change clothes. Continual violations of the dress code will result in more stringent disciplinary actions, up to expulsion. Further, in the event the dress code violation is determined to also violate other student conduct rules (e.g., public indecency, insubordination, expression of profanity, and the like), a first offense of the dress code may result in more stringent discipline, up to expulsion.

Student Conduct at School Events:

Gering Middle School students, who attend activities at school, or at another location, are reminded that they are representatives of the entire student body. They should conduct themselves in a manner that will bring credit to our school. Students are expected to observe rules and regulations established by Gering Middle School as expressed through this handbook. The administration and staff will work cooperatively with other schools if student conduct becomes a problem. Violation of these rules and regulations could lead to suspension or expulsion from school and/or activities.

Substitute Teachers

Substitutes play a unique role in continuing the educational mission of Gering Public Schools while a teacher is absent from the class. It is critically important to ensure that the substitute's experience at the Gering Middle School will be positive, so that they will continue to feel welcome and serve in our school. Consequences may be doubled for offenses incurred under the direction or supervision of a substitute teacher.

Student Conduct Rules

These student conduct rules are established to maintain a school atmosphere that is conducive to learning, to aid student development, to further school purposes, and to prevent interference with the educational process. Violations of the rules will result in disciplinary action.

The [Nebraska Student Discipline Act](#) will be used to guide the investigation, recommendation, and enforcement of any student discipline procedures. The purpose of the Student Discipline Act is to assure the protection of all elementary and secondary school students' constitutional right to due process and fundamental fairness within the context of an orderly and effective educational process. The sanctions defined in the act shall be interpreted at all times in the light of the principles of free speech and assembly protected under the Constitution of Nebraska and the United States Constitution and in recognition of the right of every student to public education. [Ref. § 79-255]

The school board or board of education may authorize the emergency exclusion, short-term or long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment of any pupil from school for conduct prohibited by the board's rules or standards established pursuant to the Student Discipline Act if such sanction complies with the procedures required by the Act. [Ref. § 79-257]

Delegation of Authority

The school board or board of education may authorize the delegation to other school officials of responsibilities directed to the principal or superintendent by the act. [Ref. § 79-261(3)]

Authorized Actions by Administrators and Teachers

Administrative and teaching personnel may take actions regarding student behavior, other than those specifically provided in the Student Discipline Act, which are reasonably necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or prevent interference with the educational process.

Gering Middle School School Progressive Discipline Procedure:

Gering's discipline plan is designed to be progressive in nature. Students who are repeatedly referred to the principal's office for additional disciplinary measures will be disciplined according to the charts listed below. The initial responsibility for the disciplining of a student, who is disobedient or disrespectful in class, is the classroom teacher. Gering Middle School will make an effort to provide counseling for all students who demonstrate need. School administration reserves the right to accept personal and/or family counseling as an alternative to

expulsion, so long as the student and/or parent(s) continue with counseling until dismissed by the counselor. Each time a student receives an office referral by a teacher or an administrator, s/he will receive a specific number of demerit points based on the type and severity of behavior exhibited. Any points received shall be cumulative throughout the school year. Accumulation of demerit points will result in the following consequences:

- 60 demerit points: 1 day of in-school-suspension
- 90 demerit points: 1 day of out-of-school suspension
- 120 demerit points: 3 days of out-of-school suspension
- 150 demerit points: 10 days of out-of-school suspension
- 180 or more demerit points: may result in recommendation to the Board of Education for expulsion from the Gering Public Schools.

The following definitions of terms are provided in order to help clarify inappropriate behaviors at Gering Middle School.

Arson

The burning of, or attempting to burn, any buildings, or part of any building, structure, or property of the school district.

Bomb Threat

Raising or creating any false alarm of bomb in and to any buildings, or part of any building, structure, or property of the school district by any means or manner whatsoever.

Bullying

Behavior is considered **bullying** when the following four elements are present:

- Unwanted aggressive behavior
- Intended to hurt someone physically, verbally, emotionally, or electronically
- Imbalance of power socially, physically, or emotionally
- Repeated or likely to be repeated over time

In student-friendly language, when someone says or does something intentionally to be hurtful and they keep doing it even when you tell them to stop or show them you're upset, that behavior would be considered **bullying**.

Cheating

To violate rules dishonestly (as on daily work or an examination).

Detentions

Time during the day (before or after school) when a student is required to report to a specified area to make up time. Examples of reasons would be misbehavior, tardies, lack of effort in class or classes, etc.

Discrimination

The act of making unjustified distinctions between people based on the groups, classes, or other categories to which they belong or are perceived to belong.

Disrespect to Faculty Member

Lack of respect to any staff member at Gering Middle School.

Disruption of School/Class/Assemblies

Examples include: Yelling and/or running in the halls, persistent talking in class, horseplay, throwing things, disruptive objects, etc.

Explosives, Fireworks and Foul Substances

Any article containing an explosive or combustible substance, including fireworks, or foul, offensive or injurious substances or compounds, with intent to use the same against the person or property of another.

Expulsion

The term “expulsion” means disciplinary action whereby a student:

1. is separated by the Board of Education from school attendance for a period in excess of ten (10) days.
2. is separated from school attendance for the balance of the then current semester or current year; or
3. suffers a penalty which automatically prevents his or her completing within normal time his or her overall course of study in any school in the school district.

The term does not apply to situations in which a student is assigned a special course of study, enrolled in special classes or given homebound instruction as authorized or required by law, or removed from athletic activities, non-credit school activities or school-provided transportation.

Extortion/Blackmail

The direct attempt to extract money, goods or favors from another individual through coercion, force or threats.

False Alarm of Fire

Raising or creating any false alarm of fire in and to any building, or part of any building, structure or property of the school district by any means or manner whatsoever.

False Reporting

The act of claiming the name of another person to excuse a student from class or school.

Fighting

The act of quarreling (physical or verbal) which could or does result in bodily injury in or on school property, or going to and from school, including any activity under school sponsorship (e.g. dance, athletic event, etc.)

Gross Misbehavior

Misbehaving that is totally beyond simple appropriate behavior, i.e. overt behavior that threatens property or the safety and well-being of others including the promotion of fighting.

Harassment/Intimidation

Any act of threat by force or verbalization against another person.

Illegal Entry

Forced entry or entry without administrative authorization into a building, room or school property.

Illegal Explosives

Possessing, using, threatening to use or transferring any weapon or instrument capable of inflicting bodily injury.

Inappropriate Behavior/Gestures

Behavior on school grounds that is not acceptable as measured by the general standards of the school and community including words, gestures, pictures, spitting, unauthorized games, littering, loitering, etc.

Inappropriate Dress

See Dress Code provisions delineated earlier in the handbook.

Inappropriate Public Displays of Affection (PDA)

Students are not to engage in inappropriate public displays of affection on school property or at school activities. Such conduct includes kissing, touching, fondling, or other displays of affection that would be reasonably considered to be embarrassing or a distraction to others.

Indecent Material

The act of portraying obscenity or vulgarity in pictures or caricatures in assignments, on any personal property visible to others at school, or on any school property.

In-School Suspension

Any disciplinary action whereby a student is separated from class attendance, but is required to be at school. In-school suspension generally lasts from one to three days.

Insubordination

Disregard for the authority of a staff member.

Loitering

Being somewhere other than where authorized and refusing to leave when ordered; being in a school area without an authorized pass.

Long-Term Suspension

More than five school days, but less than twenty school days.

Mandatory Reassignment

Assignment to another educational setting.

Member of the Administrative Staff/Designee

A school district employee who is certificated under the statutes relating to the licensing of teachers and administrators and who has supervisory authority.

Misuse of School Materials/Equipment

Misusing and/or using school materials in an unauthorized manner short of major destruction, e.g. writing on or marking desks, books, lockers, etc., using shop materials, home ec. food products, etc., misuse of computer accounts or materials.

Other School Personnel/Staff Members

All school district employees and functionaries except teachers. The term includes, but is not limited to, student teachers, teacher's aides, cafeteria personnel, custodians, maintenance personnel, bus drivers, etc.

Physical or Verbal Assault

The act of initiating a violent physical or verbal attack against another student on school property, on a school bus or at a school sponsored event.

Plagiarize

To steal and pass off as one's own work without crediting the source, knowingly or unknowingly.

Possession or Illegal Use of Weapon

The act of possession, using or threatening to use any weapon or instrument capable of inflicting bodily injury.

Possession/Use of Tobacco

Smoking by any students or the possession of smoking materials (chewing tobacco, e-cigarettes, vaping products) is not permitted on school property. Smoking shall be defined as being in the immediate proximity of smoking materials (chewing tobacco, e-cigarettes, vaping products) and exhibiting probable suspicion of intent. GMS Substance Abuse Policy governs this rule.

Profanity

The use of language that is unacceptable to school/community standards.

School Property

Any building, buildings, part of any building, structure, land or property of the school district.

Short-Term Suspension

Up to and including five school days.

Suspension

Any disciplinary action whereby a student is separated from school attendance for a period of ten or fewer days and which does not constitute an expulsion. The term does not include situations in which a student is assigned a special course of study, enrolled in special classes or given homebound instruction as authorized or required by law, or removed from athletic activities, non-credit school activities, or school provided transportation.

Theft

The act of acquiring and/or being in possession of the property of another, without consent of the owner.

Trespassing

Entering upon the lands or premises of the school district without authority after having been forbidden to do so by school staff; or upon being notified to depart by members of the school staff, refusing or neglecting to depart as directed.

Truancy

The act of unauthorized absence from school for any period of time. Chronic tardiness may be considered truancy.

Unauthorized Games in School Building

Gambling, poker, etc.

Unlawful Intimidation of School Authority

Interfering with administrators, teachers or other school personnel by force or violence.

Vandalism

Destruction of school property or property belonging to another.

Vape Pen (Vaporizer Pen)

A device used for nicotine or marijuana, which vaporizes the active molecules in concentrated nicotine or marijuana oil. Also called an e-cigarette.

Verbal/Physical/Written Threat to Staff

Any verbal, physical or written threat which insults or abuses any staff member or otherwise shows disrespect.

Vulgarity

Offensive, lewd, obscene language.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE CONSEQUENCES

- A. Detention
- B. Detention(s)
- C. Detention(s) or In-School Suspension
- D. In-School Suspension
- E. In or Out-of-School Suspension (police may be notified)
- F. Out of School Suspension (police may be notified)
- G. Out of School Suspension/Expulsion (police will be notified)
- H. Expulsion (police will be notified)

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE LEVELS

OFFENSE	CAT	PTS	1	2	3	4	5	
1. Inappropriate public display of affection		I	0	A	B	B	C	
2. Dress code violations	I	0	A	B	B	C		
3. Gum	I	0	A	B	B	C		
4. Failure to attend detention (teacher)	I	0	A	B	B	C		
5. Other Cat. I	I	0	A	B	B	C		
6. Sleeping in Class	I	8	A	B	B	C		
7. Disruption of class/school/assembly	I	8	A	B	B	C		
8. Inappropriate behavior/gestures	I	8	A	B	B	C		
9. Profanity/vulgarity	I	8	A	B	B	C		
10. Cell phone (confiscation)	II	8	SEE PROCEDURE ON PG. 42					
11. Repeated violations of Category I	II	8	A	B	B	C		
12. Other Cat. II	II	8	A	B	B	C		
13. Cheating/Plagiarism	II	10	B	B	C	C	D	
14. Skipping/Cutting class	II	10	B	B	C	C	D	
15. Disorderly conduct	II	10	B	B	C	C	D	
16. Failure to identify self to school officials	II	10	B	B	C	C	D	
17. Inappropriate dress	II	10	B	B	C	C	D	
18. Indecent material	III	10	B	B	C	C	D	
19. Jeopard. the safety of oneself or others	III	10	B	B	C	C	D	
20. Leave school grounds w/o permission	III	10	B	B	C	C	D	
21. Lying	III	10	B	B	C	C	D	
22. Misuse of school material & equipment	III	10	B	B	C	C	D	
23. Not following request of school official	III	10	B	B	C	C	D	
24. Trespassing	III	10	B	B	C	C	E	
25. Skipping detentions (office)	III	10	B	B	C	C	D	
26. *Use/poss. of tobacco/vaping products	III	10	F	F	G	G	H Coursework: Nicotine 101	
27. Other Cat. III	III	10	C	C	D	D	E	
28. False call/Forgery of notes	IV	14	C	C	D	D	E	
29. Vandalism 1	IV	14	C	C	D	D	E	
30. Theft 1	IV	14	C	C	D	D	E	
31. Disrespect to faculty members	IV	14	C	C	D	D	E	
32. Other Cat. IV	IV	14	C	C	D	D	E	
33. Gross Misbehavior	V	21	C	D	D	E	F	
34. Harassment/Intimidation/Bullying	V	21	C	D	D	E	F	
35. Discrimination	V	21	D	D	E	F	G	
36. Vandalism 2	V	21	E	E	F	F	G	
37. Theft 2	V	21	E	E	F	F	G	
38. Insubordination	V	21	E	E	F	F	G	
39. Fighting	V	21	E	E	F	F	G	
40. Other Cat. V	V	21	E	E	F	F	G	
41. Indecent behavior	VI	28	E	E	F	F	G	
42. Open/persistent defiance of authority	VI	28	E	E	F	F	G	
43. Threatening behavior	VI	28	E	E	F	F	G	
44. Physical assault	VI	28	E	E	F	G	G	
45. Under the influence of alcohol/drugs	VI	28	E	E	F	G	G	
46. Possess alcohol/drugs/paraphernalia	VI	28	E	E	F	G	G	
47. Other Cat. VI	VI	28	E	E	F	G	G	
48. Extortion	VII	42	F	F	G	H		
49. False fire alarm	VII	42	F	F	G	H		
50. Sell, give, or exchange alcohol/drugs	VII	42	F	F	G	H		
51. Possess of weapon other than firearm	VII	42	F	F	G	H		
52. Possession or use of firecrackers	VII	42	F	F	G	H		
53. Terroristic Threats	VII	42	F	F	G	H		
54. Other Cat. VII	VII	42	F	F	G	H		
55. Arson	VIII	180	G	H	H	H		
56. Bomb threat	VIII	180	H	H	H	H		
57. Physical assault (school employee)	VIII	180	H	H	H	H		
58. Possession and/or use of explosives	VIII	180	H	H	H	H		
59. Use of any instrument as a weapon	VIII	180	H	H	H	H		
60. Possession of firearm	VIII	180	(One calendar year)					
61. Other Cat. VIII	VIII	180	H	H	H	H		

**STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE
PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN TO GERING MIDDLE SCHOOL
WITHIN FIRST WEEK OF THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR**

My signature below indicates that I have received and read the policies contained in the Gering Middle School Handbook. I understand that violations of the district and school's rules and policies, and directions of Gering Middle School staff members, may result in school disciplinary action being taken.

Parent/Guardian's Name (PLEASE PRINT) _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____ DATE: _____

Student's Name (PLEASE PRINT) _____

Student's Signature _____ DATE: _____

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.



GERING

Preschool

~~Gering, NE 69341~~

PARENT HANDBOOK

~~2024-2025~~ 2025-2026

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Section 1: General District Information

Gering Public Schools Mission Statement

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

Early Childhood Mission

At Gering Preschool, our mission is to nurture a love of learning in a safe, joyful, and inclusive environment. We are dedicated to supporting each child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development through play-based learning and meaningful relationships. Together with families, we strive to inspire curiosity, creativity, and confidence in every child as they grow and explore the world around them.

~~Early childhood education provides a language-enriched environment that stimulates and promotes cognitive and physical growth, fosters curiosity, facilitates social development, and encourages children to become independent and self-sufficient.~~

~~The Early Childhood Program (ECP) serves children from birth to two years old who reside in the Gering School district and have developmental delays under state and federal guidelines. The Early Childhood Program (ECP) also offers preschool classes for 3 and 4 **through 5** year-olds' who have developmental delays and also for those who are typically developing.~~

Community Collaboration

Gering Preschool is a collaboration between Gering Public Schools, Educational Service Unit #13 Head Start, and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.

Gering Preschool is governed by the Gering Board of Education, ESU 13

Board of Directors, ESU 13 Head Start Policy Council, and NDE Rule 11. Gering Preschool follows all federal, state, and local regulations and the Head Start performance standards.

Gering Preschool is licensed by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. Our license numbers are as follows:

Geil- CCC1010106 | Lincoln- CCC10102 | Northfield- CCC10100

A copy of DHHS licensing requirements are available upon written request.

District Policy References

The following policies directly align with the Gering Preschool program. We encourage you to reference them on our district website at <https://www.geringschools.net/page/policies>.

- Section 504: Students' Rights and Responsibilities
- Section 508: Student Health and Well-Being Service Handbook
 - ☰ Health Service Handbook
- Section 604: Instructional Curriculum (Special Education Services)
- Section 612: Specialized Student Services
- Section 1005: Public Participation in the School District

Early Childhood Program Staff

Brandy Foos Kory Knight	Preschool Program Supervisor
Matteal Chapin	Geil Preschool Teacher
Stepheni Pitts-Welchlin	Geil Preschool Teacher
Kelsey Southard	Geil Preschool Teacher
Brandy Foos Nikita Anderson	Lincoln ECSE Teacher
Kendra Cardwell	Lincoln Preschool Teacher
Kelsey Sylvester	Lincoln Preschool Teacher
Deanna Ysac	Lincoln Preschool Teacher
Kelsey Engel	Northfield Preschool Teacher
Marley Garcia	Northfield Preschool Teacher
Emily Rose	Northfield Preschool Teacher/ECSE
Vanessa Hernandez Bethany Stoney	Northfield Preschool Teacher
Caleigh Walker	Northfield Preschool Teacher
Brenda Stone	School Psychologist
Bethany Freeling Jennifer Splichal	Speech Pathologist
Jamie Connell Toni Becker	Speech Language Pathologist Assistant
Sarah Schaaf	Birth-3 Speech Language Pathologist
Ashlee Wilson Sheridan Wildhelm	Occupational Therapist Assistant
Michael Moravec	Physical Therapist
Nicole Regan	Superintendent of Schools
Julie Siebke	Director of Student Services
Angela Morris	Geil Elementary Principal
Jesse Neugebauer	Lincoln Elementary Principal
Wendee Powell	Northfield Elementary Principal

Members of the Board of Education

Brian Gopsey Greg Trautman	Board President
B.J. Peters Tracy Wiese	Vice President
Tracy Wiese Matt Kautz	Member
Josh Lacy	Member
John Maser	Member
Greg Trautman Brian Gopsey	Member

Section 2: Admission Information

Admission Requirements

1. All required registration forms completed
2. Current immunization record– required by law upon entering school
3. Copy of original birth certificate- **no student will be allowed to start without a birth certificate**
4. **A child can attend preschool if they are turning 3 or 4 years old on or before July 31st, or if they are 5 years old and won't turn 6 by December 31st of the current school year. *Nebraska Statute* 79-1101.**

Transition to Preschool

It is typical for young children to cry on the first few days of school as they adjust to a new routine and schedule. This only lasts for a few minutes after you leave and they quickly join in the classroom activities. You can help your child with this transition by talking with them, reading books about preschool, and driving by the school and playground before school starts. It is a good idea to begin practicing a good-bye routine with your child before the first day of school.

Toilet Training

Toilet training is an important developmental step, and we encourage families to begin this process at home **prior to the start of preschool**. Children who are already working on toileting skills tend to have an easier, more confident transition into the classroom.

While we understand children develop at different rates, **most children are expected to be toilet trained or nearly independent by age 4 to 5**. If toileting is still a significant challenge at that stage, we'll work closely with families to develop a more intentional plan to support the child at home and school.

Our staff will provide encouragement, routine bathroom visits, and gentle reminders. We ask families to actively participate in this process at home and communicate regularly with us so we can partner in your child's

success.

Section 3: School Day Information

Schedule

Full Day	Half Day
M,T,Th,F: 8:05 AM-3:20 PM Wed: 8:05 AM-2:15 PM (Schedule consistent at all PK locations)	Mon-Fri: 8:05 AM-11:10 AM (Schedule consistent at all PK locations)
Preschool Home Visits	Parent Teacher Conferences
Fall: August 12, 13, & 15 Spring: March 4 & 5	October 6 & 7 3:45 PM- 7:30 PM

Home Visits

Home visits are a requirement. Each family will receive a minimum of two visits from the teacher during the school year. The visits will last approximately 30 minutes. Please notify your teacher or family advocate of changes or cancellations of visits. Should you be unable to keep a scheduled visit due to an emergency, please contact the teacher to cancel the visit. If you do not have a phone available, please leave a note on your door, with an alternative meeting time or way to contact you. By working together we can make home visits a learning experience that is beneficial to your family and to staff.

What We Do In Preschool

- **Circle time** is a group gathering during which we share our ideas, plans, and observations. Circle activities are designed to stimulate youngsters'

thinking, enrich their social skills, and expand their attention spans.

- **Gross-motor activities** give children the opportunity to use their muscles, as well as their imaginations, as they engage in fun, healthy exercises, such as running, jumping and climbing.

- **Fine-motor activities** help improve small-muscle development and eye-hand coordination. Some common items found in the fine-motor/manipulative area include puzzles, beads and laces, pegboards, crayons, and scissors.

- **Art activities** help youngsters creatively express their thoughts and feelings. They help reinforce fine-motor skills and concept development in areas such as colors, shapes, and size relationships.

- **Dramatic-play activities** help children express themselves, practice life skills, improve social skills, increase self-esteem, build vocabulary, and solve problems. We also learn sign language on a regular basis. Dramatic play is just plain fun!

- **Music activities** promote youngster's listening skills, creative expression, and social skills. In music, children explore sound, volume, tempo and rhythm.

- **Science activities** offer children many hands-on opportunities for observation, exploration, investigation, making predictions, and experimentation.

- **Sand and water activities** allow youngsters to experiment with textures and the properties of different substances. These activities also promote the development of other skills, such as math, science, and language.

- **Block play** gives children experience with many different concepts, such as shape and size discrimination, spatial relationships, number skills, balance, organization, cause and effect, and classification. Cooperative play skills, problem solving, and creativity are also promoted in block play.

- **Story time** is designed to help youngsters develop an appreciation and enjoyment of literature. Reading activities enhance children's vocabulary and comprehension skills, and also expand their knowledge.

Teaching Strategies GOLD

Teaching Strategies GOLD/Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines The Gering Early Learning Center uses Teaching Strategies GOLD measuring 38 objectives to ensure whole child growth and development. Each Infant through Preschool in the building has a profile where the teacher enters

anecdotal notes and evidence of the child's work. Teachers share evidence of your child's development during home visits, parent teacher conferences or at the request of the parent or caregiver. Teaching Strategies GOLD and the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines are used together to enhance each child's educational experience.

School Supplies

We ask parents to supply:

- A complete change of clothes to be kept at school
- Diapers, pull-ups, and wipes if your child is not toilet-trained
- A backpack labeled with your child's name
- School supplies on the school supply list need link to [school supply list](#)

Snacks/Lunch

A mission of Gering Public Schools ("District") is to provide curriculum, instruction, and experiences in a health-promoting school environment to instill habits of lifelong learning and health. As part of the wellness policy, students should not bring soda into class. Additionally, parents are encouraged to send healthy foods for classroom celebrations. Students will have regular opportunities to drink water. We strive to offer a variety of healthy snack choices and fresh fruits and vegetables as much as possible.

We make every effort to protect children with food allergies. Please talk to your child's teacher to plan appropriate accommodations.

Field Trips

Throughout the school year, we may be going on field trips. Gering Preschool will follow district policies and procedures. Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of the field trips and permission slips must be secured prior to each field trip.

Class Parties/Special Events

If you would like to furnish treats for parties and special projects, please discuss this with your child's classroom teacher first. We have some children with food allergies and want to keep everyone safe.

Visitors

We welcome classroom volunteers. All visitors will need to sign in at the front office, check out a visitor's badge, and check-in with the teacher. We encourage you to sign up and help where needed. Please communicate with your child's teacher if you would like to come and help.

Family Participation

Opportunities for family participation include, but are not limited to:

- Beginning of Year Open House
- 2 home visits a year- one in the fall and one in the spring, required
- 2 parent-teacher conferences- one in the fall and one in the spring, required
- Volunteering in the classroom
- Volunteering on field trips
- Quarterly Family Engagement Nights
- Parties
- Programs
- Parent Advisory Board
- Head Start Policy Council
- Preparing classroom materials
- Donating materials, snacks, and other supplies

We encourage parents to participate in our program regularly throughout the year. If you have an idea of how you would like to volunteer please talk to your classroom teacher.

Arrival and Dismissal

Gering Preschool requires that you please walk your child to the designated building drop off to meet the teacher for daily check-in no earlier than 7:45 AM. We will release students at the designated building drop off to an authorized person. All parents will be required to fill out a list of people who can pick up their child from school. If a person, other than the parent, comes to the school to pick up the child and they are not on the list, the child will not be released to them. All adults picking up a student other than their own will be required to show photo identification. If at any time during the school year, a parent needs to make changes to their list, contact your child's classroom teacher. You must complete a preschool transportation form to ride the bus. Preschool students riding the bus will be escorted directly to the bus by a designated Gering staff member.

Parking For the safety of students, please adhere to the marked parking and drop off zones at each school.

Late Pick Up Children need to be picked up at the time of dismissal. We understand the occasional emergency will happen and appreciate a phone call to let us know. Timely pickup will be expected. Consistent late pickups may result in additional conversations and extra tuition charges.

Drug and 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 drug/smoke-free environment for our children. When you attend school events, including athletic events, please remember that our grounds are drug/smoke-free and abide by our District's policy. NO SMOKING IS ALLOWED OUTSIDE WHEN WAITING TO DROP OFF OR PICK UP STUDENTS.

Transportation Transportation is available for Special Education students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP). If your child meets the criteria, use the following link to request transportation with First Student. [Transportation Request Link](#)

~~**Transportation** Transportation is offered to students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and to others upon request, following GPS boundary guidelines. To modify or add your child's transportation plan, please contact Stacy Rodriguez at 308-436-3125. If your child won't be riding on a specific day, please call First Student at 308-635-6214.~~

Reporting Absences A written excuse or telephone call to the school office is required for any absence. This is to ensure your child's safety.

Tardiness Children are expected to arrive at school on time. Arriving late to school impacts a child's learning and disrupts the educational process.

Section 4: Tuition Information

Payment Schedule

Payment for preschool tuition is due before the 1st of each month. Tuition prices are based on the free and reduced lunch application [information](#). Payment can be made at the school office or through the [Gering website](#). Please do not send your payment in your child's backpack. A late fee of \$15 will be assessed to any past due account **on the 6th of each month**. **A Gering Public Schools representative may contact you if your account becomes delinquent.** ~~If the account becomes delinquent, Gering Public Schools may remove the student from the program.~~

Sliding Fee Scale

	<u>Half-day Session</u>	<u>Full-day Session</u>
Full Pay	\$130/month	\$350/month
Reduced Pay	\$60/month	\$200/month
Lowest Pay	\$45/month	\$100/month
Head Start	Not Available	Tuition Reimbursement*

Voluntary Termination of Services

A two week notice, in writing, addressed to the program supervisor, is required before withdrawing a child from the preschool program. Failure to provide notice will result in ongoing billings to hold the seat for the student.

DHHS Child Care Subsidy

Our preschool accepts child care subsidy payments from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Families who qualify for assistance through the Child Care Subsidy Program may use their benefits to help cover tuition costs. Subsidy information can be found at <https://dhhs.ne.gov/pages/accessnebraska.aspx>.

To use the subsidy at our preschool:

- Families must have current approval through DHHS and provide all necessary documentation.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for any portion of tuition not covered by the subsidy, including copays or fees not reimbursed by DHHS.
- Attendance must be consistent and documented in accordance with DHHS guidelines. Failure to meet attendance requirements may result in loss of subsidy and/or additional charges to the family.
- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that their subsidy remains active and that all required documentation is submitted to DHHS in a timely manner.

Site License Numbers

Geil- CCC1010106 | Lincoln- CCC10102 | Northfield- CCC10100

Head Start Scholarship

We participate in a partnership with ESU #13 Head Start. This program covers tuition costs for **approximately** 30 income-eligible families. If you would like to be considered for this program, contact **Kory Knight Brandy Fees**. Not all families that apply will be accepted. Copies of income verification will be required at the time of application. Students who turn 5 between January 1 and July 31 will not be eligible.

Snacks at School

~~Every class will be served a snack daily. We ask that all parents bring in a healthy snack~~

~~monthly to keep in the snack cupboard. We do have access to a refrigerator if needed.~~

~~Notify the classroom teacher if your child has any food allergies and dietary requirements before the first day of school. Gering Preschool will accommodate any student with a food allergy. Required paperwork must be filled out and signed by a physician prior to starting school.~~

Tardiness

~~Children are expected to arrive at school each day on time. Arriving late to school impacts a child's learning and disrupts the educational process. Please make sure that your child is dropped off and picked up on time. We do not offer before and after-school care at the preschools. Gering partners with YMCA for after-school programming. Contact the secretary at the building your child attends~~

Section 5: Student Success

YMCA After School Program

Gering partners with YMCA for after-school programming.

Personal Property at School

Personal property that does not have an educational purpose should not be brought to school. This excludes individual blankets for naptime and show-and-tell items. Gering Public Schools will not be responsible for any damage done to personal property or any lost personal property. Please do not allow your child to bring toys to school. There are toys to play with at school.

Active Supervision Policy

1.0 Active Supervision of Children

1.1 Active supervision is a set of strategies for supervising infants, toddlers, and preschool children in classrooms, on or near playgrounds and school buses, and wherever enrolled children are during program

attendance.

A. Program staff, utilizing the following six strategies working together to create an effective approach to child supervision:

1. Set up the environment to support supervision of children at all times. This may include developing and posting a daily classroom schedule for children, which teaching staff and volunteers follow, that helps to keep the day predictable. Consideration of the height and arrangement of classroom furniture and outdoor equipment allows effective monitoring and supervision of children at all times.
2. Position staff to see and reach children at all times. Plans may include staffing charts that identify the staff responsible for each area or activity and individual duties during transitions before and after an activity.
3. Scan the environment, including assigned areas of the classroom or outdoor area, and keep count of the children. Staff communicate with each other, so everyone knows where each child is and what each one is doing. This is done at all times, especially during center times and on the playground when children are constantly moving. (name to face checks)
4. Listen closely to children and the environment to immediately identify signs of potential danger. Staff listen to and talk with team members, especially when a staff person or a child has to leave the area, so that staff knows where other staff are located.
5. Anticipate children's behavior to give children any needed additional support, especially at the start of the school year and during transitions. Be aware of children who tend to wander off or lag behind to ensure they are never left unsupervised.
6. Engage and redirect when children are unable to solve problems on their own. Staff offer different levels of assistance according to each individual child's needs.

2.0 Supervision During Transitions

2.1 Transitions are often the most challenging times to supervise children. To prevent children from being left unsupervised, the program utilizes strategies for managing transitions throughout the day, such as when children arrive, leave, or move from one location to another within a center. Some examples include:

- A. Regular routines, such as drop-off and pick-up times, including staff assignments (who monitors the door, etc.).
- B. Utilizing name to face checks to ensure that each child is accounted for
- C. Ensuring that Teachers, Assistant Teachers, Floaters, and Volunteers know when transitions take place and are in position to provide constant supervision.
- D. Having a plan to maintain appropriate Adult:Child ratios at all times, including when a staff member needs to leave the room.
- E. Ensuring parents understand their responsibilities during drop-off and pick-up of their child, and being alert to potential child wanderings.
- F. Limiting the amount of time children are waiting in line to transition and offering engaging activities while waiting.
- G. Letting children know what the expectations are prior to transitions.

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.**

_____ (Initial) I hereby acknowledge that I have accessed and reviewed the Gering Preschool Student Handbook available at geringschools.net on the Student & Family Portal or in print at my school's office.

_____ (Initial) 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.

OR

____ **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.

OR

____ **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.

OR

____ **No**, I do not give permission for my child to be photographed, filmed, or videotaped for publication.

ILLNESSES

____(Initial) 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.

BUS REGULATIONS

____(Initial) 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.

EARLY DISMISSAL

_____(Initial) 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.

SIGNATURES

Student Name (Print) _____

Parent/Guardian (Print) _____

Parent/Guardian (Signature) _____

Date _____

WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP AND COOPERATION AS WE WORK TOGETHER TO PROVIDE THE BEST POSSIBLE EARLY EDUCATION EXPERIENCE FOR YOUR CHILD!

Parking

~~Parents can park on any of the side streets located around the schools. Please do not pull into the bus parking. This is for bus drop-off and pick-up only. The bus is not able to drop off students at any other location and if cars are parked there, it will delay students getting to school on time.~~

Severe Weather and School Cancellations

~~**Decision 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 9:00 p.m. for announcement during the 10:00 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 6:00 a.m. if possible). In any case, an announcement will be made to the news/social media when schools will be closed. In some instances, schools will be open, but certain services may be canceled (bus transportation, student activities). Students and parents will want to pay special attention to which public school district 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 if this should occur.~~

~~**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 news/social media.~~

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

Health Program

~~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's 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
- Provide 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 students:

- Chronic or Acute health-related diseases, conditions, and/or issues (For example, severe allergies, diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, urinary or bowel issues, etc)
- Recent physical, vision, and/or dental exams.
- Updated immunizations. (Records are reviewed annually and a summary report is sent to the Nebraska State Health Department.)
- Need for medication administration during the regular school day; Please refer to Medication Administration Policy
- Need for an excuse from Physical Education for a medical reason; then a healthcare provider note is required.
- Absence from school due to illness. Please inform the school of the type of illness so that the number and type of illnesses and symptoms can be monitored and reported to the local health department if necessary.
- Updated emergency contact information and a plan/arrangements in place if parent/guardian is unable to pick up his/her ill child from school and/or when a child is ill and needs to stay home

The Gering School District employs nurses who cover the district's facilities. Each school location has a First Responder Team and staff who are CPR/First Aide/AED certified, Attack on Asthma, and Medication Administration trained to assist as the schools are not all schools are 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.

Health Screenings

Health Screenings will be performed as required 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. Parents will be responsible for scheduling and paying for the follow-up appointment and any needed health services.

Contagious and Infectious Diseases

As recommended by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, please refer to the illnesses listed below for minimum isolation periods and control measures:

Please note:

Susceptible = person with disease; Contacts = those who have been in contact with diseased person.

Day of onset of specific symptom is counted as “day zero”; the day after onset is “day 1”

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 immune-suppressed child(ren) of possible exposure.
2. **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)**: Exclude symptomatic cases. Urge medical care. May return when eye is normal in appearance or with documentation from 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 immune suppressed or eczematous persons. Good hygiene, avoid 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. **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.
12. **Measles (Rubeola)**: 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 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.

13. **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.
14. **Pediculosis (Head or body lice)**: Exclude until after appropriate treatment is started. No exclusion of contacts; however they should be notified of exposure.
15. **Pertussis (Whooping Cough)**: return as per written documentation. Exclude inadequately 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.
16. **Polio myelitis**: Exclude until physician approves return.
17. **Ringworm**: Exclude until treatment started. No exclusion of contacts. Good sanitation practices and don't share toilet articles.
18. **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.
19. **Scabies**: Exclude until the day after treatment started. No exclusion of contacts.
20. **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.
21. **Streptococcal Infection (Scarlet Fever, Scarletina, Strep Throat)**: Exclude until afebrile and under treatment for 24 hours. No exclusion of contacts. Early medical care important and usually requires 10 days of antibiotic treatment. Screening for asymptomatic cases not recommended.
22. **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 nonpulmonary tuberculosis unnecessary.

In addition, Gering Public Schools policy includes:

1. **Elevated Body Temperature**: A student with temperature of 100 degrees or greater shall be sent home from school. It is recommended that 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. **Nausea and/or Vomiting**: If student has nausea and/or vomiting, then remaining out of

school for 24 hours is strongly recommended

- ~~4. **MRSA (Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus)**: May return with documented physician approval.~~

~~**Missed school days from illness: If a student is absent for five consecutive school days due to illness, then a doctor note is required to allow for his/her return to school**~~

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 the 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, health care provider's name, drug name, and instructions for use (time, dosage, duration). The authorization must be renewed on an annual basis and/or if the prescription changes. Loose capsules, tablets, and 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 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 Services Regulation and Licensure, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the State Department of Education.~~

~~Over-the-counter medication (such as Tylenol, ibuprofen, cough drops, saline eye drops, hydrocortisone cream, triple antibiotic ointment, insect sting swab, and topical cooling gel) may be given with parents'/guardians' permission by trained school personnel by signing the pertinent section on 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 students to be kept at the school.~~

~~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.~~

~~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 the administration of medication at school.~~

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, 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*~~

~~The protocol medication is kept on school grounds and, therefore will not be available at field trips, etc. If you do not want your student to receive this protocol, then please contact the school nurse.~~

Injuries At School

~~The Gering Public Schools does not pay for medical bills for students injured at school, on field trips, 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.~~

Enrollment

Children will be placed into classrooms by the Preschool Facilitator and parents will be contacted via email when the child is accepted. Please note that enrollment is based on classroom numbers and you are not guaranteed a half-day or full-day spot.