

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Monday, September 16, 2024 7:00 PM
Central Office Board Room
401 South Pine Street
Valley, NE 68064-0378

1. Call to Order	
2. Public Communications and Correspondence	3
3. Approval of Agenda	
4. Administrative Reports	5
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5. Consent Agenda	
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5.2. Approve Claims for Payment	
5.3. Approve Financial Report	
5.4. Approve Classified Staff	
6. Old Business	
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7. New Business	
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7.2. Resolution to Set the Final Tax Request	59
7.3. First Reading Policy 5205 Graduation	61
7.4. Second Reading of 2024 Policy Updates	62
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7.6. Approve Classified Handbook

103

7.7. Authorize Superintendent to Sell, Recycle, or Dispose of Property

7.8. Approve Performing Arts Center Coordinator Extra Duty Position

8. **Adjournment**

Board of Education

Jamie Jorgensen

Bill Koile

Dr. Kelly Hinrichs

Elizabeth Mayer

Luke Janke

Jim Tomanek

Dr. Melissa Poloncic, Superintendent

Kristi Trost, Board Secretary

This pamphlet has been developed to help the general public attending a meeting of the Board of Education to understand the internal operation of the Board. It is hoped that this pamphlet will foster improved relations between the Board and the citizens it serves.

Meetings of the Board

When

- The Board of Education convenes once each month on the second Monday except in the months that have five Mondays. In months with five Mondays, the Board convenes on the third Monday of the month. Holidays and unexpected conflicts may create exceptions to this practice.
- The Board of Education will convene in special session whenever it is deemed necessary for the efficient operation of the school district.
- Board of Education meetings are called to order at 7:00 p.m. unless another time is stipulated.

Where

- Regular and special meetings of the Board of Education will be held in the Board Room on the Valley Campus at 401 S. Pine St., in Valley, unless another location is specifically identified.
- Whenever public participation dictates the need for a larger meeting room, the Board will convene in the High School library.

Notice of Meetings

- Official notice of the time and place of the regular board meetings are posted on the doors of the schools, banks in Valley and Waterloo and the Valley City Hall.
- Notice of special meetings will be posted at least 24 hours in advance. Hearings will be published in The Omaha Daily Record.

Business of the Board

Agendas

- Agendas for the regular meeting on the second Monday of the month will be prepared in advance and kept current and available in the superintendent's office. Business items of an emergency nature may be placed on the agenda by a majority vote of the Board of Education.
- Parents, employees and patrons may request items placed before the Board of Education for consideration by contacting the Superintendent at least three business days in advance of a regular meeting.

Public Participation

- The Board of Education invites you to offer comments during the Public Communication and Correspondence portion of the meeting. Public requesting to offer comments during the Public Communication portion of the meeting shall make a request to speak or complete the sign-in information sheet at the meeting. The individual is asked to state the purpose and general nature of his or her appearance before the Board. The Board President shall indicate to the individual how much time the Board will allot the individual. Speakers normally will be given five minutes with a maximum of 20 minutes set aside for such communications.
- Members of the public requesting to speak to an item considered New or Old Business on the Agenda will request time during the Public Communications portion of the meeting. Unless the comments are related to an agenda item no action will be taken by the Board. Questions or requests of the Board by the public will be taken under consideration. The Board will direct the Superintendent, or the Superintendent's designee, to respond in writing to any public

question or request brought before the Board. Equal time shall be allotted to individuals speaking for and against a proposal when opposing points of view are represented at the board meeting.

- The Board invites you to share any information you may have or address any question to any Board member or the Superintendent regarding new business in the week prior to the next meeting.
- If, at any Board meeting, any person shall conduct himself or herself in a disorderly manner and after notice of the president or the person presiding shall persist therein, the president or person presiding may ask the person to leave and if the person refuses, the president or presiding officer may order any law enforcement officer or any other person or persons to take him or her into custody until the meeting is adjourned.
- Meetings may be recorded. Recording must be done so as not to disrupt the meeting.
- Meetings of the Board of Education shall be conducted in compliance with appropriate policy, state statutes and open meeting laws.

Mission Statement

DC West Community Schools engages, prepares, and empowers all of our students for the future.



The Douglas County West Community Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age or other protected status in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Students: Superintendent of Schools, 401 S. Pine St., Valley, Nebraska 68064 (402-359-2583).

Employees and Others: Superintendent of Schools, 401 S. Pine St., Valley, Nebraska 68064 (402-359-2583).

Complaints or concerns involving discrimination or needs for accommodation or access should be addressed to the appropriate Coordinator. 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. Dept. of Education (OCR), please contact OCR at 8930 Ward Pkwy, Suite 2037, Kansas City, Missouri 64114, (816) 268-0550 (voice) or (877) 521-2172 (telecommunications device for the deaf) or ocr.kansascity@ed.gov.

Board Meeting Procedures

“Engage, Prepare, and Empower”

**Douglas County West
Community Schools
P.O. Box 378
401 S. Pine St.
Valley, Nebraska 68064**

**DC West Middle School:
September 2024 Board Report
Dr. Jeffrey Kerns**

Building Goal #1, 2024

DC West Middle School will start to implement the Responsive Classroom approach at the middle level in 2024-2025. The following staff members went to a week-long training and will be leading staff development in the 2024-2025 school year: Janna Giles, Desi Samson, Beau Schwenka, Molly Dembinski, Kristen Phillips, Traci Evans, and Lindsey Pearson. I want to thank this time for sharing their time, passion, and leadership skills with our staff!

Responsive Classroom practices are extremely important to our middle school students. 11-14 year olds, developmentally, are often in a whirlwind. They are experiencing more obvious physical, sensory, and motor development changes. However, it's their cognitive and emotional/social developmental changes that are more complex and impactful throughout our day-to-day learning.

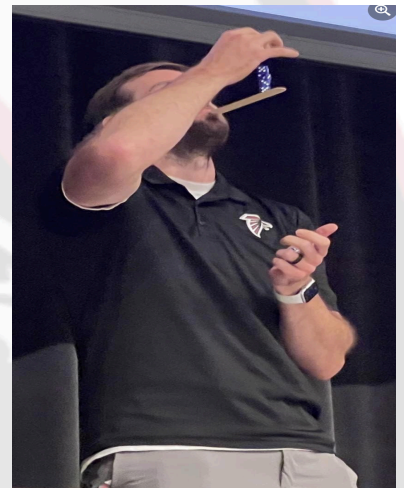
Responsive Classroom practices ensure we are helping guide our students through a challenging and overwhelming time in their lives. Students are beginning to sort out their own feelings about the world around them—sometimes unsure what they think or where they fit in. This emotional confusion can lead to friendships being tested and boundaries being pushed.

In our school bubble, we do our best to talk through our problems and interact with each other respectfully, just as we do in the real world. Every lesson they learn and experience they overcome, helps them become better people. Our first professional development session for the middle school will cover: Developmental Characteristics and Common Expectations and Language.

Respectfully,

Dr. Jeffrey Kerns

We kicked off the new school year in the performing art center with a lot of energy! A special thank you to Dr. Polonic who shared an uplifting “Rise Up” message with our students and a thank you to Mr. Travis for encouraging our middle school students to get involved in one or more of our numerous middle school activities. We ended our kickoff with student and staff competitions.



The DC West HS/MS Coffee Crew delivering smiles and coffee to our staff!



As of August 27th our Fall Sports have turned out strong participation numbers:

- 41 Students signed up for Volleyball
- 31 Students signed up for Football
- 13 Students signed up for X-Country

DC WEST MS FOOTBALL



DATE	OPPONENT
9/10	VS Fort Calhoun @ 4:30
9/17	VS Oakland-Craig @ 4:30
9/24	@ Arlington @ 5:30
10/1	@ Fremont Bergan @ 5:30
10/8	@ Louisville @ 5:00
10/15	VS Yutan @ 4:30

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DC WEST MS VOLLEYBALL



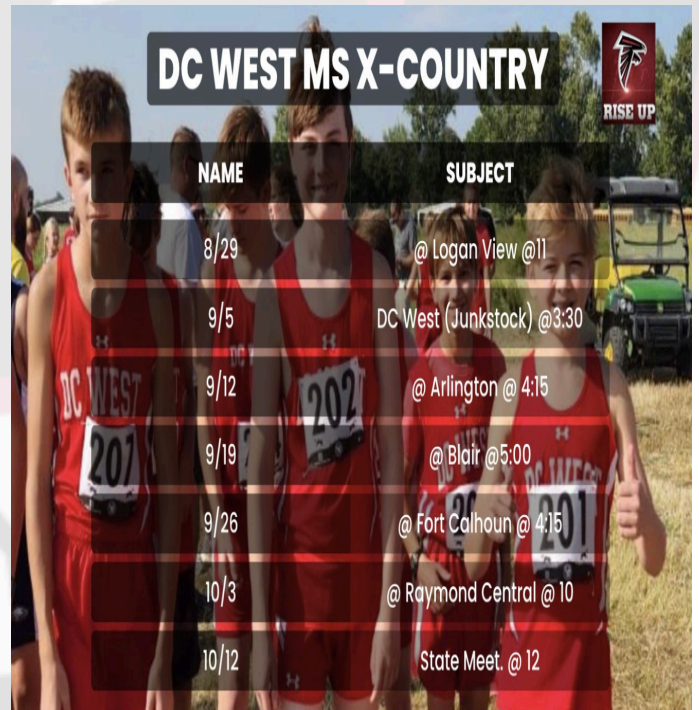
DATE	OPPONENT
9/5	@ Oakland-Craig 4PM
9/12	VS Raymond Central 4PM
9/16	@ Cedar Bluffs 4PM
9/17	VS Brownell-Talbot 4PM
9/19	VS Fort Calhoun 4PM
9/23	@ Arlington 5PM

DC WEST MS VOLLEYBALL



DATE	OPPONENT
9/26	@ Ashland-Greenwood 4:30PM
10/7	VS Yutan 4PM
10/8	VS Plattview 4PM
10/15	@ Louisville 4:30 PM

DC WEST MS X-COUNTRY



NAME	SUBJECT
8/29	@ Logan View @11
9/5	DC West (Junkstock) @3:30
9/12	@ Arlington @ 4:15
9/19	@ Blair @5:00
9/26	@ Fort Calhoun @ 4:15
10/3	@ Raymond Central @ 10
10/12	State Meet. @ 12

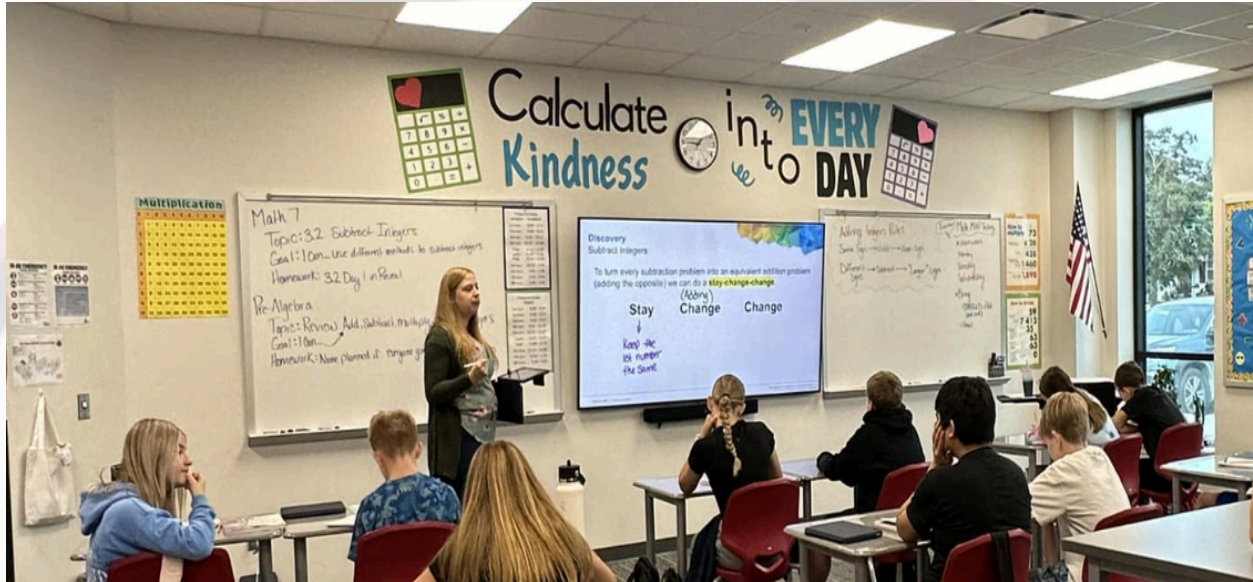
Two DCW Middle School Students were named lifters of the summer! Congratulations to Sophie Simonson and Avery Mangimelli!



8th grade students spent time testing paper towels for absorbency! Hypotheses were made, testing occurred, data was graphed, and results and conclusions were shared!



7th Graders were immersed in subtracting integers:



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Our teachers work hard to hand out daily positive recognition to our middle schoolers.

Mr. Steward was out of Falcon Flyers forms, so he improvised and recognized this Falcon for her positive attitude and contributions to our school with a Falcon Flyer Poster!



This fall we implemented **FALCON FITNESS** (recess) during student lunch time at the Middle School. 6th-8th grade students have the option of joining predetermined games in the south gym or they can choose to remain with their peers in the lunchroom. In my previous decade of experience at the middle level I have found that having opportunities for our MS students to burn off energy and interact socially with their peers in a recess type setting; yielded quite few benefits such as:

Physical activity: Recess encourages students to be active and engage with their peers.

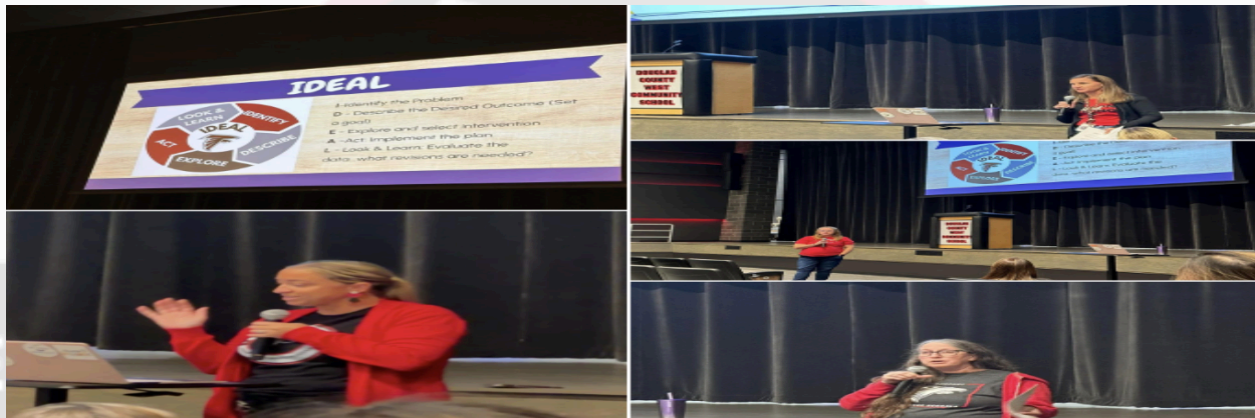
Cognitive performance: Recess can improve memory, attention, and concentration, and help students stay on task. It can also help students develop social skills and use their imaginations, which can enhance their cognitive performance in the classroom.

Behavior: Recess can help improve classroom behavior and reduce disruptive behavior.

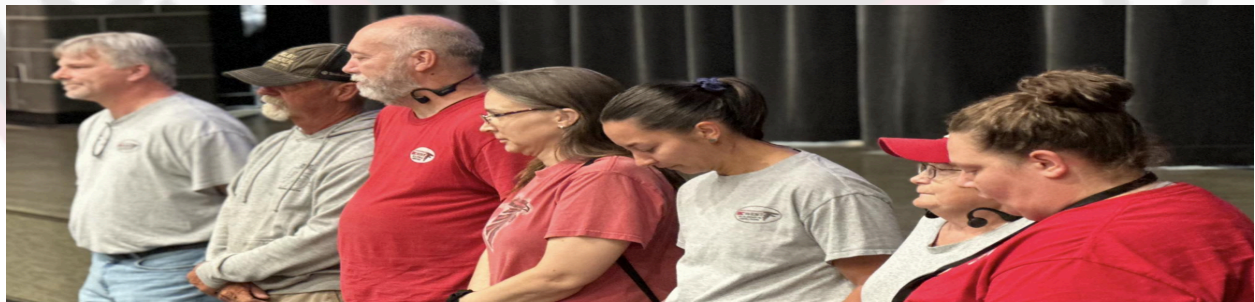
Emotional well-being: Recess can improve mood and sleep. It can also provide a break from the structure of the classroom, which can lead to many emotional benefits.



In education, collective efficacy is the belief that educators can improve student outcomes through their collective actions. This is also known as collective teacher efficacy (CTE). Research suggests that CTE is the most important factor in student achievement, more than three times as important as socioeconomic status and home environment. CTE can have many benefits, including empowering students, improving teacher retention, and helping students learn more. Thank you to our MS teacher leaders (Kristen Phillips and Janna Giles) for sharing their hard work and knowledge with our district staff on our Falcon Individual Problem Solving Process.



DC West Middle School staff would like to publicly thank our district custodial staff for all of their hard work day in and day out! We appreciate the pride you take in your work and we are very proud to have you on our team!



Welcome to **S.A.L.T.**

2024 - 2025

What is **S.A.L.T.** ?

It is a **Student Athlete Leadership Team**

We're looking for difference making student athlete leaders to continue to positively impact and build upon **The Falcon Way** culture here at DC West. Students have been recommended to participate in SALT by their coaches & staff members for the leadership abilities that they have displayed.



What is **The Falcon Way** ?

The Falcon Way is our identity. It is who we are as members of this school and community. Each person is held accountable for their academic, personal, and social growth by their peers, staff, and administration. Meeting expectations exemplifies **The Falcon Way**!



Rise Up

Rise Up is our theme for this school year. We think it is time to start leveling up and continue to build upon where we are currently at!

What does **Rise Up** mean to you? As a player? As a Team? As a Program?



S.A.L.T. Dates - *Put Dates In Your Calendar*

When: Tuesday Morning's from 7:00 - 7:45am (Donuts 6:45 - 7:00)

Dates:

8/27	Mr. Travis - SALT Kick-Off
9/17	Allie Mailloux - Humanex - Select 7
10/22	Guest Speaker
11/19	Allie Mailloux - Humanex - Commitment
12/10	Guest Speaker
1/14	Allie Mailloux - Humanex - Crucial Conversations
2/11	Guest Speaker
3/4	Allie Mailloux - Humanex - Embracing Your Role
4/8	Guest Speaker
5/6	Allie Mailloux - Humanex - High Impact Communication

Where: Performing Arts Center (PAC)



HumanEx

- Allie Mailloux - Humanex - **Select 7** (*Assessment sent on 9/9 and complete by 9/13*)
- Allie Mailloux - Humanex - **Commitment**
- Allie Mailloux - Humanex - **Crucial Conversations**
- Allie Mailloux - Humanex - **Embracing Your Role**
- Allie Mailloux - Humanex - **High Impact Communication**



Guest Speakers

There will be an outside speaker(s) that will have a leadership message/topic.

- There will be 3 questions that are asked of each speaker:
 1. Share your journey as a student athlete to present life today
 2. If you could go back, what might you do differently or change?
 3. What characteristics do you believe positively impact teams and their success?
- There will be time for questions and dialogue



Rock, Paper, Scissors Tournament

- Best 2 out of 3
- When we get to the Final Four, we will bring them up front.
- Who will be the Champion?



Leaders Must Understand These 3 Words

- Leaders that are **COMPLIANT**: These types of leaders will NOT last. Essentially, these student leaders are just responding to the demand, rules, or will of the coach.
- Leaders that lead out of **OBLIGATION**: These types of leaders are taking the step in the right direction because they feel some sense of responsibility, but still, in the end, their mindset is more of a HAVE TO versus a GET TO.
- Leaders that see **OPPORTUNITY**: These types of leaders need little or zero external support. They see their leadership role as an opportunity to serve, to give back, to make a difference, to create school spirit. These types of leaders are self-motivated to go above and beyond.



Leadership Starts with **YOU!**

- But it's not about YOU. There is a bigger picture of why leaders do what they do.
- Leadership is more about **being a part of something bigger than yourself**, enjoying that, respecting that, and serving others to the best of your ability.
- I want you to find something that you are **truly passionate about** on your team or in the program that you are a part of and use that passion to serve (lead) others.
- We know that in order to build great programs, we need player led teams that have leaders that lead from **OPPORTUNITY**, not obligation or compliance.



Leadership Activity

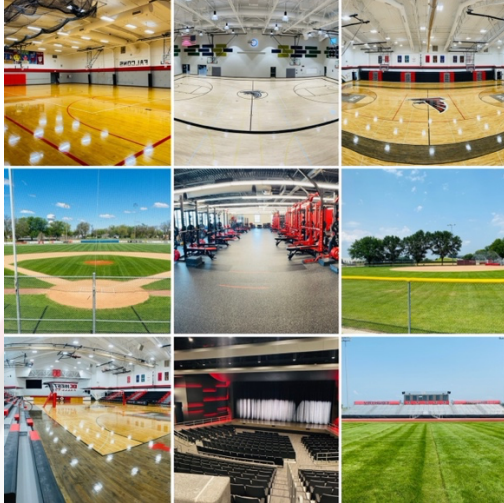
- I want each of you to personally think of a person here at DC West (Teammate, Coach, Teacher, Administrator, Any Staff Member) that you believe is a LEADER based on their every day actions, interactions, and beliefs. Someone that displays a passion that you are appreciative of.
- I want you to take this post card, write a message to who you have chosen (make sure they can read it), Sign it, and give it to Mr. Travis to deliver throughout the day today for you.



Next **S.A.L.T.** Date

- Tuesday, September 17th - Select 7 with HumanEx
- Donuts at 6:45
- **S.A.L.T.** 7:00 - 7:45 in the PAC
- Team Break - Falcons on 2!





Douglas County West High School and Middle School Director of Athletics & Activities Board Report September 2024 Mr. Jeremy Travis

The AD world has been fast and furious here at the start of the school year. I have a lot of pride and passion for our school and have enjoyed every minute of this very busy position. We are attempting to create some systems for our programs and school and I think we are in a better position today than we were a month ago but we still have a lot of things that we want to do. We have hosted A LOT of home games and activities this year but we have put our best foot forward each time so the players, coaches, teams, programs, and fans can experience a great atmosphere and environment to participate in. Our Theme nights for our teams has been a lot of fun and well attended. I have been really proud of our Falcon coaches, players, and fans in how everyone carries themselves on and off the field/court. I want to showcase a lot of the great things we have going on here at DC West!

First, I need to start with a need with a few **more paid coaching positions** in a some of our high school programs:

(9-12) High School Assistant Cheer Coach

We currently have one paid head coaching position in our high school cheerleading program. Coach Lindahl is the head coach and she currently has (2) volunteer assistant coaches in Molly Dembinski and Megan Hardisty. I am hoping to get **(1) paid high school assistant cheer coaching position** as there is a need with our team. They practice a couple morning times per week, they cheer at all home games, all away football games, have implemented stunting into their program, organize and prepare our school pep rallies, participate in parades and community activities, as well as preparing to participate in the NCA State Cheer competition. The cheer team is doing some really great things for our school and I appreciate your consideration.

(9-12) High School Assistant Girls' Basketball Coach

The next desired coaching position is another **(1) paid high school assistant girls basketball position**. We currently have a head coach and (2) paid assistant coaches. The high school girls' team is going to have approximately 25 girls on the team for this upcoming season and we have added a Reserve girls basketball schedule to their events to go along with a Varsity and JV schedule. Our high school boys' basketball team currently has a head coach and (3) paid assistant coaching positions. I am also attempting to bring some equity in coaching for both of our basketball programs. The need is definitely there and I appreciate your consideration.

(7-12) Spring Musical Extra Duties

The (7-12) Spring Musical Head, Assistant, and Pit would only be filled and paid during the school years ending in an odd year (2025). This is New for us at the High School and Middle School.

The (9-12) Spring Play Head and Assistant would only be filled and paid during the school years ending in an even year (2026). We already have this approved from previous years.

Head Musical Director: (Dawn Beyl) Responsible for casting the show, running rehearsals, teaching the music, assisting with set design, costuming, and prop ordering.

Assistant Musical Director: (Sherry Dill) Responsible for casting the show, running rehearsals, blocking, set design, assisting with lighting design, costuming, and prop ordering.

Pit Director: (Liz Guinn) Hire and rehearse professional musicians for the show.

Choreographer: Will be an hourly extra duty paid if needed.

Our fine arts department continues to grow in student participation and opportunities, especially with our new performing arts center environment. The desire to rotate every other year between a school play and a school musical is exciting and I appreciate your consideration.



We have created **Theme Nights** for Football, Volleyball, Softball, and Cheerleading for this Fall Season. We have recognized elementary and middle school students that are involved in those activities. We have invited them to join the team for a night at the game, had them attend a

camp, or had them join the team for the starting line-up. Our goal is to promote and build our programs K-12 and create a fun environment full of energy for our team. This has been going great and we look forward to more ahead.



Our **High School Cheerleading Team** has been busy....but a good busy in representing our school and supporting our programs throughout the nights at games and activities. We appreciate all of their efforts and school spirit being displayed from them. They help bring a level of passion and energy to all events. The Head Coach is Alyssa Lindahl and her Assistant Coaches are Molly Dembinski and Megan Hardisty.



Our **High School Dance Team** performed at our first home football game and did great. The team practices in the mornings throughout the weeks and bring great energy to any event that they participate in. The Head Coach is Maggie Dailey.



S.A.L.T. (Student Athlete Leadership Team) has been going great as we kicked that off on August 26th. I have attached the PDF Slideshow that I used with those students in my board report. There are 67 student athletes that are currently participating and our main focus is to continue to develop and grow our student athlete leaders to have player led teams and programs. The students recently received the select 7 assessment from humanex and they are to complete that before our next meeting date on Tuesday, September 17th where Allie Havers

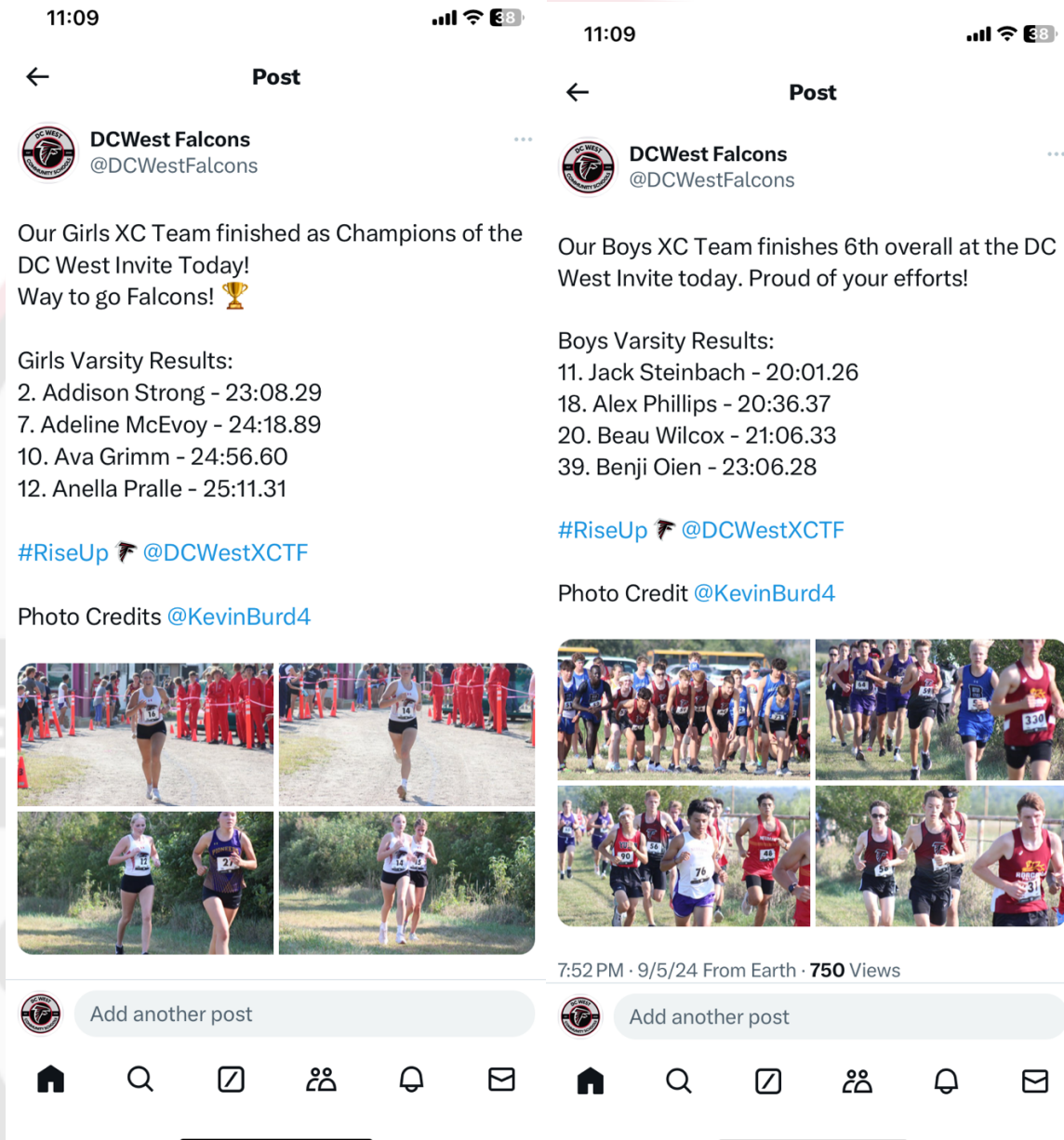
from humanex will be sharing each of our students top seven strengths and continue to build upon the leadership opportunities. This has been and will be a great platform for our student athletes and programs here at DC West.



Our **High School Softball Team** is currently (7-2) on the season. They won the Omaha Gross Tournament by defeating Omaha Westside, Plattsmouth, and Waverly in the Championship. They are currently ranked 4th in Class C in the NSAA. The team has been excited to play actual home games at DC West for the first time in 3 years. This is an exciting team that you will want to come out and watch. The Head Coach is Ady Watts and her Assistant Coaches are Molly Zach, Taylor Stamm, and JD Gagner.



Our High School Football Team is currently (1-1) on the season with a tough loss at #2 Ashland-Greenwood 7-3 after leading for all but the last 38 seconds of the game. They had a good bounce back win at home vs Nebraska City 42-6. They are currently rated #9 in Class C-1. There are very good senior leaders on this team and they will give it everything they've got. The Head Coach is Mike Troy and his Assistants are Sean Pralle, Randy Donner, Dalton Tremayne, Brian Dembinski, John McMenamin, and Max Wold.



Our **High School Cross Country Team** has gotten off to a great start this season. The Girls Team were Champions of the DC West Invite at Sycamore Farms. Addison Strong finished in 2nd Overall to lead the girls team. The boys competed well early in this season finishing 6th overall at the DC West Invite. Freshman, Jack Steinbach, finished in 11th overall to lead the boys team. This program puts in a lot of work and they represent DC West The Falcon Way. The Head Coach is Ty Hansen and the Assistant coaches are Nolan Zimmer and Taylor Hyatt.



Our **High School Volleyball Team** is off to a good start to their season with a (4-2) record. The girls have a full slate of Reserve, JV, and Varsity games throughout their season. They have a tough schedule, especially in the Nebraska Capitol Conference. The thing that has impressed me the most about this team is their “next play” attitude. If something doesn’t go their way, they don’t let it affect their energy and positive communication. The Head Coach is Bob Wald and his Assistant Coaches are Rachel Wald, Mandi Mace, and Natalie Janssen.



Our **High School Band** is AWESOME! They are always there to keep the activities and environment lively. The students and band staff put in A LOT of time and effort into practice and it shows, especially when it counts. We thank them for their continued efforts and support. The Band Director is Liz Guinn.



Our **High School Student Section** shows up to support and we appreciate all of their school pride and energy that they bring to the events. We continue to focus on The Falcon Way Sportsmanship with all of our students.



Our Middle School Teams have been practicing for a while and have recently been able to start their seasons. Our Volleyball Team won their first match at Oakland-Craig. They currently have 44 players on the team this season. The Head Coach is Sydney Troutd and her Assistant Coaches are Kerry Reker, Sara Gotch, and Ainsley Buchholtz. Our Cross Country Team kicked off their season at the DC West Invite and did great. It'll be a fun team for the Falcons. The Coaches are Nolan Zimmer, Ty Hansen, and Taylor Hyatt. Our Football Team gets to compete today vs Fort Calhoun. There are approximately 30 players on this year's team. The Head Coach is Jesse Hays and his Assistant Coaches are Marcus Martin, Ben Steward, and Jake Marshall.

To view upcoming **Team Schedules or Events**, please take the following steps:

- Go to www.dctest.org

- Click on the Activities Calendar
- Click on View Schedules
- Select Team
- Click View

There are a lot of moving parts in athletics and activities but everyone is working together towards the same common goal. I want to Thank everyone that has helped work at an event, supported our school and programs, and that have cheered on our Falcons. We are trying to RISE UP this school year and I'm a really proud Falcon!

Mr. Travis



 **JEREMY TRAVIS**
Director of Athletics & Activities (7-12)

DC WEST Community Schools
Engage, Prepare, and Empower

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Valley, NE 68064

📞 402.359.2583

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📧 @DCWestFalcons

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COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

September 2024 Special Education Report

Our school year is off and running! We have had a great start with old and new staff and students. It has been a busy and fun time of transition and learning, and we are looking forward to having a great year.

School Safety Staff Training

We kicked off our 2024-2025 school year with an all-staff training on the Standard Response Protocol and an overview of the Standard Reunification Method and Psychological First Aid. The goal of our training was to ensure that all staff understand their responsibility in the event of an emergency at school. Staff received in-depth training on procedures for the five SRP actions and their uses: Hold, Secure, Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter. Building levels teams also discussed specific procedures for different incidences and reunification procedures.

Psychological First Aid/Crisis Response

Thanks to our Psychological First Aid (Crisis Response) team for the extra hours they have devoted to training and procedure development over the past year. Members of the Psychological First Aid team include Nicki Pechous, Katie Richards, Heather Cox, Kristen Phillips, Ty Hansen, Ben Steward, Kristen Reeves, Kelsey Nabity, Reagan Rosenberg, and Karla Sextro. In addition to NDE training and time spent and writing district procedures, members of the team attended a training facilitated by ESU 3 on crisis response procedures. The team will meet quarterly this month to ensure readiness for crises and to continually update our procedures to align with our most recent training and best practices.

Unique Learning Curriculum Adoption

Our Life Skills programs have adopted Unique Curriculum for grades K-12. Unique is an online curriculum that personalizes learning around units that are designed to provide instruction aligned to the extended indicators of grade-level standards. This curriculum allows students to learn at their level while staying connected to the grade-level curriculum.

Kick-Off for Falcon Individual Problem-Solving Process (FIPS)

On September 16, all certified staff were trained on the new Falcon Individual Problem Solving Process procedures. The Falcon Individual Problem Solving Process is a systematic, data-driven approach to instruction that utilizes all resources within our district collaboratively to create a single, well-integrated system of instruction and intervention informed by student data. This process empowers, engages, and prepares students for success through personalized support and targeted interventions. A link for a parent flyer describing the FIPS process can be found [HERE](#).

An amazing team of educators spent several days developing the FIPS process, including writing a District-Wide MTSS Guidance Document that outlines procedures and responsibilities for the FIPS process, creating EduClimber forms to document student problem solving efforts, setting up thresholds in EduClimber to quickly identify children who fall below expectations on different parameters so that interventions and support can be provided in a timely manner, developing parent communication templates and flyers, and designing and providing the district training on the new process. FIPS team members included Kelsey Nabity, Kristen Phillips, Janna Giles, Linsey Bellinger, Reagan Rosenberg, Heather Cox, and Nicki Pechous.

District Special Education Leadership Team

Every year, our district submits a Targeted Improvement Plan (TIP) to the Department of Education detailing our special education improvement efforts and their result. This year, we have established a District Special Education Leadership Team to lead and monitor these efforts. This year's District Special Education Leadership Team members are Dr. Dawn Marten, Shawna Youngmans, Alan Sarka, Kristen Phillips, Reagan Rosenberg, and Nicki Pechous. Our improvement efforts for this year will focus on increasing inclusive practices for students with disabilities. We hope that by focusing on more and better quality inclusion, we will see positive achievement and social-emotional growth in students with and without disabilities. To this end, twelve teachers will participate in the Inclusive Practices Academy at ESU 3, an intensive professional development series to increase inclusion. Teachers will learn strategies for co-teaching and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) implementation.

LanguageLine Interpretation and Translation Services

We have entered into a contract with LanguageLine Solutions to provide on-demand interpretation and translation services for Limited English Proficiency families. We are excited to be partnering with an established service provider who can provide access to trained, live interpreters for nearly 300 languages via a phone connection at any time. This will be a great service to increase our ability to communicate and partner with our EL families and will be very helpful for communicating with families of special needs students through the IEP process.

Special Education Monitoring

We received feedback on our Targeted Improvement Process for the 2023-2024 school year. We again received positive feedback about our implementation and documentation of improvement efforts. As a reminder, our focus last year was on increasing student engagement in order to positively impact chronic absenteeism and reading achievement of students with disabilities. Our TIP ratings contribute positively to our rating of "Meets Requirements" for our special education programming.

"Grow Your Own" Para-to-Teacher Pathway Grant Opportunity

We are exploring a grant opportunity in partnership with Midland University and four other districts to provide five paraeducators participation in Midland's teacher preparation program. This grant is designed to help remedy the teacher shortage we have been facing in special education and other high needs areas. If we are accepted, the grant will pay all tuition, fees, and book costs for the paras, and they will receive mentoring from one of our teachers and some credit for their work experience as a para. We surveyed our paras for interest, and nearly 15 individuals expressed interest in the program, so stay tuned! This could be a great chance for us to grow some great teachers right here at DC West!

Special Education Student Numbers

We currently have 188 enrolled students from ages 0-21 enrolled who are receiving special education services. Elementary and high school capacity is the tightest with the largest caseloads, while the middle school has slightly lower numbers than the past few years.

Nicki Pechous
Director of Special Education



DC West Community Schools
Board Report September 2024
Dr. Dawn Marten - Director of Learning

Assessments:

- Kindergarten through 8th grade MAP testing (Reading, Math, Science) occurred during the first and second weeks of school. We complete testing early to allow teachers to intervene with students earlier and provide more weeks of targeted intervention instruction.
- Elementary and middle schools have created master schedules that include intervention support for students who have skill deficiencies in reading and math. These students receive an additional time block of instruction beyond the classroom/core teacher. The goal is to close the gap in the area of deficiencies and no longer need the additional intense intervention.

Superintendent’s Early Childhood Plan

The Elementary Executive Leadership Team, which comprises of district directors, building principals, teachers, and Buffett Institute Staff, has finalized the 24-25 Action Plan and are looking forward to the goals for the year. These goals are envisioned as our elementary continuous improvement goals. See below.

2024-2025 Overarching District Goal	The DC West overarching goal for the Superintendents’ Early Childhood Plan for 2022-25 is to enhance the Birth Through Grade 3 Approach in order to close through the achievement gap while focusing on equity, continuity and quality for all students. Our work will have greatest attention to the following research-based pillars: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School as Hub • Parent and Family Support • Professional Growth and Support 		
	Leadership Effectiveness	Instructional Excellence	Family and Community Engagement
2024-2025 Domain Specific Goals	Building administration and staff will deepen their understanding of the birth through Grade 3 approach in order to effectively implement the 6 key components (Birth Through Grade 3, School as Hub, Developmental Change, Parents & Family Support, Professional Growth & Support).	Building administration and staff will gain a deeper understanding of teaching the whole child and implement best practices that align with the Birth through Grade 3 approach, specific to Social Emotional and Behavioral Learning	Strengthen and increase the number of family and community partnerships at DC West Elementary Community School.
How will this goal close gaps in opportunities for children and families experiencing persistent disparities?	By effectively implementing the 6 key components (Birth Through Grade 3, School as Hub, Developmental Change, Parents & Family Support, Professional Growth & Support), students will be led by building administration and staff who have a	By building administration and staff having a deep understanding of teaching the whole child and implementing best SEBL practices, a learning environment is created that fosters strong academic and	By strengthening and increasing family and community partnerships, a wealth of positive outcomes occurs, both for individual families and the community as a whole, such as

Superintendent
 Director of Learning
 Director of Special Education
 Elementary Principal
 Middle School Principal
 High School Principal
 High School Assistant Principal/AD

Dr. Melissa Polonic
 Dr. Dawn Marten
 Nickj Pechous
 Dr. Jeffrey Kerns
 Jeremy Travis
 Jim Knott
 Nathan Ter Beest

402.359.2583
 402.359.2583
 402.359.2583
 402.359.2151
 402.779.2646
 402.359.2121
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DC WEST

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

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	<p>deep understanding of the birth through Grade 3 approach which enables school system structures to be implemented that directly impact student achievement. See activities below.</p>	<p>social-emotional skills through the following characteristics: developmental responsiveness, engaging academics, positive community, and effective management.</p>	<p>improved student success, enhanced well-being, shared resources, increased sense of belonging, and improved decision making. Strengthening family and community partnerships creates a ripple effect of positive change. It empowers families, strengthens communities, and paves the way for a brighter future for everyone</p>
<p>What activities will occur to facilitate meeting this goal?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add DC West Foundation, PTSA and Family Facilitator section to the school newsletter to increase effective communication efforts • Add pertinent information to school websites and social media (e.g. Falcon Cafe recordings) • Add a teacher representative from Kindergarten, 2nd grade, and parent to the Executive Leadership Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Project Para Training and provide professional learning opportunities as seen fit • Implement instructional coaching opportunities between teachers and Buffett staff focusing on best SEBL and academic instructional practices • Responsive Classroom training during Summer 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement student and family Fine Arts Residency experiences • Increase community partnerships (i.e. center based child care and home providers) • Increase the number of Family Volunteer Program events • Select and communicate Falcon Cafe dates in August, including a quarterly night event • Provide paraprofessionals and teachers opportunities to co-lead summer socializations • Infuse summer socializations and family engagement events from the

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			<p>Families Volunteer Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include community agencies in Family Engagement Events (e.g. Fat Brain Toys)• Provide parents with ideas and activities to implement as home with their child
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Board Report

September 16, 2024

Jim Knott – High School Principal

DC West High School

Fall activities are in full swing and it is good to have students in the building again. It has been a great start to the year as school spirit from both students and community members seems to be very high. Our sports teams have had some great early season success that we look to build upon as the season progresses.

Current high school enrollment numbers are listed at the bottom of this report. Although we have plateaued in the short-term, we are still seeing steady growth through the last 10+ years. Luckily, we have prepared for the larger numbers by adding teachers and sections in order to keep our class numbers manageable and electives plentiful. We will continue to keep a close eye on staffing in the upcoming years to ensure that we continue to provide the high-quality education DC West is known for.

A few events that will soon be happening at DCWHS

*Homecoming Week – September 30-October 5

*Parent-Teacher Conferences – October 9 (3:45-7:45) & 10 (12:30-8:00)

*Pre-ACT Testing for 9th, 10th, & 11th graders – October 16

9-12 High School Enrollment Numbers

2014/15 School Year – 272 (1/22/15)

2015/16 School Year – 281 (1/13/16)

2016/17 School Year - 270 (1/10/17)

2017/18 School Year - 284 (1/3/18)

2018/19 School Year - 294 (1/14/19)

2019/20 School Year - 289 (8/12/19)

2020/21 School Year - 301 (9/3/20)

2021/22 School Year - 311 (9/7/21)

2022/23 School Year - 302 (9/7/22)

2023/24 School Year – 335 (9/6/23)

2024/25 School Year – 331 (9/11/24)

Board Report
September 16th, 2024

Shawna Younghans- Administrative Facilitator
DC West High School

The school year is in full swing and I am building relationships with the staff, students and families. I have met with students for attendance and behavior issues along with problem-solving different solutions to situations they are experiencing. During this time, I began with the following procedure and 2 policies as a starting point. I work to understand the history and rationales of these procedures and the ways that they hold students accountable and support equitable practices. I have found obstacles in being able to efficiently and accurately collect, evaluate and disseminate the attendance and eligibility data in a timely manner. I will continue to find the most effective process to ensure accountability and build success.

Attendance = Success

- 3 days Tardy/ Absences - 1st period = Problem solving conversation
 - In attendance: Admin Facilitator and student
- 5 days Tardy/ Absences - 1st period = Problem- solving Meeting
 - In attendance: Admin Facilitator, Student, Parent
 - Plan created with team supported consequences
- Each 5 Tardy/ Absences after- 1st period = Meeting
 - In attendance: Admin Facilitator, Student, Parent
 - Explain/ Adjust next steps in plan and consequences

* 5 day consequences include but not limited to: Falcon's Nest participation, Detention, In-school suspension

* 20 day consequences include but not limited to: Falcon's Nest participation, Detention, In-school suspension, Referral to County Attorney for Truancy

Academic Eligibility

Any student who has a cumulative failing grade at the time of the eligibility report, in any two classes, will not be eligible for school activities (excluding dances) the following week, Wednesday through Tuesday. The duration for the cumulative grade eligibility roster will be for the current semester grading period.

Students who are failing a class will be provided a Progress Report on Monday (or as soon as possible following a holiday) of each eligibility period. Staff will be notified of all students on the list. Students will have three days (Monday-Wednesday) to bring their failing grades up to passing. Once a passing grade is achieved/confirmed on the Powerschool grading report (or verbally/written by the teacher), the student will communicate the progress to the Activities Director (or his or her designee). If a student raises their grades to meet the eligibility requirement, he/she may participate in activities. All students who are failing two classes at the end of the school day (4:15 PM) on Wednesday (or other designated day due to the school calendar) will be ineligible until the following week. Special consideration on the enforcement of

this policy will be given to special education students through the IEP team decision-making process. The eligibility period may be suspended due to holiday breaks, snow days, etc. at the discretion of the administration.

Attendance Eligibility

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

I continue to build relationships by being consistent and holding students accountable.

Go Falcons!

Shawna Youngmans

EST

2005

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

September 11, 2024
Board Report
Alan Sarka
DC West Community Schools

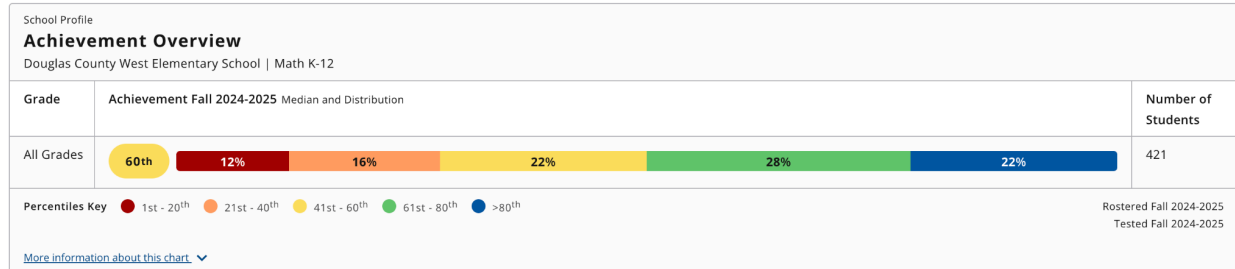
Contents:

1. MAP testing completed
2. PTSA membership mixer
3. Boosterthon Fun Run
4. Responsive Classroom progress
5. UNO leadership Dinner
6. High School Student Athlete Role Models

1. MAP testing completed and next steps:

MAP testing data is very valuable at the beginning of the year to help guide our building systems as we analyze the data to make informed decisions about what is best for kids. The data is used in a variety of ways but the formulation of small groups, identification of students that could benefit from intervention, and progress monitoring of growth and achievement are some of the most critical ways that it is used. Interventionists have been great about partnering with classroom teachers to identify students and intervention services have started. On Friday September 13, 2024 teachers will engage in professional learning around effective analysis of data and then will be given time to process and make informed decisions about their kids. Below is the overall data from our elementary school as a whole and then it is broken down by grade level.

Douglas County West Elementary School



2. PTSA Membership mixer

Dr. Johnston and I had the opportunity to meet the PTSA at their membership mixer on August 28th. As new administrators in the district it was great to meet involved parents that are champions for DC West. We capitalized on the chance to informally chat with PTSA members, and then had the opportunity to formally introduce ourselves and share a little about us.



3. Boosterthon Fun Run

The Boosterthon Fun Run is the elementary school’s annual fundraiser put on by the PTSA. Funds have been used to sponsor building initiatives as well as to make legacy gifts to the school. Construction has started on last year’s legacy gift of a new outdoor classroom. We broke ground on Tuesday September 10th. The Fun Run will feature all elementary students including pre-school students on Thursday September 12th. The schedule for this event is included below. The PTSA has set a goal of 80,000 in hopes to make another legacy donation towards a more inclusive playground. As of September 11th we’ve raised over 50,000

Start Time	End Time	Grade Level
8:25	8:45	2nd-3rd Grade
8:55	9:10	PS AM
9:25	9:45	K -1st
10:00	10:20	4th - 5th Grade
Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break
1:25	1:40	PS PM

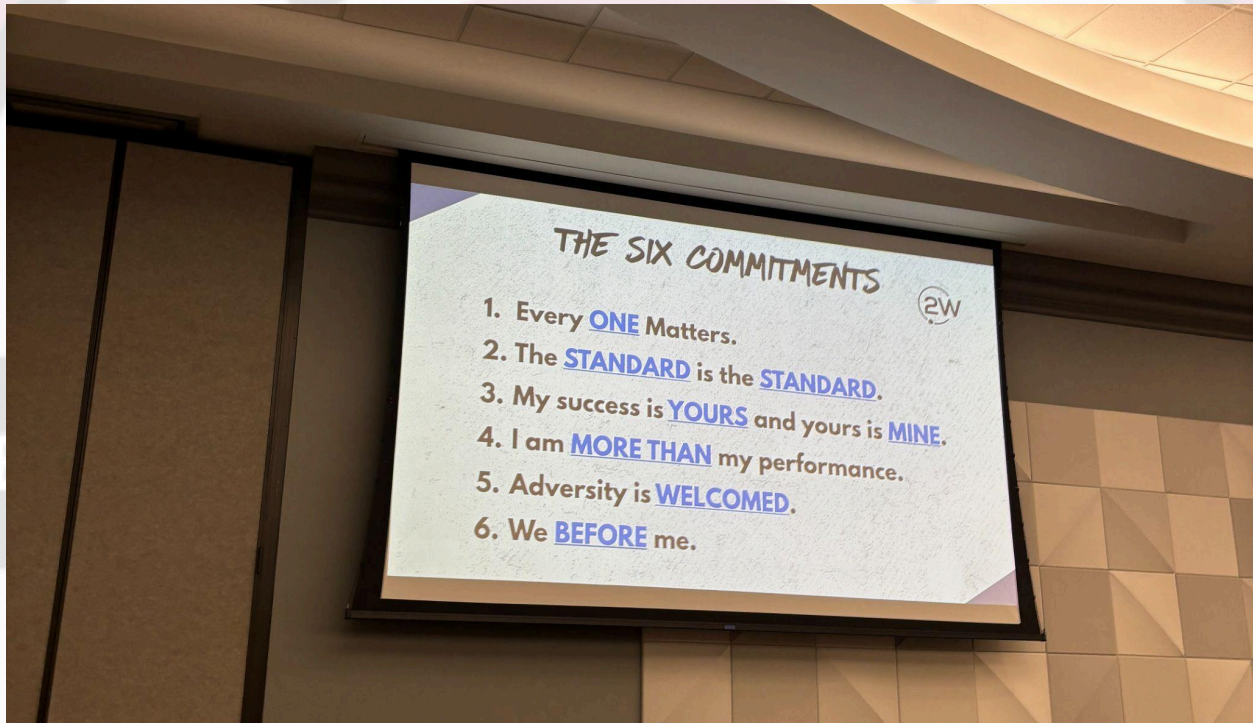
4. Responsive classrooms- Thank you PTSA

Our PTSA graciously donated almost 9,000 to purchase Calming Corner materials for all staff in support of Responsive Classrooms as part of the district SEBL strategic plan initiative. Teachers all received emotional regulation and social emotional tools and resources. All classrooms and teachers now have a calm space in their rooms where students have a safe place to feel any emotion. They are tasked with choosing a breathing strategy or a calming tool to help them get regulated while they take a break to get back on track. We continue to make progress in our implementation of Responsive Classroom. The next professional development is scheduled for September 13th.



5. UNO Leadership Conference featuring Stephen Mackey

Many members of our Administrative team were able to attend the UNO leadership conference on September 4th, 2024 at the UNO conference center. We were fortunate to have the opportunity to engage in professional networking and professional leadership development. Our team found the guest speaker to be very engaging with a great message. One pillar of the speech were the 6 leadership commitments. Our team felt that the subject matter was immediately applicable and we left motivated to share with staff.



6. Being the Falcon You're meant to be by lifting others

A special shout out to the student athletes from the high school that have taken their time to come support the elementary walking club in the morning. The athletes have been amazing with our students. The little falcons really look up to the athletes and they think it is so cool to have them as part of their morning. The student athletes have been fantastic role models and have gone above and beyond to immerse themselves with the elementary students.



DC WEST Community Schools

Engage, Prepare, and Empower

Superintendent’s Report September 16, 2024

State Education Conference (Sponsored by NASB & NCSA)

The annual [State Education Conference](#) is in Omaha at CHI on November 20-22nd. This is an outstanding learning opportunity for Board Members and district administration. Dr. Dawn Marten, Nicki Pechous, and myself plan to attend the conference. The 20th is the pre-conference and Thursday and Friday are the main sessions of the conference. I will be receiving the Nebraska Superintendent of the Year Award during the November 22nd, Friday luncheon, at 11:45-1:00. I would love to have as many Board members as possible with me during the reception of the award, as I feel I receive this honor due to the incredible support and vision our Board provides in our district. Please let me know if you plan to attend the conference and/or the luncheon and I will register you.

DC West Sports Complex Groundbreaking Ceremony

We have set the official groundbreaking ceremony for the DC West Sports Complex for Friday, October 4th at 2:30 p.m. This is after the Homecoming Parade and Ceremony at school. We will be making detailed plans along with MCL for the invitation list as well as transportation and parking on site. Please let me know if you plan to attend and take part in the ceremony. I'm hoping many of you will be available for this celebration of new facilities to serve our kids and community.

NASB Area Membership Meetings

Just a reminder that several of you are attending The Nebraska Association of School Boards [Area Membership Meeting](#) on Wednesday, September 25th in Fremont. Congratulations to our Board members being honored at the meeting:

Douglas County West Community Schools	Jim Tomanek	Point Award - Level I
Douglas County West Community Schools	Bill Koile	Point Award - Level III
Douglas County West Community Schools	Jamie Jorgensen	Point Award - Level III

Superintendent Goals 2024

- Lead the vision and support needed to implement strategic plan priorities & Superintendent goals in 2024 and provide more timely, ongoing, and detailed information about progress to the Board of Education.
- Engage in the design, development, and construction of the new outdoor facilities complex.
- Complete the adoption and implementation of a new certified staff and administrator evaluation system as well as implement new electronic management for personnel

evaluation.

- Continue to unify building leadership and communicate to all levels consistently.
- Research, study, and implement strategies to manage the growth of the communities and district in the next five to ten years so we are proactive rather than reactive. This may include a facility and enrollment study.
- Keep abreast of regular building and grounds issues as the campus expands.

Upcoming Dates:

[2024-2025 District Calendar](#)

[2024-2025 School Activities Calendar](#)

September 25~ 4:30-8 p.m. NASB Area Meeting in Fremont

September 30-Oct 4~ Homecoming Week

October 4~ 12:45 p.m. Homecoming Parade, 2:30 p.m. Sports Complex Groundbreaking Ceremony

October 8-10~ Parent/Teacher Conferences

October 11~ No School

October 14~ No School/Teacher Workday and BOE Regular Meeting @ 7:00 p.m.

Financial Recap August 2024

	8/1/2024	Receipts	Expenditures	8/31/2024
General Fund				
Depreciation Fund	\$5,228,415.71	\$2,547,602.22	\$1,927,187.36	\$5,848,830.57
Food Service Fund	\$882,998.81	\$1,002,556.94	\$10,767.30	\$1,874,788.45
Qualified Capital Fund	\$76,424.01	\$41,594.11	\$14,362.85	\$103,655.27
Bond Fund	\$389,985.09	\$124,868.69	\$0.00	\$514,853.78
Special Building Fund	\$1,103,817.36	\$291,704.75	\$0.00	\$1,395,522.11
- Special Bldg (MS/Fine Art)	\$645,836.06	\$534,013.74	\$600,000.00	\$579,849.80
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	\$8,327,477.04	\$4,542,340.45	\$2,552,317.51	\$10,317,499.98

General Fund Detail

	August	YTD	Budgeted	Revenues	August	YTD
Expenditures						
All Instructional Program	\$ 675,801.15	\$ 7,206,128.62	\$ 7,920,584.00	Personal and Prop Taxes	\$ 2,294,776.03	\$ 8,788,121.47
SPED Instructional Program	\$ 176,770.62	\$ 2,079,847.08	\$ 2,275,632.00	Carline Tax	\$ -	\$ 129,551.33
Support Services SPED Related	\$ 18,964.66	\$ 370,333.87	\$ 403,158.00	Motor Vehicle Taxes	\$ 115,957.43	\$ 1,239,316.61
Support Services Non-SPED Related	\$ 31,537.60	\$ 499,484.11	\$ 484,821.00	Facility Rental	\$ 600.00	\$ 1,400.00
Support Instructional	\$ 71,949.77	\$ 937,604.37	\$ 856,582.00	Tuition Received from Individuals	\$ 23,732.25	\$ 106,856.94
Board of Education	\$ 38,274.73	\$ 109,787.43	\$ 92,700.00	Interest	\$ 5,960.10	\$ 60,128.46
Executive Administration Services	\$ 49,797.91	\$ 394,905.97	\$ 399,286.00	Local License Fees	\$ -	\$ 4,794.00
District Legal Services	\$ 656.00	\$ 40,228.00	\$ 35,000.00	Other Local Receipts	\$ 201.08	\$ 115,451.04
Office of the Principal	\$ 80,459.19	\$ 827,772.91	\$ 828,608.00	Grants from Corporations/Private	\$ -	\$ 21,461.42
General Admin - Business Services	\$ 19,988.92	\$ 280,499.91	\$ 311,452.00	County Fines and License Fees	\$ 1,605.94	\$ 22,717.34
Maint & Operation of Building & Sit	\$ 542,374.12	\$ 2,100,079.56	\$ 1,795,631.00	ESU Receipts	\$ -	\$ 5,945.58
Vehicle Acquisition & Maint	\$ 6,237.79	\$ 10,437.79	\$ 15,200.00	State Aid	\$ -	\$ 2,744,776.00
Regular Pupil Transportation	\$ 139,903.68	\$ 604,884.82	\$ 505,400.00	Special Education Programs	\$ -	\$ 1,331,172.00
SPED Pupil Transportation	\$ 8,982.50	\$ 180,717.97	\$ 173,760.00	Special Education Transportation	\$ -	\$ 71,063.00
Categorical Grant from Coporation	\$ 21,586.28	\$ 147,559.13	\$ 134,908.00	Homestead Exemption	\$ 22,715.89	\$ 144,782.14
State Categorical Programs	\$ 15,585.90	\$ 132,227.47	\$ 146,804.00	Pro-Rate Motor Vehicle	\$ -	\$ 18,862.47
Federal Programs	\$ 31,214.63	\$ 396,265.45	\$ 418,024.00	High Ability Learners	\$ -	\$ 9,498.00
ESSER II & III	\$ (2,898.09)	\$ 78,725.51	\$ 439,612.00	Early Childhood Grant	\$ -	\$ 62,459.21
	\$ 1,927,187.36	\$ 16,397,489.97	\$ 17,237,162.00	State Apportionment	\$ -	\$ 168,850.84
				Other State Receipts	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 22,500.00
				Prop & Personal Property Tax Credit	\$ -	\$ 593,282.70
				Title ESSA Programs	\$ -	\$ 151,869.00
				IDEA Programs	\$ -	\$ 265,654.12
				Medicaid	\$ -	\$ 37,381.10
				ESSER II & ESSER III	\$ -	\$ 330,502.00
				Other Federal Categorical Receipts	\$ -	\$ 7,530.00
				Sale of Property	\$ 67,053.50	\$ 113,169.25
				Insurance Adjustment	\$ -	\$ -
				\$ 2,547,602.22	\$ 16,569,096.02	

August 2024 Payroll

Net Payroll	\$ 500,318.89
Payroll Taxes (District)	\$ 55,232.19
Payroll Withholding (Employees)	\$ 139,774.21
Retirement (District)	\$ 71,394.42
Retirement Withholding (Employees)	\$ 70,687.37

Regular; Beginning Month 08/2024; Processing Month 08/2024; Accounts to Include Accounts with Activity; Fund Number 05, 12

Fund: 05 ACTIVITY FUND

<u>Chart of Account Number</u>	<u>Chart of Account Description</u>	<u>Beginning Balance</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Revenues</u>	<u>Balance Change</u>	<u>Balance</u>
05 704	INTEREST	2,547.87	175.00	108.23	0.00	2,481.10
05 704 1001	ACTIVITY PASSES	12,827.64	0.00	6,120.00	0.00	18,947.64
05 704 1002	CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS	3,384.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,384.89
05 704 1003	INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC	2,109.92	2,109.92	1,342.00	0.00	1,342.00
05 704 1004	HS DC WEST TRAVEL	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10
05 704 1005	STAFF LOUNGE	1,930.69	190.98	0.00	0.00	1,739.71
05 704 1007	VALLEY WAY	10,220.23	875.00	953.44	0.00	10,298.67
05 704 1011	PTSA DONATION	24,449.68	0.00	0.00	0.00	24,449.68
05 704 1022	SENIOR CLASS	(21.88)	0.00	21.88	0.00	0.00
05 704 1023	PROM	2,592.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,592.34
05 704 1102	ARTS & HUMANITIES	447.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	447.02
05 704 1104	ATHLETICS HS	5,548.58	936.00	(446.00)	0.00	4,166.58
05 704 1106	BASEBALL TEAM	974.55	0.00	0.00	0.00	974.55
05 704 1107	BAND	2,652.45	762.00	560.00	0.00	2,450.45
05 704 1108	CHEER	15,129.60	21,688.31	7,842.60	0.00	1,283.89
05 704 1111	BBB TEAM	4,169.76	4,325.00	380.00	0.00	224.76
05 704 1112	CONCESSIONS	35,807.95	0.00	1,109.65	0.00	36,917.60
05 704 1113	CONSTRUCTION TECH	7,106.79	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,106.79
05 704 1114	DANCE TEAM	391.95	2,369.28	2,076.00	0.00	98.67
05 704 1116	DRAMA	5,881.49	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,881.49
05 704 1117	FBLA	2,018.72	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,018.72
05 704 1118	HIGH SCHOOL	76.14	0.00	(21.88)	0.00	54.26
05 704 1119	DC TECH 1:1	(674.77)	1,425.00	6,360.00	0.00	4,260.23
05 704 1120	GBB TEAM	3,349.94	0.00	228.61	0.00	3,578.55
05 704 1123	HOSA	3,608.62	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,608.62
05 704 1124	STUJO HS	1,284.79	0.00	2,130.00	0.00	3,414.79
05 704 1128	NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY	1,130.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,130.89
05 704 1131	FOOTBALL TEAM	1,403.10	536.00	0.00	0.00	867.10
05 704 1132	SCIENCE CLUB	427.19	0.00	0.00	0.00	427.19
05 704 1133	SPEECH TEAM	2,644.88	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,644.88
05 704 1134	VOCAL MUSIC	3,971.84	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,971.84
05 704 1136	WORLD LANGUAGE CLUB	43.13	0.00	124.94	0.00	168.07
05 704 1137	ROBOTICS TEAM	3,221.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,221.08
05 704 1141	GOLF TEAM	84.88	0.00	0.00	0.00	84.88
05 704 1142	YEARBOOK HS	3,865.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,865.57
05 704 1151	CROSS COUNTRY TEAM	1,975.43	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,975.43

Douglas County West Community School District 15
09/12/2024 9:44 AM
Activity Fund Balance Report - Summary - Exclude Encumbrances
08/2024 - 08/2024
Regular; Beginning Month 08/2024; Processing Month 08/2024; Accounts to Include Accounts with Activity; Fund Number 05, 12

Fund: 05	ACTIVITY FUND	Chart of Account Number	Chart of Account Description	Beginning Balance	Expenses	Revenues	Balance Change	Balance
05 704 1161			SOFTBALL TEAM	3,995.50	429.00	60.00	0.00	3,626.50
05 704 1166			BOYS TRACK TEAM	327.33	199.31	0.00	0.00	128.02
05 704 1167			GIRLS TRACK TEAM	800.69	800.69	0.00	0.00	0.00
05 704 1176			VOLLEYBALL TEAM	5,270.27	1,136.00	0.00	0.00	4,134.27
05 704 1186			WRESTLING TEAM	895.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	895.67
05 704 1198			SUMMER SPORTS CAMPS	598.12	0.00	0.00	0.00	598.12
05 704 1199			CHANGE BAGS	(1,620.00)	0.00	1,620.00	0.00	0.00
05 704 1222			SCIENCE GRANT	3,055.68	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,055.68
05 704 1224			STUCO MS	12,596.36	225.04	0.00	0.00	12,371.32
05 704 1225			COFFEE CART - EL SPED	1,576.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,576.40
05 704 1319			DISNEY MUSICAL	15,203.93	0.00	0.00	0.00	15,203.93
05 704 1320			PRESCHOOL	11,262.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	11,262.21
05 704 2112			MS CONCESSIONS	2,603.92	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,603.92
05 704 2121			MS BBB TEAM	211.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	211.05
05 704 2136			MS FOOTBALL TEAM	368.47	0.00	0.00	0.00	368.47
05 704 2201			ART CLUB MS	207.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	207.14
05 704 2204			ATHLETICS MS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
05 704 2205			UNIFIED SPORTS	328.55	0.00	750.00	0.00	1,078.55
05 704 2216			MS DRAMA	96.47	0.00	0.00	0.00	96.47
05 704 2218			MIDDLE SCHOOL	1,012.44	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,012.44
05 704 2242			MS YEARBOOK	2,969.48	0.00	40.00	0.00	3,009.48
05 704 3220			ELEM FIELD TRIP	1,525.44	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,525.44
05 704 3221			PBIS/FALCOIN	3,897.53	1,152.06	0.00	0.00	2,745.47
05 704 3222			BATTLE OF THE BOOKS	105.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	105.50
05 704 3318			ELEMENTARY	5,448.98	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,448.98
Fund Total:				239,320.18	39,334.59	31,359.47	0.00	231,345.06

Douglas County West Community School District 15
09/12/2024 9:44 AM

Activity Fund Balance Report - Summary - Exclude Encumbrances
08/2024 - 08/2024

Regular; Beginning Month 08/2024; Processing Month 08/2024; Accounts to Include Accounts with Activity; Fund Number 05, 12

Fund: 12 STUDENT FEES

Chart of Account Number	Chart of Account Description	Beginning Balance	Expenses	Revenues	Balance Change	Balance
12 704	STUDENT PARTICIPATION FEE	24,857.68	2,596.08	9,135.00	0.00	31,396.60
	Fund Total:	24,857.68	2,596.08	9,135.00	0.00	31,396.60

09/12/2024 10:59 AM

SEPTEMBER 2024 BOARD BILLS

User ID: CQ

Vendor Name	Vendor Description	Amount
Checking Account ID 1	Fund Number 01 GENERAL FUND	
AKRS EQUIPMENT SOLUTIONS INC		241.34
AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES		6,050.54
AMERICAN RED CROSS		79.80
ARROW STAGE LINES		1,920.00
AUTISM PRODUCTS		186.92
BALDWIN'S FLOORING AMERICA		1,849.53
BSN SPORTS LLC		434.10
CDW GOVERNMENT INC		1,906.31
CINTAS CORP		407.88
CLEMMER, GARY		110.00
COMMONWEALTH ELECTRIC COMPANY of the Midwest		492.00
DAILY RECORD, THE		550.67
DATA VIZION, LLC		28,520.16
DC WEST FOOD SERVICE		1,043.90
DIETZE MUSIC HOUSE		1,076.97
DISCOUNT SCHOOL SUPPLY		436.49
DOUGLAS COUNTY SHERIFF		66,513.80
DREY INC		740.00
EAGLE SERVICES INC.		1,787.67
EGAN SUPPLY CO		7,919.73
ELKHORN GLASS		1,235.00
ESU COORDINATING COUNCIL		1,181.00
FIRST STUDENT		2,100.75
FREMONT ELECTRIC INC		7,067.52
GREATER NEBRASKA SUPERINTENDENTS		250.00
HEARTLAND PEST CONTROL		260.00
HOMETOWN LEASING		2,522.27
HUBERT COMPANY, LLC		125.04
JAYMAR BUSINESS FORM, INC		542.80
JOHNSON, ALEX		400.00
JOURNEYED.COM, INC		3,721.02
JP BOILER SERVICE		3,064.00
JUST FOR KIDS THERAPY INC		9,379.75
JW PEPPER & SONS		395.28
KV CONSTRUCTION INC		33,124.78
MACKIN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES		3,278.23
MATHESON TRI-GAS INC		8,469.01
MCGRAW-HILL EDUCATION INC		783.54
MEDCO SUPPLY COMPANY		23.25
MENARDS - ELKHORN		410.08
METAL LOGOS INC		12,365.74
MIDWEST MOVEMENT		85.00
MY CENTRAL SUPPLY		495.36
N P GRIFFITH COMPANY		800.00
N2Y LLC		4,030.61
NACIA		250.00
NASB ALICAP		5,000.00
NATIONAL BUSINESS FURNITURE		351.02
NEBR ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS		485.00
NEBRASKA RURAL COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION		850.00
ODEY'S INC		3,430.25
OMAHA WORLD-HERALD		2,700.00
ONE SOURCE		342.05
PEARSON ASSESSMENT		147.20

09/12/2024 10:59 AM

SEPTEMBER 2024 BOARD BILLS

User ID: CQ

Vendor Name	Vendor Description	Amount
PERRY GUTHERY HAASE & GESSFORD		1,408.00
PRAIRIE MECHANICAL CORP		15,969.81
PRIME SECURED		595.00
PUBLICATION PRINTING		790.80
QUILL, LLC		592.71
REALLY GREAT READING COMPANY, LLC		99.00
ROBOSOURCE LLC		289.97
SADDLEBACK EDUCATIONAL, INC		2,725.51
SCHOLASTIC INC		113.60
SCHOOL SPECIALTY INC		3,516.66
SHEPPARD'S BUSINESS INTERIORS INC		3,804.55
SOL LEWIS ENGINEERING CO		1,372.43
SPEECH SQUAD, LLC		8,626.50
STANZEL'S MOW & SNOW LLC		10,520.00
STEVE WEISS MUSIC		747.00
TAESE/USU		500.00
UNIV OF NEBR MEDICAL CENTER		3,000.00
UNIVERSITY OF NEBR OMAHA - CEHHS		450.00
VALENTINO'S		499.13
VALLEY ACE HARDWARE		976.86
VERIZON		90.12
WARDS NATURAL SCIENCE EST INC		99.17
WASTE CONNECTIONS OF NEBR, INC		1,140.39
WATER ENGINEERING INC		302.50
WOODRIVER ENERGY LLC		42.64
YOUTH FRONTIERS INC		750.00
Fund Number 01		<u>290,955.71</u>

Checking Account ID 6	Fund Number 06	NUTRITION FUND	Amount
CASH-WA DISTRIBUTING			3,595.10
CHESTERMAN CO			459.19
CINTAS CORP			336.82
HILAND DAIRY			4,597.29
JAYMAR BUSINESS FORM, INC			119.00
ROTELLA'S ITALIAN BAKERY INC			646.49
SYSCO LINCOLN			5,677.74
US FOOD INC			5,998.51
Fund Number 06			<u>21,430.14</u>

09/12/2024 11:01 AM

MID MONTH BILLS - AUGUST/ SEPTEMBER 2024

User ID: CQ

Vendor Name	Vendor Description	Amount
Checking Account ID 1	Fund Number 01	GENERAL FUND
ACH BANK FEE		47.50
AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES		2,281.09
ATHLETIC.NET		1,008.00
AUL SPECIAL PAY TRUST		5,000.00
AWARDS UNLIMITED INC		17.50
BLACK SQUIRREL ENTERPRISES		240.00
CANOPY SUPPORTIVE SERVICES		37,244.49
CITI CARD - COSTCO		1,188.13
CITY OF VALLEY		2,157.25
COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN		1,497.00
CONTROL DEPOT		117.20
COX BUSINESS		157.98
DISCOUNT SCHOOL SUPPLY		36.04
EAGLE SERVICES INC.		257.54
ESU COORDINATING COUNCIL		976.50
HY-VEE INC		462.30
JKE HOSPITALITY MOBILE LLC		3,152.90
LAKESHORE LEARNING MATERIALS, LLC		3,377.13
LOVE'S TRAVEL STOPS & COUNTRY STORE		1,112.50
LOWE'S BUSINESS ACCOUNT		1,009.29
MACKIN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES		1,920.14
MADISON NATIONAL LIFE INS CO IN		3,123.57
MAGIC WRIGHTER E-SERVICE		402.50
MATHESON TRI-GAS INC		11,303.91
NASB ALICAP		0.00
OMAHA PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT		28,316.96
PECHOUS, NICOLE		1,825.00
PITNEY BOWES GLOBAL FINANCIAL SERVICES LLC		96.00
PUBLIC RISK MANAGEMENT		13,448.00
RIXSTINE RECOGNITION		48.29
S2 ROLL OFFS, LLC		395.00
SCHOOL MATE		887.50
SCHOOL SPECIALTY INC		1,440.35
SOCIAL THINKING		2,192.20
THOMAS, CYNTHIA		166.68
USBANK		8,840.54
VISION SERVICE PLAN		19.75
WALMART COMMUNITY		21.42
WELLS FARGO BANK		11,645.52
Fund Number 01		<u>147,433.67</u>

Checking Account ID 8	Fund Number 08	SPECIAL BUILDING FUND
DC WEST DEPRECIATION FUND		600,000.00
Fund Number 08		<u>600,000.00</u>

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
EDUCATION OF DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 28-0015,
a/k/a, DOUGLAS COUNTY WEST COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Monday, August 12, 2024**

The regular meeting of the Board of Education, District #15, in the County of Douglas, in the State of Nebraska, was convened in open and public session on Monday, August 12, 2024 at the Central Office Board Room, 401 South Pine Street, Valley, NE 68064-0378.

Following public notification procedures approved by the Board of Education, February 14, 2011, in adherence to 84-1411, notice of the meeting was given in advance thereof by posting such Notice on the exterior front door of the high school, elementary school, middle school, Valley City Hall, First Nebraska Bank, and Foundation One Bank. Notice of the meeting was simultaneously given to all members of the Board of Education. Availability of the agenda was communicated in advance notice and in the notice to the Board of Education of the meeting. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

Attendance Taken at 7:00 PM.

Kelly Hinrichs: Present
Luke Janke: Present
Jamie Jorgensen: Present
Bill Koile: Present
Elizabeth Mayer: Present
Jim Tomanek: Present

Present: 6.

1. Call to Order

The agenda, listing items for consideration by the Board, is on file in the Superintendent's office. Other matters may come before the Board and the Board has the right to modify the agenda before the meeting.

President – “As I call the meeting to order I wish to inform everyone present that a current copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted on the back wall of the Board Room for your review at any time.”

2. Public Communications and Correspondence

Comments from the audience were accepted at this time. Correspondence addressed to the Board will be presented. No public correspondence noted

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve agenda as presented Passed with a motion by Kelly Hinrichs and a second by Luke Janke.

Kelly Hinrichs: Yea, Luke Janke: Yea, Jamie Jorgensen: Yea, Bill Koile: Yea, Elizabeth Mayer: Yea,
Jim Tomanek: Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

4. Administrative Reports

4.1. Superintendent's Report

4.2. Financial Report

5. Consent Agenda

Motion to approve Consent Agenda Passed with a motion by Jamie Jorgensen and a second by Kelly Hinrichs.

Kelly Hinrichs: **Yea**, Luke Janke: **Yea**, Jamie Jorgensen: **Yea**, Bill Koile: **Yea**, Elizabeth Mayer: **Yea**, Jim Tomanek: **Yea**

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

5.1. Approve Minutes

Regular Meeting Date:

Special Meeting Date:

5.2. Approve Claims for Payment

5.3. Approve Financial Report

5.4. Approve Classified Staff

Becky Ericson, Elementary Health Para resigned

6. New Business

6.1. First Reading 2024 Policy Updates

The Board was presented summaries and policies that are proposed revisions or new policies related to updates from changes in federal law or passed Nebraska legislation in the 2024 session. The Americanism (policy) committee reviewed all changes before forwarding to the entire Board for first reading.

Policies included: 5101 Student Discipline, 1050 Access to Records, 8346 Public Participation at Board Meetings, 3130 Purchasing Policies, 8342 Designated Method of Giving Notice, 5201 Promotion and Retention, 3140 Contracting for Services, 8240 Membership in School Board Associations, 6700 Firearms, 5008 Attendance, 5006 Option Enrollment, 4141 Teacher Training-Training Requirements, 6111 Classroom Environment, 3571 Meal Charge, 6310 Textbook Loans, 5013 Preschool Enrollment.

6.2. Report of Academic Progress & Professional Development Plan for DC West Staff

Dr. Marten presented academic progress from the 2023-2024 school year. She and the administrative team also provided the Board the 2024-2025 Professional Development Plan. This plan outlines the content provided for professional development for all DC West staff in the upcoming year.

6.3. Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Review & Discussion

The Board reviewed the draft by category budget for the 2025 fiscal year. We have been budgeting with an estimate from March 2024 on our property tax valuation and state aid. We will have the certified valuation by Monday, August 19th. After that time, we will meet with the finance committee to finalize the budget and levy. The Board publication, hearing and approval of the budget will be conducted in September.

6.4. Approval to Sell or Recycle Used Wheelchair Van

As the Board approved, a new wheelchair van was purchased in July. The dealership would not take our old van on trade due to the condition of the van. The administration is requesting authorization to sell the van as is or recycle the van in order to dispose of the vehicle that is no longer needed.

Motion to authorize the Superintendent to sell, recycle, or dispose of the current wheelchair van due to the current condition of the vehicle Passed with a motion by Jamie Jorgensen and a second by Bill Koile.

Kelly Hinrichs: **Yea**, Luke Janke: **Yea**, Jamie Jorgensen: **Yea**, Bill Koile: **Yea**, Elizabeth Mayer: **Yea**,

Jim Tomanek: Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0

6.5. 2024 Special Session Legislative Update

This agenda item was held for discussion of the current status of the 2024 special legislative session and the impact of legislation on DC West Community Schools.

7. Adjournment

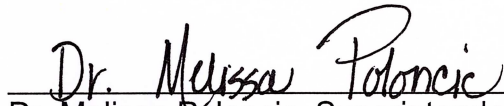
Motion to adjourn meeting @7:26pm Passed with a motion by Kelly Hinrichs and a second by Luke Janke.

Kelly Hinrichs: Yea, Luke Janke: Yea, Jamie Jorgensen: Yea, Bill Koile: Yea, Elizabeth Mayer: Yea, Jim Tomanek: Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0



Kristi Trost, Board Secretary



Dr. Melissa Poloncic, Superintendent

DC West Sports Complex
 Total Project Budget Summary GMP
 August 24, 2024



		Notes
Construction	\$ 12,690,957	MCL GMP
Contingency	\$ 308,576	Allowance

Total Construction Costs - GMP	\$ 12,999,533	Total GMP
---------------------------------------	----------------------	------------------

AV Allowance	\$ -	Included in GMP
Security	\$ 35,000	Allowance
Access Points/Server Equipment	\$ 40,000	Allowance
Owner Equipment	\$ 50,000	Allowance
Signage	\$ 40,000	Allowance
FFE Allowance	\$ -	Allowance
Scoreboards	\$ -	Included in GMP
Owner Hard Contingency	\$ 150,000	Allowance

Total-Hard Cost Sub-Total	\$ 315,000	
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BCDM	\$ 859,535.00	Contract - executed
BCDM - Reimbursables	\$ 10,000.00	allowance
Rainwood	\$ 219,375.00	Contract - executed
Special Inspections	\$ 42,089.00	Allowance
Entitlements	\$ 21,240.00	allowance
Geotech	\$ 9,850.00	Contract - executed
SWPPP	\$ 10,000.00	allowance
Public Improvement Design	\$ 75,000.00	allowance
Financing Fees	\$ 63,378.00	allowance
Owners Soft Contingency	\$ -	

Total Soft Cost Sub-Total	\$ 1,310,467
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Total Project Budget \$ 14,625,000

Difference \$ -

\$ 14,625,000.00

NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING AND BUDGET SUMMARY

Douglas County West Community Schools (28__-0015__) in Douglas County, Nebraska

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given, in compliance with the provisions of State Statute Sections 13-501 to 13-513, that the governing body will meet on the 16 day of September, 2024 at 6:45 o'clock, P.M., at DC West District Office Board Room for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions or observations of taxpayers relating to the following proposed budget and to consider amendments relative thereto. The budget detail is available at the office of the Clerk/Secretary during regular business hours. For more information on statewide receipts and expenditures, and to compare cost per pupil and performance to other school districts, go to: <https://nep.education.ne.gov>

FUNDS	Actual Disbursements & Transfers	Actual/Estimated Disbursements & Transfers	Budgeted Disbursements & Transfers	Necessary Cash Reserve (4)	Total Available Resources Before Property Taxes (5)	Total Personal and Real Property Tax Requirement (7)
	2022-2023 (1)	2023-2024 (2)	2024-2025 (3)			
General	\$ 16,752,583.00	\$ 16,323,011.00	\$ 17,795,226.00	\$ 1,963,859.00	\$ 10,076,069.00	\$ 9,780,824.00
Depreciation	\$ 316,658.00	\$ 1,604,279.00	\$ 1,472,230.00		\$ 1,472,230.00	
Activities	\$ 249,428.00	\$ 303,813.00	\$ 455,464.00	\$ -	\$ 455,464.00	
School Nutrition	\$ 836,052.00	\$ 746,375.00	\$ 751,375.00	\$ -	\$ 751,375.00	
Bond	\$ 765,991.00	\$ 769,350.00	\$ 2,411,248.00	\$ -	\$ 1,178,864.00	\$ 1,244,832.00
Special Building	\$ 11,897,426.00	\$ 5,590,859.00	\$ 2,254,587.00		\$ 183,267.00	\$ 2,092,242.00
Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking	\$ 433,646.00	\$ 431,946.00	\$ 947,948.00	\$ -	\$ 419,783.00	\$ 533,500.00
Student Fee	\$ 4,314.00	\$ 13,218.00	\$ 25,254.00	\$ -	\$ 25,254.00	
TOTALS	\$ 31,256,098.00	\$ 25,782,851.00	\$ 26,113,332.00	\$ 1,963,859.00	\$ 14,562,306.00	\$ 13,651,398.00

	Bond Purposes	Non-Bond Purposes	Total
Breakdown of Property Tax	\$ 1,778,332.00	\$ 11,873,066.00	\$ 13,651,398.00

Notice of Special Hearing To Set Final Tax Request

Douglas County West Community Schools (28__-0015____) in Douglas County, Nebraska

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given, in compliance with the provisions of State Statute Section 77-1632, that the governing body will meet on the 16 day of, September 2024 at 6:55 o'clock P.M., at DC West District Office Board Room for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions or observations of taxpayers relating to setting the final tax request.

	2023-2024	2024-2025	Change
Property Valuations	1,641,374,350	1,778,331,750	8%

2023-2024 Budget Information

2024-2025 Budget Information

Fund	2023-2024 Operating Budget	2023-2024 Property Tax Request	2023 Tax Rate	Property Tax Rate (2023-2024 Request Divided By 2023 Valuation)	2024-2025 Operating Budget	2024-2025 Proposed Property Tax Request	Proposed 2024 Tax Rate	Change in Tax Rate	Change in Operating Budget
General Fund	17,237,162.00	9,298,974.00	0.566536	0.522904	17,795,226.00	9,780,824.00	0.550000	-3%	3%
Bond Fund(s) K - 12	1,576,527.00	1,159,596.00	0.070648	0.065207	2,411,248.00	1,244,832.00	0.070000	-1%	53%
Special Building Fund	4,960,691.00	2,134,994.00	0.130074	0.120056	2,254,587.00	2,092,242.00	0.117652	-10%	-55%
Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund K - 12	645,774.00	496,970.00	0.030278	0.027946	947,948.00	533,500.00	0.030000	-1%	47%
Total	24,420,154.00	13,090,534.00	0.797535	0.736113	23,409,009.00	13,651,398.00	0.767652	-4%	-4%

RESOLUTION SETTING THE PROPERTY TAX REQUEST

RESOLUTION NO. 2024

WHEREAS, Nebraska Revised Statute 77-1632 and 77-1633 provides that the Governing Body of Douglas County West Community Schools passes by a majority vote a resolution or ordinance setting the tax request; and

WHEREAS, a special public hearing was held as required by law to hear and consider comments concerning the property tax request;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Governing Body of Douglas County West Community Schools resolves that:

1. The 2024-2025 property tax request be set at:

General Fund: \$ 9,780,824.00
Bond Fund: \$ 1,244,832.00
Special Building Fund: \$ 2,092,242.00
Qualified Capital Purpose \$ 533,500.00
Undertaking Fund:

- 2. The total assessed value of property differs from last year's total assessed value by 8.34 percent.
- 3. The tax rate which would levy the same amount of property taxes as last year, when multiplied by the new total assessed value of property would be 0.736113 per \$100 of assessed value.
- 4. Douglas County West Community Schools proposes to adopt a property tax request that will cause its tax rate to be 0.767652 per \$100 of assessed value.
- 5. Based on the proposed property tax request and changes in other revenue, the total operating budget of Douglas County West Community Schools will increase (or decrease) last year's budget by -4.14 percent.
- 6. A copy of this resolution be certified and forwarded to the County Clerk on or before October 15, 2024.

Motion by _____, seconded by _____ to adopt Resolution # _____.

Voting yes were:

Voting no were:

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2024

StudentsGraduation

To participate in commencement exercises or receive a DC West Community Schools diploma, a student must fully complete all requirements for graduation prior to the official commencement exercises, and complete other administrative requirements or conditions. Students who graduate from [Name] Public Schools must accumulate 240 hours. The total graduation requirements must include the following core curriculum:

English Language Arts	40	Semester Hours
Science	30	Semester Hours
Mathematics	30	Semester Hours
Social Sciences	30	Semester Hours
Physical Education/ Health	20	Semester Hours
Fine Arts	10	Semester Hours
Career & Technical Ed	25	Semester Hours
Required	185	Semester Hours
Electives	55	Semester Hours

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

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. Sec. 79-729
 Neb. Rev. Stat. Sec. 79-3003
 NDE Rule 10

Date of Adoption:

Community RelationsPublic Access to School Records - Examination, Making Memoranda, and Copying

1. The School District, through the Superintendent, shall provide interested persons access to the records of the School District as required by law. Such access shall include the opportunity to examine School District records, when permitted by law. The School District shall not make records of individual students, personnel, or other confidential material available, except as allowed by law or compelled by court order.

2. Records may be examined at the School District offices during the hours such offices are open for the ordinary transaction of business. School district offices will be open for the ordinary transaction of business (a) during the school year on such days as school is in session, and (b) during the summer months when school is not in session, Monday through Friday, except legal holidays or other days the District is closed.

3. Records may be obtained in the form in which the record is maintained including, but not limited to, printouts, electronic data, and photocopies. The School District will not be required to produce or generate any record in a new or different form or format modified from that of the original School District record. Copies of records may be made as follows:

(a) Copies may be made by persons using their own copying or photocopying equipment, provided that such copies shall be made on the premises of the School District offices or at a location mutually agreed to by the requester and the School District.

(b) Copies may be obtained from the School District if the School District has copying equipment reasonably available, and upon payment of a fee for providing copies. The Superintendent shall determine a reasonable fee for the copying of school district records, provided that such fee is not to exceed the actual cost of making the copies available. If the copies requested are estimated by the School District to be more than fifty dollars (\$50.00), the School District may require the requester to furnish a deposit prior to fulfilling such request.

4. For residents of Nebraska and news media desiring to submit a public records request to the School District, a requester must submit a written request to the School District. Upon written request for access to records, the School District will provide to the requester as soon as is practicable and without delay, but not more than four (4) business days after actual receipt of the request:

(a) Access to or, if copying equipment is reasonably available, copies of the school district records requested;

(b) A written denial of the request, or portion thereof, if there is a legal basis for such denial of access to school district records on a written form from the school district; or

(c) If the entire request cannot with reasonable good faith efforts be fulfilled within four (4) business days after actual receipt of the request due to the significant difficulty or extensiveness of the request, the school district shall provide a written explanation, including the earliest practicable date for fulfilling the request, and estimate of the expected cost of any copies, and an opportunity to modify or prioritize the items within the request. If the response to the request is expected to require more than eight cumulative hours of staff time spent searching, identifying, physically redacting, or copying, the District may require the requester to furnish a deposit, as permitted under the Public Records Request Laws.

5. For nonresidents of Nebraska, a requester must submit a written request to the School District. The School District may then require the requester to submit a deposit, as permitted under the Public Records Request Laws.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. Sec. 84-712 et seq.

Date of Adoption: September 16, 2024

Business OperationsPurchasing Policies

The Superintendent shall ensure that all purchases are made in the interest of economy and efficiency. Where necessary, standards and procedures shall be established to accomplish the following policies of the Board of Education:

1. Purchases up to \$20,000. For the greatest efficiency in expediting purchases, the administration shall be authorized to purchase any item specifically budgeted which has a sale price within the established limit.
2. Purchases from \$20,000 up to \$90,000. The Superintendent shall request the submission of proposals for purchases which have a sale price within the established limit. The Superintendent shall receive and evaluate all proposals in making a recommendation to the Board of Education for acceptance. The Board of Education may review all proposals submitted relating to the recommended purchase. Since this is a proposal system, not a bidding process, the school district in no way shall be obligated to arbitrarily award the contract to the lowest proposal, but shall reserve the right to reject any and all proposals or to waive any informality in any proposal it deems advisable, and to award to the proposer which, in its opinion, is most desirable.
3. Purchases of \$90,000 and above. The Superintendent shall advertise for sealed bids which shall be opened in conformity with any applicable laws and in compliance with any procedures established by the Superintendent. The Board retains the right to determine the responsibility of the bidders, and shall award the contract to the lowest responsible bidder meeting specifications, be the bidder a member or apart from the local community.
4. These purchasing limits or requirements will not apply in the event of a time-sensitive purchase, or a purchase where these requirements would not reasonably or practically apply, as long as the Superintendent obtains prior approval from the Board President, and the Board of Education subsequently ratifies said purchase at a subsequent Board meeting.
5. Any school employee who orders any supplies or equipment outside of that which has been included in the annual budget and without written authorization of the principal or Superintendent shall be personally liable for payment for the supplies or equipment purchased.
6. School employees or students purchasing supplies and equipment out of an activity account must first secure a purchase order from the principal authorizing the purchase. Failure to do so will cause the person to be personally liable for payment for the supplies or equipment purchased.
7. The District need not comply with the bidding requirements if the District purchases property from the Nebraska State Purchasing Bureau, so long as the Nebraska State

Purchasing Bureau competitively bid the purchase of property.

8. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, no employee may enter into any agreement or understanding on behalf of the District that may financially benefit the employee, member of the employee's immediate family, or a business with which the employee is associated, unless the Board of Education approves such contract or arrangement in advance.

Credit Card Purchasing Program

1. The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent or designee to contract with one or more financial institutions, card-issuing banks, credit card companies, charge card companies, debit card companies, or third-party merchant banks capable of operating a purchasing card program on behalf of the District.
2. The Board of Education delegates to the Superintendent or designee: (a) the determination of the type of purchasing card or cards to be utilized in the District's purchasing card program; and (b) the determination of which employees shall be approved or disapproved to be assigned a purchasing card in the District's purchasing card program. The Superintendent shall submit the approved names to the Board, from time to time.
3. The District's purchasing card program may only be utilized for the purchase of goods and services for and on behalf of the District. No officer or employee of the District shall use a purchasing card for any unauthorized use.
4. An itemized receipt for purposes of tracking expenditures shall accompany all purchasing card purchases. In the event that a receipt does not accompany an authorized cardholder's purchase, the Superintendent or designee shall temporarily or permanently suspend said cardholder's purchasing card privileges.
5. Upon the termination or suspension of employment of an individual using a purchasing card, the Superintendent or designee shall immediately close such individual's purchasing card account and said employee shall immediately return the purchasing card.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. Sec. 13-610
Neb. Rev. Stat. Sec. 49-1401, et seq

Date of Adoption: September 16, 2024

Business OperationsContracting for Services

Contractual services which by their nature are not adapted to award by competitive bidding, such as contracts for the services of individuals possessing a high degree of professional skill, where the ability or fitness of the individual plays an important part, are not subject to bid but are subject to approval by the Board of Education in conformity with established policy.

Every contract for services to be provided to [Name] Public Schools shall require that the contractor use a federal immigration verification system to determine the work eligibility status of new employees physically performing services within the State of Nebraska. Such requirement shall be deemed to be included and a part of the terms of every contract for services with the School District, including but not limited to oral contracts.

For any company that submits a bid or proposal for any technology-related product or service, and before entering into any contract with any company for any technology-related product or service, the company must certify that: (1) the company is not a scrutinized company (as defined by law); (2) the company will not subcontract with any scrutinized company for any aspect of the performance of the contemplated contract; and (3) that any products or services to be provided do not originate with a scrutinized company. The District will not knowingly enter into any contract with any scrutinized company.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. Sec. 4-114
LB 1300 (2024)

Date of Adoption: September 16, 2024

Business OperationsMeal Charge Policy

It is the policy of the District to comply with the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program and all other federal grant programs that provide free or reduced meals to qualifying students.

Student Eligibility

Families of students who may be eligible for free or reduced price school meals should submit an application to determine their eligibility. Applications are available through the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee. As long as an application is submitted on or after July 1, the application will be considered current for the new school year. A student may become eligible for free or reduced meals at any time during the school year if the household experiences a change in financial circumstances.

Meal Account Balances

The District will ensure that families can check their meal account balances in a manner other than exclusively online. The District will ensure that at least one form of meal account payment is free of charge.

The District encourages families to pre-pay without charge for free or reduced price meals. Notwithstanding the option to pre-pay, students and families will have a method to add funds during the school day. Any balance remaining in a pre-paid account shall carry over into the next month. Households approved for free or reduced price meals with funds remaining in their meal account at the end of the school year shall receive a refund. When a student leaves the District or graduates, the District shall attempt to contact the student's household to return any funds remaining in the student's meal account.

Unpaid meal charges may be carried over at the end of the school year as a delinquent debt and the District shall undertake reasonable collection efforts to collect unpaid meal charges classified as delinquent debt, pursuant to and in compliance with state and federal law. The District shall maintain records of its collection efforts and, once delinquent meal charges are converted to bad debt, its documentation establishing and handling of the bad debt.

The District will not use a debt collection agency to collect or attempt to collect, directly or indirectly, debts due or assessed to be owed for outstanding debts on a school lunch or breakfast account of any student. Nor will the District assess or collect any interest, fees, or other monetary penalties for outstanding debts on a school lunch or breakfast account of any student.

Student Confidentiality

The District will disclose individual student eligibility information only to those persons (and organizations) who require the information in order to carry out an activity specifically authorized by the National School Lunch Act, subject to applicable legal exceptions.

The District shall not use or implement any colored or coded meal cards, tickets, tokens, or other methods of payment that would overtly identify a student as being eligible for free or reduced price meals.

Distribution Annually

This policy shall be provided or made available to all students' households at the start of each school year and to households transferring to the District during the school year.

This policy shall also be provided annually to District staff members responsible for the enforcement of this policy, including food service professionals.

The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee shall maintain documentation of the annual distribution of this policy to students' households and District staff.

Legal Reference: Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 1751);
U.S.D.A. Memorandum SP 57-2016.
LB 1329 (2024)

Date of Adoption: September 16, 2024

Personnel - Certificated EmployeesTeacher Training

The district shall provide and promote development programs for all professional staff - Superintendent, principals, teachers and the Board of education. Features of the staff development program:

1. Staff development resources and time shall be allocated in keeping with the key values and priorities of the district.
2. The staff development program shall concentrate on the programs and practices of effective schools and teaching, goal setting, assessment procedures, evaluation of staff, and the change process.
3. Content shall be selected that has been verified by research to improve student outcomes.
4. Teachers shall be actively involved in initiating, planning, and conducting the development programs for teachers.

At least annually, the administration will present to the Board the planned staff training as required by law. The Board will then approve those training requirements if the Board determines that the length of each training is reasonable.

Legal Reference: LB 1329 (2024)

Date of Adoption: September 16, 2024

StudentsOption EnrollmentA. Process and Time Lines to Option In

For a student to attend DC West Community Schools as an option enrollment student, the student's parent or legal guardian must submit an application to the Board of Education of the DC West Community School District between September 1 and March 15 for enrollment during the following and subsequent school years (the "application period").

B. Standards for Acceptance or Rejection of Option Students

Numeric Capacity: The Board of Education may set the numeric capacity of programs, classes, grade levels, or school buildings by operation of this policy or through freestanding action by the Board. Numeric Capacity will generally be determined based upon available staff, facilities, projected enrollment of resident students, projected number of students with which the option school district will contract based on existing contractual arrangements, and other factors the Board deems relevant to the school's operations and education provided to students. Such determinations may be made in the form of an Appendix "1" to this Policy. The Board's adoption of a resolution does not preclude the Board from adopting a subsequent resolution with specific capacity standards partially or wholly different from its previous resolution(s). Individuals seeking information about the numeric capacity set by the Board may contact the superintendent for a copy of that resolution.

Programmatic Capacity: In addition to the numeric capacity standards referred to above, the board may, by resolution, prior to October 15 of each school year, declare a program, a class, or a school unavailable for the next school year to option students due to lack of capacity. Individuals seeking information about the numeric capacity set by the board may contact the superintendent for a copy of that resolution.

Special Education Capacity: The Director of Special Education shall review on a case-by-case basis all option applications for students that would receive or could be eligible to receive special education or related services. If the Director or designee determines that the District does not have the capacity to provide the student with the appropriate services and accommodations, then the Director or designee shall send a denial notice to the parent(s) or guardian(s) and include a description of services and accommodations that the District does not have the capacity to provide.

Other Standards for Acceptance or Rejection of Option Enrollment Applications: In addition to the numeric and programmatic capacity standards outlined above, the school district shall not be required to accept an option student when acceptance of the student:

1. Would increase the operating costs of the school district, such as by requiring the hiring of new staff or contracting with outside entities to provide services to the student;
2. Would require the procurement of new equipment, technology, or furnishings;
3. Would cause or require the rearrangement of caseloads for staff and contracted professionals;

4. Is reasonably deemed by appropriate school staff to pose a potential risk to the health or safety of students or staff;
5. May pose a risk of adversely affecting the quality of educational services being provided to resident students, as determined by appropriate school staff.

Prohibited Standards. The school district shall not base the decision to accept or reject an option student on the student's previous academic achievement, athletic or other extracurricular ability, disabling condition(s), proficiency in the English language, or previous disciplinary proceedings.

Order of Acceptance. Priority shall be accorded in the following order: (1) first, to those applications required to be given priority by law, (2) second, to students of staff members, (3) third to those with a sibling in attendance at DC West Community Schools, with priority within this group being given to those who had earliest filed applications, and (3) fourth to those without an option student sibling in attendance at DC West Community Schools, with priority within this group to those who had earliest filed applications. Filing date determinations are made by the Superintendent, or the Superintendent's designee. In the event applications within a group are received at the same or substantially the same time, priority as between such same-date applications shall be determined on the basis of random drawing.

C. False or Misleading Option Applications.

If prior to the student's attendance as an option student, the school district discovers that a previously accepted option application contained false or substantively misleading information, the option application will be rejected.

D. Releases for Options Out

A request for release of a resident student or option student currently attending DC West Community School District who submits an enrollment option application after March 15 or any other statutory deadline will be granted unless the release shall not be granted if the administration is considering or has recommended expulsion of the student at the time the application is filed, and the administration determines it is appropriate to complete the expulsion process.

The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee is hereby authorized to execute such releases on behalf of the School District and the School District, subject to subsequent ratification by the School District.

E. Notification of Acceptance or Rejection

The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee is hereby authorized to apply this Policy and determine, on behalf of the Board, whether an option application will be accepted or rejected. The Superintendent or designee shall notify, in writing, the parent or legal guardian of the student-applicant and the student-applicant's resident school district or, if the student is an option student attending a different district, that option district whether the application is accepted or rejected on or before April 1 or, in the case of an application submitted after March 15, within sixty days after submission.

If an option enrollment application or a request for release is rejected by the DC West Community School District, the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee shall provide written notification to the parent or guardian stating the reasons for the rejection and the process for appealing such rejection to the State Board of Education. Such notification shall be sent by certified mail.

F. Applications Subsequent to Relocations

An option enrollment application does not require a release and shall be accepted or rejected within forty-five days after filing in the following circumstances:

1. the student relocated to a different resident school district after February 1, or
2. the resident student relocates in a different school district but wants to continue attending his or her original resident school district and has been enrolled in the original school district for the immediately preceding two years shall be automatically accepted and the deadlines for application are not applicable.

G. Wait Lists and Application Process for Newly Available Option Enrollment Slots After April 1

The district will follow the following procedures when any option enrollment slots open or become newly available after June 1 and up through the day prior to the start of the next upcoming school year. Such option enrollment slots which become newly available shall first be filled from the wait list in order.

1. The District will communicate with the parent or legal guardian of the first student on the wait list about the newly available option enrollment slot and whether the parent or legal guardian desires to accept it. If the parent or legal guardian does not accept it, then the district shall similarly communicate with the parents or legal guardians of the next students on the wait list in order, until the newly available option enrollment slot is filled or the wait list is exhausted.
2. When a parent or legal guardian accepts the available option enrollment slot, they have four business days to obtain and provide to the district. Release approval from the resident school district on the application form. When the release approval is provided to the district, the district shall immediately notify in writing that the application is accepted.
3. All wait lists shall become null and void once the school year begins.

H. Status of Option Student

A student who is admitted under the enrollment option program shall be treated as a resident student, and in such regard shall be required to provide such enrollment information and documentation as is required for enrollment of other students (e.g., certified birth certificate and

evidence of physical examination, visual evaluation and immunization), shall be required to be enrolled on a full-time basis, and shall be required to adhere to student conduct rules. The building assignment for an option student, as well as classroom and grade level assignments, shall be determined by the administration.

An option student shall not be entitled to transportation except as required by law. Transportation or transportation reimbursement will be provided in the following circumstances:

1. The DC West Community School District may, upon mutual agreement with the parent or legal guardian of an option student, provide transportation to the option student on the same basis as provided for resident students. The school district may charge the parents of each option student transported a fee sufficient to recover the additional costs of such transportation.
2. Option students who qualify for free lunches are eligible for either free transportation or transportation reimbursement from the option school district. The District's policy is that the District selects which service (transportation or reimbursement) is to be provided to students.
3. For option students receiving special education services, the transportation services required in the student's Individualized Education Plan shall be provided by the resident school district.

I. Information Regarding Schools, Programs, Policies and Procedures.

As part of the option enrollment program, the administration shall make information about the DC West Community Schools and its school, programs, policies and procedures available to all interested persons and shall have a copy of the option enrollment policy and regulations available at each school building.

J. Late Applications and Requests for Release

The Board of Education may refuse a request of a student seeking to option out of the school district when the option application is submitted after March 15th under the following conditions:

1. When the district has already entered into contracts with teaching staff for the following school year;
2. When the district has already contracted for the performance of specific services for the student;
3. When the release of the student would have a negative financial impact or loss of revenue for the district.

The Board of Education may approve late applications to option into the district under the following conditions:

1. When the resident district has released a student;
2. When the student's late enrollment into the district meets the standards for acceptance or rejection of option students contained elsewhere in this policy.

K. Cancellation of Option

Students who option either into or out of the school district shall:

1. Attend the option school district until graduation or relocation/re-option in a different resident school district unless the student chooses to return to the resident school district, in which case the student's parent or legal guardian shall timely submit a cancellation form to the school board or board of education of the option school district and the resident school district for approval for the following year.
2. Attend an option school district for not less than one school year unless the student relocates to a different resident school district, completes requirements for graduation prior to the end of the school year, transfers to a parochial or private school, or upon mutual agreement of the resident and option school districts cancels the enrollment option and returns to the resident school district.

L. Authority of Superintendent

The Board of Education authorizes the superintendent of schools to make decisions on its behalf pursuant to and to apply the criteria articulated by this policy in determining whether to grant or deny option enrollment applications.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. Sections 79-232 to 79-246

Date of Adoption: September 16, 2024

StudentsStudent AttendanceAttendance Policy and Excessive Absenteeism

Regular and punctual student attendance is required. The administration is responsible for developing further attendance rules and regulations, and all staff are expected to implement this policy and administrative rules and regulations to encourage regular and punctual student attendance. The District will maintain an accurate record of student attendance.

A. Attendance and Absences.

1. Circumstances of Absences – Definitions. The circumstances for all absences from school will be identified as School Excused or Not School Excused. Absences should be cleared through the Principal's office in advance whenever possible. All absences, except for illness and/or death in the family, require advance approval.
 - a. School Excused. Any of the following circumstances that lead to an absence will be identified as a School Excused absence, provided the required attendance procedures have been followed:
 - (1) Impossible or impracticable barriers outside the control of the parent or child prevent a student from attending school. The parent may be required to provide the school with documentation to demonstrate the absence was beyond the control of the parent or child. This could include, but is not limited to documented illness (including physical or mental illness), court, death of a family member, or suspension.
 - (2) Other absences as determined by the principal or the principal's designee.
 - b. Not School Excused. Absences that are not school excused may result in a report to the county attorney and may be classified as follows:
 - (1) Parent acknowledged absences are those in which the parent communicated with the school in the prescribed manner that the child is absent and is the parent's responsibility for the extent of the school day. This includes vacations or other events that do not meet the criteria for a School Excused absence.
 - (2) Other absences are those in which the parent has not communicated a reason for the student's absence.

2. Absence Procedure. In its Student Information System, the District may identify many different codes that provide greater definition to the circumstances of a child's absence, but all of the codes need to be identified to parents and students as fitting into one of the above defined absence circumstances.
3. Mandatory Ages of Attendance. A child is of mandatory age if the child will reach age 6 prior to January 1 of the then-current school year and has not reached 18 years of age.

Exceptions for Younger Students. Attendance is not mandatory for a child who has reached 6 years of age prior to January 1 of the then-current school year, but will not reach age 7 prior to January 1 of such school year, if the child's parent or guardian has signed and filed with the school district in which the child resides an affidavit stating either: (1) that the child is participating in an education program that the parent or guardian believes will prepare the child to enter grade one for the following school year; or (2) that the parent or guardian intends for the child to participate in a school which has elected or will elect pursuant to law not to meet accreditation or approval requirements and the parent or guardian intends to provide the Commissioner of Education with a statement pursuant to section 79-1601(3) on or before the child's seventh birthday.

Exceptions for Older Students. Attendance is also not mandatory for a child who: (1) has obtained a high school diploma by meeting statutory graduation requirements; (2) has completed the program of instruction offered by a school which elects pursuant to law not to meet accreditation or approval requirements; or (3) has reached the age of 16 years and has been withdrawn from school in the manner prescribed by law.

Early Withdrawal for Students Enrolled in Accredited or Approved Schools. A person who has legal or actual charge or control of a child who is at least 16 but less than 18 years of age may withdraw such child from school before graduation and be exempt from the mandatory attendance requirements if an exit interview is conducted and a withdrawal form is signed.

Exit Interview. The process is initiated by a person who has legal or actual charge or control of the child submitting a withdrawal form. The form is to be as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education. Upon submission of the form, the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee shall set a time and place for an exit interview if the child is enrolled in [Name] Public Schools or resides in the [Name] Public School District and is enrolled in a private, denominational, or parochial school.

The exit interview shall be personally attended by:

- The child, unless the withdrawal is being requested due to an illness of the child making attendance at the exit interview impossible or impracticable;
- the person who has legal or actual charge or control of the child who requested the exit interview;
- the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee;
- the child's principal or the principal's designee if the child at the time of the exit interview is enrolled in a school operated by the school district; and
- any other person requested by any of the required parties who agrees to attend the exit interview and is available at the time designated for the exit interview which may include, for example, other school personnel or the child's principal if the child is enrolled in a private school.

At the exit interview, the person making the written request must present evidence that (a) the person has legal or actual charge or control of the child and (b) the child would be withdrawing due to either:

- financial hardships requiring the child to be employed to support the child's family or one or more dependents of the child, or
- an illness of the child making attendance impossible or impracticable.

The Superintendent or Superintendent's designee shall identify all known alternative educational opportunities, including vocational courses of study, that are available to the child in the school district and how withdrawing from school is likely to reduce potential future earnings for the child and increase the likelihood of the child being unemployed in the future. Any other relevant information may be presented and discussed by any of the parties in attendance.

At the conclusion of the exit interview, the person making the written request may sign a withdrawal form provided by the school district agreeing to the withdrawal of the child or may rescind the written request for the withdrawal.

Withdrawal Form. Any withdrawal form signed by the person making the written request shall be valid only if:

- the child also signs the form, unless the withdrawal is being requested due to an illness of the child making attendance at the exit interview impossible or impracticable, and
- the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee signs the form acknowledging that the interview was held, the required information was provided and discussed at the interview, and, in the opinion of the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee, the person making the written request does in fact have legal or actual charge or control of the child and the child is experiencing either (i) financial hardship, or (ii) an illness making attendance impossible or impracticable.

Early Withdrawal for Students Enrolled in an Exempt School (Home Schools). A person who has legal or actual charge or control of a child who is at least 16 but less than 18 years of age may withdraw such child from school before graduation and be exempt from the mandatory attendance requirements if such child has been enrolled in a school that elects not to meet the accreditation or approval requirements by filing with the State Department of Education a signed notarized release on a form prescribed by the Commissioner of Education.

4. Reporting and Responding to Excessive Absenteeism. Any District staff member or board member who knows of any failure on the part of any child of mandatory school attendance age to attend school regularly without lawful reason, shall within three days report such violation to the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee to be the attendance officer. The attendance officer shall immediately cause an investigation into any such report to be made. The attendance officer shall also investigate any case when of his or her personal knowledge, or by report or complaint from any resident of the district, the attendance officer believes there is a violation of the compulsory attendance laws. The school shall render all services in its power to compel such child to attend school

5. Excessive Absenteeism. Students who accumulate five (5) unexcused absences in a quarter which are Not School Excused shall be deemed to have "excessive absences." Such absences shall be determined on a per day (or hourly equivalent) basis for elementary students and on a per class basis for secondary students. When a student has excessive absences, school officials will have verbal or written communication with the person or persons who have legal or actual charge or control of any child.

When a student continues thereafter to have absences of at least twenty days which are Not School Excused, one or more meetings will be held between the school, the child's parent or guardian, and the child, when appropriate, to address the barriers to attendance. The result of the meeting or meetings shall be to develop a collaborative plan to reduce barriers identified to improve regular attendance. The plan shall include, if agreed to by the person who is responsible for making educational decisions on behalf of the child, an educational evaluation to determine whether any intellectual, academic, physical, or social-emotional barriers are contributing factors to the lack of attendance. The plan shall also consider, but not be limited to:

- (a) The physical, mental, or behavioral health of the child.
- (b) Educational counseling;
- (c) Referral to community agencies for economic services;
- (d) Family or individual counseling; and
- (e) Assisting the family in working with other community services.

If the parent/guardian refuses to participate in such meeting, the principal shall place documentation of such refusal in the child's attendance records.

6. Reporting Excessive Absenteeism to the County Attorney.

The school may report to the county attorney of the county in which the person having control of the student resides when the school has documented the efforts to address excessive absences, the collaborative plan to reduce barriers identified to improve regular attendance has not been successful, and the student has accumulated more than twenty (20) absences per school year. The school shall notify the child’s family in writing prior to making the referral to the county attorney. Illness (including physical or mental illness) that makes attendance impossible or impracticable shall not be the basis for referral to the county attorney.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. Sections 79-201 and 79-209

Date of Adoption: September 16, 2024

Students

Preschool Enrollment

The District's preschool program shall be operated in accordance with this policy.

Eligibility

The Superintendent or designee will develop and maintain eligibility guidelines for children to enroll in the District's preschool program in the following order of priority:

1. Those students that are required by law to participate or be given a preference in the preschool program;
2. Resident students who are four-years old on or before July 31st of the school year;
3. Resident students who are three-years old on or before July 31st of the school year;
4. Non-resident students who are not eligible to enroll in kindergarten will be considered for enrollment if they meet one of the following criteria in the following order of priority:
 - a. Staff member's children.
 - b. Students with a sibling currently enrolled at DC West in grades K-12 and who plan to attend kindergarten at DC West.

The Superintendent or designee shall have the authority to implement and interpret capacity and enrollment decisions to ensure the best interests of the District and its preschool program, and there shall be no appeal process to the Board of Education related to the Superintendent or designee's decision.

Enrollment Process

Enrollment for the preschool program will be conducted on an annual basis. Parents or legal guardians must complete and submit a preschool enrollment application form by the specified deadline. Applications will be reviewed, and enrollment decisions will be based on available space, eligibility criteria, and other factors deemed appropriate by District staff. Parents will be notified of their child's enrollment status within a reasonable timeframe after the application deadline.

Waitlist

In the event that the number of applicants exceeds the preschool program's capacity, a waitlist may be established. Priority on the waitlist may be given to eligible children based on the priorities listed in this policy. Parents will be notified if their child is placed on the waitlist and will receive updates regarding their status if openings become available.

Compliance

All aspects of this policy shall be implemented in accordance with applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and guidelines related to preschool education and enrollment.

Date of Adoption: September 16, 2024

StudentsStudent Discipline

- A. Development of Uniform Discipline System. It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent to develop and maintain a system of uniform discipline. The discipline which may be imposed includes actions which are determined to be reasonably necessary to aid the student, to further school purposes, or to prevent interference with the educational process, such as (without limitation) counseling and warning students, parent contacts and parent conferences, rearrangement of schedules, requirements that a student remain in school after regular hours to do additional work, restriction of extracurricular activity, or requirements that a student receive counseling upon written consent of the parent or guardian, or in-school suspension. The discipline may also include out-of-school suspension (short-term or long-term) and expulsion.
1. Short-Term Suspension: Students may be excluded by the Principal or the Principal's designee from school or any school function for a period of up to five school days (short-term suspension) on the following grounds:
 - a. Conduct that constitutes grounds for expulsion, whether the conduct occurs on or off school grounds; or
 - b. Other violations of rules and standards of behavior adopted by the Board of Education or the administrative or teaching staff of the school, which occur on or off school grounds, if such conduct interferes with school purposes or there is a nexus between such conduct and school.

The following process will apply to short-term suspensions:

- a. The Principal or the Principal's designee will make a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances. A short-term suspension will be made upon a determination that the suspension is necessary to help any student, to further school purposes, or to prevent an interference with school purposes.
- b. Prior to commencement of the short-term suspension, the student will be given oral or written notice of the charges against the student. The student will be advised of what the student is accused of having done, an explanation of the evidence the authorities have, and be afforded an opportunity to explain the student's version of the facts.
- c. Within 24 hours or such additional time as is reasonably necessary, not to exceed an additional 48 hours, following the suspension, the Principal or administrator will send a written statement to the student and the student's parent or guardian describing the student's conduct, misconduct or violation of the rule or standard and the reasons for the action taken.
- d. An opportunity will be given to the student, and the student's parent or guardian, to have a conference with the Principal or administrator ordering the short-term suspension before or at the time the student returns to school.

The Principal or administrator shall determine who in addition to the parent or guardian is to attend the conference. The Principal shall document their attempt to make a reasonable effort to hold a conference with the parent or guardian.

- e. A student who is on a short-term suspension shall not be permitted to be on school grounds without the express permission of the Principal.
2. Long-Term Suspension: A long-term suspension means an exclusion from school and any school functions for a period of more than five school days but less than twenty school days. A student who is on a long-term suspension shall not be permitted to be on school grounds without the express permission of the Principal. A notice will be given to the student and the parents/guardian when the Principal recommends a long-term suspension. The notice will include a description of the procedures for long-term suspension; the procedures will be those set forth in the Student Discipline Act.
 3. Expulsion:
 - a. Meaning of Expulsion. Expulsion means exclusion from attendance in all schools, grounds and activities of or within the system for a period not to exceed the remainder of the semester in which it took effect unless the misconduct occurred (a) within ten school days prior to the end of the first semester, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect through the second semester, or (b) within ten school days prior to the end of the second semester, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect for summer school and the first semester of the following school year, or (c) unless the expulsion is for conduct specified in these rules or in law as permitting or requiring a longer removal, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect for the period specified therein. Such action may be modified or terminated by the school district at any time during the expulsion period. A student who has been expelled shall not be permitted to be on school grounds without the express permission of the Principal. A notice will be given to the student and the parents/guardian when the Principal recommends an expulsion. The notice will include a description of the procedures for expulsion; the procedures will be those set forth in the Student Discipline Act.
 - b. Suspensions Pending Hearing. When a notice of intent to discipline a student by long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment is filed with the Superintendent, the student may be suspended by the principal until the date the long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment takes effect if the principal determines that the student must be suspended immediately to prevent or substantially reduce the risk of (a) interference with an educational function or school purpose or (b) a personal injury to the student himself or herself, other students, school employees, or school volunteers. If the student is suspended pending the outcome of the

hearing, the student may complete classwork and homework, including, but not limited to, examinations, missed during the period of suspension. During this period, the student will not be required to attend the alternative programs for expelled students in order to complete classwork or homework.

- c. Summer Review. Any expulsion that will remain in effect during the first semester of the following school year will be automatically scheduled for review before the beginning of the school year in accordance with law.
- d. Alternative Education: Students who are expelled may be offered an alternative education program that will enable the student to continue academic work for credit toward graduation. A student will not be required to attend the alternative education program in order to complete classwork and homework. In the event an alternative education program is not provided, a conference will be held with the parent, student, the Principal or another school representative assigned by the Principal, and a representative of a community organization that assists young people or that is involved with juvenile justice to develop a plan for the student in accordance with law.
- e. Suspension of Enforcement of an Expulsion: Enforcement of an expulsion action may be suspended for a period of not more than one full semester in addition to the balance of the semester in which the expulsion takes effect. As a condition of such suspended action, the student and parents will be required to sign a discipline agreement.
- f. Students Subject to Juvenile or Court Probation. Prior to the readmission to school of any student who is less than nineteen years of age and who is subject to the supervision of a juvenile probation officer or an adult probation officer pursuant to the order of the District Court, County Court, or Juvenile Court, who chooses to meet conditions of probation by attending school, and who has previously been expelled from school, the Principal or the Principal's designee shall meet with the student's probation officer and assist in developing conditions of probation that will provide specific guidelines for behavior and consequences for misbehavior at school (including conduct on school grounds and conduct during an educational function or event off school grounds) as well as educational objectives that must be achieved. If the guidelines, consequences, and objectives provided by the Principal or the Principal's designee are agreed to by the probation officer and the student, and the court permits the student to return to school under the agreed to conditions, the student may be permitted to return to school. The student may with proper consent, upon such return, be evaluated by the school for possible disabilities and may be referred for evaluation for possible placement in a special education program. The

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

- g. Returning from Expulsion. At the conclusion of an expulsion, the District will reinstate the student and accept nonduplicative, grade-appropriate credits earned by the student during the term of expulsion from any Nebraska accredited institution or institution accredited by one of the six regional accrediting bodies in the United States.
 - h. Exception for Pre-Kindergarten through Second Grade Students. Notwithstanding the foregoing, no pre-kindergarten through second grade student may be suspended from school, unless the student brings a deadly weapon on school grounds, in a school vehicle, or to a school activity. Instead, the Principal or Principal's designee may implement alternative disciplinary measures on a case-by-case basis if a pre-kindergarten through second grade student engages in misconduct that would otherwise result in a short-term suspension. If a pre-kindergarten through second grade student brings a deadly weapon on school grounds, in a school vehicle, or to a school activity, then the student may be suspended or expelled in accordance with this Policy's disciplinary procedures.
 - i. Religious Freedom. The District will not substantially burden a student's right to religious exercise unless the student's religious exercise is disruptive to the school environment, not permitted by staff, may pose a safety risk, or would otherwise interfere with the school day.
4. Emergency Exclusion: A student may be excluded from school in the following circumstances:
- a. If the student has a dangerous communicable disease transmissible through normal school contacts and poses an imminent threat to the health or safety of the school community; or
 - b. If the student's conduct presents a clear threat to the physical safety of himself, herself, or others, or is so extremely disruptive as to make temporary removal necessary to preserve the rights of other students to pursue an education.

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

If the emergency exclusion will be for five school days or less, the procedures for a short-term suspension shall be followed. If the Superintendent or his or her designee determines that an emergency exclusion shall extend beyond five days, a hearing may be held, upon a parent's timely request, and a final determination made within ten school days after the initial date of exclusion. Such procedures shall substantially comply with the procedures set forth in this policy for a long-term

suspension or expulsion, and be modified only to the extent necessary to accomplish the hearing and determination within this shorter time period.

5. Other Forms of Student Discipline: Administrative and teaching personnel may also take actions regarding student behavior, other than removal of students from school, which are reasonably necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or prevent interference with the educational process. Such actions may include, but are not limited to, counseling of students, parent conferences, rearrangement of schedules, requirements that a student remain in school after regular hours to do additional work, restriction of extracurricular activity, or requirements that a student receive counseling, psychological evaluation, or psychiatric evaluation upon the written consent of a parent or guardian to such counseling or evaluation. The actions may also include in-school suspensions. When in-school suspensions, after-school assignments, or other disciplinary measures are assigned, the student is responsible for complying with such disciplinary measures. A failure to serve such assigned discipline as directed will serve as grounds for further discipline, up to expulsion from school.
- B. Student Conduct Expectations. Students are not to engage in conduct which causes or which creates a reasonable likelihood that it will cause a substantial disruption in or material interference with any school function, activity or purpose or interfere with the health, safety, well being or rights of other students, staff or visitors.
- C. Grounds for Short-Term Suspension, Long-Term Suspension, Expulsion or Mandatory Reassignment. The following conduct has been determined by the Board of Education to have the potential to seriously affect the health, safety or welfare of students, staff and other persons or to otherwise seriously interfere with the educational process. Such conduct constitutes grounds for long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment, and any other lesser forms of discipline. The conduct is subject to the consequence of long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment where it occurs on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by the school and being used for a school purpose or in a vehicle being driven for a school purpose by a school employee or an employee's designee, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event.
1. Willfully disobeying any reasonable written or oral request of a school staff member, or the voicing of disrespect to those in authority.
 2. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, harassment, or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes or making any communication that a reasonable recipient would interpret as a serious expression of an intent to harm or cause injury to another.
 3. Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property of substantial value, repeated damage or theft involving property, or setting or attempting to set a fire of any magnitude.
 4. Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to any person, including any school employee, school volunteer, or student. Personal injury caused by accident, self-

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

intended to be derogatory toward a group or individual based upon race, gender, disability, 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 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.
16. Willfully violating the behavioral expectations for riding school buses or vehicles.

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

- 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.

Knowingly and intentionally possessing, using, or transmitting a firearm on school grounds, in a school-owned or utilized vehicle, or during an educational function or event off school grounds, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event. This conduct shall result in an expulsion for one calendar year. "Firearm" means a firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921, as that statute existed on January 1, 1995. That statute includes the following statement: "The term 'firearm' means (a) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (b) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (c) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (d) any destructive device." The Superintendent may modify such one year expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis, provided that such modification is in writing. 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.

For purposes of this policy, the term “dangerous weapon” includes any personal safety or security device (such as tasers, mace and pepper spray). If a student desires to carry or possess a personal safety or security device, the student must obtain prior approval from the building principal before bringing such device on school grounds. If a student obtains prior approval from the building principal, the student must store the device during the school day in the student’s locker, in the main office or in another secure location designated by the building principal. A student shall not carry a personal safety or security device during the school day.

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

1. Student Appearance: Students are expected to dress in a way that is appropriate for the school setting. Students should not dress in a manner that is dangerous to the health and safety of anyone or interferes with the learning environment or teaching process in our school. 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, or otherwise of an appropriate size and fit so as to be revealing or drag on the ground.
 - 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. Head wear including hats, caps, bandannas, and scarves.
 - e. Clothing or jewelry which exhibits nudity, makes sexual references or carries lewd, indecent, or vulgar double meaning.
 - f. Clothing or jewelry that is gang related.

A student who is a member of an indigenous tribe of the United States or another country may wear tribal regalia in any location where the student is authorized to be on such school grounds or at any school function, as long as the tribal regalia does not interfere with the educational process and does not endanger another person, as determined by the administration.

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.

2. Academic Integrity.

- a. 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.

- b. Definitions: The following definitions provide a guide to the standards of academic integrity:

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

(a) Tests (includes tests, quizzes and other examinations or academic performances):

(i) 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.

(ii) Use of Unauthorized Materials: Using notes, textbooks, pre-programmed formulae in calculators, or other unauthorized material, devices or information while taking a test except as expressly permitted. For example, except for "open book" tests, a student engages in cheating if the student looks at personal notes or the textbook during the test.

(iii) 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.
- (iv) 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.
- (v) 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.
- (b) Papers (includes papers, essays, lab projects, and other similar academic work):
- i) 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.
- (ii) 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.
- (iii) 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.
- (iv) 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.
- (v) 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.

- (c) 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.
- (2) "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:
- (a) 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.
- (b) 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.
- (3) "Contributing" to academic integrity violations means to participate in or assist another in cheating or plagiarism. It includes but is not limited to allowing another student to look at your test answers, to copy your papers or lab projects, and to fail to report a known act of cheating or plagiarism to the instructor or administration.
- c. Sanctions: The following sanctions will occur when a student engages in cheating, plagiarism, or contributing to an academic integrity offense:
- (1) Academic Sanction. The instructor will refuse to accept the student's work in which the academic integrity offense took place, assign a grade of "F" or zero for the work, and require the student to complete a test or project in place of the work within such time and under such conditions as the instructor may determine appropriate. In the event the student completes the replacement test or project at a level meeting minimum performance standards, the instructor will assign a grade which the instructor determines to be appropriate for the work.

(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 parents 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 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.

E. Law Violations

1. Any act of a student which is a basis for expulsion and which the principal or designee knows or suspects is a violation of the Nebraska Criminal Code will be reported to law enforcement as soon as possible. Conduct to be reported for law enforcement referral includes conduct that may constitute a felony, conduct which may constitute a threat to the safety or well-being of students or others in school programs and activities, and conduct that the legal system is better equipped to address than school officials. Conduct that does not need to be reported for law enforcement referral includes typical adolescent behavior that can be addressed by school administrators without the involvement of law enforcement. In making the decision of whether to report, consideration should be given to the student's maturity, mental capacity, and behavioral disorders, where applicable. When appropriate, it shall be the responsibility of the referring administrator to contact the student's parent of the fact that the referral to legal authorities has been or will be made.

The foregoing reporting standards shall be reviewed annually by the school Board on or before August 1 of each year, be annually reviewed in collaboration with the County Attorney each year, be distributed to each student and his or her parent or guardian at the beginning of each school year, or at the time of enrollment if during the school year, and shall be posted in conspicuous places in each school during the school year.

2. 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 shall 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, except when a minor has been taken into custody as a victim of suspected child abuse, in which case the principal or other school official shall provide the peace officer with the address and telephone number of the minor's parents or guardian.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. Sections 79-254 to 79-296
LB 43 (2024)

Date of Adoption: September 16, 2024

StudentsPromotion and Retention

Students will typically progress annually from grade to grade. A student may be retained at a grade level or be required to repeat a course or program when such is determined in the judgment of the Principal, in consultation with the student's teachers and counselor, to be appropriate for the educational interests of the student and the school's educational program.

If a parent or guardian would like their student to retake a grade level, the parent or guardian must meet with the Superintendent or designee to discuss the student repeating a grade. At that meeting, the parent or guardian must provide evidence of academic needs, illness, or excessive absenteeism that would warrant the student to repeat the grade. A student in kindergarten through fourth grade may be retained due to academic needs, illness, or excessive absenteeism. A student in grades fifth through twelfth grade may be retained due to excessive absenteeism. At such meeting, the Superintendent or designee shall identify any alternative educational opportunities, including remedial instruction, if applicable, and verify any special education supports available to such student. If the student's parent or guardian still intends for their student to repeat a grade, such parent or guardian shall then complete the required form and return such form to the District. Upon completion of the form and if all requirements pursuant to this policy and law are met, the District shall permit the student to repeat the student's grade for the next school year.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. Sec. 79-526

Date of Adoption: September 16, 2024

InstructionClassroom Environment

At all times, teachers are expected to organize, maintain and ensure that their classroom is in a safe, orderly and clean condition for student learning. Classrooms should be free from distractions (such as inappropriate or unprofessional posters or other displays) and other apparatus that may cause student health problems (such as essential oils and/or essential oil diffusers). Teachers who are uncertain as to whether their classroom meets this requirement are encouraged to consult with their building principal in a proactive manner.

The District will only permit the Gall-Peters projection map (or a similar cylindrical equal-area projection map) or the AuthaGraph projection map for display or use in the classroom.

Legal Reference: LB 1329 (2024)

Date of Adoption: September 16, 2024

InstructionFirearm Policy

It shall be the policy of the DC West Community School District to undertake all reasonable efforts to prohibit the unlawful possession, the knowingly and intentionally selling, attempting to sell, providing, loaning, delivering, or in any other way transferring the possession of a firearm to a juvenile, and to prevent the unlawful possession of a firearm, including concealed firearms, in a school, on school grounds, in a school owned vehicle, or at a school sponsored activity or athletic event. This policy shall not apply to the issuance of firearms to or possession by members of the Armed Services of the United States, active or reserve, National Guard of the State, or Reserve Officers' Training Corps, peace officers, or qualified law enforcement officers or qualified retired law enforcement officers, as defined by and pursuant to state and federal law. Further, nothing in this policy shall be construed to require school action when a firearm is lawfully possessed by a person receiving instruction, or instruction under the immediate supervision of an adult instructor, or as to firearms contained within a private vehicle operated by someone other than a minor or prohibited person, as defined by law, and are enclosed in a case or inside the glove box, trunk, or other compartment of the vehicle, a storage box securely attached to the vehicle, or, if the vehicle is a motorcycle, other than an autocycle, a hardened compartment securely attached to the motorcycle while the vehicle is in or on such parking area.

Any unlawful use or possession of a firearm, including concealed firearms, as described in this policy and as described by statute shall as soon as is reasonably possible be reported to an appropriate peace officer. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to prevent the district from carrying out regular disciplinary procedures as have been adopted by the Board of Education or as otherwise authorized by law.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. Sec. 28-1204.04

Date of Adoption: September 16, 2024

Internal Board Policies - Board Members

Membership in School Board Associations

The Board of Education shall hold memberships in such school board associations as it may from time to time determine appropriate.

The Board will list on the school's website the organizations and memberships that the Board belongs to and the annual membership dues (if any) for such organizations and memberships, as well as the fees paid by the Board to any individual lobbyist or lobbying firm (if any).

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. Sec. 79-512
 LB 304 (2024)

Date of Adoption: September 16, 2024

Internal Board Policies - Methods of OperationDesignated Method of Giving Notice of Meetings

The Board of Education will give advance notice of meetings by publishing such notice in a newspaper of general circulation within the District's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's web site. If a newspaper refuses, neglects, or is unable to timely publish such notice, then notice may be given by (1) posting on the newspaper's website, if available, and (2) posting such notice in conspicuous public places within the District. The Board Secretary shall keep a written record of such postings.

Notice shall be given a reasonable time in advance of the meeting. Two (2) days advance notice shall be considered sufficient.

For an emergency meeting, notice shall not be required to be given; however, the Board will complete minutes for such an emergency meeting as required by law. An emergency has been defined as any event or occasional combination of circumstances which calls for immediate action or remedy; pressing necessity; exigency; a sudden or unexpected happening; an unforeseen occurrence or condition.

The Secretary of the Board of Education, or the Secretary's designee, shall maintain a list of the news media requesting notification of meetings and shall make reasonable efforts to provide advance notification to such news media of the time and place of each meeting and the subjects to be discussed at the meeting.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. Sections 79-554; 79-555 and 84-1411

Date of Adoption: September 16, 2024

Internal Board Policies - Methods of OperationPublic Participation at Board MeetingsA. Attend

Members of the public shall be permitted to attend and to speak at Board meetings. They will not be required to identify themselves as a condition for admission to the meeting.

The Board may allow advisors, consultants, and other persons who are not Board members to appear at the meeting via telephone or other similar means.

The President has the authority to assure that people conduct themselves in an orderly manner at the meeting. Undue interruption or other interference with the orderly conduct of business will not be allowed. The President may order persons who are disorderly to be removed from the meeting.

B. Hear

The Board will, upon request, make a reasonable effort to accommodate the public's right to hear the discussion and testimony presented at the meeting.

C. Record

Members of the public may use recording devices (phone, video camera, etc.) to record any part of a board meeting, except for closed sessions. The President shall control the placement of the recording device so the device does not obstruct the view of Board members or other members of the public attending the meeting and does not otherwise interfere with the meeting.

D. Access to Written Materials

At least one copy of all reproducible written material to be discussed at an open meeting will be made available at the meeting for examination and copying by members of the public.

E. Speak

Members of the public will be permitted to speak at Board meetings. Members of the public may also speak when invited to make a presentation or when recognized by the President.

For all meetings of the Board, individual speakers shall have up to five minutes to address the Board, and the Board shall hear up to twenty cumulative minutes of public comment. The Board may vote to modify these time limits when the Board deems appropriate. The President may implement other reasonable requirements for public comment, consistent with the Open Meetings Act.

Speakers will be permitted to address the Board consistent with free speech rights. However, offensive language, defamatory remarks, and hostile conduct will not be tolerated. Further, charges or complaints against a school employee shall not be made for the first time at a public Board meeting without having followed the school's complaint procedure.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. 84-1412

Date of Adoption: September 16, 2024

DC WEST
Classified Staff



Handbook
2024-2025

FOREWORD

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Receipt of Handbook

FOREWORD

Welcome to DC West Community Schools! This handbook is intended to be used by classified employees to provide general information about the District and to serve as a guide to the District's policies, rules, and regulations, benefits of employment, and performance expectations.

References in this handbook to "classified employees" are intended to apply to all staff who are not required by their position to hold a teaching or administrative certificate.

Each classified employee is responsible for becoming familiar with the handbook and knowing the information 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. This handbook is intended to supplement other documents that deal with your employment, including your employment contract and the policies and regulations of the Board of Education. In reading this handbook, please understand that where a direct conflict exists, state or federal law, the negotiated agreement, and Board policies and regulations adopted after this handbook, will control.

This handbook does not create a "contract" of employment. Classified employee positions and assignments may be ended or changed on an "at will" basis notwithstanding anything in this handbook or any other publication or statement, except for a contract approved by the Board of Education.

The administration will be responsible for interpreting the rules contained in the handbook and shall have the right to make decisions and make rule revisions at any time. Should a situation or circumstance arise that is not specifically covered in this handbook, the administration will make a decision based upon applicable school district policies, state and federal statutes and regulations, and the best interests of the District. In the event that a staff member does not understand a provision of this Handbook, it is the staff member's responsibility to seek the administration's interpretation of such provision.

Every staff member is subject to the Policies of the Board of Education. As such, every classified staff member should review the Policies of the Board of Education, available online at: www.dewest.org, Staff Only, Staff Handbooks.

This handbook will be in effect for the 2024-2025 and subsequent school years unless replaced by a later edition.

Article 1 – SCHOOL CALENDAR AND SCHEDULES

Section 1 Severe Weather and School Closures

The Superintendent is authorized by the Board of Education to close school in case of severe weather or extenuating circumstances. If the Superintendent closes school, reasonable steps will be taken to notify staff as soon as practical. All staff members are expected to check the local news, their phone, and any other typical means of communication to determine if the school is closed on a workday. A staff member who reports to work on a closure date, but failed to check their phone, email, or other typical method of communication, will not be paid for that workday, unless the Superintendent or designee approves their pay or requires them to work that day.

Article 2 – EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Section 1 Employment

Classified employees may be asked in the spring whether they wish to continue employment during the following school year. This is done for staff planning purposes and does not constitute an offer of employment.

Should an employee wish to resign from employment the employee should give two weeks' written notice of resignation to the Superintendent or the employee's immediate supervisor.

Classified employees are "at-will" employees and may be terminated at any time by the school district. Notice of termination may be delivered by the administration at any time.

Section 2 Assignments

The duties to be performed are subject to assignment by the administration and your supervisor. Job descriptions, where available, may provide additional information about the position duties.

Employees are expected to devote full time attention and effort to their work and to perform the assigned duties diligently and faithfully to the best of the employee's ability.

Section 3 Personnel File

The District will follow the requirements of state and federal law and regulation regarding an employee's personnel file.

Section 4 Grievances and Complaints

Employee grievances or complaints shall be addressed through the administrative chain of command including the process set forth in board policy or this handbook.

Section 5 Compensation

Compensation. Compensation is paid only as authorized by the Board of Education.

Salary Payments. Employees are paid on the 15th of the month, or the last preceding business day, if the 15th falls on a holiday or weekend. Employees will be expected to accurately report hours worked. Falsification of time is a serious offense.

With administration approval, classified employees who work less than 12 months annually and

are participating in the group health insurance may request that their pay be spread out over 12 months so that their health insurance premium can be withheld during the summer months. The monthly amount will be based on an estimated number of hours. Adjustments to the monthly amount based on the number of hours actually worked shall be made after the school year is completed.

Section 6 Benefits

Classified employees are provided benefits in accordance with their employment agreement and Board policy. Annual fringe benefit elections are to be made by September 1 of each school year. Should an employee fail to make such an election, the employee election from the immediately preceding school and contract year shall be continued. Employees are responsible for informing the Superintendent's Office in writing of any changes in benefit status.

Life Insurance (available to employees who work 20 or more hours weekly)

The district provides a \$25,000 term life insurance benefit which includes a \$25,000 accidental death or dismemberment benefit. Additional life insurance and dependent life insurance may be purchased by the employee.

Long Term Disability Insurance (available to employees who work 20 or more hours weekly)

This coverage protects 66 2/3% of your earnings should you become disabled and unable to work. The premium will show up as a payment as well as a deduction on your pay form. No taxes would be paid on any subsequent benefits.

Section 125 Plan (available to employees who work 20 or more hours weekly)

This program allows employees to pay for elected benefit premiums with pre-tax dollars. Additionally, beginning January 1 each year, employees can enroll with Payflex and begin contributing pre-tax dollars for unreimbursed medical expenses and dependent care expenses.

Health and Dental Insurance (available to employees who work an average of 30 hours or more weekly based on PPACA calculations)

A portion of the health premium may be paid by the school district for staff members in certain job categories. This premium designation will be noted on the Classified Employee Employment Agreement. This insurance is part of a group plan through Blue Cross Blue Shield and the employee's portion of the premium will be paid as a deduction from your salary. Employee employee/spouse, employee/child(ren), or family health and dental coverage may be elected or dental only.

Continued health insurance benefits are available through COBRA, subject to certain qualifying requirements. A Notice of COBRA Continuation Coverage Rights will be provided to you or will be made available upon request from the Superintendent's office.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) provides rights and protections for participants and beneficiaries in group health plans. HIPAA includes protections for coverage under group health plans that limit exclusions for preexisting conditions; prohibit discrimination against employees and dependents based on their health status; and allow a special opportunity to enroll in a new plan to individuals in certain circumstances. HIPAA may also give you a right to

purchase individual coverage if you have no group health plan coverage available, and have exhausted COBRA or other continuation coverage. Further information may be obtained from the Plan Administrator of the group health plan.

Section 7 State Retirement (NPERS)

The State of Nebraska requires participation in the School Employees Retirement Plan for all permanent employees working 20 hours/week or more or any employee whose average hours increase to 20 hours/week or more for any 3 calendar months in a plan year (July 1 - June 30). The contribution rate is determined by the state. The school district matches your contributions at 101%. Annual statements are received from the Retirement System. The Retirement web site www.npers.ne.gov provides a variety of information about the retirement program.

Section 8 Overtime

Overtime is paid to classified employees in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Classified employees may be classified as either “exempt” or “non-exempt” for overtime purposes. Employees who are classified as exempt employees are not eligible for overtime. Those who are “non-exempt” are eligible for overtime.

The regular workweek for overtime purposes is from 12:00 a.m. on Monday through 11:59 p.m. on Sunday. The administration may establish a different 7-day period workweek from time to time for specified employees or employee groups.

Employees will be expected to accurately report hours worked. An employee who falsified their time worked may be terminated, effective immediately.

Non-exempt employees must receive prior approval from their immediate supervisor to work additional hours beyond their regular work schedule. Non-exempt employees will be paid for each hour worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek and are expected to accurately and timely report overtime hours to their supervisor.

Overtime pay for non-exempt employees will be paid at the rate of not less than 1 1/2 times the employee’s regular rate of pay for hours worked in excess of the 40-hour workweek. Employees with two or more non-exempt positions may be eligible for overtime pay based upon the total number of hours worked in one workweek. If applicable, the employee and the Superintendent will agree upon the overtime rate, in compliance with FLSA regulations.

The District’s policy is to not permit improper deductions from the salary of exempt employees who are required to meet a “salaried basis” test for the overtime exemption to be applicable. An employee who feels an improper deduction affecting exemption status has occurred shall submit a complaint to the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee, who shall promptly investigate the complaint. Reimbursement shall be made and a good faith commitment to comply in the future will be given in the event it is determined that an improper deduction affecting overtime exemption has been made.

The Superintendent or Superintendent's designee may suspend an employee with or without pay for the employee's violation of District policy or rules. Such suspensions and deductions (when applicable) will be made pursuant to law.

Section 9 Expense Reimbursement

Reimbursement for authorized mileage will be paid to employees required to drive their own vehicles during their regularly scheduled working hours between two or more work sites. Employees must receive prior approval from their supervisor before incurring any mileage. Claims for reimbursement should be submitted to the employee's immediate supervisor. The allowable rate shall be governed by Board policy, unless otherwise required by law. The District is not liable for physical damage to employee vehicles. A request for reimbursement shall be accurate. Any employee who falsifies a reimbursement request may be terminated from employment.

Reimbursement for purchase of materials or for meals or other expenses related to travel must be submitted to and approved by either the Superintendent or, if the expense relates to an activity, by the Athletic Director. The request for reimbursement should include an itemized receipt sufficient to establish that the expense was actually incurred and that the expense was reasonable and related to a school purpose.

Necessary materials and supplies are provided by the District. If an employee needs additional materials for performance of duties, the request should be made to the Superintendent. Employees who purchase materials or supplies without advance approval may not be reimbursed.

Reimbursement for meals or other expenses related to District-required travel must be submitted to and approved by either the Superintendent or, if the expense relates to an activity, by the Athletic Director. The request for reimbursement should include a voucher sufficient to establish that the expense was actually incurred and that the expense was reasonable and related to a school purpose.

Article 3 – ABSENCES FROM WORK

Section 1 Absence Procedures

Requesting Leave. Leave requests should be made as soon as practicable under the circumstances. An employee who wants to use available leave is to submit a request for leave through the school's leave request and system. A leave request should be submitted at least 5 duty days prior to the requested leave day. The supervisor may require that more notice be given, depending on the nature of the employee's duties or the need to schedule a substitute.

Giving Notice of Unscheduled Absences. An employee who is unable to request advance approval for an absence because of the nature of the circumstance requiring the absence (such as personal illness or unforeseen emergency) is to report the need to be absent as soon as the situation is known. To report the need to take unexpected leave, employees are to contact their immediate supervisor as soon as practical. Before the end of the day on the first day of the

absence, and on each subsequent day of absence, the employee is to report to their immediate supervisor whether the employee will be able to return to work on the next duty day.

Returning from Absences. If an employee is absent without advance approval either: (1) the day immediately preceding or immediately following a regularly scheduled school break (such as winter break, spring break, and quarter or semester breaks) or (2) during the first two weeks or the last two weeks of school, the employee may be required to give verification (for example, a doctor’s note) to establish that the employee was unable to work for an excusable condition or excusable reason.

Section 2 Paid Leave

Employees are provided with paid leave as detailed in this handbook. During such paid leaves, employees continue to receive their wages/salary and fringe benefits. At least 90 days of employment is required prior to the use of sick, personal or bereavement leave, unless otherwise granted by the Superintendent.

Sick leave, personal leave, and vacation hours are added to the employees leave bank in September of each year. Employees hired mid-year will receive a prorated number of leave hours. Employees may be provided with sick, personal, or other forms of paid leave in accordance with Board policy and administrative approval. These leaves provided by the District are to be used for the purpose intended. Abuse of leave privileges affects the students, other staff, and the entire District and will not be permitted.

Section 3 Sick, Personal, Bereavement, Vacation, and Holiday Paid Leaves

Sick Leave

- Sick leave must be used in 1 hour increments
- Employees may use sick leave when unable to work due to illness. Sick leave may be used for personal illness or illness of a family member living in the employee’s household.
- Maximum accumulation of sick leave is 360 hours.

Sick leave is calculated in hours based on the following ranges:

<u>Annual Hours worked</u>	<u>Hours of Sick Leave</u>
700-900	36
900-1100	45
1100-1300	54
1300-1500	63
1500-1700	72
1700-2000	80
2000+	96

Upon leaving the District after fifteen (15) consecutive years of service, a classified employee shall receive one-half of their final hourly pay rate for each hour of accumulated sick leave- up to a maximum of 360 hours. Consecutive years shall also include years of service at Waterloo Public Schools and Valley Public Schools.

Personal Leave

- Personal leave must be used in 1 hour increments.
- Compensation will be given for unused personal leave at the regular hourly rate in June of each year.
- Personal leave days cannot be carried forward to the next school year.

Personal leave is calculated in hours based on the following ranges:

<u>Annual Hours worked</u>	<u>Hours of Personal Leave</u>
700-900	8
900-1100	9
1100-1300	11
1300-1500	13
1500-1700	15
1700-2000	16
2000+	16

Bereavement Leave

Bereavement leave is to be used for purposes of addressing issues related to the death and to attend funeral services.

Classified employees are allowed bereavement leave of:

- a maximum of five (5) consecutive days following the death of an immediate relative. “Immediate relative” includes spouse, child, stepchild, parent, step parent, grandparent, grandchild, brother, or sister.
- a maximum of three (3) consecutive days following the death of a near relative. “Near relative” includes aunt, uncle, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandparent-in-law, and/or any other relative who is a permanent resident of the employee’s home.

Vacation (only available to full time 12 month employees)

- Vacation must be used in 1 hour increments
- Vacation shall not be carried forward to the next school year

Vacation leave is calculated from original hire date and awarded as follows:

Year 1	0 hours
Year 2	80 hours maximum (prorated based on date of 1st anniversary)
Year 3-8	80 hours
Year 9-14	120 hours
Year 15+	160 hours

Holidays

Classified staff will be allowed paid holidays, if the holidays fall during the employee’s required work year. Pay will be for the regular number of scheduled hours. The holidays shall be New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

Section 4 Payroll Deductions for Absences in Excess of Paid Leave

Should an employee be absent from work in excess of the employee's accumulated paid leave, the employee's compensation may be reduced by the day or days of work missed.

Section 5 Leaves of Absence

An employee may apply to the Superintendent for a leave of absence. The Superintendent may consider a leave of absence request on a case-by-case basis. Every leave of absence shall be without pay except as may be required under applicable state or federal laws.

Section 5 Unpaid Leaves

The District complies with all laws that require leave to be allowed, such as for FMLA leaves, military service, and jury duty. Should an employee be absent from work in excess of the employee's available paid leaves, the absence will be unpaid leave except as may be required by law. The employee's salary may be subject to reduction for the day or days of work missed.

Section 6 Jury Duty Leave

An employee who is summoned for jury service must promptly notify their immediate supervisor. The employee will be allowed time off for jury duty, pursuant to law.

There will be no loss of salary or deduction to the employee for time spent in jury service. The District will reduce the employee's salary by an amount equal to any compensation, other than expenses, paid by the court for jury duty service.

If an employee reports for jury duty in the morning and is then dismissed from jury duty for the remainder of the day, the employee is to report for work and resume duties for the balance of the day, except as may be otherwise arranged by the employee's immediate supervisor.

Section 7 Family and Medical Leave

Employee Rights and Responsibilities under the Family and Medical Leave Act

Family and medical leave shall be allowed under the terms and conditions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, as amended (FMLA).

Basic Leave Entitlement. FMLA provides up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons:

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care, or childbirth;
- To care for your child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- To care for your spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes you unable to perform your job.

The "leave year" for purposes of the FMLA is a "rolling" 12-month period, measured backward from the date of any FMLA leave usage.

Military Leave Entitlement. Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active-duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a

contingency operation may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a 12-month period. A covered servicemember is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the servicemember medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the servicemember is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list.

Benefits and Protections. During FMLA leave, an employee's health coverage under a "group health plan" will be maintained on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

An employee's use of FMLA leave will not result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of the FMLA leave.

Eligibility Requirements. An employee is eligible if he or she has been employed with DC West Community Schools for at least one year, for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if there are at least 50 employees of the District within 75 miles of your work location.

Definition of Serious Health Condition. A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of his or her job or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regiment of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

Use of Leave. The employee must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the District's operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis.

Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave. An employee may choose, or DC West Community Schools may require use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, the employee must comply with the District's normal paid leave policies.

Employee Responsibilities. The employee must provide sufficient information for the District to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. The employee also must inform the District if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. The employee also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

Employer Responsibilities. The District will inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are, the notice will specify any additional information required as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If they are not eligible, the District will provide a reason for the ineligibility.

The District will inform employees if leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement. If the District determines that the leave is not FMLA-protected, the District will notify the employee.

Unlawful Acts by Employers. FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:

- Interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under 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. An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer.

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.

For additional information you may refer to FMLA poster at school or contact the U.S. Wage and Hour Division at:

1-866-4US-WAGE (1-866-487-9243) TTY: 1-877-889-5627

www.wagehour.dol.gov

To submit a request for use of FMLA, or to plan for payment of benefits while on FMLA leave, contact the Superintendent.

Section 8 Military and Family Military Leave

Military leave and family military leave will be granted to the extent required by state and federal law and in accordance with Board policy.

Employees requesting to take military leave or family military leave under the Nebraska statutes must notify the Superintendent at least 14 days in advance of taking such a leave if the leave will be for 5 or more consecutive days and consult with their immediate supervisor to schedule the leave so as to not unduly disrupt operations of the District. For leaves of less than 5 days, the employee is to notify the Superintendent of the leave request as soon as practicable. Employees

are to attach a copy of their orders to a leave request form when they prepare the request for military leave.

Section 9 Adoption Leave

Adoption leave will be permitted to be taken by an adoptive parent for the same time and on the same terms as an employee is permitted to take a leave of absence upon the birth of the employee's child.

The adoptive parent leave of absence begins following the commencement of the parent-child relationship. The parent-child relationship commences, for purposes of adoption leave, when the child is placed with the employee for purposes of adoption. The employee shall be deemed to have waived any adoptive leave days not taken following the commencement of the parent-child relationship, except as the Superintendent and the employee may otherwise agree. Advance notice of an anticipated adoption shall be provided by the employee to the Superintendent as early as possible.

Section 10 Subpoena to Testify Leave

An employee must promptly notify their immediate supervisor when the employee receives a lawfully issued subpoena to testify in court or to give a deposition that may require an absence from duty.

In the event the subpoena involves a job-related matter in which the employee is testifying on behalf of the District, the absence will be treated similar to a jury duty leave.

In the event the subpoena involves a personal matter, the employee will be required to use available leave days. The Superintendent shall make the final determination as to whether a matter is personal to the employee.

Section 11 Voting Leave

Employees will be allowed paid time off to vote in an election if the employee: (a) is a registered voter; (b) does not have 2 consecutive hours between the time of the opening and closing of the polls during which the employee is not required to be present at work; and (c) applies for voting leave prior to or on election day with their immediate supervisor.

When voting leave is available, an employee will be entitled to be absent from work on election day for such a period of time as will, when considering the employee's non-working time, total 2 consecutive hours between the time of the opening and closing of the polls. When voting leave is used, no deduction shall be made from the employee's salary or wages on account of such absence. The immediate supervisor may specify the hours during which the employee may be absent for voting leave.

Article 4 – DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1 Hours of Work & Meetings

Regular, dependable in-person attendance at work is an essential function of a classified employee's employment position.

Employees are required to attend meetings called by the administration or their supervisors, except those meetings which are designated for optional attendance.

Section 2 Arrival to Duty Assignments

Classified employees' work assignments may or may not be scheduled during the regular school day. Classified employees are expected to know their duty dates and times, and to be on time for work.

Timecard. All classified employees will keep track of their work time through an automated time card system. Employees will clock in and out on a computer through a web based program. This includes clocking out and back in for lunch breaks. Any paid leave hours are to be noted in the time card system as a leave request that must be approved by the supervisor. Hours are to be submitted for approval at the end of each week.

Lunch & Breaks. Classified employees are given a 30 minute unpaid lunch break as scheduled by their supervisor. Additionally, a 15 minute break may be taken once during the day if the employee works at least a 6.0 hour daily schedule. If an employee wishes to leave the building during the break, they should notify office personnel as they leave and return.

Section 3 Leaving School

Employees are to be on duty at all times during the assigned workday. Employees may not leave school or their assigned area during duty hours without the approval of their immediate supervisor. If approval is given, employees must sign out in the office when leaving the building.

Employees who leave the school during their designated lunch period or for an approved absence must check out and check back in the office. Employees who need to leave during the school day for unexpected reasons (such as illness or an emergency) must notify their immediate supervisor as soon as practical.

Section 4 School Procedures

Employees are expected to adhere to the following school procedures in the performance of their duties:

1. Use of Cell Phones. Employees must ensure that any use of a cell phone does not interfere with their job duties, distract from their attention to the job, or extend beyond a reasonable time, as determined by their immediate supervisor.

Employees are not to use cell phones or otherwise engage in distracted driving while transporting students, driving a school vehicle, or while on duty. This rule applies to the driver regardless of whether the vehicle is in motion. The only exception to these rules is in the case of emergencies. Employees will abide by all rules of the road and any applicable rules of the Nebraska Department of Education and the District relating to driving a motor vehicle. Seat belts and child restraint systems must be used by all occupants.

2. Checking Out of Equipment. All equipment must be checked out through the

Superintendent. School equipment may be used only for school purposes. School equipment and other resources may be used for personal purposes only as authorized by the Superintendent or designee.

3. Requisition of Equipment and Supplies. Books and supplies which are needed for instruction should be requested through the Principal's office. Employees shall not make purchases on behalf of the District without prior approval of the Principal.
4. Email. Employees will be assigned a school email address for email correspondence. Employees should check email throughout the duty day, and should timely respond to emails which require a response, but should avoid checking and responding to emails during supervision time. Use of the district's email system for personal communications should be limited, and is subject to the rules governing overall computer usage found in Board policy and this handbook.

Section 5 Supervision of Students

Proper supervision of students is necessary. Employees responsible for student supervision are expected to meet the four "P's" for student supervision and safety. All employees of the school should be familiar with these principles, to the extent they may be involved in supervision of students or interacting with students.

1. Proper Supervision
 - Report to all duty assignments on time.
 - Circulate through your duty area. Pay particular attention to areas and activities that pose an increased risk of injury.
 - Be vigilant while supervising students. Never leave the students unattended; the need to make a copy is not greater than the need to supervise the students. If an emergency requires that an employee must leave students, the employee must request that another nearby staff member supervise those students or notify the office so someone can help. If the employee is on recess duty, the employee's responsibility is to supervise the students in the assigned area. When talking with other adults or students, remember that the employee's primary duty is supervision, and the employee is to be aware of what all students are doing.
 - If the employee has seen or has been informed that a particular student has a propensity to act dangerously or in an unpredictable manner, the employee's supervision of that student must increase with the known risk of injury. (Remember, though, that this type of information may be confidential—do not share confidential information about students except with other staff who need to know the information to perform their jobs).
 - Be careful with touching students. Touching students should be limited to that necessary to protect the student. Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school district and is not to be used. Physical force may only be used to the extent reasonably necessary to protect the student, yourself, and others, and to protect property as may be reasonable.

- Use good judgment when dealing with difficult situations involving students. Physical confrontation generally escalates tense situations.
 - Be careful with language. Profanity or abusive language should not be used. Be a good role model for students. If a student uses such language, you should correct the student and take disciplinary action as is appropriate, which may include making a report to the administration.
2. Proper Instructions
- Proper instructions are important to reduce the risk of injury when students undertake an activity, especially an activity that has an increased risk of harm to students.
 - Repeat the instructions on how to complete a task that has a heightened risk of danger, as often as needed. Do not assume because students heard the directions once they will be remembered.
3. Proper Maintenance of Buildings, Grounds, and Equipment
- Conduct periodic inspections of equipment under your control or in your area of supervision.
 - If equipment is broken and presents a risk of injury, immediately take it out of service (if it can't be moved, tape a "Do Not Use" sign) and notify the Principal immediately so repairs may be undertaken.
4. Proper Warnings
- If you have knowledge of a hazard that can likely cause injury, take steps to warn other staff and students. Tell your immediate supervisor immediately so additional warnings may be given.

Contact the Principal for Assistance

The Principal should be contacted immediately when a situation exists which could cause injury to students or others. Examples include:

- student fight
- student health problem (fainting, bleeding, high temperature, difficulty breathing, etc.); if the Principal cannot be immediately located, call 911 if the problem appears to be of immediate and serious concern
- a report or a suspicion that a student has a weapon or other dangerous item or drugs, alcohol, or other illegal substances
- presence of an intruder (a non-student or staff member who refuses to go to the office)

Violations of student rules which are also violations of state law are required to be reported to law enforcement. Make a report of such conduct to the Principal so this law may be followed.

Student Searches

Only certificated staff may conduct searches of students. The Principal must be contacted so they can be present during searches of students or their belongings. A

student suspected of having an item in violation of school rules should be directed to wait until a certificated staff is present. Do not use physical force to detain the student or to make the student accompany you except as reasonably necessary to protect the student or others.

Student Rights

Treat students fairly and consistently without consideration of race, color, religion, gender, or disability. Students who need special accommodations are to be given those accommodations as needed for them to participate in school and school activities. Follow IEP and 504 Plans for the students for whom you are responsible. Be attentive and respond to “bullying”. Maintain the confidentiality of student records. Student record information should be shared only with other school staff with a need to know the information to perform their duties.

Section 6 Reporting Child Abuse

Nebraska state law and District policy requires staff to promptly make a report to the proper law enforcement agency or the Department of Health and Human Services (Child Protective Services) when the employee has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected, including sexual abuse, or a child is in a situation which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect. According to Nebraska state law, abuse or neglect means knowingly, intentionally, or negligently causing or permitting a minor child to be:

1. Placed in a situation that endangers his or her life or physical or mental health;
2. Cruelly confined or cruelly punished;
3. Deprived of necessary food, clothing, shelter, or care;
4. Left unattended in a motor vehicle if such minor child is six years of age or younger;
5. Sexually abused; or
6. Sexually exploited by allowing, encouraging, or forcing such person to solicit for or engage in prostitution, debauchery, public indecency, or obscene or pornographic photography, films, or depictions.

Employees are to inform the Principal that they intend to make a report. However, simply informing a Principal or supervisor does not end the employee’s responsibility; employees are obligated by law to make certain a report was made if they do not do it themselves.

This requirement shall apply to all school employees, including coaches and volunteers, participating in interstate amateur athletic competitions. The term “promptly” means “within a 24-hour period.”

It is vital that the report be made as accurately and as soon as possible. To assure accuracy, you are encouraged to document the date of the incident and specific statements or explanations made by a child regarding an abuse/neglect concern. Timeliness in making a report will assist in minimizing further risk to the child by allowing the police or Child Protective Services workers to promptly interview the child. A counselor or an administrator will help you with any questions or concerns that you may have.

Article 5 – PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Section 1 Ethics Standards

The DC West Community School District expects its classified employees to adhere to ethics standards which are modified from those established by the Nebraska Department of Education for certificated employees. The classified school employment job ethics standards which classified employees are expected to adhere to include those set forth below.

Principle I - Commitment as a School Employee:

Employees shall exhibit good moral character, maintain high standards of performance, and promote equality of opportunity.

In fulfillment of the employee's contractual and personal responsibilities, the employee:

1. Shall not interfere with the exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities of students, colleagues, parents, school patrons, or school board members.
2. Shall not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, sexual orientation or gender identity, or other protected status.
3. Shall not use coercive means, or promise or provide special treatment to students, colleagues, school patrons, or school board members in order to influence personal decisions.
4. Shall not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact for which the employee is responsible.
5. Shall not exploit school relationships with students, colleagues, parents, school patrons, or school board members for personal gain or private advantage.
6. Shall not sexually harass students, parents or school patrons, employees, or board members.
7. Shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation in the performance of job duties.
8. Shall report to the Superintendent any known violation of paragraphs 2 or 5 above.
9. Shall seek no reprisal against any individual who has reported a violation of this rule.

Principle II - Commitment to the Student:

Mindful that the employee's classified position exists for the purpose of serving the best interests of the school district's students and patrons, the classified employee shall perform his/her job duties with genuine interest, concern, and consideration for the student. The employee shall work to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the student, the employee:

1. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions which interfere with the learning process or are harmful to health or safety.
2. Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information that has been obtained in the course of employment unless disclosure is approved by the administration or is required by law.
3. Shall not discipline students using corporal punishment.

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 classified employee bears responsibility for instilling an understanding of confidence in the rule of law, respect for individual freedom, and a responsibility to promote respect from the public for the integrity of the profession.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the public, the employee:

1. Shall not misrepresent an institution with which the employee is affiliated and shall take added precautions to distinguish between the employee's personal and institutional views.
2. Shall not use institutional privileges for private gain or to promote political candidates, political issues, or partisan political activities.
3. Shall neither offer nor accept gifts or favors that will impair judgment to be exercised in the course of employment.
4. Shall support the principle of due process and protect the political, citizenship, and natural rights of all individuals.
5. Shall not commit any act of moral turpitude, nor commit any felony under the laws of the United States or any state or territory.
6. Shall, with reasonable diligence, attend to the duties of the employee's position.

Principle IV - Commitment to Classified Position Employment Practices:

The employee shall regard the employment agreement as a pledge to be executed both in spirit and in fact. The employee shall believe that sound personnel relationships with governing administration and board of education are built upon personal integrity, dignity, and mutual respect.

In fulfillment of the obligation to employment practices, the employee:

1. Shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or responsibility on the basis of preparation and legal qualifications.
2. Shall not knowingly withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or employer or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.
3. Shall give prompt notice to the employer of any change in availability of service.
4. Shall conduct job-related business through designated procedures, when available, that have been approved by the employing agency.
5. Shall not assign unqualified personnel tasks for which an employee is responsible.
6. Shall permit no commercial or personal exploitation of his or her employment position.
7. Shall use time on duty and leave time for the purpose for which intended.

Competent Performance

Employees must possess the abilities and skills necessary to accomplish the designated task.

Therefore, each employee shall:

1. Keep records for which he or she is responsible in accordance with law and policies of the school system;
2. Supervise others in accordance with law and policies of the District;
3. Recognize the role and function of community agencies and groups as they relate to the District and to his or her position, including but not limited to health and social services, employment services, community teaching resources, cultural opportunities, educational advisory committees, and parent organizations.

Each employee shall:

1. Utilize available materials and equipment necessary to accomplish the designated task;
2. Adhere to and enforce written and dated administrative policy of the District which has been communicated to the educator;
3. Use channels of communication when interacting with educators, community agencies, and groups, in accordance with policy.

Each supervisor shall:

1. Make reasonable assignment of tasks and duties in light of individual abilities and specialties and available personnel resources.

Communication Skills: In communicating with students and other employees, each employee, within the limits prescribed by his or her assignment and role, shall:

1. Utilize information and materials that are relevant to the designated task;
2. Use language and terminology which are relevant to the designated task;
3. Use language which reflects an understanding of the ability of the individual or group;
4. Assure that the designated task is understood;
5. Use feedback techniques which are relevant to the designated task;
6. Consider the entire context of the statements of others when making judgments about what others have said;
7. Encourage each individual to state his ideas clearly.

Management techniques: The employee shall:

1. Resolve discipline problems in accordance with law, board policy, and administrative regulations and policies;
2. Maintain consistency in the application of policy and practice;
3. Develop and maintain positive standards of conduct.

Human and Interpersonal Relationships: Employees shall possess effective human and interpersonal relations skills and therefore:

1. Shall allow others who hold and express differing opinions or ideas to freely express such ideas;

2. Shall not knowingly misinterpret the statement of others;
3. Shall not show disrespect for or lack of acceptance of others;
4. Shall provide leadership and direction for others by appropriate example;
5. Shall offer constructive criticism when necessary;
6. Shall comply with reasonable requests and orders given by and with proper authority;
7. Shall not assign unreasonable tasks;
8. Shall demonstrate self-confidence and self-sufficiency in exercising authority.

Personal Requirements: Each employee within the scope of delegated authority shall:

1. Be able to engage in physical activity appropriate to the designated task except for temporary disability;
2. Be able to communicate so effectively as to accomplish the designated task;
3. Appropriately control his or her emotions;
4. Possess and demonstrate sufficient intellectual ability to perform designated tasks.

Contractual Obligations: Employees shall adhere fully to the terms of a contract or appointment.

Section 2 Role Model

Employees serve as role models for students and their actions and conduct reflect on the school as a whole. Employees are in all respects to conduct themselves in a professional manner.

Section 3 Professional Boundaries

All employees are expected to observe and maintain professional boundaries between themselves and students. A violation of professional boundaries will be regarded as a form of misconduct and may result in disciplinary action.

The following non-exclusive list of actions will be regarded as a violation of the professional boundaries that employees are expected to maintain with a student:

- Using e-mail, text messaging, instant messaging, or social networking sites to discuss with a student a matter that does not pertain to school-related activities, such as the student's homework, class activity, school sport or club, or other school-sponsored activity. Electronic communications with students are to be sent simultaneously to multiple recipients, not to just one student, except where the communication is clearly school-related and inappropriate for persons other than the individual student to receive (for example, emailing a message about a student's grades).
- Engaging in social-networking friendships or communications with a student on social networking sites. Material that employees post on social networks that is publicly available to those in the school community must reflect the professional image applicable to the employee's position and not impair the employee's capacity to maintain the respect of students and parents or impair the employee's ability to serve as a role model for children. Employees shall not friend, communicate with, or follow students on any social networking site.

- Engaging in sexual activity, a romantic relationship, or dating a student or a former student within one year of the student graduating or otherwise leaving the District.
- Making any sexual advance - verbal, written, or physical - towards a student.
- Showing sexually inappropriate materials or objects to a student.
- Discussing with a student a sexual topic that is not related to a specific curriculum.
- Telling sexual jokes to a student.
- Invading a student's physical privacy (e.g., walking in on the student in a restroom).
- Hugging or other physical contact with a student that is initiated by the employee when the student does not seek or want this attention.
- Being overly "touchy" with a specific student.
- Allowing a specific student to get away with misconduct that is not tolerated from other students, except as appropriate for students with an IEP or 504 Plan.
- Discussing with the student the employee's problems that would normally be discussed with adults (e.g., marital problems).
- Giving a student a ride in the employee's personal vehicle without express permission of the student's parent or school administrator unless another adult is in the vehicle.
- Taking a student on an outing without obtaining prior express permission of the student's parent or school administrator.
- Inviting a student to the employee's home without prior express permission of the student's parent and school administrator.
- Going to the student's home when the student's parent or a proper chaperone is not present.
- Giving gifts of a personal nature to a specific student.
- Discussing alcohol, tobacco, or other illicit drugs in a non-instructional setting, such as describing a party that the employee attended.
- Discussing another student's or employee's personal matters when it is not appropriate outside of the instructional setting.
- "Grooming," which includes building trust with a student and individuals close to the

student in an effort to gain access to and time alone with the student, with the ultimate goal of engaging in sexual contact or sexual penetration with the student, regardless of when in the student's life the sexual contact or sexual penetration would take place.

Appropriate exceptions are permitted to the foregoing for legitimate health or educational purposes and for reasons of family relationships between employees and their children who are students in the District. A staff member seeking an exception must receive advance approval from his or her administrator. If a staff member is unable to communicate with an administrator in advance (such as in the event of an emergency), the staff member must notify the administrator as soon as possible, but not later than 24 hours immediately following the event.

Any person who suspects a District employee of engaging in any prohibited conduct under this policy, including grooming, should contact the Superintendent as soon as practical.

An employee who violates this policy may face discipline, up to and including termination of employment, and may be referred to the appropriate certification or credentialing agencies for further discipline.

A violation of this policy will result in referral to the Department of Health and Human Services, law enforcement, or both.

Section 4 Relationships

It is important for employees to maintain an effective working relationship with the administration and all co-workers. Employees are also to maintain appropriate relationships with students.

Section 5 Civility

All employees shall behave with civility, fairness, and respect in dealing with fellow employees, students, parents, patrons, visitors, and anyone else having business with the District. Uncivil behaviors are prohibited. Employees may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination for engaging in uncivil behaviors.

Uncivil behaviors are any behaviors that are physically or verbally threatening, either overtly or implicitly, as well as behaviors that are coercive, intimidating, violent or harassing. Such interactions are prohibited in all forms of communication, including telephone conversations, texting, voice mail messages, face-to-face conversations, written communications, and email messages.

Any employee aware of another employee's uncivil behavior shall report the conduct to the employee's immediate supervisor or to the Superintendent. There will be no retaliation against the person for making the report.

Section 6 Notification of Arrest, etc.

Employees must notify Superintendent by the next business day after:

1. Arrest or Criminal Charges. The employee is arrested, ticketed, or issued a criminal charge where:
 - a. The maximum penalty for the crime equals or exceeds six months incarceration;
 - b. The crime relates to abuse, neglect or endangerment of a minor, a minor was allegedly a victim or a witness, or the crime involves alleged sexual misconduct;
 - c. Conviction would impact performance of employee's job responsibilities, including offenses that:
 - i. Would impact the responsibility to be a role model for students or relations with other employees of the District;
 - ii. Would impact the employee's ability to operate a motor vehicle if the employee's work duties include driving; or
 - iii. Would impact the employee's Commercial Driver's License if the employee's job requires that the employee have a CDL.
 - d. The arrest or the alleged criminal activity occurred while the employee was on duty, on District property, or in a school owned or utilized vehicle, or at a school-supervised activity or school-sponsored function.Employees must also promptly report to the Superintendent whenever the employee has been sentenced to be incarcerated for any period of time, even if the offense is not otherwise reportable.
2. Certificate or License. The employee becomes aware that a complaint has been filed against the employee that could affect a certificate or license required for the employee's position.
3. Child Abuse. The employee becomes aware that a report of child abuse or neglect has been made against the employee under the Child Protection Act.

Further, employees must give full disclosure of any Child Protection Act investigation that resulted in an "inconclusive" determination that occurred at any time. Current employees must give such disclosure within ten days following receipt of this handbook.

Employees must give full disclosure of the existence and nature of the above proceedings and must also promptly notify the Superintendent of the disposition of the proceedings.

Legal documents relating to the proceedings shall be treated and maintained as part of the employee's confidential criminal background file.

Failure to notify as required under this policy may subject the employee to disciplinary action, including termination.

Section 7 Evaluations

Evaluations of employees will be conducted in accordance with the District's evaluation policy. Supervisors reserve the right to observe, appraise or evaluate employees more frequently than

required by policy on an as-needed basis. Employees are expected to make themselves available for evaluation on request, to participate constructively and positively in the evaluation process, and to accept and implement constructive suggestions and improvement strategies developed by the administration.

Section 8 Employee Complaints or Concerns

Employees are to inform their supervisor or the Superintendent of any complaints or concerns about the operations of the District using the established chain of command (immediate supervisor, next higher-level supervisor, etc.) on all matters that require administrative attention; that is, on all matters or issues that their job responsibilities require them to report to a supervisor.

It is important to the efficient and successful operation of the District and a duty of all employees to share any such complaints or concerns in a responsible, professional manner such as to: (1) not disrupt the proper functioning of their duties, (2) not undermine the authority of their co-workers, supervisors, or superiors, (3) maintain close working relationships with their co-workers, supervisors, and superiors, and (4) ensure that all applicable laws and regulations are followed. All official communications from employees must be accurate, demonstrate sound judgment, and promote the District's mission. Employees must ensure that all applicable laws and regulations are followed by the District and its employees. In the event an employee becomes aware of any such non-compliance, the employee is to report such to the employee's immediate supervisor (or the next higher level, if the supervisor is responsible for the problem) and maintain the confidentiality of the report so that the problem can be appropriately corrected in the best interests of the District.

Employees are to use the appropriate complaint or grievance mechanism for matters involving discrimination or harassment or other established mechanism specific to the nature of the complaint or concern.

The District will not tolerate unlawful retaliation against an employee for engaging in legally protected activity. A protected activity includes an employee's act of opposing an unlawful practice prohibited by employment discrimination or other laws that protect the conduct in question. Any act of unlawful retaliation by a supervisor or other employee may result in serious disciplinary action up to and including termination. Any employee may file a complaint with the Superintendent or appropriate Coordinator if the employee feels that they have experienced unlawful retaliation in any form.

Section 9 Attire

It is important for employees to project a professional image to students, parents, co-workers, and patrons. Appropriate attire and grooming are one of the means of projecting a professional image. Employees are expected to maintain professional attire and grooming when on duty. As a minimal guide, employees should not wear clothing which students would not be permitted to wear at school. The administration may establish more detailed guidelines for individual employees should that be necessary.

Section 10 Outside Employment

Employees shall not perform duties unrelated to District employment during duty hours. In addition, employees shall not engage in employment which conflicts with their school duties.

Section 11 Employee Fundraising

Any employee who directly or indirectly seeks to use their position as a District employee to fundraise (such as through a crowdfunding initiative) must obtain prior approval from the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee before taking any action to fundraise.

District employees who engage in fundraising efforts in their private capacities need not abide by this policy.

Article 6 – USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Section 1 Drug-Free Workplace

The District has established the school as a drug-free workplace. The drug-free workplace for this purpose includes school grounds, school utilized vehicles, and places in which school activities are held.

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, disposition, possession, or use of tobacco, alcohol or a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace. The possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs or alcohol, the use of glue or aerosol paint or any other chemical substance for inhalation, and being under the influence of illicit drugs, alcohol, or inhalants, is prohibited in any place on school grounds, in a school utilized vehicle or any location over which the District had control. The possession or distribution of a look-alike drug or look-alike-controlled substance is similarly prohibited. Any level of impairment from illicit drugs, alcohol, or inhalants, and the presence of any odor of illicit drugs (such as marijuana) or alcohol on an employee in the workplace or on duty time shall be a violation of the drug-free workplace. In addition, employees are expected to serve as role models for students and will be considered to have violated the District's expectations in the event the employee commits a criminal drug or alcohol offense off the workplace or off duty time.

As a condition of employment employees will abide by the District's drug-free workplace policies and notify the Superintendent of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than 5 days after such conviction. Disciplinary sanctions up to and including termination of employment and referral for prosecution will be imposed for violations of the District's drug-free workplace policies. Sanctions may include the requirement that the employee complete an appropriate rehabilitation program, a reprimand, or termination of employment. Drug and alcohol counseling and rehabilitation and reentry programs are available through local health agencies.

Section 2 Smoke and Tobacco-Free Workplace

The use of tobacco products is prohibited on school grounds.

“Tobacco products” means any tobacco product (including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, and chewing tobacco), vapor products (such as e-cigarettes), electronic nicotine delivery

systems, alternative nicotine products, tobacco product look-alikes, and products intended to replicate tobacco products either by appearance or effect. This does not preclude adults from wearing non-visible nicotine patches, or using nicotine gum without displaying the product container, as part of a smoking cessation program.

Section 3 Weapon-Free Workplace

The District prohibits any person from being in possession of a weapon at a school attendance facility, on school property, at a school-supervised activity, or at a school-sponsored function. Any employee found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The phrase “possession of a weapon” includes, without limitation, a weapon in an employee's personal possession or within reach (such as in the employee’s vehicle), as well as in an employee’s desk, locker, briefcase, backpack, or purse.

Section 4 Use of School Facilities

An employee who is issued school keys or fobs shall not lose their keys or fobs and shall not allow others to have access to or to use their keys or fobs. Employees are permitted to have access to school facilities during non-school time provided such access is for work-related purposes and the Principal or supervisor has given permission for such access. When employees leave the building, they are to close all windows, lock doors, and make sure that the entry door is fully closed and locked. This is especially important when employees are using the school facilities during any weekend or evening use.

Use of school supplies (paper, staples, etc.), school equipment (copiers, fax machines, telephones, etc.) and school postage is to be for approved school-related purposes only. Excess or surplus supplies or equipment, including items which have been placed in the trash, must not be removed for non-school use without approval from the Principal.

Section 5 Recording of Others

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

Article 7 – STATE AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Section 1 Notice of Nondiscrimination

DC West Community Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race

(including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, sexual orientation or gender identity, or other protected status in admission or access to, or treatment of employment, in its programs and activities. The Coordinators listed in Section 2 have been designated to handle inquiries regarding complaints, grievance procedures or the application of these policies of nondiscrimination.

Local complaint or grievance procedures are provided for by the District and set forth in this handbook. If an employee does not feel that a complaint of nondiscrimination has been satisfactorily resolved at the school level, the employee may file a complaint with the appropriate federal or state agency. Complaints are to be filed with the regional Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights where the complaint relates to Title IX (discrimination, harassment or lack of equity based on gender), Title VI (discrimination or harassment based on race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, or national origin) or Section 504 (discrimination, harassment, or failure to accommodate a disability). Complaints are to be filed with the regional U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) if the complaint relates to Title VII (discrimination or harassment based on race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, gender, national origin, or religion), the Americans with Disabilities Act (discrimination, harassment, or failure to accommodate a disability), or the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (discrimination based on age). The contact information for the OCR and the EEOC in this regard are:

Office for Civil Rights (OCR)
 One Petticoat Lane
 1010 Walnut St. 3rd Floor, Suite 320
 Kansas City, MO 64106
 (816) 268-0550 (voice)
 Fax (816) 268-0599

The U.S. Equal Employment
 Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
 Gateway Tower II
 400 State Avenue, Suite 905
 Kansas City, MO 66101
 (800) 669-4000
 TDD: (800) 669-6820

(800) 877-8339 (telecommunications device
 for the deaf), or ocr.kansascity@ed.gov.

Section 2 Designation of Coordinators

Any person having inquiries concerning the District’s compliance with nondiscrimination laws or policies or other programs should contact or notify the following person(s) who are designated as the coordinator for such laws, policies, or programs. The contact address for the coordinator is: DC West Community Schools, [Address], [City], Nebraska [Zip]; Phone: ([Area Code]) [Telephone Number]:

Law, Policy, or Program	Issue or Concern	Coordinator
Title VI	Discrimination or harassment based on race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, or national origin;	Superintendent

	harassment	
Title IX	Discrimination or harassment based on sex; gender equity	Superintendent Director of Learning Building Principals
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disability Act (ADA)	Discrimination, harassment, or reasonable accommodations of persons with disabilities	Superintendent Special Services Director for student matters
Homeless student laws	Children who are homeless	Superintendent
Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities	Safe and drug free schools	Superintendent

Section 3 Anti-discrimination & Harassment Policy

DC West Community 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, and other employees, students or other persons is prohibited. In addition, the District will endeavor 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 policy, discrimination or harassment based on a person’s sex, disability, race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, sexual orientation or gender identity, or other protected status is prohibited. The following are general definitions of what might constitute prohibited harassment:

1. In general, verbal or physical conduct relating to a person’s protected status constitutes harassment when the conduct unreasonably interferes with the person’s work performance or creates an intimidating work, instructional or educational environment.
2. 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.
3. 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, classroom, or educational environment. Sexual harassment may exist when:
 - a. Supervisors or managers make submission to such conduct either an explicit or implicit term and condition of employment (including hiring, compensation, promotion, or retention);

- b. 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.
- c. 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, 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.

Grievance Procedures

1. Employees should initially report all instances of discrimination or harassment to their immediate supervisor. However, if the employee is uncomfortable in presenting the problem to the supervisor, or if the supervisor is the problem, the employee is encouraged to go to the next level of supervision.
2. If the employee's complaint is not resolved to his or her satisfaction within five to ten working days, or if the discrimination or harassment continues, please report your complaint to the Superintendent. If a satisfactory arrangement cannot be obtained through the Superintendent, the complaint may be processed to the Board of Education.
3. The supervisor or the Superintendent will promptly and 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 or removal of offending students may be taken.
4. The person who makes the complaint shall not be threatened or retaliated against for alleging a violation of this anti-discrimination policy or for use of this grievance procedure.

Section 4 Grievance Procedure for Persons with a Disability

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act address discrimination, harassment, or failure to provide reasonable accommodations to persons with a disability. The following grievance procedure shall be used for resolution of complaints by employees of alleged violations of the ADA or Section 504:

1. Complaints shall be filed with the ADA and Section 504 Coordinator. Complaints shall be made in writing, unless the Complainant's disability prevents such, in which event the Complaint can be made verbally.
2. Complaints shall set forth: (a) the name of the Complainant, (b) the address and telephone number or other such information sufficient to enable the Coordinator to contact the Complainant, (c) a brief description of the alleged violation, and (d) the relief requested by the Complainant.

3. Complaints shall be investigated by the Coordinator or the Coordinator's designee. Investigations shall be thorough, but informal, and the Complainant shall be given a full opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint.
4. The Coordinator shall make a decision on the Complaint within 30 days of the filing of the Complaint, unless such time period is extended by agreement with the Complainant, or a longer period is reasonably necessitated by the circumstances. The decision shall be made in writing, shall set forth the Coordinator's proposed resolution of the Complaint, and shall be forwarded to the Complainant.
5. The Complainant shall have 10 days from the date the Coordinator's decision is sent to the Complainant to accept or reject the Coordinator's proposed resolution. The Complainant shall be deemed to have accepted the proposed resolution unless the Complainant rejects the proposed resolution within such time period.
6. In the event the Complainant rejects the proposed resolution, the Complainant shall be given the opportunity to file a request for reconsideration within 10 days from the date the Coordinator's decision is sent to the Complainant. The request for reconsideration shall be filed with the Coordinator. Upon receipt of the request for reconsideration, the Coordinator shall promptly forward the request for reconsideration and all evidence received by the Coordinator in connection with the Complaint to a third person for review (either an administrator or other employee of the District, or members of the Board of Education or Committee of the Board).
7. A decision on the request for reconsideration shall be made within 10 days after the request for reconsideration was filed unless the Board or Committee of the Board is the reviewer, in which event the decision shall be made within 30 days of the filing of the request for reconsideration, unless such time period is extended by agreement with the Complainant, or a longer period is reasonably necessitated by the circumstances.

**RECEIPT OF 2024-2025 CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK OF
DC West Community SCHOOLS**

This signed receipt acknowledges receipt of the 2024-2025 Classified Employee Handbook of DC West Community Schools. This receipt acknowledges that I understand that I will read and be familiar with the handbook, that I understand the handbook contains a disclaimer of contract, that I understand that the handbook includes the District's policies of non-discrimination and equity, and that specific complaint and grievance procedures exist in the handbook which should be used for responding to harassment or discrimination.

Date: _____

Employee's Signature