

## **Regular Board of Education Meeting**

Monday, July 13, 2026 6:00 PM

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



# **Agenda**

## **1. GPS Board of Education Information**

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

---

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

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

---

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

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

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

## **2. Opening Procedures**

### **2.1. Call to Order**

The Board of Education reserves the right to enter into Executive Session for the

protection of the public interest, or the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual, and if the individual has not requested a public meeting.

2.2. Roll Call

2.3. Pledge of Allegiance

2.4. Open Meetings Act

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

Notice of this meeting was published in the Star Herald on Thursday, July 9th, 2026.

3. **Consent Agenda**

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

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

3.2. Approval of Claims/Bills Fund Amount

01 General \$750,775.59

03 Employee \$209.00

05 Activity \$37,023.19

06 School Nutrition \$483,975.02

07 Bond \$3,000.00

Fund Totals: \$1,274,982.80

3.3. Board Policy Adoption

3.3.i. First Reading of Board Policies

3.3.ii. Second Reading of Board Policies

3.4. Personnel Items

3.4.i. Certified Staff Contracts Brittanie Shaw - Preschool Teacher, Northfield Elementary

John Einfalt - Interim Dean of Students, High School

Chris Guardarrama - Preschool Teacher, Lincoln Elementary

Lisa Blanco - Math Teacher, High School

4. **Student Fees Public Hearing**

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

Schedule.

**5. Parental and Family Engagement Public Hearing**

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

**6. Bully Prevention Public Hearing**

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

**7. Celebration of Excellence**

7.1. SFE Update

7.2. Summer Program Update - YMCA

**8. Reports & Discussions**

8.1. Board Committee Report: Curriculum & Personnel

8.2. Board Committee Report: Business & Facilities

8.3. Superintendent's Report

**9. Public Comments: 204.12**

**10. Action Items**

10.1. Discuss, consider, and take action to approve the 2026-27 school year handbooks for Gering High School, LINKS, Preschool and Substitutes.

10.2. Discuss, consider, and take action to approve the 2026-27 Board of Education Schedule.

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

10.4. Conduct hearing on grievance of Aaron Pierce and consider, discuss, and take action in response to same.

## **11. Board Comments**

### **11.1. Tentative Upcoming Board Meeting/Event Dates**

#### **Future Board Meetings**

Regular Meeting: Mon, Aug. 10th, 2026 @ 6:00 p.m. (Freshmen Academy)

Special Meeting: Tues, Aug. 25th, 2026 @ 12:00 p.m. (Central Office)

#### **Tentative Committee Meeting Dates:**

Personnel & Curriculum Committee: Tues, Aug. 4th, 2026 @ 7:00 a.m. (Central Office)

Middle School Improvement Committee: Wed, Aug. 5th, 2026 @ 4:30 p.m. (Central Office)

Finance & Facilities Committee: Thurs, Aug. 6th, 2026 @ 4:30 p.m. (Central Office)

#### **Upcoming Event Highlights:**

NASB Membership Meeting: Aug. 19th @ 4:30 p.m. (Civic Center)

## **12. Adjourn**

## Regular Board of Education Meeting

Monday, June 15, 2026 12:00 PM

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



## Minutes

### 1. GPS Board of Education Information

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

### 2. Opening Procedures

#### 2.1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Board Vice President, Tracy Wiese, at 12:00 p.m.

#### 2.2. Roll Call

#### 2.3. Pledge of Allegiance

#### 2.4. Open Meetings Act

### 3. Consent Agenda

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

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

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

#### 3.2. Approval of Claims/Bills

Fund Amount

01 General \$355,797.19

03 Employee Benefit \$209.00

05 Activity \$59,534.48

06 School Nutrition \$82,436.14

07 Bond \$39,323.55

08 Special Building \$178,060.00

09 QCPUF \$21,960.00

Fund Totals: \$737,320.36

#### 3.3. Personnel Items

##### 3.3.i. Certified Staff Contract(s)

Aleshia Schmer - Preschool Teacher, Lincoln Elementary

Marley Tarr - Preschool Teacher, Northfield Elementary

##### 3.3.ii. Early Graduation Request -

Ximena Avitia

#### **4. Reports & Discussions**

##### **4.1. Board Committee Report: Curriculum & Personnel**

John Maser presented to the Board regarding the proposed minor revisions to the student handbooks for the 2026-27 school year. He also provided an update on several Continuous Improvement goals, including initiatives focused on reading achievement, Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction, and student attendance.

##### **4.2. Board Committee Report: Business & Facilities**

Bryan Barrett presented to the Board and provided an update on the First Student transportation contract shared with Scottsbluff Public Schools. He noted that both districts are continuing to work through the remaining details of the agreement. Bryan also shared progress updates on the construction of the high school auditorium and the track project, both of which are expected to be completed this fall. In addition, he reported that INA Alert has begun installation of its safety and communication system and is anticipated to complete the project later this summer.

##### **4.3. Superintendent's Report**

No report was given.

#### **5. Public Comments: 204.12**

#### **6. Action Items**

##### **6.1. Discuss, consider, and take action regarding the approval of the 2026-2027 school year Elementary School, Middle School, and Activity Handbooks.**

A motion to approve the 2026-2027 school year Elementary School, Middle School, and Activity Handbooks was presented by Bryan Barrett, seconded by Josh Lacy. After voting, motion Passed.

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

##### **6.2. Discuss, consider, and take action regarding the approval of the 2026-2027 Classified and Certified Staff Handbooks.**

A motion to approve the 2026-2027 Classified and Certified Staff Handbooks was presented by Josh Lacy, seconded by Matt Kautz. After voting, motion Passed.

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

#### **7. Board Comments**

Bryan Barrett - Thanks to Dr. Regan for your time at Gering. Excited to see the progress of the track!

Matt Kautz - Thanks to the directors for having the conversation with First Student regarding our contract.

John Maser - Thanks to Dr. Regan for her years at Gering.

Josh Lacy - No comment

Tracy Wiese - Thanks to Dr. Regan for all she's done here at GPS! We wish her the best! Looking forward to Dr. Knight stepping into that role. Also, excited about the track!

##### **7.1. Tentative Upcoming Board Meeting/Event Dates**

#### **8. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

**Special Board of Education Work  
Session**

Monday, June 1, 2026 12:00 PM

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



**Minutes**

**1. GPS Board of Education Information**

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

**2. Opening Procedures**

2.1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Board Vice President, Tracy Wiese, at 12:00 p.m.

2.2. Roll Call

2.3. Open Meetings Act

**3. Reports and Discussions**

3.1. District Strategic Plan Update: #4 Operational Excellence - Dr. Nicole Regan

Dr. Regan presented an overview of the work the district has undertaken over the past two years in preparation for the proposed middle school bond project. She highlighted the extensive planning process, which has included touring other school facilities, gathering feedback from staff and community members, and evaluating the district's long-term facility needs. Dr. Regan also shared that the district has partnered with Sampson as its Construction Manager at Risk (CM@R) to help guide the project through the planning and construction phases.

Jennifer Sibal then provided an update on lessons learned from the district's previous bond attempt. She discussed the ongoing efforts to "reimagine" Gering Middle School, including extensive feedback that has shaped the project's direction. Based on feedback and further analysis, adjustments have been made to the reduce the building's square footage, resulting in a reduction in overall project costs.

Cody Wickham of D.A. Davidson presented information on the financial aspects of the proposed bond. He reviewed the projected impact of the bond over the next 25 years and explained a new option to take a portion of the bond and leverage existing funding which would be levy-neutral. Cody also discussed potential lease-purchase opportunities that could provide additional flexibility in funding future facility improvements.

**4. Action Items**

**5. Public Comment: Policy 204.12**

**6. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:49 p.m.

**POLICY 205.2**  
**GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**GERING, NE**

**POLICY ADOPTION**

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

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

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

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

Cross Reference:             201.1 Board Powers and Responsibilities

**POLICY 411.1R1**  
**GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**GERING, NE**

**SUBSTITUTE TEACHER RATE OF PAY**

As per Board Policy number 411.1, the daily rate of pay for substitute teachers is to be determined annually by the Board of Education. The rate of pay will be as follows:

| <b>Days of Service/School Year</b> | <b>LOCAL Substitute Permits &amp; Certified Nurses</b> | <b>CERTIFIED Substitutes</b> | <b>Substitute Secretaries &amp; Paraprofessionals</b> |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 1-30                               | <del>\$150</del> 160 / day                             | <del>\$150</del> -160 / day  | <del>\$13.50</del> 15.26/ hour                        |
| 31-60                              | <del>\$150</del> 160 / day                             | <del>\$160</del> 170 / day   |                                                       |
| 61+                                | <del>\$150</del> 160 / day                             | <del>\$175</del> 185 / day   |                                                       |

Beginning the sixteenth (16<sup>th</sup>) consecutive day in the same classroom, the rate of pay will be 1/186 of the beginning teacher base salary.

In the event a substitute teacher, who is qualified for the position, teaches in the same teaching position for more than thirty (30) consecutive days, he/she may then be placed on the salary schedule for the remainder of time served.

Each substitute teacher must hold proper Nebraska certification.

Continuous substitute teachers are substitute teachers who are temporarily employed to provide substitute teaching services for a teacher for an anticipated, planned period of time to exceed 30 working days. The planned absence of the contracted teacher must be known prior to the scheduling of the substitute teacher and be approved by the Superintendent or designee. In this event, the continuous substitute teacher will be paid on a per diem basis equivalent to his/her placement on the salary schedule beginning the first day of substitute teaching services. Continuous substitute teachers do not have property rights to the position for which they are providing a service. Continuous substitute teachers may be considered as candidates for the position for which they are substituting if the contracted employee is unable to return. However, in this event, the continuous substitute teacher must meet all other hiring criteria in comparison to other candidates for the position and is subject to approval by the Board of Education.

Cross Reference:     Substitute Handbook

**Approved** 03/15/2010,9/28/21,07/11/2022 **Reviewed** 05/20/2013, 11/28/2016, 07/06/22, 3/9/23 **Revised** 12/16/16, 9/28/21,8/1/22

**POLICY 1002**  
**GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**GERING, NE**

**DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT**

The superintendent or designee shall annually provide information to the public regarding district characteristics and student achievement results. The information may include the following topics as well as other information deemed relevant by the superintendent.:

- Student demographics, including enrollment by grade and site, number of students receiving free or reduced meals and number of special education students.
- District financial information including levy, total budget, valuation per pupil, per pupil costs and local, state and federal revenue.
- Student academic performance including aggregate results of standardized tests, graduation rates and dropout rates.
- Faculty experience and education data.
- Average class size information.
- Graduation requirements and course-offering information.

At least annually, the Superintendent or designee shall provide a computer science and technology education status report to both the Board of Education and Nebraska State Department of Education. The annual report may include information about student progress on the computer science and technology courses and other relevant measures of student progress in the areas of computer science and technology education. To the extent appropriate, computer science education data may be incorporated into the District's Annual Report and considered as part of the District's ongoing school improvement planning process.

Legal Reference:               NDE Rule 10.010.01A  
                                      NDE Rule 10.010.01B

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

**POLICY 706.3**  
**GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**GERING, NE**

**BIDDING PROCEDURES**

The purchasing procedure of the school district shall not only ensure the best possible price for goods and services, but shall also operate efficiently and economically. The construction of facilities that may exceed an expenditure of ~~\$100,000~~ \$136,000, and an amount as periodically adjusted by state statute, shall be advertised and submitted for bid in the manner required by law. This limit does not apply to the acquisition of existing buildings, purchase of new sites, or site expansions by the district. Other purchases or contractual services may be advertised and submitted for bid as directed by the Board or when, in the opinion of the superintendent, the welfare of the district will be served. All bids must be submitted in sealed envelopes, addressed to the Board, and plainly marked with the name of the bid and the time of the bid opening. Bids shall be opened and examined publicly.

The Board reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part of any bid and accept that bid which appears to be in the best interest of the school district. The Board reserves the right to waive any informalities in any bid. Any bid may be withdrawn prior to the scheduled time for the opening of bids. Any bid received after the time and date specified shall not be considered.

Legal Reference:      Neb. Statute 73-106  
                              Neb. Statute 79-10,104

**Approved** 11/17/03    **Reviewed** 06/29/11, 8/17/15, 1/28/20**Revised** 7/18/11, 9/14/15, 2/17/20

**POLICY 902.4**  
**GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**GERING, NE**

**BIDS AND AWARDS FOR CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS**

Public, competitive sealed bids are required for construction projects, including renovation and repair, with a cost exceeding ~~\$109,000~~ **\$136,000** and an amount as periodically adjusted by state statute. This does not apply to the acquisition of existing buildings, purchase of new sites or site expansions by the district. The sealed bids shall be opened in public on the date and hour as advertised.

The award of construction contracts will, generally, be made to the lowest responsible bidder. The Board, in its discretion, after considering factors relating to the construction, including, but not limited to, the cost of the construction, availability of service and/or repair, completion date, and any other factors deemed relevant by the board, may choose a bid other than the lowest bid. Resident bidders of the state of Nebraska may be given preference over nonresident bidders in some instances according to state statutes. The Board shall have the right to reject any or all bids, or any part of the bids, to waive informalities, and to enter into the contract or contracts deemed to be in the best interests of the school district.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to make a recommendation accompanied by supportive reasoning to the board for construction contract bids.

The district will require the successful bidder to submit a performance labor and material payment bond for an amount not less than the contract price on any project with a total cost of more than ten thousand dollars.

Reference: Neb. Statute 73-101 et seq.  
52-118

Cross Reference: 706 Expenditures

**Approved** 01/19/04

**Reviewed** 04/29/13, 08/17/15,10/12/23

**Revised**  
09/14/15, 2/8/24

**POLICY 508.12**  
**GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**GERING, NE**

**ASTHMA, ANAPHYLAXIS, AND ALLERGIC REACTION PROTOCOL**

The district will adopt and implement the Emergency Response to Life-Threatening Asthma or Systemic Allergic Reactions (Anaphylaxis) Protocol as required by the Nebraska Department of Education. The school shall allow a student with asthma or anaphylaxis to self-manage his or her asthma or anaphylaxis condition upon written request of the student's parent or guardian and authorization of the student's physician or other health care professional who prescribed the medication for treatment of the student's condition.

The superintendent, in conjunction with licensed health personnel, shall establish administrative regulations for the implementation of this policy during regular hours while school classes are in session. The regulations established shall comply with NDE rules regarding the protocol to follow in case of a life-threatening asthma or systemic allergic reaction (including anaphylaxis) and use of an EpiPen and albuterol. Also, these shall ensure that each school building will procure and maintain the equipment and medication necessary under the protocol in the case of any student or school staff emergency. Staff training in using the protocol shall occur periodically. Records of such training and occurrences of administering medication under the protocol shall be maintained.

The parent or guardian of a student of minority age may sign a waiver requesting that their student not receive emergency treatment under this protocol. Information about the waiver shall be provided to parents in the student handbook.

The Superintendent or designee shall further develop and implement protocols to address anaphylaxis and the emergency use of epinephrine at school buildings and school-sponsored activities. A school nurse or trained staff member may administer epinephrine to any individual believed to be experiencing anaphylaxis. These protocols will also address the District's response, documentation, notification, and reporting any instances of administering epinephrine. The District will continue to implement individualized health or Section 504 plans for students with known severe allergies, and nothing in this policy limits rights or accommodations under Section 504, the ADA, or the IDEA.

Legal Reference: NDE Rule 59.006

Cross Reference: 508.02 Administration of Medication to Students

Approved 05/17/2010 Reviewed 08/22/2016, 03/26/2018, 04/02/2025 Revised 09/19/2016

**~~POLICY 508.12F1~~**  
**~~GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS~~**  
**~~GERING, NE~~**

**~~WAIVER OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO LIFE THREATENING ASTHMA OR~~**  
**~~SYSTEMIC ALLERGIC REACTIONS PROTOCOL~~**

~~Gering Public Schools~~

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
School: \_\_\_\_\_

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

~~I am aware of the school policy that provides a protocol to be followed by school personnel to administer EpiPen/albuterol to a student when it is determined that the student is suffering a life-threatening asthma or systemic allergic reaction while school is in session.~~

~~After considering the school policy and the best interests of my child,~~  
~~\_\_\_\_\_, I do not wish to have him/her administered albuterol or~~  
~~medication from an Epi-Pen by school personnel under any circumstances for the 20\_\_ - 20\_\_~~  
~~school year.~~

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
~~(Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian/Custodian of Child) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)~~

~~Approved~~ ~~05/17/10~~ ~~Reviewed~~ ~~04/02/2025~~ ~~Revised~~

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

STUDENT FEES  
~~2025-26~~ 2026-27

**Gering High School**

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

**Gering ~~Junior-High~~ Middle School**

|                     | Fund     | Waiver Eligible | Maximum Cost              |
|---------------------|----------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Band T-Shirt        | Activity | Yes             | \$ 15.00                  |
| Band Black Slacks   | Activity | Yes             | \$ 25.00                  |
| Honor Band Audition | Activity | No              | \$ 40.00                  |
| Class Projects      | Activity | No              | \$ 100.00                 |
| Club Dues           | Fee      | Yes             | \$ 5.00                   |
| Activity Tickets    | Activity | Yes             | \$ <del>35.00</del> 40.00 |

Approved 7/8/2024, 7/14/2025 Reviewed 12/05/2024 Revised \_\_\_\_\_

**POLICY 509.4**  
**GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**GERING, NE**

**SCHOOL LIBRARY MATERIALS AND PARENT ACCESS**

The District will provide parents, guardians, and educational decision makers access to information regarding books available in the District’s school library, and an opportunity to receive notification when their student checks out a library book.

For purposes of this Policy, the “school library” means the collection of books maintained by the District in a library or media center, as designated by the Superintendent or designee, located on school property and managed by District staff for student circulation. The term “school library” does not include: (1) classroom libraries or book collections maintained by individual teachers; (2) instructional textbooks or curriculum materials issued to students; (3) digital instructional materials, online databases, or subscription research services; and (4) materials accessed through a library not managed or supervised by the District. For purposes of this policy, a “book” means a bound or printed work cataloged within the District’s school library circulation system. The District will maintain a catalog of books available in each designated library. Such catalog will be made available for viewing by parents, guardians, and educational decisionmakers through a method designated by the Superintendent or designee.

The District will provide parents, guardians, and educational decisionmakers the opportunity to opt-in to receive notification when their student checks out a book from a designated library. If a parent, guardian, or educational decisionmaker elects to receive such notifications, the District shall provide such notice, which will include the: (1) title of the book; (2) author(s); and (3) date the book must be returned.

Requests to receive library checkout notifications must be submitted through a written request or through a process identified by the Superintendent or designee.

The Superintendent or designee may develop procedures to implement this Policy, and staff, parents, guardians, and educational decision makers must follow these procedures.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. §79-533.04

**Approved** \_\_\_\_\_ **Reviewed** \_\_\_\_\_ **Revised** \_\_\_\_\_

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

STUDENT FEES  
~~2025-26~~ 2026-27

**Gering High School**

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

**Gering ~~Junior-High~~ Middle School**

|                     | Fund     | Waiver Eligible | Maximum Cost |
|---------------------|----------|-----------------|--------------|
| Band T-Shirt        | Activity | Yes             | \$ 15.00     |
| Band Black Slacks   | Activity | Yes             | \$ 25.00     |
| Honor Band Audition | Activity | No              | \$ 40.00     |
| Class Projects      | Activity | No              | \$ 100.00    |
| Club Dues           | Fee      | Yes             | \$ 5.00      |
| Activity Tickets    | Activity | Yes             | \$ 35.00     |

Approved 7/8/2024, 7/14/2025 Reviewed 12/05/2024 Revised \_\_\_\_\_

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

STUDENT FEES  
2026-27

**Gering High School**

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

**Gering Junior High School**

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

**Approved** 7/8/2024, 7/14/2025    **Reviewed** 12/05/2024,    **Revised** \_\_\_\_\_

**POLICY 504.12**  
**GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**GERING, NE**

**CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

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

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

Students are not prohibited from using an electronic communication device while on school property or attending a school instructional function under any of the following circumstances:

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

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

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

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

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

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

|                  |        |                    |
|------------------|--------|--------------------|
| Cross Reference: | 505    | Student Discipline |
|                  | 504.03 | Student Conduct    |

Approved: 05/17/2010 Reviewed: 09/25/2017, 08/27/2018;05/20/2024,12/05/2024 Revised:  
09/17/2018, 7/16/2025

**POLICY 613.01**  
**GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**GERING, NE**

**DISTRICT TITLE I PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

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

**In General**

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

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

**Approved:** 5/21/18

**Reviewed** 10/28/19, 1/8/26

**Revised** 11/18/19

**POLICY 1005.3**  
**GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**GERING, NE**

**PARENTAL AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOLS**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Legal Reference: Neb. Statute 79-530 to 533

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

**Approved** 2/16/04

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

**Revised** 9/19/16

**POLICY 504.20**  
**GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**GERING, NE**

**BULLYING PREVENTION**

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

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

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

This policy shall be reviewed annually.

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

Cross Reference:                    505      Student Discipline

Approved:05/17/2010 Reviewed 06/23/2014, 07/17/2017, 08/20/2018, 7/20/2020,12/05/2024  
Revised \_\_\_\_\_

**POLICY 204.12**  
**GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**GERING, NE**

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS**

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

Instructions for members of the public who wish to speak:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Legal Reference: Nebraska Statute 84-1408 to 1414

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

Approved 01/20/2003

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

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

**Personal or Consumable**  
**GERING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK**  
**SCHOOL YEAR 2026-2027**

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

**Foreword**

**Section 1    Intent of Handbook**

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

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

**Section 2    Members of the Board of Education**

|               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| Greg Trautman | Tracy Wiese |
| Josh Lacy     | John Maser  |
| Bryan Barrett | Matt Kautz  |

**Section 3    Administrative Staff**

| Name         | Position                | Contact Information |
|--------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Kory Knight  | Interim Superintendent  | 308-436-3125        |
| Mario Chavez | Principal               | 308-436-3121        |
| John Einfalt | Interim Dean of Student | 308-436-3121        |
| Keaton Green | Assistant Principal     | 308-436-3121        |
| J.J.Behrens  | Activities Director     | 308-436-3121        |

## **Section 4 School Calendar/Health**

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

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

## **Article 1 – Direction/Vision/Goals**

### **Section 1 School Direction/Vision Statement**

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

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

### **Section 2 Goals and Objectives**

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

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

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

### **Section 3 Surveys**

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

### **Section 4 Mutual Respect**

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

### **Section 5 Complaint Procedures**

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

**Step 1.** Schedule a conference with the staff person most immediately or directly involved in the matter.

**Step 2.** Address the concern to the Principal if the matter is not resolved at Step 1.

**Step 3.** Address the concern to the Superintendent if the matter is not resolved at Step 2.

**Step 4.** Address the concern to the Board of Education if the matter is not resolved at Step 3. Written appeal should be made within five (5) days of the Superintendent's decision.

Conditions Applicable to All Levels of Complaint Procedure

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

## Article 2 - School Day

### Section 1 Daily Bell Schedule

## Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

|                                                             |             |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| Period 1<br>Announcements at 8:03                           | 8:00-8:50   | (50 min) |
| <i>Grab and Go Breakfast at 8:50 am in the main hallway</i> |             |          |
| Period 2                                                    | 8:55-9:40   | (45 min) |
| Period 3                                                    | 9:45-10:30  | (45 min) |
| Period 4                                                    | 10:35-11:20 | (45 min) |
| 9th-12th Lunch                                              | 11:25-11:55 | (30 min) |
| Period 5                                                    | 12:00-12:45 | (45 min) |
| Period 6                                                    | 12:50-1:35  | (45 min) |
| Period 7                                                    | 1:40-2:25   | (45 min) |
| Period 8                                                    | 2:30-3:15   | (45 min) |

## Early Release Wednesday

|                                                             |             |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| Period 1<br>Announcements at 8:03                           | 8:00-8:42   | (37 min) |
| <i>Grab and Go Breakfast at 8:42 am in the main hallway</i> |             |          |
| Period 2                                                    | 8:47-9:24   | (37 min) |
| Period 3                                                    | 9:29-10:06  | (37 min) |
| Period 4                                                    | 10:11-10:48 | (37 min) |
| 9th - 12th Lunch                                            | 10:53-11:23 | (30 min) |
| Period 5                                                    | 11:28-12:06 | (38 min) |
| Period 6                                                    | 12:11-12:49 | (38 min) |
| Period 7                                                    | 12:54-1:32  | (38 min) |
| Period 8                                                    | 1:37-2:15   | (38 min) |

## **Section 2 Severe Weather and School Cancellations**

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

- **Decision to Close Schools** A decision to close school is made when forecasts by the weather service, law enforcement advisories or civil defense officials indicate that it would be unwise to hold school. An early decision is not always possible because of uncertain weather conditions. School officials will make periodic assessments of conditions during the night and will decide early in the morning (by 6 a.m. if possible). In any case, an announcement will be made to the news media when schools will be closed. In some instances, schools will be open, but certain services may be canceled (bus transportation, kindergarten, student activities).
- **After School Starts** Every attempt will be made to avoid closing school once classes are in session. In some instances, closing school during the day is inevitable if children are to safely return home before the brunt of a major storm hits. In these cases, as much advance notice as possible will be given to parents. If school is closed during the day, the notice will be broadcast by the media. Parents should have a plan in place to accommodate these circumstances.
- **Parental Decisions** Parents may decide to keep their children at home in inclement weather because of personal circumstances. Students absent because of severe weather when school is in session will be marked absent. The absence will be treated like any other absence for legitimate causes, provided parents properly notify the school of their decision. Parents may pick up their children in inclement weather during the school day. Students will not normally be dismissed from school during severe weather on the basis of a telephone request.
- **What Not To Do** Parents should not attempt to come to school during a tornado warning. School officials are not permitted to release students from the school building during a tornado warning. Tornado safety procedures are practiced regularly by students and staff members. Also, parents are urged not to call radio and television stations and school buildings during severe weather.
- **Emergency Conditions** The school has a signal which, when activated, includes the necessity to either evacuate the building or to move to safer areas of the building. Regular drills are held as required by law through the school year. There are plans for an Emergency Exit system, Tornado Warning System, and Critical Incident Response.

## **Section 3 Open-Closed Campus**

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

## **Section 4 Identification Cards**

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

## **Section 5 Arrival to School/Dismissal from School**

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

## **Section 6 Signing a Child In and Out of School**

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

## **Section 7 Emergency Closing Procedures**

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

# **Article 3 - Use of Building and Grounds**

## **Section 1 Visitors**

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

## **Section 2 Smoke/Vape-Free Environment**

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

## **Section 3 Care of School Property**

Students are responsible for the proper care of all books, equipment, supplies and furniture supplied by the school. Students are responsible for cleaning up any messes made from their food and drink. Students who disfigure property, break windows or do other damage to school property or equipment will be required to pay for the damage done or replace the item.

Fines are determined on books according to the following criteria:

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

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

#### **Section 4 Lockers**

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

#### **Section 5 Searches of Lockers and Other Types of Searches**

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

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

#### **Use of Metal Detectors - [Board Policy 504.13](#)**

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

#### **Section 6 Video Surveillance**

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

Notice is hereby given that video surveillance may occur on District property. In the event a video surveillance recording captures a student or other building user violating school policies or rules or local, state or federal laws, the video surveillance recording may be used in appropriate disciplinary proceedings against the student or other building user and may also be provided to law enforcement agencies.

#### **Section 7 Use of Telephone**

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

#### **Section 8 Bicycles**

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

#### **Section 9 Student Valuables**

Students, not the school, are responsible for their personal property. Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money or items of value to school. If it is necessary to bring valuable items or more money than is needed to pay for lunch, leave the money or valuables with a staff member in the school office for temporary

safe-keeping. Even then, the school is not in a position to guarantee that the student's property will not be subject to loss, theft, or damage.

#### **Section 10 Lost and Found**

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

#### **Section 11 Accidents**

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

#### **Section 12 Laboratory Safety Glasses**

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

#### **Section 13 Insurance**

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

#### **Section 14 Bulletins and Announcements**

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

#### **Section 15 Copyright and Fair Use Policy**

It is the school's policy to follow the federal copyright law. Students are reminded that, when using school equipment and when completing coursework, they also must follow the federal copyright laws. The federal copyright law governs the reproduction of works of authorship. Copyrighted works are protected regardless of the medium in which they are created or reproduced; thus, copyright extends to digital works and works transformed into a digital format. Copyrighted works are not limited to those that bear a copyright notice.

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

educational purposes; the nature of the copyrighted work; the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

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

#### **Section 16 Media Center**

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

### **Media Circulation Center Policies**

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

#### Check Out/Fine Policy

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

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

## **Article 4 – Attendance**

### **Section 1 Attendance Policy**

Regular and punctual student attendance is required. The Board's policies require such attendance; the administration is responsible for developing further attendance rules and regulations; staff is responsible for assisting in the enforcement of the rules and regulations. Students and parents are responsible for developing behaviors which will result in regular and punctual student attendance.

### **Section 2 Pre-arranged Absence:**

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

### **Section 3 Attendance and Absences Process**

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

[\*\*Gering High School Attendance Process Link\*\*](#)

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

### **Tardy vs. Absent**

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

## **Tardies**

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

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

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

## **Section 4 Make-up Work**

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

## **Section 5 Truancy**

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

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

## **Section 6 Transferring from Gering High School**

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

## **Section 7 Withdrawal from School**

A person who has legal or actual charge or control of a child who is at least sixteen years of age but less than eighteen years of age may withdraw such child from school before graduation must have an exit interview with the superintendent's designee. Any withdrawal form signed by the person making the written request shall be valid only if the child signs the form unless the withdrawal is being requested due to an illness of the child making attendance impossible. The superintendent's designee signs the form that the interview was held, the required information was provided and discussed at the interview, and, in the opinion of the superintendent's designee the person making the

written request does in fact have legal guardianship and the child is experiencing either financial hardship requiring the child to be employed to support the child's family or one or more dependents of the child or an illness making attendance impossible or impracticable. (Nebraska law LB -996)

## **Article 5 - Scholastic Achievement**

### **Section 1 Grading System**

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

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

### **Section 2 High School Yearly Course Sequence**

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

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

### **Flex Periods Full-Time Student Status**

Students will be eligible for flex periods with the following criteria:

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

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

### **Dual Credit Registration**

WNCC registration for high school students takes place in April for fall classes and in November for spring classes. The registration process involves meeting with school counselors and WNCC college advisors. In order to register, students must complete a WNCC registration form and a GHS contract for college course enrollment. Information for completion of this process will take place prior to registration for WNCC classes.

### **Dual Credit Contract**

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

### **Course Placement Testing**

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

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

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

### **Dual Credit Orientation**

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

### **Grades and Credits**

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

### **GHS Dual Credit Academic Probation**

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

### **WNCC Academic Probation and Suspension**

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

### **WNCC Portal**

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

### **Transferology and Transfer Nebraska**

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

### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

FERPA is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records at elementary and secondary schools that are subject to FERPA's requirements. These rights transfer to the student when he or she attends a postsecondary institution at any age. Under FERPA, an eligible student must provide a signed and dated written consent before a school discloses personally identifiable information, such as financial aid records, grades, transcripts, account balance, student conduct, or placement scores from the student's education records. Students should be responsible for knowing the status of their progress. We realize that there may be situations when parents may want to access their son's/daughter's grades. Students have access to grades on their WNCC portal. If parents want access to grades or other personally identifiable information, their son or daughter will need to sign a release of information agreement. This form is found in the portal. Parents wishing to access student information for dual enrollment through GHS will need to work through GHS Infinite Campus for progress monitoring; however, grades and attendance are only updated at midterm and semester. Parents wishing for full access will need to access the student's WNCC portal.

### **Academic Help**

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

### Student Code of Conduct (including Academic Integrity)

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

### Transportation

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

### Tuition/Textbooks

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

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

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

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

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

Likewise if you are dropped from a dual credit class during the semester because of poor attendance, you choose to drop the course or you fail the class for the semester. You are liable for and must reimburse GPS for the cost of any textbook or textbook codes and/or applicable fees, up to \$150 This will be added to your account as a fine to be paid at the end of the school year.

### Drops

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

### TUITION REFUND POLICY

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

| Time Elapsed | Percent Refunded |
|--------------|------------------|
| 6.25%.....   | 100%             |

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| 12.50%.....        | 50%  |
| 25% .....          | 25%  |
| More than 25%..... | None |

**NOTES:**

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

**Credits**

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

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

**Title IX Policy 504.24**

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

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

For information regarding the Gering Public School District procedure for complaints of sexual harassment including the complaint process, how to file a report or a complaint of sexual harassment, how to file a formal complaint of sexual harassment, and how the District will respond to such complaints see

**Board Policy 504.24** located at Gering Public Schools website (<https://www.geringschools.net>).

**Section 3 Graduation Requirements**

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

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

**Graduation Requirements**

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

|                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| English         | 40 semester hours |
| Social Sciences | 30 semester hours |
| Science         | 30 semester hours |
| Math            | 30 semester hours |

|                   |                                                                                       |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| P.E. and Health   | 15 semester hours                                                                     |
| FAFSA Requirement | <a href="https://www.education.ne.gov/fafsa/">https://www.education.ne.gov/fafsa/</a> |

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

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

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

#### **Section 4 Schedule Changes**

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

#### **Section 5 Report Cards**

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

#### **Section 6 Incompletes**

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

#### **Section 7 Parent-Teacher Conferences**

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

#### **Section 8 Academic Honors for Graduation**

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

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

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

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

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

## **Section 9 Honor Roll**

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

## **Section 10 National Honor Society**

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

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

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

## **Removal from National Honor Society**

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

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

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

## **Section 11 Academic Integrity**

### **1. Policy Statement**

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

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

#### **Definitions**

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

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

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

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

## **Section 12 Transcripts**

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

## **Article 6 - Support Services**

### **Section 1 Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS):**

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

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

In order to carry out the philosophy and beliefs stated above, our school has chosen to implement the Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) model. PBIS is a program designed to build a more positive school-wide atmosphere. The ultimate goal is to teach students to be self-managers, who encourage and challenge each other to higher behavioral and academic standards. This is accomplished through the use of clear expectations which are explicitly taught, regularly acknowledged and fairly corrected. Students are “set up” for success in school.

### **Section 2 Special Education Services**

What Does Special Education Mean?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Section 3 Students with Disabilities: Section 504**

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

Under Section 504, parents have the following rights:

1. Have your child take part in, and receive benefits from, public education programs without discrimination because of your child's disability.
2. Have the school district advise you of your rights under federal law.
3. Receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation or placement of your child.

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

#### **Section 4 Multi-Tiered Student Support Services (MTSS)**

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

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

#### **Absenteeism/Tardiness**

Students in need of information or help may be referred by various concerned individuals including: self, peers, family, or school staff. Referral forms can be obtained from any staff member (which will include cooks, custodian staff, secretaries, library aides, coaches, teachers, or administrators). Completed forms can be returned to any staff member. After the referral, information will be gathered to help identify the problem(s) the student is experiencing. The Student Assistance Team will then meet to formulate an appropriate plan of action.

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

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

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

### **Section 5 Guidance Services**

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

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

### **Section 6 Alternative Education**

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

#### **Valley Alternative Education School**

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

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

Criteria for Admission:

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

### **LINKS**

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

Criteria for Admission:

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

### **Section 7 Transportation Services**

The school district maintains bus service for the convenience of its students and parents. Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. Students who live outside the radius of one mile from Gering Freshman Academy, may

apply for a bus pass. Students must ride the bus assigned and leave the bus only at their designated stop. Violations of the rules by a student will result in disciplinary action.

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

## **Article 7 - Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco**

### **Section 1 Drug-Free Schools**

Philosophy - All students have the right to attend school in a drug free environment conducive to good learning. The use of illicit drugs, alcohol, or other substances is not only illegal, but it interferes with both effective learning and the healthy development of young people. The educational system has a fundamental and ethical obligation to prevent drug abuse and maintain a drug free and safe educational environment, not only throughout the schools, but also in all school related activities.

### **Section 2 Use/Possession of Health Endangering Substances**

Pursuant to its statutory authority to adopt policies, rules and regulations necessary to protect the government and health of students in the school district, the Board of Education of Gering Public Schools has determined that the possession or use by students of tobacco, tobacco products or vapor products, alcohol, narcotics, or other dangerous and/or illegal drugs shall be prohibited:

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

Students who possess or use tobacco, tobacco products or vapor products, alcohol or narcotics, or other dangerous drugs, except as directed by a physician during the school day, on school grounds, or while participating in or attending school activities, shall be subject to disciplinary sanctions, including but not limited to expulsion or suspension. Where there is "reasonable suspicion" that a student has been using alcohol, the administration may request the student to submit to a "breathalyzer" test to determine use. If the student refuses such a test or does not admit to use where there is "reasonable suspicion" of use, the student may be subject to the disciplinary consequences as described in the GHS Parent Student Handbook.

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

## **Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules**

### **Section 1 Purpose of Student Conduct Rules**

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

Gering's discipline plan is designed to be progressive. Students who are repeatedly referred to the principal's office for additional disciplinary measures will be disciplined according to the charts listed below. The initial responsibility for the disciplining of a student, who is disobedient or disrespectful in class, is the classroom teacher. Each time a student receives an office behavior referral he/she will receive a specific number of points. Any points received shall be cumulative

throughout the school year. Accumulation of 90 or more points throughout the school year, may result in a recommendation to the Board of Education for expulsion from Gering Public Schools or mandatory reassignment.

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

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

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

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

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

## Section 2 Progressive Discipline Levels

Parents will be notified at levels C through G

Police may be notified for any illegal activity

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

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

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

**Progressive Discipline Table**

| Offense                         | Category | Behavior Demerits | 1st Offense | 2nd Offense | 3rd Offense | 4th Offense | 5th Offense |
|---------------------------------|----------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| INAPPROPRIATE PUBLIC DISPLAY OF | I        | 4                 | A           | A           | B           | C           | D           |

|                                              |     |    |   |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------------------------------|-----|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| AFFECTION                                    |     |    |   |   |   |   |   |
| DRESS CODE VIOLATION                         | I   | 4  | A | A | B | C | D |
| LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS                       | I   | 4  | A | A | B | C | D |
| OTHER I                                      | I   | 4  | A | A | B | C | D |
|                                              |     |    |   |   |   |   |   |
| DISRUPTION OF CLASS/SCHOOL/ASS EMBLY         | II  | 8  | A | B | B | C | D |
| INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR OR GESTURES           | II  | 8  | A | B | B | C | D |
| PROFANITY OR VULGARITY                       | II  | 8  | A | B | B | C | D |
| FAILURE TO ATTEND DETENTION TIME             | II  | 8  | C | C | D | D | E |
| CELL PHONE VIOLATION                         | II  | 8  | A | B | B | C | D |
| SKIPPING CLASS                               | II  | 8  | A | B | B | C | D |
| OTHER II                                     | II  | 8  | A | B | B | C | D |
|                                              |     |    |   |   |   |   |   |
| DISORDERLY CONDUCT                           | III | 10 | B | B | C | C | D |
| INDECENT MATERIAL                            | III | 10 | B | B | C | C | D |
| JEOPARDIZING THE SAFETY OF ONESELF OR OTHERS | III | 10 | B | B | C | C | D |
| MISUSE OF SCHOOL MATERIAL OR EQUIPMENT       | III | 10 | B | B | C | C | D |
| INSUBORDINATION                              | III | 10 | B | B | C | D | D |
| ACADEMIC VIOLATION                           | III | 10 | B | B | C | C | D |

|                                               |     |    |     |     |     |   |   |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|---|---|
| FALSE CALL OR FORGERY OF NOTE                 | III | 10 | B   | B   | C   | D | E |
|                                               |     |    |     |     |     |   |   |
| USE OR POSSESSION OF TOBACCO OR VAPOR PRODUCT | IV  | 14 | D   | D   | E   | E | G |
| CARELESS DRIVING OR SPEEDING                  | IV  | 14 | B   | C   | D   | D | E |
| VANDALISM LEVEL I                             | IV  | 14 | C   | D   | E   | E | G |
| THEFT LEVEL I                                 | IV  | 14 | C   | D   | E   | E | G |
| OTHER IV                                      | IV  | 14 | C   | D   | E   | E | G |
|                                               |     |    |     |     |     |   |   |
| HARASSMENT                                    | V   | 21 | D   | D   | E   | E | G |
| VANDALISM LEVEL II                            | V   | 21 | D   | D   | E   | E | G |
| THEFT LEVEL II                                | V   | 21 | D   | D   | E   | E | G |
| GROSS MISBEHAVIOR (DETRIMENTAL)               | V   | 21 | D   | D   | E   | E | G |
| OPEN AND PERSISTENT DEFIANCE OF AUTHORITY     | V   | 21 | D   | D   | E   | E | G |
| OTHER V                                       | V   | 21 | D   | D   | E   | E | G |
|                                               |     |    |     |     |     |   |   |
| THEFT LEVEL III                               | VI  | 28 | D/E | E   | G   |   |   |
| FIGHTING LEVEL I                              | VI  | 28 | D/E | E   | G   |   |   |
| DANGEROUS ITEM                                | VI  | 28 | D/E | E   | G   |   |   |
| INDECENT BEHAVIOR                             | VI  | 28 | D/E | E   | G   |   |   |
| THREATENING BEHAVIOR                          | VI  | 28 | D/E | E   | G   |   |   |
| UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF                        | VI  | 28 | D/E | D/E | E/G |   |   |

|                                             |      |    |                                          |     |     |  |  |
|---------------------------------------------|------|----|------------------------------------------|-----|-----|--|--|
| ALCOHOL OR DRUGS                            |      |    |                                          |     |     |  |  |
| POSSESSION OF ALCOHOL                       | VI   | 28 | E                                        | E   | E/G |  |  |
| OTHER VI                                    | VI   | 28 | DEG                                      | DEG | DEG |  |  |
|                                             |      |    |                                          |     |     |  |  |
| FIGHTING LEVEL II                           | VII  | 42 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
| EXTORTION                                   | VII  | 42 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
| FALSE FIRE ALARM                            | VII  | 42 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
| POSSESSION OF A WEAPON OTHER THAN A FIREARM | VII  | 42 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
| POSSESSION OR USE OF FIRECRACKERS           | VII  | 42 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
| TERRORISTIC THREATS                         | VII  | 42 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
| OTHER VII                                   | VII  | 42 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
|                                             |      |    |                                          |     |     |  |  |
| ASSAULT                                     | VIII | 90 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
| ARSON                                       | VIII | 90 | G                                        |     |     |  |  |
| BOMB THREAT                                 | VIII | 90 | G                                        |     |     |  |  |
| ASSAULT ON EMPLOYEE OR STAFF MEMBER         | VIII | 90 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
| POSSESSION OR USE OF EXPLOSIVES             | VIII | 90 | G                                        |     |     |  |  |
| USE OF ANY INSTRUMENT AS A WEAPON           | VIII | 90 | G                                        |     |     |  |  |
| POSSESSION OF DRUGS OR PARAPHERNALIA        | VIII | 90 | G<br>MANDATORY EXPULSION<br>FOR SEMESTER |     |     |  |  |
| POSSESSION OR USE OF A FIREARM              | VIII | 90 | G<br>MANDATORY EXPULSION                 |     |     |  |  |

|            |      |    |                       |  |  |  |  |
|------------|------|----|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|
|            |      |    | FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR |  |  |  |  |
| OTHER VIII | VIII | 90 | E/G                   |  |  |  |  |

**Section 3 Other Forms of Student Discipline:** Administrative and teaching personnel may take actions regarding student behavior, other than removal of students from school, which are reasonably necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or prevent interference with the educational process. Such actions may include, but are not be limited to, counseling of students; parent conferences; rearrangement of schedules; requiring that a student remain in school after regular hours to do additional work; restriction of extracurricular activity; or requirements that a student receive counseling, psychological evaluation, or psychiatric evaluation upon the written consent of a parent or guardian to such counseling or evaluation. The actions may also include in-school suspensions. When in-school suspensions, after-school assignments, or other disciplinary measures are assigned, the student is responsible for complying with such disciplinary measures. A failure to serve such assigned discipline as directed will serve as grounds for further discipline, up to expulsion from school.

#### **Section 4 Inappropriate Public Displays of Affection (IPDA)**

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

#### **Section 5 Student Appearance**

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

- a. Shorts, skirts, or skorts that do not reach mid-thigh or longer.
- b. Clothing or jewelry that advertises or promotes beer, alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs.
- c. Clothing or jewelry that could be used as a weapon (chains, spiked apparel) or that would encourage "horse-play" or that would damage property. (e.g. cleats).
- d. Headwear including hats, caps, bandannas, and scarves.
- e. Clothing or jewelry which exhibits nudity, makes sexual references or carries lewd, indecent, or vulgar language, or exhibits violence.
- f. Clothing must be "in reasonably good repair". Therefore, wearing jeans with large or excessive holes will not be permitted, whether skin is revealed or not (other examples: frayed shorts, or torn clothing, holes in clothing)
- g. Clothing or jewelry that is gang related

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

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

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

## **Section 6 Electronic Devices**

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

**Definitions.**

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

## **Possession and Use of Electronic Devices**

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

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

1. Activities which disrupt the educational environment;
2. Illegal activities in violation of state or federal laws or regulations;
3. Unethical activities, such as cheating on assignments or tests;
4. Immoral or pornographic activities;
5. Activities in violation of Board or school policies and procedures relating to student conduct and harassment;
6. Recording others (photographs, videotaping, sound recording, etc.) without direct administrative approval and consent of the person(s) being recorded, other than recording of persons participating in school activities that are open to the public; "sexting;" or activities which invade the privacy of others. Such student misuses will be dealt with as serious school violations, and immediate and appropriate disciplinary action will be imposed, including, but not limited to, suspension and expulsion from school.

## **Electronic Device Regulations**

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

**Disposition of Confiscated Electronic Devices:** Electronic devices possessed or used in violation of this policy may be confiscated by school personnel and returned to the student or parent/guardian at an appropriate time. If

an electronic device is confiscated, the electronic device shall be taken to the school's main office to be identified, placed in a secure area, and returned to the student and/or the student's parent/guardian in a consistent and orderly way.

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

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

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

### **Section 7 Harassment and Bullying Policy:**

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

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

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

### **Section 8 Acceptable Use Policy for Electronic Resources**

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

#### **District Accounts**

Gering Public Schools accounts and services are to be used for educational purposes only. No GPS accounts or services are to be used for commercial purposes, political reasons, advertising purposes, or lobbying. Students may not use their GPS email account to sign up for any other accounts or services.

Students may not use their District accounts to enter into any contracts on behalf of GPS. Students may not post, enter, or store any personal information about themselves or others. All accounts and network storage are the property of Gering Public Schools. GPS reserves the right to inspect and govern any District account and all included information to ensure proper use. GPS will strive to provide the best security possible for all student accounts and information.

### **Passwords and Safety**

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

### **Student Conduct**

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

### **System Integrity**

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

1. Gering Public Schools provides internet content filtering in an attempt to prevent access to websites that contain obscene, pornographic, violent, or otherwise harmful materials. Due to the limitations of content filtering, it is impossible to block all inappropriate sites.
2. Gering Public Schools will periodically revise the Acceptable Use Policy and will make determinations on whether specific uses of the network are consistent with the intent of policy.
3. Gering Public Schools makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the Internet service. GPS will not be responsible for damages you suffer. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by negligence, errors, or omissions.
4. Gering Public Schools will not be responsible for any financial charges incurred by an account user or someone else using the account. Use of any information obtained via Internet is at your own risk. GPS specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its
5. Failure to follow this Acceptable Use Policy may result in suspension of account privileges. Students who violate the Acceptable Use Policy will also be subject to the school's discipline policy.

### **Section 9 Reporting Student Law Violations:**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Section 1 Extracurricular Activity Philosophy**

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

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

### **Section 2 Safety**

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

### **Section 3 Warning for Participants and Parents**

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

### **Section 4 Extracurricular Activity Code of Conduct**

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

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

Scope of the Code of Conduct.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. Willfully disobeying any reasonable written or oral request of a school staff member, or the voicing of disrespect to those in authority.
2. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, harassment or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school or extracurricular activity purposes or making any communication that a reasonable person would interpret as a serious expression of an intent to harm or cause injury to another.
3. Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property, repeated damage or theft involving property or setting or attempting to set a fire of any magnitude.
4. Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to any person, including a school employee, school volunteer, or student. Personal injury caused by accident, self-defense, or other action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect another person shall not constitute a violation.

5. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of, or with the intent of, obtaining money or anything of value from a student or making a threat which causes or may be expected to cause a disruption to school operations.
6. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon or that has the appearance of a weapon, or bringing or possessing any explosive device, including fireworks, on school grounds or at a school function or event, or in a manner that is unlawful or contrary to school activity rules.
7. Selling, using, possessing or dispensing alcohol, tobacco/vapor products, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance, or an inhalant; being under the influence of any of the above; possession of drug paraphernalia, or the selling, using, possessing, or dispensing of an imitation controlled substance as defined in section 28-401 of the Nebraska statutes, or material represented to be alcohol, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance or inhalant. Use of a controlled substance in the manner prescribed for the student by the student's physician is not a violation. (Note: Refer to "Drug and Alcohol Violations" for further information).
8. Public indecency.
9. Sexual assault or attempting to sexually assault any person. Engaging in sexual conduct, even if consensual, on school grounds or at a school function or event.
10. Engaging in bullying, which includes any ongoing pattern of physical, verbal, or electronic abuse on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by a school being used for a school purpose by a school employee or a school employee's designee, or at school-sponsored activities or school-sponsored athletic events;
11. Engaging in any activity forbidden by law which constitutes a danger to other students, interferes with school purposes or an extracurricular activity, or reflects a lack of high ideals.
12. Repeated violation of any of the school rules.
13. Truancy or failure to attend assigned classes or assigned activities; or tardiness to school, assigned classes or assigned activities.
14. The use of language, written or oral, or conduct, including gestures, which is profane or abusive to a school employee, school volunteer, or student. Profane or abusive language or conduct includes, but is not limited to, that which is commonly understood and intended to be derogatory toward a group or individual based upon race, gender, national origin, or religion.
15. Dressing or grooming in a manner which is dangerous to the student's health and safety or a danger to the health and safety of others or repeated violations of dress and grooming standards; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that is lewd or indecent, vulgar or plainly offensive; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that school officials reasonably conclude will materially and substantially disrupt the work and discipline of the school or of an extracurricular activity; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that a reasonable observer would interpret as advocating illegal drug use.
16. Willfully violating the behavioral expectations for those students riding Gering Public School buses or vehicles used for activity purposes.
17. Failure to attend scheduled practices and meetings. If circumstances arise to prevent the participant's attendance, the validity of the reason will be determined by the coach or sponsor. Every reasonable effort should be made to notify the coach or sponsor prior to any missed practice or meeting.
18. All other reasonable rules or regulations adopted by the coach or sponsor of an extracurricular activity shall be followed, provided that participants shall be advised by the coach or sponsor of such rules and regulations by written handouts or posting on bulletin boards prior to the violation of the rule or regulation.
19. Failure to comply with any rule established by the Nebraska School Activities Association, including, but not limited to, the rules relating to eligibility.
20. Any activity that is deemed by the Gering High School administration to not demonstrate high ideals.

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

### **Consequences**

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

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

## **Section 5 Gering Public School Random Drug Testing Program**

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

The following shall result from a positive test result:

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

District-administered drug test, and (c) agrees to submit to monthly District-administered drug test during the next twelve-month period.

- o For a third offense, the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for one calendar year. The student may not return to participate in extracurricular activities until the student shows proof that the student: (a) is participating in substance abuse counseling with a qualified professional and is following the recommendations of the counselor and (b) tests negative in a District-administered drug test, and (c) agrees to submit to monthly District-administered drug test during the next twelve-month period.
- o For a fourth offense, the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for the remainder of the student's secondary school career.

## **Section 6 Drug and Alcohol Offenses and/or Violations**

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

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

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

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

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

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

The self-report must be made :

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

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

All students are expected to be honest and forthright with school officials. In the event the coach or activity sponsor or any school administrator asks a student participant for information pertaining to compliance (or lack of compliance) by the student or other student participants with the Code of Conduct or eligibility conditions for participation in activities, the student is expected to fully, completely, and honestly provide the information. Students may be disciplined for a failure to be honest and forthright.

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

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

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

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

**When Suspensions Begin:** All suspensions begin with the next scheduled activity in which the student is a participant, after the determination by school officials of the sanction to be imposed; provided that the school officials shall have the discretion to establish a time period for the suspension that makes the suspension have a real consequence for the student. During a suspension, participants may be required or permitted to practice at

the sole discretion of the coach or activity sponsor. Suspensions will be carried over to the next season when the suspension has not been fully served or when determined appropriate for the suspension to have a real consequence for the student.

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

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

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

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

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

1. Investigation. The school official(s) considering the suspension will conduct a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances and determine whether the suspension will help the student or other students, further school purposes, or prevent an interference with a school purpose.
2. Meeting. Prior to commencement of the suspension, the school official(s) considering the suspension or their designee will provide the student an opportunity to give the student's side of the story. The meeting for this purpose may be held in person or via a telephone conference.
3. The student will be given oral or written notice of what the student is accused of having done, an explanation of the evidence the school has, and the opportunity to explain the student's version. Detail is not required where the activity participant has made a self-report or otherwise admits the conduct. Names of informants may be kept confidential when determined to be appropriate.
4. The suspension may be imposed prior to the meeting if the meeting cannot reasonably be held before the suspension is to begin. In that case the meeting will occur as soon as reasonably practicable. The student is responsible for cooperating in the scheduling of the meeting.
  1. Notice Letter. Within two school days (two business days if school is not in session), or such additional time as is reasonably necessary following the suspension, the Athletic Director or the Athletic Director's designee will send a written statement to the student and the student's parents or guardian. The statement will describe the student's conduct violation and the discipline imposed. The student and parents or guardian will be informed of the opportunity to request a hearing.
  2. Informal Hearing Before Superintendent. The student or student's parent/guardian may request an informal hearing before the Superintendent. The Superintendent may designate the Athletic Director or another administrator not responsible for the suspension decision as the Superintendent's designee to conduct the hearing and make a decision. A form to request such a hearing must be signed by the parent or guardian. A form will be provided with the notice letter or otherwise be made available by request from the Principal's office.

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

If a hearing is requested:

- a. The hearing will be held within ten calendar days of receipt of the request; subject to extension for good cause as determined by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.
- a. The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee will notify the participants of the time and place of the hearing a reasonable time in advance to allow preparation for the hearing.

- b. Upon conclusion of the hearing, a written decision will be rendered within five school days (ten calendar days if school is not in session). The written decision will be mailed or otherwise delivered to the participant, parents or guardian.
- c. A record of the hearing (copies of documents provided at the hearing and a tape recording or other recordation of the informal hearing) will be kept by the school if requested sufficiently in advance of the hearing by the parent/guardian.

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

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

## **Section 8 Eligibility**

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

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

Extracurricular academic requirements do not apply to the following:

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

## **Section 9 Attendance**

Student participants are expected to meet the following attendance expectations:

1. Attend school regularly. Students who have "excessive absences" as determined under the school's attendance policy are ineligible to participate in extracurricular activity contests or performances. Students who have excessive absences in the semester of participation may be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activity contests or performances.
2. Be on time for all scheduled practices, contests and departure for contests. In the event a participant is unable to attend a practice or contests the participant should contact the coach or sponsor in advance.
3. On the day of a contest, performance or other activity, be in attendance for the full day. A student who is not in attendance the full day is ineligible for practice, the contest, performance, or activity. When events occur during the regular school day only eligible participants will be dismissed or students with prior administrative approval will be excused for the event.

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

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

## **Section 10 Relationships between Parents and Coaches/Sponsors**

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

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

Parents' Role in Interscholastic Athletics and Other Extracurricular Activities  
Communicating with your children

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

### **Communicating with the coach**

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

- Philosophy of the coach
- Expectations the coach has for your child
- Locations and times of all practices and contests
- Team requirements
- Procedure should your child be injured
- Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation
- Communication coaches expect from parents
- Concerns expressed directly to the coach
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
- Specific concerns in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations
- Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:
  - o The treatment of your child, mentally, and physically
  - o Ways to help your child improve
  - o Concerns about your child's behavior
  - o Injuries or health concerns. Report injuries to the coach immediately!!
  - o Tell the coach about any health concerns that may make it necessary to limit your child's participation or require assistance of trainers. Students are sometimes unwilling to tell coaches when they are injured, so please make sure the coach is told.
- Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:
  - o Playing time
  - o Team strategy
  - o Play calling
  - o Other student-athletes (except for reporting activity code violations)
- Appropriate procedures for discussing concerns with the coaches:
  - o Do not confront a coach before or after a contest or practice (these can be emotional times for all parties involved and do not promote resolution)
  - o Call to set up an appointment with the coach

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

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

### **Section 11 “Team Selection” and “Playing Time”**

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

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

### **Section 12 School Dances**

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

1. **Attendees:** Only students of Gering Public Schools and their guests may attend.
2. Students currently attending Gering High School or another Nebraska high school who have not been restricted from attending extracurricular activities at Gering High School or their own school are generally considered appropriate dates or invited guests.
3. No students below the 9th grade or individuals 21 years of age or older are allowed to attend GHS dances.
4. Some school dances may be restricted to students attending specified grades levels at Gering Public Schools
5. The school reserves the right to exclude persons who may or do cause a disruption or detract from the event. Dates or invited guests not attending our school are expected to follow the same rules of conduct which apply to our students.
6. Rules for dances may restrict students and their guests from leaving dance until the dance ends without written parental permission on a form provided.
7. Students or their guests who engage in inappropriate behavior, whether on or off of the dance floor, may be asked to leave.
8. **Prohibited Substances:** Alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and tobacco/vapor products are prohibited. Anyone using prohibited substances or showing the effects of use will not be allowed admission or, if discovered after admission, be removed from the dance. Their parents may be contacted.
9. Students and their dates may be required to submit to a breathalyzer prior to gaining entrance. Those who choose not to submit to a breathalyzer will not gain entrance. Law enforcement will be contacted if there is reasonable suspicion that the student or a student's date is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
10. **Appropriate Attire:** Students and their guests must meet the dress code requirements established for each dance. Teachers or administrators will make the final decision as to whether or not a student's attire is appropriate. Students will be asked to change unacceptable items, which may mean that the student may have to return home to change the inappropriate clothing. It is advisable to check in advance of the dance with the Principal or staff sponsor for the event if you are uncertain about your attire.

**Eligibility for Selection as Royalty:** Nomination and selection as royalty for school sponsored dances is an honor awarded by students to those of their peers that exemplify the highest standards of integrity and achievement. Students nominated for dance royalty must have demonstrated through their conduct, academic

achievement and activities that they have represented, and will represent, themselves, their classmates, and their school in a manner which reflects outstanding effort, commitment to their school and fellow students, and integrity and good citizenship in the school and in the community. The students selected to be the "royalty" for the Homecoming and Prom or any other school sponsored dance or activity shall meet that general standard as determined by the administration and, in addition, meet the following specific academic, activity and conduct standards: Achievement, Citizenship and Conduct Qualifications:

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

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

**Pre-Qualification of and Acceptance by Student:** All students nominated for dance royalty shall meet with the Principal. At the meeting the Principal will review the eligibility requirements for the honor of dance royalty. The student will be required to confirm that the student meets all eligibility requirements. The student will be required to confirm his or her acceptance of the nomination for dance royalty and the responsibilities of such an all school honor. The Principal or designee may contact local, county and/or state law enforcement and judicial authorities to confirm a student's eligibility for the honor of being nominated for or awarded dance royalty.

**Specific Dance Royalty Eligibility and Selection Requirements:**

**Homecoming Queen & King:**

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

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

### **Winter Royalty**

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

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

### **Prom Royalty**

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

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

## **Section 13 Student Fees Policy**

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

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

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

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

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

- Guidelines for non-specialized attire required for specified courses and activities. Students have the responsibility to furnish and wear non-specialized attire meeting general District grooming and attire guidelines, as well as grooming and attire guidelines established for the building or programs attended by the students or in which the students participate. Students also have the responsibility to furnish and wear

non-specialized attire reasonably related to the programs, courses and activities in which the students participate where the required attire is specified in writing by the administrator or teacher responsible for the program, course or activity.

- The District will provide or make available to students such safety equipment and attire as may be required by law, specifically including appropriate industrial-quality eye protective devices for courses of instruction in vocational, technical, industrial arts, chemical or chemical-physical classes which involve exposure to hot molten metals or other molten materials, milling, sawing, turning, shaping, cutting, grinding, or stamping of any solid materials, heat treatment, tempering, or kiln firing of any metal or other materials, gas or electric arc welding or other forms of welding processes, repair or servicing of any vehicle, or caustic or explosive materials, or for laboratory classes involving caustic or explosive materials, hot liquids or solids, injurious radiations, or other similar hazards. Building administrators are directed to assure that such equipment is available in the appropriate classes and areas of the school buildings, teachers are directed to instruct students in the usage of such devices and to assure that students use the devices as required, and students have the responsibility to follow such instructions and use the devices as instructed.
- Personal or consumable items & miscellaneous
  - Extracurricular Activities. Students have the responsibility to furnish any personal or consumable items for participation in extracurricular activities.
  - Courses
    - General Course Materials. Items necessary for students to benefit from courses will be made available by the District for the use of students during the school day. Students may be encouraged, but not required, to bring items needed to benefit from courses including, but not limited to the following: pencils, paper, pens, erasers, notebooks, protractors and math calculators. A specific class supply list will be published annually in a Board-approved student handbook or supplement or other notice. The list may include refundable damage or loss deposits required for usage of certain District property.
    - Damaged or Lost Items. Students are responsible for the careful and appropriate use of school property. Students and their parents or guardian will be held responsible for damages to school property where such damage is caused or aided by the student and will also be held responsible for the reasonable replacement cost of school property which is placed in the care of and lost by the student.
    - Materials Required for Course Projects. Students are permitted to and may be encouraged to supply materials for course projects. Some course projects (such as projects in art and shop classes) may be kept by the student upon completion. In the event the completed project has more than minimal value, the student may be required, as a condition of the student keeping the completed project, to reimburse the District for the reasonable value of the materials used in the project. Standard project materials will be made available by the District. If a student wants to create a project other than the standard course project, or to use materials other than standard project materials, the student will be responsible for furnishing or paying the reasonable cost of any such materials for the project.
    - Music Course Materials. Students will be required to furnish musical instruments for participation in optional music courses. Use of a musical instrument without charge is available under the
      - District's fee waiver policy. The District is not required to provide for the use of a particular type of musical instrument for any student.
  - Parking. Students may be required to pay for parking on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities, and may be subject to payment of fines or damages for damages caused with or to vehicles or for failure to comply with school parking rules.
    - Extracurricular Activities–Specialized equipment or attire. Extracurricular activities means student activities or organizations which are supervised or administered by the District, which do not count toward graduation or advancement between grades, and in which participation is not otherwise required by the District. The District will generally furnish students with specialized equipment and attire for participation in extracurricular activities. The District is not required to provide for the use of any particular type of equipment or attire. Equipment or attire fitted for the student and which the student generally wears exclusively, such as dance squad, cheerleading, and music/dance activity (e.g. choir or show choir) uniforms and outfits, along with T-shirts for teams or band members, will be required to be provided by the participating student. The cost of maintaining any equipment or attire, including uniforms, which the student purchases or uses exclusively, shall be the responsibility of the participating student. Equipment which is ordinarily exclusively used by an individual student participant throughout the year, such as golf clubs, softball gloves, and the like, are required to be provided by the student

participant. Items for the personal medical use or enhancement of the student (braces, mouth pieces, and the like) are the responsibility of the student participant. Students have the responsibility to furnish personal or consumable equipment or attire for participation in extracurricular activities or for paying a reasonable usage cost for such equipment or attire. For musical extracurricular activities, students may be required to provide specialized equipment, such as musical instruments, or specialized attire, or for paying a reasonable usage cost for such equipment or attire.

- o Extracurricular Activities–Fees for participation. Any fees for participation in extracurricular activities for the current school year are further specified in Appendix “1.” Admission fees are charged for extracurricular activities and events.
- Postsecondary education costs. Students are responsible for postsecondary education costs. The phrase “postsecondary education costs” means tuition and other fees only associated with obtaining credit from a postsecondary educational institution. For a course in which students receive high school credit and for which the student may also receive postsecondary education credit, the course shall be offered without charge for tuition, transportation, books, or other fees, except tuition and other fees associated with obtaining credits from a postsecondary educational institution.
- Transportation costs. Students are responsible for fees established for transportation services provided by the District as and to the extent permitted by federal and state laws and regulations.
- Copies of student files or records. The Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee shall establish a schedule of fees representing a reasonable cost of reproduction for copies of a student’s files or records for the parents or guardians of such student. A parent, guardian or student who requests copies of files or records shall be responsible for the cost of copies reproduced in accordance with such fee schedule. The imposition of a fee shall not be used to prevent parents of students from exercising their right to inspect and review the student’s files or records and no fee shall be charged to search for or retrieve any student’s files or records. The fee schedule shall permit one copy of the requested records be provided for or on behalf of the student without charge and shall allow duplicate copies to be provided without charge to the extent required by federal or state laws or regulations.
- Participation in before-and-after-school. Students are responsible for fees required for participation in before-and-after-school or pre-kindergarten services offered by the District, except to the extent such services are required to be provided without cost.
- Participation in summer school or night school. Students are responsible for fees required for participation in summer school or night school. Students are also responsible for correspondence courses.
- Breakfast and lunch programs. Students shall be responsible for items which students purchase from the District’s breakfast and lunch programs. The cost of items to be sold to students shall be consistent with applicable federal and state laws and regulations. Students are also responsible for the cost of food, beverages, and personal or consumable items which the students purchase from the District or at school, whether from a “school store,” a vending machine, a booster club or parent group sale, a book order club, or the like. Students may be required to bring money or food for field trip lunches and similar activities.
- Waiver Policy. The District’s policy is to provide fee waivers in accordance with the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act. Students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches under United States Department of Agriculture child nutrition programs shall be provided a fee waiver or be provided the necessary materials or equipment without charge for: (1) participation in extracurricular activities and (2) use of a musical instrument in optional music courses that are not extracurricular activities. Participation in a free-lunch program or reduced-price lunch program is not required to qualify for free or reduced-price lunches for purposes of this section. Students or their parents must request a fee waiver prior to participating in or attending the activity, and prior to purchase of the materials.
- Distribution of Policy. The Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee shall publish the District’s student fee policy in the Student Handbook or the equivalent (for example, publication may be made in an addendum or a supplement to the student handbook). The Student Handbook or the equivalent shall be provided to every student of the District or to every household in which at least one student resides, at no cost.
- Student Fee Fund. The School Board hereby establishes a Student Fee Fund. The Student Fee Fund shall be a separate school district fund not funded by tax revenue, into which all money collected from students and subject to the Student Fee Fund shall be deposited and from which money shall be expended for the

purposes for which it was collected from students. Funds subject to the Student Fee Fund consist of money collected from students for the following (1) participation in extracurricular activities, (2) postsecondary education costs, and (3) summer school or night school.

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

**STUDENT FEES  
~~2025-26~~ 2026-27**

**Gering High School**

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

**Gering ~~Junior-High~~ Middle School**

|                   | <b>Fund</b> | <b>Waiver Eligible</b> | <b>Maximum Cost</b> |
|-------------------|-------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Band T-Shirt      | Activity    | Yes                    | \$ 15.00            |
| Band Black Slacks | Activity    | Yes                    | \$ 25.00            |

|                     |          |     |           |
|---------------------|----------|-----|-----------|
| Honor Band Audition | Activity | No  | \$ 40.00  |
| Class Projects      | Activity | No  | \$ 100.00 |
| Club Dues           | Fee      | Yes | \$ 5.00   |
| Activity Tickets    | Activity | Yes | \$ 35.00  |

**Approved** 7/8/2024, 7/14/2025    **Reviewed** 12/05/2024,    **Revised** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Article 10 State and Federal Programs**

### **Section 1 Notice of Nondiscrimination**

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

### **Section 2 Designation of Coordinators**

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

| Law, Policy or Program                                                            | Issue or Concern                                                                     | Coordinator    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Title VI                                                                          | Discrimination or harassment based on race, color, or national origin; harassment    | Superintendent |
| Title IX Policy 504.24                                                            | Discrimination or harassment based on sex; gender equity                             | Superintendent |
| Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) | Discrimination, harassment or reasonable accommodations of persons with disabilities | Superintendent |
| Homeless student laws                                                             | Children who are homeless                                                            | Superintendent |
| Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities                                        | Safe and drug free schools                                                           | Superintendent |

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

### **Section 3 Anti-discrimination & Harassment Policy**

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

#### **Preventing Harassment and Discrimination of Students**

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

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

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

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

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

Sexual harassment may exist when:

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

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

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

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

#### **Complaint and Grievance Procedures:**

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

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

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

#### **TITLE IX Statement from the District:**

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

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

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

#### **Section 4 Multicultural Policy**

The philosophy of the District's multicultural education program is that students will have improved ability to function as productive members of society when provided with the following: (a) an understanding of diverse cultures and races, the manner in which the existence of diverse cultures and races have affected the history of our Nation and the world, and of the contributions made by diverse cultures and races (including but not be limited to African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans and European Americans) and (b) with the ability and skills to be sensitive toward and to study, work and live successively with persons of diverse cultures and races. The mission shall also include preparing students to eliminate stereotypes and discrimination or harassment of others based on ethnicity, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, age, or disability.

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

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

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

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

educational interest; which means records needed to effectively provide the function or service for which they are responsible.

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

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.

Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

### **Section 7 Notice Concerning Directory Information**

The District may disclose directory information. The types of personally identifiable information that the district has designated as directory information are as follows: student's name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, date of and place of birth, major fields of study, dates of attendance, grade level, enrollment status (e.g., full-time or part-time), participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, degrees, honors and awards received, and most recent previous school attended. A parent or eligible student has the right to refuse to let the District designate any or all of those types of information about the student as directory information. The period of time within which a parent or eligible student has to notify the District in writing that he or she does not want any or all of those types of information about the student designated as directory information is as follows: two weeks from the time this information is first received. The district may disclose information about former students without meeting the conditions in this section.

### **Additional Notice Concerning Directory Information**

The district's policy is for education records to be kept confidential except as permitted by the FERPA law, and the district does not approve any practice which involves an unauthorized disclosure of education records. In some courses, student work may be displayed or made available to others. Also, some teachers may have persons other than the teacher or school staff, such as volunteers or fellow students, assist with the task of grading student work and returning graded work to students. The District designates such student work as directory information and as non-education records. Each parent and eligible student shall be presumed to have accepted this designation in the absence

of the parent or eligible student giving notification to the District in writing in the manner set forth above pertaining to the designation of directory information. Consent will be presumed to have been given in the absence of such a notification from the parent or eligible student.

Notice Concerning Designation of Law Enforcement Unit:

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

### **Section 8 Notice Concerning Disclosure of Student Recruiting Information**

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

### **Section 9 Notice Concerning Staff Qualifications**

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

- ~~1. Whether the teacher has met State qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.~~
- ~~2. Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or provisional teaching certificate.~~
- ~~3. The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher. You may also get information about other graduate certification or degrees held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree. We will also, upon request, tell parents/guardians whether their child is being provided services by a paraprofessional and, if so, the qualifications of the paraprofessional. The request for information should be made to an administrator in your child's school building. The information will be provided to you in a timely manner. Finally, the District will give timely notice to you if your child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet the requirements of the Act.~~

## **Section 10 Student Privacy Protection Policy**

It is the policy of Gering Public Schools to develop and implement policies which protect the privacy of students in accordance with applicable laws. The District's policies in this regard include the following:

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

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

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

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

Rights of Parents to be Notified of and to Opt-Out of Certain Physical Examinations or Screenings. The general policy and practice of the District is to not administer physical examinations or screenings of students which require advance notice or parental opt-out rights under the applicable federal laws, for the reason that the physical examinations or screenings to be conducted by the District will usually fit into one of the following exceptions: (1) hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Section 11 Parental Involvement Policies**

### **A. General - Parental/Community Involvement in Schools:**

Gering Public Schools welcomes parental involvement in the education of their children. We recognize that parental involvement increases student success. It is the District's policy to foster and facilitate, to the extent appropriate and in their primary language, parental information about,

and involvement in the education of their children. Policies and regulations are established to protect the emotional, physical and social well-being of all students.

1. Parental involvement is a part of the ongoing and timely planning, review and improvement of district and building programs.
2. Parents are encouraged to support the implementation of district policies and regulations.
3. Parents are encouraged to monitor their student's progress by reviewing quarterly report cards and attending parent-teacher conferences.
4. Textbooks, tests and other curriculum materials used in the district are available for review by parents upon request.
5. Parents are provided access to records of students according to law and school policy.
6. Parents are encouraged to attend courses, assemblies, counseling sessions and other instructional activities with prior approval of the proper teacher or counselor and administrator. Parents' continued attendance at such activities will be based on the student's well-being.
7. Testing occurs in this school district as determined to be appropriate by district staff to assure proper measurement of educational progress and achievement.
8. Parents submitting written requests to have their student excused from testing, classroom instruction and other school experiences will be granted that request when possible and educationally appropriate. Requests should be submitted to the proper teacher or administrator within a reasonable time prior to the testing, classroom instruction or other school experience and should be accompanied by a written explanation for the request. A plan for an acceptable alternative shall be approved by the proper teacher and administrator prior to, or as a part of, the granting of any parent request.
9. Participation in surveys of students occurs in this district when determined appropriate by district staff for educational purposes. Parents will be notified prior to the administration of surveys in accordance with district policy. Timely written parental requests to remove students from such surveys will be granted in accordance with district policy and law. In some cases, parental permission must be given before the survey is administered.
10. Parents are invited to express their concerns, share their ideas and advocate for their children's education with board members, administrators and staff.
11. School district staff and parents will participate in an annual evaluation and revision, if needed, of the content and effectiveness of the parental involvement policy.

## **B. Title I Parental Involvement Policy:**

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

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

**Expectations for Parental Involvement:** It is the expectation of the District that parents of participating children will have opportunities available for parental involvement in the programs, activities, and procedures of the District's Title I program. The term "parental involvement" means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring—(A) that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning; (B) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school; (C) that parents are full partners in their child's

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

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

Shared Responsibilities for High Student Academic Achievement: As a component of the District's parental involvement policy, each school served under the Title I program will jointly develop with parents for all children served under the Title I program a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State's high standards. Such compact shall: (1) describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the children served under Title I to meet the State's student academic achievement standards and the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their children's learning, such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, and television watching; volunteering in their child's classroom; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children and positive use of extracurricular time; and (2) address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum: (i) parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools, at least annually, during which the compact shall be discussed as the compact relates to the individual child's achievement; (ii) frequent reports to parents on their children's progress; and (iii) reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observation of classroom activities.

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

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

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

Section 12 Homeless Students Policy

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

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

Homeless Coordinator: The Homeless Coordinator shall serve as the school liaison for homeless children and youth and shall ensure that: (1) homeless children are identified by school personnel; (2) homeless children enroll in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, school; (3) homeless children and their families receive educational service for why they are eligible and referrals to health, dental, and mental health services and other appropriate services; (4) the parents or guardians of homeless children are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children; (5) public notice of the educational rights of homeless children is disseminated where such children receive services under the federal homeless children laws, such as schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens; (6) enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with law; and (7) the parents or guardians of homeless children, and any unaccompanied youth, are fully informed of transportation services available under law. The Homeless Coordinator shall coordinate with State coordinators and community and school personnel responsible for the provisions of education and related services to homeless children. The Homeless Coordinator may designate duties hereunder as the Homeless Coordinator determines to be appropriate.

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

Transportation will be provided to homeless students, to the extent required by law and comparable to that provided to students who are not homeless, upon request of the parent or guardian of the homeless child, or by the Homeless Coordinator in the case of an unaccompanied youth, as follows:

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

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

### Section 13 Breakfast and Lunch Programs

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

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Eligibility criteria for free and reduced meals
- Parent letter and application
- Public release
- Collection procedure

#### **GUIDELINES REGARDING THE COLLECTION OF DELINQUENT MEAL CHARGES**

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

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

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

Account Balance Information:

Gering Public Schools expects parents to be responsible for monitoring their student's Café account and maintaining a positive balance. Free and reduced-price meal assistance is available to all patrons at any time throughout the school year. Applications may be obtained from any of our school offices.

The building Principal's office will notify parents of negative account balances. In the event a student's account reaches a negative balance, no extra meals or ala carte items can be charged.

In the event a student's Café account reaches a negative balance of \$10, the following will apply. An alternate lunch will be served, consisting of a peanut butter or cheese sandwich and milk. The student will continue to receive an alternate meal until all charges are paid and the account has a positive balance.

Free and Reduced eligible students are entitled to one reimbursable meal. Extra meals and ala carte items will need to be purchased.

#### **Section 14**

#### **POLICY 503.9 GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS GERING, NE HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

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

1. Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack

of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals.

2. Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
3. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
4. Migratory children (as defined in section 1309 of the ESSA of 1965, as amended), who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described in this definition.

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

#### Assurances

1. The district adopts these policies and practices to ensure that homeless children and youths are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless.
2. The district will designate an appropriate staff person as the Local Educational Liaison (LEL) for homeless children and youths, to carry out the duties in compliance with state and federal law.
3. The district adopts these policies and practices to ensure that transportation is provided, at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison), to and from the school of origin. The "school of origin" means the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled. This will be done in accordance with the following, as applicable:
  1. If the homeless child or youth continues to live in the district in which the school of origin is located, the child's or youth's transportation to and from the school of origin shall be provided or arranged by that district.
  2. If the homeless child's or youth's living arrangements in the district served by the school of origin terminate and the child or youth, though continuing his or her education in the school of origin, begins living in an area served by another district, the school of origin and the local district in which the homeless child or youth is living shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs for providing the child with transportation to and from the school of origin. If the two districts are unable to agree upon such method, the responsibility and costs for transportation shall be shared equally.

#### Comparable Services

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

#### Local Educational Liaison

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

1. In general, the LEL shall coordinate:
  1. the provision of services with local social services agencies, the NDE Homeless Education Liaison, community and school personnel, and other agencies or programs providing education, social and related services to homeless children and youths and their families; and
  2. with other local educational agencies on inter-district issues, such as transportation or transfer of school records.
2. Coordination purpose - The coordination shall be designed to:
  1. ensure that homeless children and youths have access and reasonable proximity, to available education and related support services; and

2. raise the awareness of school personnel and service providers of the effects of short-term stays in a shelter and other challenges associated with homelessness.
3. The LEL shall receive appropriate time and training to carry out the duties required by law and this policy, and ensure that:
  1. homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
  2. homeless children and youths enroll in schools of the district, which includes attending classes and participating fully in school activities, and have a full and equal opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic standards as other children and youths;
  3. homeless families, children, and youths receive educational services for which such families, children, and youths are eligible, and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services, and other appropriate services;
  4. the parents or guardians of homeless children and youths are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;
  5. receive individualized counseling from counselors to prepare and improve their readiness for college, including college selection, application, financial aid, and on-campus supports;
  6. unaccompanied youths are informed of their status as independent students under the Higher Education Act of 1965 and may obtain assistance from the LEL to receive verification of such status for purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid;
  7. public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is communicated where such children and youths receive services under the federal laws for homeless children, such as schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens;
  8. enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance state and federal law; and
  9. the parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin and is assisted in accessing transportation to the school that is selected for the youth.

#### Enrollment and Placement

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

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

#### School Stability

1. In determining the best interest of the child or youth the district shall presume that keeping a homeless child or youth in the school of origin is in the child's or youth's best interest unless doing so is contrary to the request of the child's or youth's parent or guardian, or (in the case of an unaccompanied youth) the youth.

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

#### Enrollment Disputes

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

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

#### Records

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

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

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

#### Immunization Requirements

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

#### Review and Revision

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

## TITLE 92 CHAPTER 27

### Preamble:

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

### Principle I

#### Commitment as a Professional Educator

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

### Principle II

#### Commitment to the Student

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

### Principle III

#### Commitment to the Public

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

### Principle IV

#### Commitment to the Profession

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

# **LINKS Handbook**

**2026-2027**



## LINK'S Mission Statement

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

## Eligibility Criteria

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Option Students from other districts (of high school age)

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Transition Students

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

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

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

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

## **Expulsion/Long Term Suspended**

### **Expelled Students**

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

### **Long-Term Suspended Students**

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

## **Program Components**

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

## **Program Costs**

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

## **Connections to Graduation**

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

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

## Program Expectations

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

## Graduation Requirements (Title 92; 003.05)

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

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

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

## Graduation from LINKS

Graduates of LINKS will receive a **district diploma** certified through Gering Public Schools. Students who enter the LINKS program must meet all LINKS graduation requirements to graduate from LINKS with a district diploma. Students may graduate as early as the middle of their junior year, as long as they have met all of their graduation requirements. Students must meet attendance requirements set forth by the LINKS program. LINKS students who are on track to graduate in their junior year must take the ACT at Gering High School to be eligible for graduation.

## State Testing

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

## Hours of Attendance

- Morning Session 8:30 am - 11:30 am
- Afternoon Session 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm
- Only arrive 10 minutes prior to the first bell
- Picked up 10 minutes after the conclusion of their session

## Parking

- Students who drive must park in assigned parking areas.
- Parking will only be in designated areas. Inappropriate behaviors or driving will result in students not being allowed to park on school property.

## LINKS Attendance Policy

- Attendance will be taken daily upon students' arrival at the LINKS building.
- Students are expected to be punctual when reporting back from breaks; tardies will be reported for students who do not return on time.
- A tardy is anytime after 8:30 am for the morning session and anytime after 12:00 pm for the afternoon session.
- ~~Any tardy over 15 minutes will be considered an absence.~~
- ~~Five tardies equals one absence.~~
- ~~Each student is allowed 10 absences per semester.~~

- ~~● Students unable to stay awake or keep their heads up may be sent home and counted as an absence. Parent/guardian will then be notified.~~
- If students miss a class, need to arrive late, or depart early, s/he must inform a LINKS staff member in advance.

## LINKS Non-Attendance Procedure

### LINKS Attendance Process Link

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

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

## Dances and School Activities

- LINKS students who would like to participate in a school event or attend a school dance will apply for approval to participate in the event. The principal of the building will review the application and approve it.
- Students can apply for and try out for after-school activities and athletics at the high school.

## Individual Graduation Plan

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

Components of the IGP will include:

- Profile of current transcript and requirements to graduate
- List of students' career, educational, and personal goals beyond high school
- List of learning goals that must be accomplished in order to earn a diploma

- Description of learning activities, which may include online learning courses and college credit opportunities
- Description of assessments
- Signatures of LINKS representative, student, and student's parent or legal guardian (if available)
- Anticipated date of graduation

## **LINKS Program Model**

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

1. Using the online learning course system or other district-approved online/paper-pencil curricular opportunities for core high school credit (Ex, Algebra, Speech, Science, etc.)
2. Career Development or Link Experience component(s) to fulfill elective requirements (one or both is highly suggested).
3. Taking advantage of elective or core credit offerings offered by the LINKS program, offerings could include and are not limited to video discussion sessions, college prep programming, health and wellness course offerings, and other elective or core course opportunities.
4. Core and elective courses can also be taken through credit and community education courses offered by Western Nebraska Community College. Students who want to fast-track their educational goals and work on college credit while earning their diploma should consider this option.

## **Online Learning Curriculum**

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

## **College Courses**

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

be set up in any combination of college and high school attendance hours that total either a 2-hour or 4-hour school day.

## **Work Experience**

LINKS students must be employed or volunteer a minimum of 15 hours per week. Pay stubs must be handed in every pay period. New students will have four weeks from their entrance date to be employed or have a volunteer position. Any student who does not maintain employment or volunteer hours will be reassigned. One week will be allowed to change employment

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

## **Grading Policy**

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

## **Special Education Services**

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

## **Tiered System**

- **Level 1:** Cell phones will be turned in at the door for the entire session, use of headphones/earbuds will be prohibited, bathroom and drinks only during first/last 5 minutes, in classroom with desktops, in assigned seating and must remain in their assigned seats, no outside food or drink allowed, can move to level 2 by earning 40 or more percent for two consecutive weeks.
- **Level 2:** Must achieve five percent progress to earn cell phone use, bathroom at teacher discretion (e-hall pass), in classroom with chromebooks, assigned seating (may have

flexible seating at teacher discretion), outside drinks allowed, can move to level 3 by earning 40 or more percent for two consecutive weeks, not achieving weekly percentages for two consecutive weeks will result in a loss of a level.

- **Level 3:** Students have full access to their electronic devices, bathroom at teacher discretion (e-hall pass), in classroom with chrome books, allowed to choose where they sit, allowed to leave thirty minutes early, maintain level 3 by earning 40 or more percent each week, not achieving weekly percentages for two consecutive weeks will result in a loss of a level.

## **LINKS Staff**

Mario Chavez - Administrator

Karee Klassen - Teacher

Kaylee Pierce - Teacher

Madison Keller - Special Education Teacher

## **Contact Information**

Phone - 308-436-3121

Email - [links@geringschools.net](mailto:links@geringschools.net)

1500 U Street, Gering



**~~2025-26~~ 2026-27**

# **Substitute Teacher Handbook**



# GERING

---

## BULLDOGS

---

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

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

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

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

*Committed to you,*

~~Dr. Nicole Regan, Superintendent~~ Kory Knight, Interim Superintendent

308-436-3125

## **Scheduling Substitute Assignments**

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

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

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

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

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

## **Reporting For Duty**

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

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

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

## Dress Code

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

## Identification Badges

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

## Pay Rate

As per Board Policy# 411.01, the daily rate of pay for substitute teachers is set by the Board of Education. Effective August 1, ~~2025~~ 2026, the rates of pay are as follows:

| Days of Service / School Year | LOCAL Substitute Permits & Certified Nurses | CERTIFIED Substitutes      | Substitute Secretaries & Paraprofessionals |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1-30                          | <del>\$150</del> 160 / day                  | <del>\$150</del> 160 / day | <del>\$15.00</del> 15.26 / hour            |
| 31-60                         | <del>\$150</del> 160 / day                  | <del>\$160</del> 170 / day |                                            |
| 61+                           | <del>\$150</del> 160 / day                  | <del>\$175</del> 180 / day |                                            |

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

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

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

## **Payroll Procedures for Substitutes**

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

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

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

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

## **Early Release Pay**

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



# School Building Information

|                                                 |                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Geil Elementary</b><br><b>436-2545</b>       | <b>8:05 a.m. to 3:20 p.m.</b><br>Early release on Wednesday at 2:15 p.m. |
| <b>Lincoln Elementary</b><br><b>436-2350</b>    | <b>8:05 a.m. to 3:20 p.m.</b><br>Early release on Wednesday at 2:15 p.m. |
| <b>Northfield Elementary</b><br><b>436-2545</b> | <b>8:05 a.m. to 3:20 p.m.</b><br>Early release on Wednesday at 2:15 p.m. |
| <b>Middle School</b><br><b>436-3123</b>         | <b>8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.</b><br>Early release on Wednesday at 2:15 p.m. |
| <b>High School</b><br><b>436-3121</b>           | <b>8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.</b><br>Early release on Wednesday at 2:15 p.m. |
| <b>Central Office</b><br><b>436-3125</b>        | <b>7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Monday - Friday)</b>                          |

## **Substitute Teaching Eligibility**

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

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

## **Newly Retired Teachers**

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

*“A retiree who is asked to sub a day here and day there should not have a problem, but if that substitute work is for an employee who will be absent over a long period of time, a retiree could jeopardize his/her retirement benefits. An example would be if a retiree worked as a substitute for someone on medical leave or military call-up.”*

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

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

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

See link below regarding FAQ's for LB147

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

### **Professional Responsibilities and Relationships**

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

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

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

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

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

**When you leave the classroom at the end of the day, please see that it is in an orderly**

fashion, the windows are closed and locked, and the room is locked. You should make a brief written summary of each class session including any problems encountered, areas of study not adequately covered, assignments made – a general evaluation of what happened during that period.

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

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

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

## Substitute Teacher Tips

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

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

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

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

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

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

\*Offer a game or activity at the end of the class to motivate students to behave.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

activity early and have a few extra minutes to fill.

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

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

## **Drug-Free Schools and Workplaces**

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

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

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

## **Smoke-Free Environment**

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

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

## **NO Weapons Allowed at Gering Public Schools**

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

## **Legal Aspects of Substituting**

**Supervision of Students:** The substitute has a duty to keep children safe and orderly by a standard of reasonable professional judgment.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

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

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

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

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

## **Symptoms of HBV:**

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

### **Transmission**

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

### **Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV):**

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

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

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

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

### **Modes of Transmission**

**HBV and HIV can be transmitted through**

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

## **Universal Precautions**

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

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

## **Universal Precaution in School**

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

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



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

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

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

Begin by attending to the injured person:



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

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

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

Clean and disinfect environmental surfaces:

- ✓ Whenever cleaning and disinfecting environmental surfaces in which blood

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

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

Wash your hands:



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

### **Protect Yourself from Contracting an Infectious Disease**

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



**PARENT HANDBOOK**

~~2025-2026~~ **2026-2027**

|                                                                    |               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Section 1: General District Information.....</b>                | <b>3</b>      |
| Gering Public Schools Mission Statement.....                       | 3             |
| Early Childhood Mission.....                                       | 3             |
| Community Collaboration.....                                       | 3             |
| District Policy References.....                                    | 4             |
| Early Childhood Program Staff.....                                 | 5             |
| <del>2025-2026</del> <del>2026-2027</del> School Calendar.....     | 6             |
| <b>Section 2: Admission Information.....</b>                       | <b>7</b>      |
| Admission Requirements.....                                        | 7             |
| Transition to Preschool.....                                       | 7             |
| Toilet Training.....                                               | 7             |
| <b>Section 3: School Day Information.....</b>                      | <b>8</b>      |
| Schedule.....                                                      | 8             |
| Home Visits.....                                                   | 8             |
| What We Do In Preschool.....                                       | 8             |
| Teaching Strategies GOLD.....                                      | 9             |
| School Supplies.....                                               | 10            |
| Snacks/Lunch.....                                                  | 10            |
| Field Trips.....                                                   | 10            |
| Class Parties/Special Events.....                                  | 10            |
| Visitors.....                                                      | 11            |
| Family Participation.....                                          | 11            |
| Arrival and Dismissal.....                                         | 11            |
| <b>Section 4: Tuition Information.....</b>                         | <b>13</b>     |
| Payment Schedule.....                                              | 13            |
| Sliding Fee Scale.....                                             | 13            |
| Voluntary Termination of Services.....                             | 13            |
| <del>DHHS Child Care Subsidy.....</del>                            | <del>13</del> |
| Head Start Scholarship.....                                        | 14            |
| <b>Section 5: Student Success.....</b>                             | <b>15</b>     |
| YMCA After School Program.....                                     | 15            |
| Personal Property at School.....                                   | 15            |
| Active Supervision Policy.....                                     | 15            |
| <del>Parent-Student Permission Information Record Sheet.....</del> | <del>18</del> |

## **Section 1: General District Information**

### **Gering Public Schools Mission Statement**

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

### **Early Childhood Mission**

At Gering Preschool, our mission is to nurture a love of learning in a safe, joyful, and inclusive environment. We are dedicated to supporting each child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development through play-based learning and meaningful relationships. Together with families, we strive to inspire curiosity, creativity, and confidence in every child as they grow and explore the world around them.

### **Community Collaboration**

Gering Preschool is a collaboration between Gering Public Schools, Educational Service Unit #13 Head Start, and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.

Gering Preschool is governed by the Gering Board of Education, ESU 13 Board of Directors, ESU 13 Head Start Policy Council, and NDE Rule 11. Gering Preschool follows all federal, state, and local regulations and the Head Start performance standards.

~~Gering Preschool is licensed by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. Our license numbers are as follows:~~

~~Geil- CCC10106 | Lincoln- CCC10102 | Northfield- CCC10100~~

~~A copy of DHHS licensing requirements are available upon written request.~~

## District Policy References

The following policies directly align with the Gering Preschool program. We encourage you to reference them on our district website at

<https://www.geringschools.net/page/policies>.

- Section 504: Students' Rights and Responsibilities
- Section 508: Student Health and Well-Being Service Handbook
  - ☰ Health Service Handbook
- Section 604: Instructional Curriculum (Special Education Services)
- Section 612: Specialized Student Services
- Section 1005: Public Participation in the School District

## Early Childhood Program Staff

~~Kory Knight~~ Crystal Palser

Matteal Chapin

Stepheni Pitts-Welchlin

Kelsey Southard

Nikita Anderson

Kendra Cardwell

Kelsey Sylvester

~~Deanna Ysac~~ Aleshiea Schmer

Chris Guadarrama

Kelsey Engel

Marley Tarr

Emily Rose

~~Bethany Stoney~~ Brittanie Shaw

Caleigh Walker

Brenda Stone

Jennifer Splichal

Toni Becker

Sarah Schaaf

Sheridan Wildhelm

Michael Moravec

Interim Preschool Program Supervisor

Geil Preschool Teacher

Geil Preschool Teacher

Geil Preschool Teacher

Lincoln ECSE Teacher

Lincoln Preschool Teacher

Lincoln Preschool Teacher

Lincoln Preschool Teacher

Lincoln Preschool Teacher

Northfield Preschool Teacher

Northfield Preschool Teacher

Northfield Preschool Teacher/ECSE

Northfield Preschool Teacher

Northfield Preschool Teacher

School Psychologist

Speech Pathologist

Speech Language Pathologist Assistant

Birth-3 Speech Language Pathologist

Occupational Therapist

Physical Therapist

~~Nicole Regan~~ Kory Knight

Julie Siebke

Angela Morris

Jesse Neugebauer

Wendee Powell

Interim Superintendent of Schools

Director of Student Services

Geil Elementary Principal

Lincoln Elementary Principal

Northfield Elementary Principal

## Members of the Board of Education

Greg Trautman

Board President

Tracy Wiese

Vice President

Matt Kautz

Member

Josh Lacy

Member

John Maser

Member

Bryan Barrett

Member

# 2026-2027 School Calendar

GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

**SCHOOL START/DISMISSAL**  
 Gil | LCN | NF: 8:05a.m. to 3:20 p.m.  
 GMS: 8:00a.m. to 3:15 p.m.  
 GHS: 8:00a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

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

NEW TEACHER ORIENTATION

NO SCHOOL STUDENTS  
STAFF DEVELOPMENT

NO SCHOOL STUDENTS & STAFF  
Holiday or Break

EARLY DISMISSAL

[ ] BEGIN/END NINE WEEKS

### AUGUST 2026

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

Aug 3-5 New Teacher Orientation  
 Aug 7-12 Staff Development  
 Aug 12 6th Grade Orientation 10am to Noon  
 Freshman Orientation 3pm  
 Aug 13 K-12 First Day of School 1st Qtr Begins  
 Aug 17 PreK First Day of School  
 Students: 13 Staff: 17

### JANUARY 2027

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

Jan 1 No School: Holiday Students & Staff  
 Jan 4 No School Students Workday  
 Jan 5 Students Return -3rd qtr begins  
 Jan 15 No School Students & Staff  
 Jan 22 No School Students Staff Development  
 Students: 17 Staff: 19

### SEPTEMBER 2026

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

Sept 7 No School: Holiday Students & Staff  
 Sept 8 No School Students Staff Development  
 Students: 20 Staff: 21

### FEBRUARY 2027

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

Feb 12 No School Students & Staff  
 Feb 15 No School Students (ESU Mid-Winter Conf.)  
 Students: 18 Staff: 19

### OCTOBER 2026

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

Oct 16 No School Students Workday  
 Oct 19 2nd qtr begins  
 Oct 19-20 PreK-5 P/T Conferences 3:45-7:30pm  
 Oct 21-22 6-12 P/T Conferences 3:45-7:30pm  
 Oct 23 No School Students & Staff  
 Students: 20 Staff: 22

### MARCH 2027

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

Mar 12 No School Students Workday  
 Mar 15 4th qtr begins  
 Mar 15-16 K-5 P/T Conferences 3:45-7:30pm  
 Mar 17-18 No School PreK ONLY Home Visits  
 Mar 17-18 6-12 P/T Conferences 3:45-7:30pm  
 Mar 19 No School Students & Staff  
 Mar 26-30 No School Students & Staff  
 Students: 18 Staff: 20

### NOVEMBER 2026

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

Nov 9 No School Students Staff Development  
 Nov 25-27 No School: Holiday Students & Staff  
 Students: 17 Staff: 18

### APRIL 2027

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

Apr 16 No School GMS ONLY  
 Students: 22 Staff: 22

### DECEMBER 2026

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

Dec 18 2nd Qtr/1st Sem Ends  
 \*Dec 21-31 No School: Holiday Students & Staff (\*continues into January)  
 1st Sem: 84 Days  
 Students: 14 Staff: 14

### MAY 2027

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

May 15 Graduation  
 May 17 Preschool Graduation 3pm  
 May 18 Last Day of School K-12 Early Release 11:30am 1/2 Staff Workday  
 May 19 Staff Workday  
 2nd Sem: 86.5 Days  
 Students: 11.5 Staff: 13

**308-436-3125**

WWW.GERINGSCHOOLS.NET

## Section 2: Admission Information

### Admission Requirements

1. All required registration forms completed
2. Current immunization record– required by law upon entering school
3. Copy of original birth certificate- **no student will be allowed to start without a birth certificate**
4. A child can attend preschool if they are turning 3 or 4 years old on or before July 31st, or if they are 5 years old and won't turn 6 by December 31st of the current school year. **Nebraska Statute** 79-1101.

### Transition to Preschool

It is typical for young children to cry on the first few days of school as they adjust to a new routine and schedule. This only lasts for a few minutes after you leave and they quickly join in the classroom activities. You can help your child with this transition by talking with them, reading books about preschool, and driving by the school and playground before school starts. It is a good idea to begin practicing a good-bye routine with your child before the first day of school.

### Toilet Training

Toilet training is an important developmental step, and we encourage families to begin this process at home **prior to the start of preschool**. Children who are already working on toileting skills tend to have an easier, more confident transition into the classroom.

While we understand children develop at different rates, **most children are expected to be toilet-trained or nearly independent by age 4 to 5**. If toileting is still a significant challenge at that stage, we'll work closely with families to develop a more intentional plan to support the child at home and school.

Our staff will provide encouragement, routine bathroom visits, and gentle reminders. We ask families to actively participate in this process at home and communicate regularly with us so we can partner in your child's success.

## Section 3: School Day Information

### Schedule

| Full Day                                                                                                     | Half Day                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>M,T,Th,F:</b> 8:05 AM-3:20 PM<br><b>Wed:</b> 8:05 AM-2:15 PM<br>(Schedule consistent at all PK locations) | <b>Mon-Fri:</b> 8:05 AM-11:10 AM<br>(Schedule consistent at all PK locations) |

  

| Preschool Home Visits                                          | Parent Teacher Conferences        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Fall:</b> August 12, 13, & 15<br><b>Spring:</b> March 4 & 5 | October 6 & 7<br>3:45 PM- 7:30 PM |

### Home Visits

Home visits are a requirement. Each family will receive a minimum of two visits from the teacher during the school year. The visits will last approximately 30 minutes. Please notify your teacher or family advocate of changes or cancellations of visits. Should you be unable to keep a scheduled visit due to an emergency, please contact the teacher to cancel the visit. If you do not have a phone available, please leave a note on your door with an alternative meeting time or way to contact you. By working together, we can make home visits a learning experience that is beneficial to your family and to staff.

### What We Do In Preschool

- **Circle time** is a group gathering during which we share our ideas, plans, and observations. Circle activities are designed to stimulate youngsters' thinking, enrich their social skills, and expand their attention spans.
- **Gross-motor activities** give children the opportunity to use their muscles, as well as their imaginations, as they engage in fun, healthy exercises, such as running, jumping and climbing.
- **Fine-motor activities** help improve small-muscle development and

eye-hand coordination. Some common items found in the fine-motor/manipulative area include puzzles, beads and laces, pegboards, crayons, and scissors.

- **Art activities** help youngsters creatively express their thoughts and feelings. They help reinforce fine-motor skills and concept development in areas such as colors, shapes, and size relationships.

- **Dramatic-play activities** help children express themselves, practice life skills, improve social skills, increase self-esteem, build vocabulary, and solve problems. We also learn sign language on a regular basis. Dramatic play is just plain fun!

- **Music activities** promote youngsters' listening skills, creative expression, and social skills. In music, children explore sound, volume, tempo and rhythm.

- **Science activities** offer children many hands-on opportunities for observation, exploration, investigation, making predictions, and experimentation.

- **Sand and water activities** allow youngsters to experiment with textures and the properties of different substances. These activities also promote the development of other skills, such as math, science, and language.

- **Block play** gives children experience with many different concepts, such as shape and size discrimination, spatial relationships, number skills, balance, organization, cause and effect, and classification. Cooperative play skills, problem-solving, and creativity are also promoted in block play.

- **Story time** is designed to help youngsters develop an appreciation and enjoyment of literature. Reading activities enhance children's vocabulary and comprehension skills, and also expand their knowledge.

## Teaching Strategies GOLD

Teaching Strategies GOLD/Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines The Gering Early Learning Center uses Teaching Strategies GOLD, measuring 38 objectives to ensure whole child growth and development. Each Infant through Preschool in the building has a profile where the teacher enters anecdotal notes and evidence of the child's work. Teachers share evidence of your child's development during home visits, parent-teacher conferences or at the request of the parent or caregiver. Teaching Strategies GOLD and the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines are used together to enhance each child's educational experience.

## **School Supplies**

We ask parents to supply:

- A complete change of clothes to be kept at school
- Diapers, pull-ups, and wipes if your child is not toilet-trained
- A backpack labeled with your child's name
- School supplies on the school supply list need link to [school supply list](#)

## **Snacks/Lunch**

A mission of Gering Public Schools ("District") is to provide curriculum, instruction, and experiences in a health-promoting school environment to instill habits of lifelong learning and health. As part of the wellness policy, students should not bring soda into class. Additionally, parents are encouraged to send healthy foods for classroom celebrations. Students will have regular opportunities to drink water. We strive to offer a variety of healthy snack choices and fresh fruits and vegetables as much as possible.

We make every effort to protect children with food allergies. Please talk to your child's teacher to plan appropriate accommodations.

## **Field Trips**

Throughout the school year, we may be going on field trips. Gering Preschool will follow district policies and procedures. Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of the field trips and permission slips must be secured prior to each field trip.

## **Class Parties/Special Events**

If you would like to furnish treats for parties and special projects, please discuss this with your child's classroom teacher first. We have some children with food allergies and want to keep everyone safe.

## **Visitors**

We welcome classroom volunteers. All visitors will need to sign in at the front office, check out a visitor's badge, and check-in with the teacher. We encourage you to sign up and help where needed. Please communicate with your child's teacher if you would like to come and help.

## **Family Participation**

Opportunities for family participation include, but are not limited to:

- Beginning of Year Open House
- 2 home visits a year- one in the fall and one in the spring, required
- 2 parent-teacher conferences- one in the fall and one in the spring, required
- Volunteering in the classroom
- Volunteering on field trips
- Quarterly Family Engagement Nights
- Parties
- Programs
- Parent Advisory Board
- Head Start Policy Council
- Preparing classroom materials
- Donating materials, snacks, and other supplies

We encourage parents to participate in our program regularly throughout the year. If you have an idea of how you would like to volunteer please talk to your classroom teacher.

## **Arrival and Dismissal**

Gering Preschool requires that you please walk your child to the designated building drop off to meet the teacher for daily check-in no earlier than 7:45 AM. We will release students at the designated building drop off to an authorized person. All parents will be required to fill out a list of people who can pick up their child from school. If a person, other than the parent, comes to the school to pick up the child and they are not on the list, the child will not be released to them. All adults picking up a student other than their own will be required to show photo identification. If at any time

during the school year, a parent needs to make changes to their list, contact your child's classroom teacher. You must complete a preschool transportation form to ride the bus. Preschool students riding the bus will be escorted directly to the bus by a designated Gering staff member.

**Parking** For the safety of students, please adhere to the marked parking and drop off zones at each school.

**Late Pick Up** Children need to be picked up at the time of dismissal. We understand the occasional emergency will happen and appreciate a phone call to let us know. Timely pickup will be expected. Consistent late pickups may result in additional conversations and extra tuition charges.

**Drug and Smoke-Free Environment** Gering Public Schools declares all of our school buildings and grounds to be smoke-free. We would appreciate your help in meeting the goal of a drug/smoke-free environment for our children. When you attend school events, including athletic events, please remember that our grounds are drug/smoke-free and abide by our District's policy. **NO SMOKING IS ALLOWED OUTSIDE WHEN WAITING TO DROP OFF OR PICK UP STUDENTS.**

**Transportation** Transportation is available for Special Education students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP). If your child meets the criteria, use the following link to request transportation with First Student.  
[Transportation Request Link](#)

**Reporting Absences** A written excuse or telephone call to the school office is required for any absence. This is to ensure your child's safety.

**Tardiness** Children are expected to arrive at school on time. Arriving late to school impacts a child's learning and disrupts the educational process.

## Section 4: Tuition Information

### Payment Schedule

Payment for preschool tuition is due before the 1st of each month. Tuition prices are based on the free and reduced lunch application information. Payment can be made at the school office or through the [Gering website](#). **Please do not send your payment in your child's backpack.** A late fee of \$15 will be assessed to any past due account on the 6th of each month. A Gering Public Schools representative may contact you if your account becomes delinquent.

### Sliding Fee Scale

|                    | <u>Half-day Session</u> | <u>Full-day Session</u> |
|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Full Pay</b>    | \$130/month             | \$350/month             |
| <b>Reduced Pay</b> | \$60/month              | \$200/month             |
| <b>Lowest Pay</b>  | \$45/month              | \$100/month             |
| <b>Head Start</b>  | Not Available           | Tuition Reimbursement*  |

### Voluntary Termination of Services

A two-week notice, in writing, addressed to the program supervisor, is required before withdrawing a child from the preschool program. Failure to provide notice will result in ongoing billings to hold the seat for the student.

### ~~DHHS Child Care Subsidy~~

~~Our preschool accepts child care subsidy payments from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Families who qualify for assistance through the Child Care Subsidy Program may use their benefits to help cover tuition costs. Subsidy information can be found at <https://dhhs.ne.gov/pages/accessnebraska.aspx>.~~

~~To use the subsidy at our preschool:~~

- ~~• Families must have current approval through DHHS and provide all necessary documentation.~~
- ~~• Parents/guardians are responsible for any portion of tuition not covered by the subsidy, including copays or fees not reimbursed by DHHS.~~
- ~~• Attendance must be consistent and documented in accordance with DHHS guidelines. Failure to meet attendance requirements may result in loss of subsidy and/or additional charges to the family.~~
- ~~• It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that their subsidy remains active and that all required documentation is submitted to DHHS in a timely manner.~~

~~Site License Numbers~~

~~Geil GCG1010106 | Lincoln GCG10102 | Northfield GCG10100~~

### **Head Start Scholarship**

We participate in a partnership with ESU #13 Head Start. This program covers tuition costs for approximately ~~30-40~~ income-eligible families. If you would like to be considered for this program, contact ~~Kory Knight~~ **Crystal Palser**. Not all families that apply will be accepted. Copies of income verification will be required at the time of application. Students who turn 5 between January 1 and July 31 will not be eligible.

## **Section 5: Student Success**

### **YMCA After School Program**

Gering partners with the YMCA for after-school programming. Registered students are able to attend daily when school is in session, and the YMCA also offers programming for weekdays when school is not in session for students. To learn more about these offerings and about summer programming, visit the Gering Public Schools website at <https://www.geringschools.net/page/student-family-portal>.

### **Personal Property at School**

Personal property that does not have an educational purpose should not be brought to school. This excludes individual blankets for naptime and show-and-tell items. Gering Public Schools will not be responsible for any damage done to personal property or any lost personal property. Please do not allow your child to bring toys to school. There are toys to play with at school.

### **Active Supervision Policy**

#### **1.0 Active Supervision of Children**

1.1 Active supervision is a set of strategies for supervising infants, toddlers, and preschool children in classrooms, on or near playgrounds and school buses, and wherever enrolled children are during program attendance.

A. Program staff, utilizing the following six strategies working together to create an effective approach to child supervision:

1. Set up the environment to support supervision of children at all times. This may include developing and posting a daily classroom schedule for children, which teaching staff and volunteers follow, that helps to keep the day predictable. Consideration of the height and arrangement of classroom furniture and outdoor equipment allows effective monitoring and supervision of children at all times.
2. Position staff to see and reach children at all times. Plans may include staffing charts that identify the staff responsible for

each area or activity and individual duties during transitions before and after an activity.

3. Scan the environment, including assigned areas of the classroom or outdoor area, and keep count of the children. Staff communicate with each other, so everyone knows where each child is and what each one is doing. This is done at all times, especially during center times and on the playground when children are constantly moving. (name to face checks)
4. Listen closely to children and the environment to immediately identify signs of potential danger. Staff listen to and talk with team members, especially when a staff person or a child has to leave the area, so that staff know where other staff are located.
5. Anticipate children's behavior to give children any needed additional support, especially at the start of the school year and during transitions. Be aware of children who tend to wander off or lag behind to ensure they are never left unsupervised.
6. Engage and redirect when children are unable to solve problems on their own. Staff offer different levels of assistance according to each individual child's needs.

## **2.0 Supervision During Transitions**

2.1 Transitions are often the most challenging times to supervise children. To prevent children from being left unsupervised, the program utilizes strategies for managing transitions throughout the day, such as when children arrive, leave, or move from one location to another within a center. Some examples include:

- A. Regular routines, such as drop-off and pick-up times, including staff assignments (who monitors the door, etc.).
- B. Utilizing name to face checks to ensure that each child is accounted for
- C. Ensuring that Teachers, Assistant Teachers, Floaters, and Volunteers know when transitions take place and are in position to

provide constant supervision.

- D. Having a plan to maintain appropriate Adult:Child ratios at all times, including when a staff member needs to leave the room.
- E. Ensuring parents understand their responsibilities during drop-off and pick-up of their child, and being alert to potential child wanderings.
- F. Limiting the amount of time children are waiting in line to transition and offering engaging activities while waiting.
- G. Letting children know what the expectations are prior to transitions.

## **Parent-Student Permission Information Record Sheet**

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

~~\_\_\_\_\_ (Initial) I hereby acknowledge that I have accessed and reviewed the Gering  
Preschool Student Handbook available at [geringschools.net](http://geringschools.net) on the Student & Family  
Portal or in print at my school's office.~~

~~\_\_\_\_\_ (Initial) I have reviewed the handbook with my children, including the behavior  
guidelines and expulsion procedures.~~

### **FIELD TRIP/HEALTH INFORMATION**

~~\_\_\_\_\_ **Yes**, I hereby give permission for my child(ren) to accompany his/her teacher on  
school trips during the year.~~

**OR**

~~\_\_\_\_\_ **No**, I do not give permission for my child(ren) to accompany his/her teacher on  
school trips during the school year.~~

---

~~\_\_\_\_\_ **Yes**, I hereby authorize the school to obtain, through a physician of its choice, any  
emergency medical treatment that may become reasonably necessary by a qualified  
physician, in his office or hospital emergency room, in the event of an accident or  
serious illness for the student(s) in the course of any school activity.~~

**OR**

~~\_\_\_\_\_ **No**, I do not authorize the school to obtain medical treatment for my child during  
the course of a field trip.~~

### **PICTURE — NEWS RELEASE**

~~\_\_\_\_\_ **Yes**, I hereby give permission for my child to be photographed, filmed (school  
website), or videotaped for use by Gering Elementary Schools.~~

**OR**

~~\_\_\_\_\_ **No**, I do not give permission for my child to be photographed, filmed, or videotaped  
for publication.~~

## **ILLNESSES**

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

---

## **BUS REGULATIONS**

\_\_\_\_\_(Initial) I hereby acknowledge that I have read the Gering Public School transportation policy/regulations/etiquette in the Gering Elementary Student Handbook available at [geringschools.net](http://geringschools.net) on the Student & Family Portal.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL**

\_\_\_\_\_(Initial) Should severe weather occur, it is sometimes necessary to dismiss children from school early. It is important we know beforehand what you wish your child to do or where to go if an early dismissal occurs. Please make arrangements, other than having your child call you at the time of early dismissal, as we cannot accommodate all phone calls in such a short time. We only have one phone line and it must be kept open for incoming calls in such a situation.

Should we need to dismiss early due to severe weather, you will be contacted by phone via Messenger with a recorded message from Gering Public Schools Central Office. Information will also be available on local radio and/or television stations. Please indicate below what procedure you expect your child to follow. Be specific — no phone numbers accepted.

## **SIGNATURES**

Student Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP AND COOPERATION AS WE WORK TOGETHER TO PROVIDE THE BEST POSSIBLE EARLY EDUCATION EXPERIENCE FOR YOUR CHILD!**

**Personal or Consumable**  
**GERING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK**  
**SCHOOL YEAR 2026-2027**

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

**Foreword**

**Section 1    Intent of Handbook**

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

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

**Section 2    Members of the Board of Education**

|               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| Greg Trautman | Tracy Wiese |
| Josh Lacy     | John Maser  |
| Bryan Barrett | Matt Kautz  |

**Section 3    Administrative Staff**

| Name         | Position                | Contact Information |
|--------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Kory Knight  | Interim Superintendent  | 308-436-3125        |
| Mario Chavez | Principal               | 308-436-3121        |
| John Einfalt | Interim Dean of Student | 308-436-3121        |
| Keaton Green | Assistant Principal     | 308-436-3121        |
| J.J.Behrens  | Activities Director     | 308-436-3121        |

## **Section 4 School Calendar/Health**

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

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

## **Article 1 – Direction/Vision/Goals**

### **Section 1 School Direction/Vision Statement**

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

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

### **Section 2 Goals and Objectives**

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

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

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

### **Section 3 Surveys**

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

### **Section 4 Mutual Respect**

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

### **Section 5 Complaint Procedures**

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

**Step 1.** Schedule a conference with the staff person most immediately or directly involved in the matter.

**Step 2.** Address the concern to the Principal if the matter is not resolved at Step 1.

**Step 3.** Address the concern to the Superintendent if the matter is not resolved at Step 2.

**Step 4.** Address the concern to the Board of Education if the matter is not resolved at Step 3. Written appeal should be made within five (5) days of the Superintendent's decision.

Conditions Applicable to All Levels of Complaint Procedure

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

## Article 2 - School Day

### Section 1 Daily Bell Schedule

## Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

|                                                             |             |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| Period 1<br>Announcements at 8:03                           | 8:00-8:50   | (50 min) |
| <i>Grab and Go Breakfast at 8:50 am in the main hallway</i> |             |          |
| Period 2                                                    | 8:55-9:40   | (45 min) |
| Period 3                                                    | 9:45-10:30  | (45 min) |
| Period 4                                                    | 10:35-11:20 | (45 min) |
| 9th-12th Lunch                                              | 11:25-11:55 | (30 min) |
| Period 5                                                    | 12:00-12:45 | (45 min) |
| Period 6                                                    | 12:50-1:35  | (45 min) |
| Period 7                                                    | 1:40-2:25   | (45 min) |
| Period 8                                                    | 2:30-3:15   | (45 min) |

## Early Release Wednesday

|                                                             |             |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| Period 1<br>Announcements at 8:03                           | 8:00-8:42   | (37 min) |
| <i>Grab and Go Breakfast at 8:42 am in the main hallway</i> |             |          |
| Period 2                                                    | 8:47-9:24   | (37 min) |
| Period 3                                                    | 9:29-10:06  | (37 min) |
| Period 4                                                    | 10:11-10:48 | (37 min) |
| 9th - 12th Lunch                                            | 10:53-11:23 | (30 min) |
| Period 5                                                    | 11:28-12:06 | (38 min) |
| Period 6                                                    | 12:11-12:49 | (38 min) |
| Period 7                                                    | 12:54-1:32  | (38 min) |
| Period 8                                                    | 1:37-2:15   | (38 min) |

## **Section 2 Severe Weather and School Cancellations**

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

- **Decision to Close Schools** A decision to close school is made when forecasts by the weather service, law enforcement advisories or civil defense officials indicate that it would be unwise to hold school. An early decision is not always possible because of uncertain weather conditions. School officials will make periodic assessments of conditions during the night and will decide early in the morning (by 6 a.m. if possible). In any case, an announcement will be made to the news media when schools will be closed. In some instances, schools will be open, but certain services may be canceled (bus transportation, kindergarten, student activities).
- **After School Starts** Every attempt will be made to avoid closing school once classes are in session. In some instances, closing school during the day is inevitable if children are to safely return home before the brunt of a major storm hits. In these cases, as much advance notice as possible will be given to parents. If school is closed during the day, the notice will be broadcast by the media. Parents should have a plan in place to accommodate these circumstances.
- **Parental Decisions** Parents may decide to keep their children at home in inclement weather because of personal circumstances. Students absent because of severe weather when school is in session will be marked absent. The absence will be treated like any other absence for legitimate causes, provided parents properly notify the school of their decision. Parents may pick up their children in inclement weather during the school day. Students will not normally be dismissed from school during severe weather on the basis of a telephone request.
- **What Not To Do** Parents should not attempt to come to school during a tornado warning. School officials are not permitted to release students from the school building during a tornado warning. Tornado safety procedures are practiced regularly by students and staff members. Also, parents are urged not to call radio and television stations and school buildings during severe weather.
- **Emergency Conditions** The school has a signal which, when activated, includes the necessity to either evacuate the building or to move to safer areas of the building. Regular drills are held as required by law through the school year. There are plans for an Emergency Exit system, Tornado Warning System, and Critical Incident Response.

## **Section 3 Open-Closed Campus**

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

## **Section 4 Identification Cards**

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

## **Section 5 Arrival to School/Dismissal from School**

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

## **Section 6 Signing a Child In and Out of School**

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

## **Section 7 Emergency Closing Procedures**

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

# **Article 3 - Use of Building and Grounds**

## **Section 1 Visitors**

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

## **Section 2 Smoke/Vape-Free Environment**

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

## **Section 3 Care of School Property**

Students are responsible for the proper care of all books, equipment, supplies and furniture supplied by the school. Students are responsible for cleaning up any messes made from their food and drink. Students who disfigure property, break windows or do other damage to school property or equipment will be required to pay for the damage done or replace the item.

Fines are determined on books according to the following criteria:

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

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

#### **Section 4 Lockers**

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

#### **Section 5 Searches of Lockers and Other Types of Searches**

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

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

#### **Use of Metal Detectors - [Board Policy 504.13](#)**

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

#### **Section 6 Video Surveillance**

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

Notice is hereby given that video surveillance may occur on District property. In the event a video surveillance recording captures a student or other building user violating school policies or rules or local, state or federal laws, the video surveillance recording may be used in appropriate disciplinary proceedings against the student or other building user and may also be provided to law enforcement agencies.

#### **Section 7 Use of Telephone**

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

#### **Section 8 Bicycles**

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

#### **Section 9 Student Valuables**

Students, not the school, are responsible for their personal property. Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money or items of value to school. If it is necessary to bring valuable items or more money than is needed to pay for lunch, leave the money or valuables with a staff member in the school office for temporary

safe-keeping. Even then, the school is not in a position to guarantee that the student's property will not be subject to loss, theft, or damage.

#### **Section 10 Lost and Found**

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

#### **Section 11 Accidents**

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

#### **Section 12 Laboratory Safety Glasses**

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

#### **Section 13 Insurance**

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

#### **Section 14 Bulletins and Announcements**

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

#### **Section 15 Copyright and Fair Use Policy**

It is the school's policy to follow the federal copyright law. Students are reminded that, when using school equipment and when completing coursework, they also must follow the federal copyright laws. The federal copyright law governs the reproduction of works of authorship. Copyrighted works are protected regardless of the medium in which they are created or reproduced; thus, copyright extends to digital works and works transformed into a digital format. Copyrighted works are not limited to those that bear a copyright notice.

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

educational purposes; the nature of the copyrighted work; the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

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

#### **Section 16 Media Center**

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

### **Media Circulation Center Policies**

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

#### Check Out/Fine Policy

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

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

## **Article 4 – Attendance**

### **Section 1 Attendance Policy**

Regular and punctual student attendance is required. The Board's policies require such attendance; the administration is responsible for developing further attendance rules and regulations; staff is responsible for assisting in the enforcement of the rules and regulations. Students and parents are responsible for developing behaviors which will result in regular and punctual student attendance.

### **Section 2 Pre-arranged Absence:**

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

### **Section 3 Attendance and Absences Process**

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

[\*\*Gering High School Attendance Process Link\*\*](#)

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

### **Tardy vs. Absent**

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

## **Tardies**

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

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

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

## **Section 4 Make-up Work**

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

## **Section 5 Truancy**

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

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

## **Section 6 Transferring from Gering High School**

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

## **Section 7 Withdrawal from School**

A person who has legal or actual charge or control of a child who is at least sixteen years of age but less than eighteen years of age may withdraw such child from school before graduation must have an exit interview with the superintendent's designee. Any withdrawal form signed by the person making the written request shall be valid only if the child signs the form unless the withdrawal is being requested due to an illness of the child making attendance impossible. The superintendent's designee signs the form that the interview was held, the required information was provided and discussed at the interview, and, in the opinion of the superintendent's designee the person making the

written request does in fact have legal guardianship and the child is experiencing either financial hardship requiring the child to be employed to support the child's family or one or more dependents of the child or an illness making attendance impossible or impracticable. (Nebraska law LB -996)

## **Article 5 - Scholastic Achievement**

### **Section 1 Grading System**

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

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

### **Section 2 High School Yearly Course Sequence**

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

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

### **Flex Periods Full-Time Student Status**

Students will be eligible for flex periods with the following criteria:

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

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

### **Dual Credit Registration**

WNCC registration for high school students takes place in April for fall classes and in November for spring classes. The registration process involves meeting with school counselors and WNCC college advisors. In order to register, students must complete a WNCC registration form and a GHS contract for college course enrollment. Information for completion of this process will take place prior to registration for WNCC classes.

### **Dual Credit Contract**

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

### **Course Placement Testing**

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

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

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

### **Dual Credit Orientation**

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

### **Grades and Credits**

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

### **GHS Dual Credit Academic Probation**

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

### **WNCC Academic Probation and Suspension**

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

### **WNCC Portal**

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

### **Transferology and Transfer Nebraska**

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

### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

FERPA is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records at elementary and secondary schools that are subject to FERPA's requirements. These rights transfer to the student when he or she attends a postsecondary institution at any age. Under FERPA, an eligible student must provide a signed and dated written consent before a school discloses personally identifiable information, such as financial aid records, grades, transcripts, account balance, student conduct, or placement scores from the student's education records. Students should be responsible for knowing the status of their progress. We realize that there may be situations when parents may want to access their son's/daughter's grades. Students have access to grades on their WNCC portal. If parents want access to grades or other personally identifiable information, their son or daughter will need to sign a release of information agreement. This form is found in the portal. Parents wishing to access student information for dual enrollment through GHS will need to work through GHS Infinite Campus for progress monitoring; however, grades and attendance are only updated at midterm and semester. Parents wishing for full access will need to access the student's WNCC portal.

### **Academic Help**

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

### Student Code of Conduct (including Academic Integrity)

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

### Transportation

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

### Tuition/Textbooks

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

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

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

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

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

Likewise if you are dropped from a dual credit class during the semester because of poor attendance, you choose to drop the course or you fail the class for the semester. You are liable for and must reimburse GPS for the cost of any textbook or textbook codes and/or applicable fees, up to \$150 This will be added to your account as a fine to be paid at the end of the school year.

### Drops

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

### TUITION REFUND POLICY

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

| Time Elapsed | Percent Refunded |
|--------------|------------------|
| 6.25%.....   | 100%             |

12.50%..... 50%  
 25% ..... 25%  
 More than 25%.....None

**NOTES:**

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

**Credits**

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

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

**Title IX Policy 504.24**

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

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

For information regarding the Gering Public School District procedure for complaints of sexual harassment including the complaint process, how to file a report or a complaint of sexual harassment, how to file a formal complaint of sexual harassment, and how the District will respond to such complaints see

**Board Policy 504.24** located at Gering Public Schools website (<https://www.geringschools.net>).

**Section 3 Graduation Requirements**

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

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

**Graduation Requirements**

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

|                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| English         | 40 semester hours |
| Social Sciences | 30 semester hours |
| Science         | 30 semester hours |
| Math            | 30 semester hours |

|                   |                                                                                       |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| P.E. and Health   | 15 semester hours                                                                     |
| FAFSA Requirement | <a href="https://www.education.ne.gov/fafsa/">https://www.education.ne.gov/fafsa/</a> |

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

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

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

#### **Section 4 Schedule Changes**

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

#### **Section 5 Report Cards**

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

#### **Section 6 Incompletes**

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

#### **Section 7 Parent-Teacher Conferences**

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

#### **Section 8 Academic Honors for Graduation**

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

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

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

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

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

## **Section 9 Honor Roll**

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

## **Section 10 National Honor Society**

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

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

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

## **Removal from National Honor Society**

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

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

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

## **Section 11 Academic Integrity**

### **1. Policy Statement**

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

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

#### **Definitions**

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

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

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

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

## **Section 12 Transcripts**

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

## **Article 6 - Support Services**

### **Section 1 Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS):**

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

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

In order to carry out the philosophy and beliefs stated above, our school has chosen to implement the Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) model. PBIS is a program designed to build a more positive school-wide atmosphere. The ultimate goal is to teach students to be self-managers, who encourage and challenge each other to higher behavioral and academic standards. This is accomplished through the use of clear expectations which are explicitly taught, regularly acknowledged and fairly corrected. Students are “set up” for success in school.

### **Section 2 Special Education Services**

What Does Special Education Mean?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Section 3 Students with Disabilities: Section 504**

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

Under Section 504, parents have the following rights:

1. Have your child take part in, and receive benefits from, public education programs without discrimination because of your child's disability.
2. Have the school district advise you of your rights under federal law.
3. Receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation or placement of your child.

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

#### **Section 4 Multi-Tiered Student Support Services (MTSS)**

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

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

#### **Absenteeism/Tardiness**

Students in need of information or help may be referred by various concerned individuals including: self, peers, family, or school staff. Referral forms can be obtained from any staff member (which will include cooks, custodian staff, secretaries, library aides, coaches, teachers, or administrators). Completed forms can be returned to any staff member. After the referral, information will be gathered to help identify the problem(s) the student is experiencing. The Student Assistance Team will then meet to formulate an appropriate plan of action.

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

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

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

### **Section 5 Guidance Services**

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

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

### **Section 6 Alternative Education**

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

#### **Valley Alternative Education School**

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

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

Criteria for Admission:

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

### **LINKS**

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

Criteria for Admission:

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

### **Section 7 Transportation Services**

The school district maintains bus service for the convenience of its students and parents. Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. Students who live outside the radius of one mile from Gering Freshman Academy, may

apply for a bus pass. Students must ride the bus assigned and leave the bus only at their designated stop. Violations of the rules by a student will result in disciplinary action.

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

## **Article 7 - Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco**

### **Section 1 Drug-Free Schools**

Philosophy - All students have the right to attend school in a drug free environment conducive to good learning. The use of illicit drugs, alcohol, or other substances is not only illegal, but it interferes with both effective learning and the healthy development of young people. The educational system has a fundamental and ethical obligation to prevent drug abuse and maintain a drug free and safe educational environment, not only throughout the schools, but also in all school related activities.

### **Section 2 Use/Possession of Health Endangering Substances**

Pursuant to its statutory authority to adopt policies, rules and regulations necessary to protect the government and health of students in the school district, the Board of Education of Gering Public Schools has determined that the possession or use by students of tobacco, tobacco products or vapor products, alcohol, narcotics, or other dangerous and/or illegal drugs shall be prohibited:

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

Students who possess or use tobacco, tobacco products or vapor products, alcohol or narcotics, or other dangerous drugs, except as directed by a physician during the school day, on school grounds, or while participating in or attending school activities, shall be subject to disciplinary sanctions, including but not limited to expulsion or suspension. Where there is "reasonable suspicion" that a student has been using alcohol, the administration may request the student to submit to a "breathalyzer" test to determine use. If the student refuses such a test or does not admit to use where there is "reasonable suspicion" of use, the student may be subject to the disciplinary consequences as described in the GHS Parent Student Handbook.

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

## **Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules**

### **Section 1 Purpose of Student Conduct Rules**

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

Gering's discipline plan is designed to be progressive. Students who are repeatedly referred to the principal's office for additional disciplinary measures will be disciplined according to the charts listed below. The initial responsibility for the disciplining of a student, who is disobedient or disrespectful in class, is the classroom teacher. Each time a student receives an office behavior referral he/she will receive a specific number of points. Any points received shall be cumulative

throughout the school year. Accumulation of 90 or more points throughout the school year, may result in a recommendation to the Board of Education for expulsion from Gering Public Schools or mandatory reassignment.

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

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

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

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

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

## Section 2 Progressive Discipline Levels

Parents will be notified at levels C through G

Police may be notified for any illegal activity

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

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

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

**Progressive Discipline Table**

| Offense                         | Category | Behavior Demerits | 1st Offense | 2nd Offense | 3rd Offense | 4th Offense | 5th Offense |
|---------------------------------|----------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| INAPPROPRIATE PUBLIC DISPLAY OF | I        | 4                 | A           | A           | B           | C           | D           |

|                                              |     |    |   |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------------------------------|-----|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| AFFECTION                                    |     |    |   |   |   |   |   |
| DRESS CODE VIOLATION                         | I   | 4  | A | A | B | C | D |
| LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS                       | I   | 4  | A | A | B | C | D |
| OTHER I                                      | I   | 4  | A | A | B | C | D |
|                                              |     |    |   |   |   |   |   |
| DISRUPTION OF CLASS/SCHOOL/ASS EMBLY         | II  | 8  | A | B | B | C | D |
| INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR OR GESTURES           | II  | 8  | A | B | B | C | D |
| PROFANITY OR VULGARITY                       | II  | 8  | A | B | B | C | D |
| FAILURE TO ATTEND DETENTION TIME             | II  | 8  | C | C | D | D | E |
| CELL PHONE VIOLATION                         | II  | 8  | A | B | B | C | D |
| SKIPPING CLASS                               | II  | 8  | A | B | B | C | D |
| OTHER II                                     | II  | 8  | A | B | B | C | D |
|                                              |     |    |   |   |   |   |   |
| DISORDERLY CONDUCT                           | III | 10 | B | B | C | C | D |
| INDECENT MATERIAL                            | III | 10 | B | B | C | C | D |
| JEOPARDIZING THE SAFETY OF ONESELF OR OTHERS | III | 10 | B | B | C | C | D |
| MISUSE OF SCHOOL MATERIAL OR EQUIPMENT       | III | 10 | B | B | C | C | D |
| INSUBORDINATION                              | III | 10 | B | B | C | D | D |
| ACADEMIC VIOLATION                           | III | 10 | B | B | C | C | D |

|                                               |     |    |     |     |     |   |   |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|---|---|
| FALSE CALL OR FORGERY OF NOTE                 | III | 10 | B   | B   | C   | D | E |
|                                               |     |    |     |     |     |   |   |
| USE OR POSSESSION OF TOBACCO OR VAPOR PRODUCT | IV  | 14 | D   | D   | E   | E | G |
| CARELESS DRIVING OR SPEEDING                  | IV  | 14 | B   | C   | D   | D | E |
| VANDALISM LEVEL I                             | IV  | 14 | C   | D   | E   | E | G |
| THEFT LEVEL I                                 | IV  | 14 | C   | D   | E   | E | G |
| OTHER IV                                      | IV  | 14 | C   | D   | E   | E | G |
|                                               |     |    |     |     |     |   |   |
| HARASSMENT                                    | V   | 21 | D   | D   | E   | E | G |
| VANDALISM LEVEL II                            | V   | 21 | D   | D   | E   | E | G |
| THEFT LEVEL II                                | V   | 21 | D   | D   | E   | E | G |
| GROSS MISBEHAVIOR (DETRIMENTAL)               | V   | 21 | D   | D   | E   | E | G |
| OPEN AND PERSISTENT DEFIANCE OF AUTHORITY     | V   | 21 | D   | D   | E   | E | G |
| OTHER V                                       | V   | 21 | D   | D   | E   | E | G |
|                                               |     |    |     |     |     |   |   |
| THEFT LEVEL III                               | VI  | 28 | D/E | E   | G   |   |   |
| FIGHTING LEVEL I                              | VI  | 28 | D/E | E   | G   |   |   |
| DANGEROUS ITEM                                | VI  | 28 | D/E | E   | G   |   |   |
| INDECENT BEHAVIOR                             | VI  | 28 | D/E | E   | G   |   |   |
| THREATENING BEHAVIOR                          | VI  | 28 | D/E | E   | G   |   |   |
| UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF                        | VI  | 28 | D/E | D/E | E/G |   |   |

|                                             |      |    |                                          |     |     |  |  |
|---------------------------------------------|------|----|------------------------------------------|-----|-----|--|--|
| ALCOHOL OR DRUGS                            |      |    |                                          |     |     |  |  |
| POSSESSION OF ALCOHOL                       | VI   | 28 | E                                        | E   | E/G |  |  |
| OTHER VI                                    | VI   | 28 | DEG                                      | DEG | DEG |  |  |
|                                             |      |    |                                          |     |     |  |  |
| FIGHTING LEVEL II                           | VII  | 42 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
| EXTORTION                                   | VII  | 42 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
| FALSE FIRE ALARM                            | VII  | 42 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
| POSSESSION OF A WEAPON OTHER THAN A FIREARM | VII  | 42 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
| POSSESSION OR USE OF FIRECRACKERS           | VII  | 42 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
| TERRORISTIC THREATS                         | VII  | 42 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
| OTHER VII                                   | VII  | 42 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
|                                             |      |    |                                          |     |     |  |  |
| ASSAULT                                     | VIII | 90 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
| ARSON                                       | VIII | 90 | G                                        |     |     |  |  |
| BOMB THREAT                                 | VIII | 90 | G                                        |     |     |  |  |
| ASSAULT ON EMPLOYEE OR STAFF MEMBER         | VIII | 90 | E/G                                      | G   |     |  |  |
| POSSESSION OR USE OF EXPLOSIVES             | VIII | 90 | G                                        |     |     |  |  |
| USE OF ANY INSTRUMENT AS A WEAPON           | VIII | 90 | G                                        |     |     |  |  |
| POSSESSION OF DRUGS OR PARAPHERNALIA        | VIII | 90 | G<br>MANDATORY EXPULSION<br>FOR SEMESTER |     |     |  |  |
| POSSESSION OR USE OF A FIREARM              | VIII | 90 | G<br>MANDATORY EXPULSION                 |     |     |  |  |

|            |      |    |                       |  |  |  |  |
|------------|------|----|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|
|            |      |    | FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR |  |  |  |  |
| OTHER VIII | VIII | 90 | E/G                   |  |  |  |  |

**Section 3 Other Forms of Student Discipline:** Administrative and teaching personnel may take actions regarding student behavior, other than removal of students from school, which are reasonably necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or prevent interference with the educational process. Such actions may include, but are not be limited to, counseling of students; parent conferences; rearrangement of schedules; requiring that a student remain in school after regular hours to do additional work; restriction of extracurricular activity; or requirements that a student receive counseling, psychological evaluation, or psychiatric evaluation upon the written consent of a parent or guardian to such counseling or evaluation. The actions may also include in-school suspensions. When in-school suspensions, after-school assignments, or other disciplinary measures are assigned, the student is responsible for complying with such disciplinary measures. A failure to serve such assigned discipline as directed will serve as grounds for further discipline, up to expulsion from school.

#### **Section 4 Inappropriate Public Displays of Affection (IPDA)**

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

#### **Section 5 Student Appearance**

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

- a. Shorts, skirts, or skorts that do not reach mid-thigh or longer.
- b. Clothing or jewelry that advertises or promotes beer, alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs.
- c. Clothing or jewelry that could be used as a weapon (chains, spiked apparel) or that would encourage "horse-play" or that would damage property. (e.g. cleats).
- d. Headwear including hats, caps, bandannas, and scarves.
- e. Clothing or jewelry which exhibits nudity, makes sexual references or carries lewd, indecent, or vulgar language, or exhibits violence.
- f. Clothing must be "in reasonably good repair". Therefore, wearing jeans with large or excessive holes will not be permitted, whether skin is revealed or not (other examples: frayed shorts, or torn clothing, holes in clothing)
- g. Clothing or jewelry that is gang related

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

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

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

## **Section 6 Electronic Devices**

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

**Definitions.**

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

## **Possession and Use of Electronic Devices**

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

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

1. Activities which disrupt the educational environment;
2. Illegal activities in violation of state or federal laws or regulations;
3. Unethical activities, such as cheating on assignments or tests;
4. Immoral or pornographic activities;
5. Activities in violation of Board or school policies and procedures relating to student conduct and harassment;
6. Recording others (photographs, videotaping, sound recording, etc.) without direct administrative approval and consent of the person(s) being recorded, other than recording of persons participating in school activities that are open to the public; "sexting;" or activities which invade the privacy of others. Such student misuses will be dealt with as serious school violations, and immediate and appropriate disciplinary action will be imposed, including, but not limited to, suspension and expulsion from school.

## **Electronic Device Regulations**

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

**Disposition of Confiscated Electronic Devices:** Electronic devices possessed or used in violation of this policy may be confiscated by school personnel and returned to the student or parent/guardian at an appropriate time. If

an electronic device is confiscated, the electronic device shall be taken to the school's main office to be identified, placed in a secure area, and returned to the student and/or the student's parent/guardian in a consistent and orderly way.

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

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

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

### **Section 7 Harassment and Bullying Policy:**

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

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

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

### **Section 8 Acceptable Use Policy for Electronic Resources**

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

#### **District Accounts**

Gering Public Schools accounts and services are to be used for educational purposes only. No GPS accounts or services are to be used for commercial purposes, political reasons, advertising purposes, or lobbying. Students may not use their GPS email account to sign up for any other accounts or services.

Students may not use their District accounts to enter into any contracts on behalf of GPS. Students may not post, enter, or store any personal information about themselves or others. All accounts and network storage are the property of Gering Public Schools. GPS reserves the right to inspect and govern any District account and all included information to ensure proper use. GPS will strive to provide the best security possible for all student accounts and information.

### **Passwords and Safety**

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

### **Student Conduct**

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

### **System Integrity**

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

1. Gering Public Schools provides internet content filtering in an attempt to prevent access to websites that contain obscene, pornographic, violent, or otherwise harmful materials. Due to the limitations of content filtering, it is impossible to block all inappropriate sites.
2. Gering Public Schools will periodically revise the Acceptable Use Policy and will make determinations on whether specific uses of the network are consistent with the intent of policy.
3. Gering Public Schools makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the Internet service. GPS will not be responsible for damages you suffer. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by negligence, errors, or omissions.
4. Gering Public Schools will not be responsible for any financial charges incurred by an account user or someone else using the account. Use of any information obtained via Internet is at your own risk. GPS specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its
5. Failure to follow this Acceptable Use Policy may result in suspension of account privileges. Students who violate the Acceptable Use Policy will also be subject to the school's discipline policy.

### **Section 9 Reporting Student Law Violations:**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Section 1 Extracurricular Activity Philosophy**

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

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

### **Section 2 Safety**

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

### **Section 3 Warning for Participants and Parents**

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

### **Section 4 Extracurricular Activity Code of Conduct**

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

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

Scope of the Code of Conduct.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. Willfully disobeying any reasonable written or oral request of a school staff member, or the voicing of disrespect to those in authority.
2. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, harassment or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school or extracurricular activity purposes or making any communication that a reasonable person would interpret as a serious expression of an intent to harm or cause injury to another.
3. Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property, repeated damage or theft involving property or setting or attempting to set a fire of any magnitude.
4. Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to any person, including a school employee, school volunteer, or student. Personal injury caused by accident, self-defense, or other action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect another person shall not constitute a violation.

5. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of, or with the intent of, obtaining money or anything of value from a student or making a threat which causes or may be expected to cause a disruption to school operations.
6. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon or that has the appearance of a weapon, or bringing or possessing any explosive device, including fireworks, on school grounds or at a school function or event, or in a manner that is unlawful or contrary to school activity rules.
7. Selling, using, possessing or dispensing alcohol, tobacco/vapor products, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance, or an inhalant; being under the influence of any of the above; possession of drug paraphernalia, or the selling, using, possessing, or dispensing of an imitation controlled substance as defined in section 28-401 of the Nebraska statutes, or material represented to be alcohol, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance or inhalant. Use of a controlled substance in the manner prescribed for the student by the student's physician is not a violation. (Note: Refer to "Drug and Alcohol Violations" for further information).
8. Public indecency.
9. Sexual assault or attempting to sexually assault any person. Engaging in sexual conduct, even if consensual, on school grounds or at a school function or event.
10. Engaging in bullying, which includes any ongoing pattern of physical, verbal, or electronic abuse on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by a school being used for a school purpose by a school employee or a school employee's designee, or at school-sponsored activities or school-sponsored athletic events;
11. Engaging in any activity forbidden by law which constitutes a danger to other students, interferes with school purposes or an extracurricular activity, or reflects a lack of high ideals.
12. Repeated violation of any of the school rules.
13. Truancy or failure to attend assigned classes or assigned activities; or tardiness to school, assigned classes or assigned activities.
14. The use of language, written or oral, or conduct, including gestures, which is profane or abusive to a school employee, school volunteer, or student. Profane or abusive language or conduct includes, but is not limited to, that which is commonly understood and intended to be derogatory toward a group or individual based upon race, gender, national origin, or religion.
15. Dressing or grooming in a manner which is dangerous to the student's health and safety or a danger to the health and safety of others or repeated violations of dress and grooming standards; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that is lewd or indecent, vulgar or plainly offensive; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that school officials reasonably conclude will materially and substantially disrupt the work and discipline of the school or of an extracurricular activity; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that a reasonable observer would interpret as advocating illegal drug use.
16. Willfully violating the behavioral expectations for those students riding Gering Public School buses or vehicles used for activity purposes.
17. Failure to attend scheduled practices and meetings. If circumstances arise to prevent the participant's attendance, the validity of the reason will be determined by the coach or sponsor. Every reasonable effort should be made to notify the coach or sponsor prior to any missed practice or meeting.
18. All other reasonable rules or regulations adopted by the coach or sponsor of an extracurricular activity shall be followed, provided that participants shall be advised by the coach or sponsor of such rules and regulations by written handouts or posting on bulletin boards prior to the violation of the rule or regulation.
19. Failure to comply with any rule established by the Nebraska School Activities Association, including, but not limited to, the rules relating to eligibility.
20. Any activity that is deemed by the Gering High School administration to not demonstrate high ideals.

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

### **Consequences**

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

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

## **Section 5 Gering Public School Random Drug Testing Program**

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

The following shall result from a positive test result:

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

District-administered drug test, and (c) agrees to submit to monthly District-administered drug test during the next twelve-month period.

- o For a third offense, the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for one calendar year. The student may not return to participate in extracurricular activities until the student shows proof that the student: (a) is participating in substance abuse counseling with a qualified professional and is following the recommendations of the counselor and (b) tests negative in a District-administered drug test, and (c) agrees to submit to monthly District-administered drug test during the next twelve-month period.
- o For a fourth offense, the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for the remainder of the student's secondary school career.

## **Section 6 Drug and Alcohol Offenses and/or Violations**

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

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

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

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

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

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

The self-report must be made :

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

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

All students are expected to be honest and forthright with school officials. In the event the coach or activity sponsor or any school administrator asks a student participant for information pertaining to compliance (or lack of compliance) by the student or other student participants with the Code of Conduct or eligibility conditions for participation in activities, the student is expected to fully, completely, and honestly provide the information. Students may be disciplined for a failure to be honest and forthright.

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

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

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

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

**When Suspensions Begin:** All suspensions begin with the next scheduled activity in which the student is a participant, after the determination by school officials of the sanction to be imposed; provided that the school officials shall have the discretion to establish a time period for the suspension that makes the suspension have a real consequence for the student. During a suspension, participants may be required or permitted to practice at

the sole discretion of the coach or activity sponsor. Suspensions will be carried over to the next season when the suspension has not been fully served or when determined appropriate for the suspension to have a real consequence for the student.

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

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

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

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

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

1. Investigation. The school official(s) considering the suspension will conduct a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances and determine whether the suspension will help the student or other students, further school purposes, or prevent an interference with a school purpose.
2. Meeting. Prior to commencement of the suspension, the school official(s) considering the suspension or their designee will provide the student an opportunity to give the student's side of the story. The meeting for this purpose may be held in person or via a telephone conference.
3. The student will be given oral or written notice of what the student is accused of having done, an explanation of the evidence the school has, and the opportunity to explain the student's version. Detail is not required where the activity participant has made a self-report or otherwise admits the conduct. Names of informants may be kept confidential when determined to be appropriate.
4. The suspension may be imposed prior to the meeting if the meeting cannot reasonably be held before the suspension is to begin. In that case the meeting will occur as soon as reasonably practicable. The student is responsible for cooperating in the scheduling of the meeting.
  1. Notice Letter. Within two school days (two business days if school is not in session), or such additional time as is reasonably necessary following the suspension, the Athletic Director or the Athletic Director's designee will send a written statement to the student and the student's parents or guardian. The statement will describe the student's conduct violation and the discipline imposed. The student and parents or guardian will be informed of the opportunity to request a hearing.
  2. Informal Hearing Before Superintendent. The student or student's parent/guardian may request an informal hearing before the Superintendent. The Superintendent may designate the Athletic Director or another administrator not responsible for the suspension decision as the Superintendent's designee to conduct the hearing and make a decision. A form to request such a hearing must be signed by the parent or guardian. A form will be provided with the notice letter or otherwise be made available by request from the Principal's office.

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

If a hearing is requested:

- a. The hearing will be held within ten calendar days of receipt of the request; subject to extension for good cause as determined by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.
- a. The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee will notify the participants of the time and place of the hearing a reasonable time in advance to allow preparation for the hearing.

- b. Upon conclusion of the hearing, a written decision will be rendered within five school days (ten calendar days if school is not in session). The written decision will be mailed or otherwise delivered to the participant, parents or guardian.
- c. A record of the hearing (copies of documents provided at the hearing and a tape recording or other recordation of the informal hearing) will be kept by the school if requested sufficiently in advance of the hearing by the parent/guardian.

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

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

## **Section 8 Eligibility**

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

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

Extracurricular academic requirements do not apply to the following:

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

## **Section 9 Attendance**

Student participants are expected to meet the following attendance expectations:

1. Attend school regularly. Students who have "excessive absences" as determined under the school's attendance policy are ineligible to participate in extracurricular activity contests or performances. Students who have excessive absences in the semester of participation may be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activity contests or performances.
2. Be on time for all scheduled practices, contests and departure for contests. In the event a participant is unable to attend a practice or contests the participant should contact the coach or sponsor in advance.
3. On the day of a contest, performance or other activity, be in attendance for the full day. A student who is not in attendance the full day is ineligible for practice, the contest, performance, or activity. When events occur during the regular school day only eligible participants will be dismissed or students with prior administrative approval will be excused for the event.

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

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

## **Section 10 Relationships between Parents and Coaches/Sponsors**

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

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

Parents' Role in Interscholastic Athletics and Other Extracurricular Activities  
Communicating with your children

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

### **Communicating with the coach**

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

- Philosophy of the coach
- Expectations the coach has for your child
- Locations and times of all practices and contests
- Team requirements
- Procedure should your child be injured
- Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation
- Communication coaches expect from parents
- Concerns expressed directly to the coach
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
- Specific concerns in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations
- Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:
  - o The treatment of your child, mentally, and physically
  - o Ways to help your child improve
  - o Concerns about your child's behavior
  - o Injuries or health concerns. Report injuries to the coach immediately!!
  - o Tell the coach about any health concerns that may make it necessary to limit your child's participation or require assistance of trainers. Students are sometimes unwilling to tell coaches when they are injured, so please make sure the coach is told.
- Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:
  - o Playing time
  - o Team strategy
  - o Play calling
  - o Other student-athletes (except for reporting activity code violations)
- Appropriate procedures for discussing concerns with the coaches:
  - o Do not confront a coach before or after a contest or practice (these can be emotional times for all parties involved and do not promote resolution)
  - o Call to set up an appointment with the coach

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

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

### **Section 11 “Team Selection” and “Playing Time”**

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

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

### **Section 12 School Dances**

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

1. **Attendees:** Only students of Gering Public Schools and their guests may attend.
2. Students currently attending Gering High School or another Nebraska high school who have not been restricted from attending extracurricular activities at Gering High School or their own school are generally considered appropriate dates or invited guests.
3. No students below the 9th grade or individuals 21 years of age or older are allowed to attend GHS dances.
4. Some school dances may be restricted to students attending specified grades levels at Gering Public Schools
5. The school reserves the right to exclude persons who may or do cause a disruption or detract from the event. Dates or invited guests not attending our school are expected to follow the same rules of conduct which apply to our students.
6. Rules for dances may restrict students and their guests from leaving dance until the dance ends without written parental permission on a form provided.
7. Students or their guests who engage in inappropriate behavior, whether on or off of the dance floor, may be asked to leave.
8. **Prohibited Substances:** Alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and tobacco/vapor products are prohibited. Anyone using prohibited substances or showing the effects of use will not be allowed admission or, if discovered after admission, be removed from the dance. Their parents may be contacted.
9. Students and their dates may be required to submit to a breathalyzer prior to gaining entrance. Those who choose not to submit to a breathalyzer will not gain entrance. Law enforcement will be contacted if there is reasonable suspicion that the student or a student's date is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
10. **Appropriate Attire:** Students and their guests must meet the dress code requirements established for each dance. Teachers or administrators will make the final decision as to whether or not a student's attire is appropriate. Students will be asked to change unacceptable items, which may mean that the student may have to return home to change the inappropriate clothing. It is advisable to check in advance of the dance with the Principal or staff sponsor for the event if you are uncertain about your attire.

**Eligibility for Selection as Royalty:** Nomination and selection as royalty for school sponsored dances is an honor awarded by students to those of their peers that exemplify the highest standards of integrity and achievement. Students nominated for dance royalty must have demonstrated through their conduct, academic

achievement and activities that they have represented, and will represent, themselves, their classmates, and their school in a manner which reflects outstanding effort, commitment to their school and fellow students, and integrity and good citizenship in the school and in the community. The students selected to be the "royalty" for the Homecoming and Prom or any other school sponsored dance or activity shall meet that general standard as determined by the administration and, in addition, meet the following specific academic, activity and conduct standards: Achievement, Citizenship and Conduct Qualifications:

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

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

**Pre-Qualification of and Acceptance by Student:** All students nominated for dance royalty shall meet with the Principal. At the meeting the Principal will review the eligibility requirements for the honor of dance royalty. The student will be required to confirm that the student meets all eligibility requirements. The student will be required to confirm his or her acceptance of the nomination for dance royalty and the responsibilities of such an all school honor. The Principal or designee may contact local, county and/or state law enforcement and judicial authorities to confirm a student's eligibility for the honor of being nominated for or awarded dance royalty.

**Specific Dance Royalty Eligibility and Selection Requirements:**

**Homecoming Queen & King:**

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

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

### **Winter Royalty**

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

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

### **Prom Royalty**

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

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

## **Section 13 Student Fees Policy**

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

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

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

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

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

- Guidelines for non-specialized attire required for specified courses and activities. Students have the responsibility to furnish and wear non-specialized attire meeting general District grooming and attire guidelines, as well as grooming and attire guidelines established for the building or programs attended by the students or in which the students participate. Students also have the responsibility to furnish and wear

non-specialized attire reasonably related to the programs, courses and activities in which the students participate where the required attire is specified in writing by the administrator or teacher responsible for the program, course or activity.

- The District will provide or make available to students such safety equipment and attire as may be required by law, specifically including appropriate industrial-quality eye protective devices for courses of instruction in vocational, technical, industrial arts, chemical or chemical-physical classes which involve exposure to hot molten metals or other molten materials, milling, sawing, turning, shaping, cutting, grinding, or stamping of any solid materials, heat treatment, tempering, or kiln firing of any metal or other materials, gas or electric arc welding or other forms of welding processes, repair or servicing of any vehicle, or caustic or explosive materials, or for laboratory classes involving caustic or explosive materials, hot liquids or solids, injurious radiations, or other similar hazards. Building administrators are directed to assure that such equipment is available in the appropriate classes and areas of the school buildings, teachers are directed to instruct students in the usage of such devices and to assure that students use the devices as required, and students have the responsibility to follow such instructions and use the devices as instructed.
- Personal or consumable items & miscellaneous
  - Extracurricular Activities. Students have the responsibility to furnish any personal or consumable items for participation in extracurricular activities.
  - Courses
    - General Course Materials. Items necessary for students to benefit from courses will be made available by the District for the use of students during the school day. Students may be encouraged, but not required, to bring items needed to benefit from courses including, but not limited to the following: pencils, paper, pens, erasers, notebooks, protractors and math calculators. A specific class supply list will be published annually in a Board-approved student handbook or supplement or other notice. The list may include refundable damage or loss deposits required for usage of certain District property.
    - Damaged or Lost Items. Students are responsible for the careful and appropriate use of school property. Students and their parents or guardian will be held responsible for damages to school property where such damage is caused or aided by the student and will also be held responsible for the reasonable replacement cost of school property which is placed in the care of and lost by the student.
    - Materials Required for Course Projects. Students are permitted to and may be encouraged to supply materials for course projects. Some course projects (such as projects in art and shop classes) may be kept by the student upon completion. In the event the completed project has more than minimal value, the student may be required, as a condition of the student keeping the completed project, to reimburse the District for the reasonable value of the materials used in the project. Standard project materials will be made available by the District. If a student wants to create a project other than the standard course project, or to use materials other than standard project materials, the student will be responsible for furnishing or paying the reasonable cost of any such materials for the project.
    - Music Course Materials. Students will be required to furnish musical instruments for participation in optional music courses. Use of a musical instrument without charge is available under the
      - District's fee waiver policy. The District is not required to provide for the use of a particular type of musical instrument for any student.
  - Parking. Students may be required to pay for parking on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities, and may be subject to payment of fines or damages for damages caused with or to vehicles or for failure to comply with school parking rules.
    - Extracurricular Activities–Specialized equipment or attire. Extracurricular activities means student activities or organizations which are supervised or administered by the District, which do not count toward graduation or advancement between grades, and in which participation is not otherwise required by the District. The District will generally furnish students with specialized equipment and attire for participation in extracurricular activities. The District is not required to provide for the use of any particular type of equipment or attire. Equipment or attire fitted for the student and which the student generally wears exclusively, such as dance squad, cheerleading, and music/dance activity (e.g. choir or show choir) uniforms and outfits, along with T-shirts for teams or band members, will be required to be provided by the participating student. The cost of maintaining any equipment or attire, including uniforms, which the student purchases or uses exclusively, shall be the responsibility of the participating student. Equipment which is ordinarily exclusively used by an individual student participant throughout the year, such as golf clubs, softball gloves, and the like, are required to be provided by the student

participant. Items for the personal medical use or enhancement of the student (braces, mouth pieces, and the like) are the responsibility of the student participant. Students have the responsibility to furnish personal or consumable equipment or attire for participation in extracurricular activities or for paying a reasonable usage cost for such equipment or attire. For musical extracurricular activities, students may be required to provide specialized equipment, such as musical instruments, or specialized attire, or for paying a reasonable usage cost for such equipment or attire.

- o Extracurricular Activities–Fees for participation. Any fees for participation in extracurricular activities for the current school year are further specified in Appendix “1.” Admission fees are charged for extracurricular activities and events.
- Postsecondary education costs. Students are responsible for postsecondary education costs. The phrase “postsecondary education costs” means tuition and other fees only associated with obtaining credit from a postsecondary educational institution. For a course in which students receive high school credit and for which the student may also receive postsecondary education credit, the course shall be offered without charge for tuition, transportation, books, or other fees, except tuition and other fees associated with obtaining credits from a postsecondary educational institution.
- Transportation costs. Students are responsible for fees established for transportation services provided by the District as and to the extent permitted by federal and state laws and regulations.
- Copies of student files or records. The Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee shall establish a schedule of fees representing a reasonable cost of reproduction for copies of a student’s files or records for the parents or guardians of such student. A parent, guardian or student who requests copies of files or records shall be responsible for the cost of copies reproduced in accordance with such fee schedule. The imposition of a fee shall not be used to prevent parents of students from exercising their right to inspect and review the student’s files or records and no fee shall be charged to search for or retrieve any student’s files or records. The fee schedule shall permit one copy of the requested records be provided for or on behalf of the student without charge and shall allow duplicate copies to be provided without charge to the extent required by federal or state laws or regulations.
- Participation in before-and-after-school. Students are responsible for fees required for participation in before-and-after-school or pre-kindergarten services offered by the District, except to the extent such services are required to be provided without cost.
- Participation in summer school or night school. Students are responsible for fees required for participation in summer school or night school. Students are also responsible for correspondence courses.
- Breakfast and lunch programs. Students shall be responsible for items which students purchase from the District’s breakfast and lunch programs. The cost of items to be sold to students shall be consistent with applicable federal and state laws and regulations. Students are also responsible for the cost of food, beverages, and personal or consumable items which the students purchase from the District or at school, whether from a “school store,” a vending machine, a booster club or parent group sale, a book order club, or the like. Students may be required to bring money or food for field trip lunches and similar activities.
- Waiver Policy. The District’s policy is to provide fee waivers in accordance with the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act. Students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches under United States Department of Agriculture child nutrition programs shall be provided a fee waiver or be provided the necessary materials or equipment without charge for: (1) participation in extracurricular activities and (2) use of a musical instrument in optional music courses that are not extracurricular activities. Participation in a free-lunch program or reduced-price lunch program is not required to qualify for free or reduced-price lunches for purposes of this section. Students or their parents must request a fee waiver prior to participating in or attending the activity, and prior to purchase of the materials.
- Distribution of Policy. The Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee shall publish the District’s student fee policy in the Student Handbook or the equivalent (for example, publication may be made in an addendum or a supplement to the student handbook). The Student Handbook or the equivalent shall be provided to every student of the District or to every household in which at least one student resides, at no cost.
- Student Fee Fund. The School Board hereby establishes a Student Fee Fund. The Student Fee Fund shall be a separate school district fund not funded by tax revenue, into which all money collected from students and subject to the Student Fee Fund shall be deposited and from which money shall be expended for the

purposes for which it was collected from students. Funds subject to the Student Fee Fund consist of money collected from students for the following (1) participation in extracurricular activities, (2) postsecondary education costs, and (3) summer school or night school.

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

**STUDENT FEES  
~~2025-26~~ 2026-27**

**Gering High School**

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

**Gering ~~Junior-High~~ Middle School**

|                   | <b>Fund</b> | <b>Waiver Eligible</b> | <b>Maximum Cost</b> |
|-------------------|-------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Band T-Shirt      | Activity    | Yes                    | \$ 15.00            |
| Band Black Slacks | Activity    | Yes                    | \$ 25.00            |

|                     |          |     |                           |
|---------------------|----------|-----|---------------------------|
| Honor Band Audition | Activity | No  | \$ 40.00                  |
| Class Projects      | Activity | No  | \$ 100.00                 |
| Club Dues           | Fee      | Yes | \$ 5.00                   |
| Activity Tickets    | Activity | Yes | \$ <del>35.00</del> 40.00 |

**Approved** 7/8/2024, 7/14/2025    **Reviewed** 12/05/2024,    **Revised** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Article 10 State and Federal Programs**

### **Section 1 Notice of Nondiscrimination**

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

### **Section 2 Designation of Coordinators**

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

| Law, Policy or Program                                                            | Issue or Concern                                                                     | Coordinator    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Title VI                                                                          | Discrimination or harassment based on race, color, or national origin; harassment    | Superintendent |
| Title IX Policy 504.24                                                            | Discrimination or harassment based on sex; gender equity                             | Superintendent |
| Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) | Discrimination, harassment or reasonable accommodations of persons with disabilities | Superintendent |
| Homeless student laws                                                             | Children who are homeless                                                            | Superintendent |
| Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities                                        | Safe and drug free schools                                                           | Superintendent |

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

### **Section 3 Anti-discrimination & Harassment Policy**

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

#### **Preventing Harassment and Discrimination of Students**

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

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

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

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

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

Sexual harassment may exist when:

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

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

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

Sexual harassment may include explicit sexual propositions, sexual innuendo, suggestive comments, sexually oriented "kidding" or "teasing", "practical jokes", jokes about gender-specific traits, foul or obscene language or gestures, displays of foul or obscene printed or visual material, and physical contact such as patting, pinching or brushing against another's body.

#### **Complaint and Grievance Procedures:**

Employees or students should initially report all instances of discrimination or harassment to their immediate supervisor or classroom teacher. However, if the employee or student is uncomfortable in presenting the problem to the supervisor or teacher, or if the supervisor or teacher is the problem, the employee or student is encouraged to go to the next level of supervision. In the case of a student, the Principal would be the next or alternative person to contact.

If the employee or student's complaint is not resolved to his or her satisfaction within five (5) to ten (10) calendar days, or if the discrimination or harassment continues, or if as a student you feel you need immediate help for any reason, please report your complaint to the Superintendent of Gering Public Schools. If a satisfactory arrangement cannot be obtained through the Superintendent, the complaint may be processed to the Board of Education.

The supervisor, teacher or the Superintendent will thoroughly investigate all complaints. These situations will be treated with the utmost confidence, consistent with resolution of the problem. Based on the results of the investigation, appropriate corrective action, up to and including discharge of offending employees, and disciplinary action up to expulsion against a harassing student, may be taken. Under no circumstances will any threats or retaliation be permitted to be made against an employee or student for alleging in good faith a violation of this policy.

#### **TITLE IX Statement from the District:**

"The Gering Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any educational program or activity that it operates. The District is required by Title IX (20 U.S.C. § 1681) and 34 CFR Part 106 not to discriminate in such a manner. This requirement not to discriminate also applies to admission and employment. Any inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the District Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Civil Rights, or both. "

- o Title IX Coordinator: Superintendent and/or Designee
- o Address: 1519 10th Street, Gering, NE 69341
- o Email: nregan@geringschools.net
- o Phone: (308) 436-3125

"For information regarding the Gering Public School District procedure for complaints of sexual harassment including the complaint process, how to file a report or a complaint of sexual harassment, how to file a formal complaint of sexual harassment, and how the District will respond to such complaints see Board Policy 504.24 located at Gering Public Schools website (<https://www.geringschools.net>).

#### **Section 4 Multicultural Policy**

The philosophy of the District's multicultural education program is that students will have improved ability to function as productive members of society when provided with the following: (a) an understanding of diverse cultures and races, the manner in which the existence of diverse cultures and races have affected the history of our Nation and the world, and of the contributions made by diverse cultures and races (including but not be limited to African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans and European Americans) and (b) with the ability and skills to be sensitive toward and to study, work and live successively with persons of diverse cultures and races. The mission shall also include preparing students to eliminate stereotypes and discrimination or harassment of others based on ethnicity, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, age, or disability.

Section 5 Notice to Parents of Rights Afforded by Section 504 of  
the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 SEE ARTICLE 6 SECTION 3 Section 6 Notification of  
Rights Under FERPA (STUDENT RECORDS)

The Gering Public Schools will on occasion release routine directory information (84-712.05) to the general public which includes: "Student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degree and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student, and other similar information." The information released may be to military recruiters, newspapers, colleges & universities, athletic and activity programs, etc. Parents may have their student's name and information withheld from dissemination upon written request to the office of the principal.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the district receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access, and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The rights to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the school district to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the
  - a. parent or eligible student, the district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility and effectively provide the function or service for which they are responsible. Contractors, consultants and volunteers are permitted to have access to education records where they are performing a function or service that would otherwise be done by a school employee. Their access is limited to education records in which they have a legitimate

educational interest; which means records needed to effectively provide the function or service for which they are responsible.

The District forwards education records (may include academic, health and discipline records) that have requested the records and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student has already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.

Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

### **Section 7 Notice Concerning Directory Information**

The District may disclose directory information. The types of personally identifiable information that the district has designated as directory information are as follows: student's name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, date of and place of birth, major fields of study, dates of attendance, grade level, enrollment status (e.g., full-time or part-time), participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, degrees, honors and awards received, and most recent previous school attended. A parent or eligible student has the right to refuse to let the District designate any or all of those types of information about the student as directory information. The period of time within which a parent or eligible student has to notify the District in writing that he or she does not want any or all of those types of information about the student designated as directory information is as follows: two weeks from the time this information is first received. The district may disclose information about former students without meeting the conditions in this section.

### **Additional Notice Concerning Directory Information**

The district's policy is for education records to be kept confidential except as permitted by the FERPA law, and the district does not approve any practice which involves an unauthorized disclosure of education records. In some courses, student work may be displayed or made available to others. Also, some teachers may have persons other than the teacher or school staff, such as volunteers or fellow students, assist with the task of grading student work and returning graded work to students. The District designates such student work as directory information and as non-education records. Each parent and eligible student shall be presumed to have accepted this designation in the absence

of the parent or eligible student giving notification to the District in writing in the manner set forth above pertaining to the designation of directory information. Consent will be presumed to have been given in the absence of such a notification from the parent or eligible student.

Notice Concerning Designation of Law Enforcement Unit:

The District designates the Gering Police Department as the District's "law enforcement unit" for purposes of (1) enforcing any and all federal, state or local law, (2) maintaining the physical security and safety of the schools in the District, and (3) maintaining safe and drug free schools.

### **Section 8 Notice Concerning Disclosure of Student Recruiting Information**

The ~~No Child Left Behind Act~~ Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that the District provide military recruiters and institutions of higher education access to secondary school students' names, addresses, and telephone listings. Parents and secondary students have the right to request that the District not provide this information (i.e., not provide the student's name, address, and telephone listing) to military recruiters or institutions of higher education, without their prior written parental consent. The District will comply with any such request.

### **Section 9 Notice Concerning Staff Qualifications**

~~The No Child Left Behind Act gives parents/guardians the right to get information about the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teachers. Upon request, the District will give parents/guardians the following information about their child's classroom teacher:~~

- ~~1. Whether the teacher has met State qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.~~
- ~~2. Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or provisional teaching certificate.~~
- ~~3. The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher. You may also get information about other graduate certification or degrees held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree. We will also, upon request, tell parents/guardians whether their child is being provided services by a paraprofessional and, if so, the qualifications of the paraprofessional. The request for information should be made to an administrator in your child's school building. The information will be provided to you in a timely manner. Finally, the District will give timely notice to you if your child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet the requirements of the Act.~~

## **Section 10 Student Privacy Protection Policy**

It is the policy of Gering Public Schools to develop and implement policies which protect the privacy of students in accordance with applicable laws. The District's policies in this regard include the following:

Right of Parents to Inspect Surveys Funded or Administered by the United States Department of Education or Third Parties: Parents shall have the right to inspect, upon the parent's request, a survey created by and administered by either the United States Department of Education or a third party (a group or person other than the District) before the survey is administered or distributed by the school to the parent's child.

Protection of Student Privacy in Regard to Surveys of Matters Deemed to be Sensitive: The District will require, for any survey of students which contain one or more matters deemed to be sensitive (see section headed "Definition of Surveys of Matters Deemed to be Sensitive"), that suitable arrangements be made to protect student privacy (that is, the name or other identifying information about a particular student). For such surveys, the District will also follow the procedures set forth in the section entitled: "Notification of and Right to Opt-Out of Specific Events."

Right of Parents to Inspect Instructional Materials: Parents have the right to inspect, upon reasonable request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for their child. Reasonable requests for inspection of instructional materials shall be granted within a reasonable period of time after the request is received. Parents shall not have the right to access academic tests or academic assessments, as such are not within the meaning of the term "instructional materials" for purposes of this policy. The procedures for making and granting a

request to inspect instructional materials are as follows: the parent shall make the request, with reasonable specificity, directly to the building principal. The building principal, within five (5) school days, shall consult with the teacher or other educator responsible for the curriculum materials. In the event the request can be accommodated, the building principal shall make the materials available for inspection or review by the parent, at such reasonable times and place as will not interfere with the educator's intended use of the materials. In the event there is a question as to the nature of the curriculum materials requested or as to whether the materials are required to be provided, the building principal shall notify the parent of such concern, and assist the parent with forming a request which can reasonably be accommodated. If the parent does not formulate such a request, and continues to desire certain curriculum materials, the parent shall be asked to make their request to the Superintendent.

Rights of Parents to be Notified of and to Opt-Out of Certain Physical Examinations or Screenings. The general policy and practice of the District is to not administer physical examinations or screenings of students which require advance notice or parental opt-out rights under the applicable federal laws, for the reason that the physical examinations or screenings to be conducted by the District will usually fit into one of the following exceptions: (1) hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings;

(2) physical examinations or screenings that are permitted or required by an applicable State law; and (3) surveys administered to students in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. For physical examinations or screenings which do not fit into the applicable exceptions, the District will follow the procedures set forth in the section entitled: "Notification of and Right to Opt-Out of Specific Events."

Protection of Student Privacy in Regard to Personal Information Collected from Students: The general policy and practice of the District is to not engage in the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information. The District will make reasonable arrangements to protect student privacy to the extent possible in the event of any such collection, disclosure, or use of personal information. "Personal information" for purposes of this policy means individually identifiable information about a student including: a student or parent's first and last name, home address, telephone number, and social security number. The term "personal information," for purposes of this policy, does not include information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions. This exception includes the following examples: (i) college or postsecondary education recruitment, or military recruitment; (ii) book clubs, magazines, and programs providing access to low-cost literary products; (iii) curriculum and instructional materials used by elementary schools and secondary schools; (iv) tests and assessments used by elementary schools and secondary schools to provide cognitive, evaluative, diagnostic, clinical, aptitude, or achievement information about student, or to generate other statistically useful data for the purpose of securing such tests and assessments, and the subsequent analysis and public release of the aggregate data from such tests and assessments; (v) the sale by student of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education-related activities; (vi) student recognition programs.

Parental Access to Instruments used in the Collection of Personal Information: While the general practice of the District is to not engage in the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information, parents shall have the right to inspect, upon reasonable request, any instrument which may be administered or distributed to a student for such purposes. Reasonable requests for inspection shall be granted within a reasonable period of time after the request is received. The procedures for making and granting such a request are as follows: the parent shall make the request, with reasonable specificity, directly to the building principal and shall identify the specific act and the school staff member or program responsible for the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information from students for the purpose of marketing that information. The building principal, within five (5) school days, shall consult with the school staff member or person responsible for the program which has been reported by the parent to be responsible for the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information from students. In the event such collection, disclosure, or use of personal information is occurring or there is a plan for such to occur, the building principal shall consult with the Superintendent for determination of whether the action shall be allowed to continue. If not, the instrument for the collection of personal information shall not be given to any students. If it is to be allowed, such instrument shall be provided to the requesting parent as soon as such instrument can be reasonably obtained.

Annual Parental Notification of Student Privacy Protection Policy: The District provides parents with reasonable notice of the adoption or continued use of this policy and other policies related to student privacy. Such notice shall be given to parents of students enrolled in the District at least annually, at the beginning of the school year, and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in such policies.

Notification to Parents of Dates of and Right to Opt-Out of Specific Events: The District will directly notify the parents of the affected children, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when any of the following activities are scheduled, or are expected to be scheduled:

The collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information. (Note: the general practice of the District is to not engage in the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information).

Surveys of students involving one or more matters deemed to be sensitive in accordance with the law and this policy; and, any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is required as a condition of attendance; administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance; and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student or of other students. (Note: the general practice of the District is to not engage in physical examinations or screenings which require advance notice, for the reason that the physical examinations or screenings to be conducted by the District will usually fit into one of the following exceptions to the advance notice requirement and parental opt-out right: (1) hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings; (2) physical examinations or screenings that are permitted or required by an applicable State law, and (3) surveys administered to students in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ).

Parents shall be offered an opportunity in advance to opt their child out of participation in any of the above listed activities.

In the case of a student of an appropriate age (that is, a student who has reached the age of 18, or a legally emancipated student), the notice and opt-out right shall belong to the student.

Definition of Surveys of Matters Deemed to be Sensitive: Any survey containing one or more of the following matters shall be deemed to be "sensitive" for purposes of this policy:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's parent;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom the student has close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the students or the student's parent;
8. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

## **Section 11 Parental Involvement Policies**

### **A. General - Parental/Community Involvement in Schools:**

Gering Public Schools welcomes parental involvement in the education of their children. We recognize that parental involvement increases student success. It is the District's policy to foster and facilitate, to the extent appropriate and in their primary language, parental information about,

and involvement in the education of their children. Policies and regulations are established to protect the emotional, physical and social well-being of all students.

1. Parental involvement is a part of the ongoing and timely planning, review and improvement of district and building programs.
2. Parents are encouraged to support the implementation of district policies and regulations.
3. Parents are encouraged to monitor their student's progress by reviewing quarterly report cards and attending parent-teacher conferences.
4. Textbooks, tests and other curriculum materials used in the district are available for review by parents upon request.
5. Parents are provided access to records of students according to law and school policy.
6. Parents are encouraged to attend courses, assemblies, counseling sessions and other instructional activities with prior approval of the proper teacher or counselor and administrator. Parents' continued attendance at such activities will be based on the student's well-being.
7. Testing occurs in this school district as determined to be appropriate by district staff to assure proper measurement of educational progress and achievement.
8. Parents submitting written requests to have their student excused from testing, classroom instruction and other school experiences will be granted that request when possible and educationally appropriate. Requests should be submitted to the proper teacher or administrator within a reasonable time prior to the testing, classroom instruction or other school experience and should be accompanied by a written explanation for the request. A plan for an acceptable alternative shall be approved by the proper teacher and administrator prior to, or as a part of, the granting of any parent request.
9. Participation in surveys of students occurs in this district when determined appropriate by district staff for educational purposes. Parents will be notified prior to the administration of surveys in accordance with district policy. Timely written parental requests to remove students from such surveys will be granted in accordance with district policy and law. In some cases, parental permission must be given before the survey is administered.
10. Parents are invited to express their concerns, share their ideas and advocate for their children's education with board members, administrators and staff.
11. School district staff and parents will participate in an annual evaluation and revision, if needed, of the content and effectiveness of the parental involvement policy.

## **B. Title I Parental Involvement Policy:**

The District's Title I Parental Involvement Policy is established in compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act. The District has a parental involvement policy applicable to parents of all children. The parental involvement policy applicable to parents of all children is not replaced by this Title I Parental Involvement Policy and shall continue to be applicable to all parents, including parents participating in Title I programs.

It is the policy of the District to implement programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents in Title I programs consistent with the Title I laws. Such programs, activities, and procedures shall be planned and implemented with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.

**Expectations for Parental Involvement:** It is the expectation of the District that parents of participating children will have opportunities available for parental involvement in the programs, activities, and procedures of the District's Title I program. The term "parental involvement" means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring—(A) that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning; (B) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school; (C) that parents are full partners in their child's

education and are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and (D) the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in this parental involvement policy. The District intends to meet this expectation through the following activities:

1. Involving parents in the joint development of the District's Title I plan and the processes of school review and school improvement.
2. Providing coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance.
3. Building the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement.
4. Coordinating and integrating parental involvement strategies under Title I with parental involvement strategies under other programs.
5. Conducting, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parental involvement policy in improving the academic quality of the schools served under the Title I program, including identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in Title I programs, with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background, and use the findings of such evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary, the parental involvement policies of the District.
6. Involving parents in the activities of the schools served under Title I. **Policy Involvement:** Each school served under the Title Program will:
  1. Convene an annual meeting, at a convenient time, to which all parents of participating children shall be invited and encouraged to attend, to inform parents of their school's participation under the Title I program and to explain the requirements of the Title I program.
  2. Offer a flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning or evening. If sufficient funds are provided for this purpose, the District may assist parental involvement in such meetings by offering transportation, child care, or home visits.
  3. Involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs.
  4. Provide parents of participating children: (1) timely information about programs under Title I, (2) a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet; and (3) if requested by parents, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.
  5. If the District operates a school-wide program under Title I and such plan is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, submit any parental comments on the plan when the school makes the plan available to the District.

Shared Responsibilities for High Student Academic Achievement: As a component of the District's parental involvement policy, each school served under the Title I program will jointly develop with parents for all children served under the Title I program a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State's high standards. Such compact shall: (1) describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the children served under Title I to meet the State's student academic achievement standards and the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their children's learning, such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, and television watching; volunteering in their child's classroom; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children and positive use of extracurricular time; and (2) address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum: (i) parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools, at least annually, during which the compact shall be discussed as the compact relates to the individual child's achievement; (ii) frequent reports to parents on their children's progress; and (iii) reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observation of classroom activities.

Building Capacity for Involvement: To ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the District, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, each school participating in the Title I program and the District: (1) shall provide assistance to participating parents, as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the State's academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards, State and local academic assessments, the requirements of Title I and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children; (2) shall provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement; (3) shall educate teachers, student service personnel, principals, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school; (4) shall, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, the Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teacher Program, and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children; (5) shall ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand; (6) may involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training; (7) may provide necessary literacy training from funds received under Title I if the District has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for such training; (8) may pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions; (9) may train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents; (10) may arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend such conferences at school, in order to maximize parental involvement and participation; (11) may adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement; (12) may establish a district-wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in programs supported under Title I; (13) may develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities; and (14) shall provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under Title I as parents may request.

Accessibility: In carrying out the parental involvement activities for this Title I Parental Involvement policy, the District shall provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under Title I in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language such parents understand.

Use, Distribution, and Updating of this Policy: This Title I Parental Involvement Policy shall be incorporated into the District's Title I plan, shall be distributed to parents of participating children, shall be made available to the local community, and shall be updated periodically to meet the changing needs of the parents and the school.

Section 12 Homeless Students Policy

Homeless children for purposes of this Policy generally include children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, as further defined by applicable federal and state law.

No Stigmatization or Segregation of Homeless Students: It is the District's policy and practice to ensure that homeless children are not stigmatized or segregated by the District on the basis of their status as homeless.

Homeless Coordinator: The Homeless Coordinator shall serve as the school liaison for homeless children and youth and shall ensure that: (1) homeless children are identified by school personnel; (2) homeless children enroll in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, school; (3) homeless children and their families receive educational service for why they are eligible and referrals to health, dental, and mental health services and other appropriate services; (4) the parents or guardians of homeless children are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children; (5) public notice of the educational rights of homeless children is disseminated where such children receive services under the federal homeless children laws, such as schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens; (6) enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with law; and (7) the parents or guardians of homeless children, and any unaccompanied youth, are fully informed of transportation services available under law. The Homeless Coordinator shall coordinate with State coordinators and community and school personnel responsible for the provisions of education and related services to homeless children. The Homeless Coordinator may designate duties hereunder as the Homeless Coordinator determines to be appropriate.

Enrollment of and Services to Homeless Children: A homeless child shall be enrolled in compliance with law and be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school in which the homeless child has been placed. Placement of a homeless child is determined based on the child's "school of origin" and the "best interests" of the child. The "school of origin" means the school that the child attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child was last enrolled. Placement decisions shall be made according to the District's determination of the child's best interests, and shall be at either: (1) the child's school of origin for the duration of the child's homelessness (or, if the child becomes permanently housed during the school year, for the remainder of that school year) or (2) the school of the attendance area where the child is actually living. To the extent feasible, the placement shall be in the school of origin, except when such is contrary to the wishes of the homeless child's parent or legal guardian. If the placement is not in the school of origin or a school requested by the homeless child's parent or legal guardian, the District shall provide a written explanation of the placement decision and a statement of appeal rights to the parent or guardian. If the homeless child is an unaccompanied youth, the Homeless Coordinator shall assist in the placement decision, consider the views of the unaccompanied youth, and provide the unaccompanied youth with notice of the right to appeal. In the event of an enrollment dispute, the placement shall be at the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute in accordance with the dispute resolution process. The homeless child shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which the District has determined to place the child, even if the child is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documentation. The District shall immediately contact the school last attended by the homeless child to obtain relevant academic and other records. If the homeless child needs to obtain immunizations or medical records, the District shall immediately refer the parent or guardian of the homeless child to the Homeless Coordinator, who shall assist in obtaining necessary immunizations or medical records. The District may nonetheless require the parent or guardian of the homeless child to submit contact information.

Transportation will be provided to homeless students, to the extent required by law and comparable to that provided to students who are not homeless, upon request of the parent or guardian of the homeless child, or by the Homeless Coordinator in the case of an unaccompanied youth, as follows:

(1) if the homeless child's school of origin is in the District, and the homeless child continues to live in the District, transportation to and from the school or origin shall be provided by the District; and (2)

if the homeless child lives in a school other than the District, but continues to attend the Gering Public Schools based on it being the school of origin, the new school and Gering Public Schools shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs for providing the child with transportation to and from the school of origin and, if they are unable to agree, the responsibility and cost for transportation shall be shared equally.

### Section 13 Breakfast and Lunch Programs

The District has agreed to participate in the National School Lunch Program and accepts responsibility for providing free and reduced-price meals to eligible children in the schools under its jurisdiction. The District provides the United States Department of Agriculture's required nondiscrimination statement:

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

The school food authority assures the State Department of Education that the school system will uniformly implement the following policy to determine children's eligibility for free and reduced-price meals in all National School Lunch Programs. In fulfilling its responsibilities, the school food authority:

1. Agrees to serve meals free to children from families whose income meets eligibility guidelines.
2. Agrees to serve meals at a reduced price to children from families whose income falls between free meal scale and the poverty guidelines.
3. Agrees to provide these benefits to any child whose family's income falls within the criteria in Attachment A after deductions are made for the following special hardship conditions which could not reasonably be anticipated or controlled by the household: Unusually high medical expenses; shelter costs in excess of 30 percent of reported income; special education expenses due to the mental or physical condition of a child; disaster or casualty losses.
4. In addition, agrees to provide these benefits to children from families who are experiencing strikes, layoffs and unemployment which cause the family income to fall within the criteria set forth in federal guidelines.
5. Agrees there will be no physical segregation of, nor any other discrimination against, any child because of his inability to pay the full price of the meal. The names of the children eligible to receive free and reduced-price meals shall not be published, posted or announced in any manner and there shall be no overt identification of any such children by use of special tokens or tickets or any other means. Further assurance is given that children eligible for free or reduced-price meals shall not be required to do the following: work for their meals, use a separate lunch room, go through a separate serving line, enter the lunchroom through a separate entrance, eat meals at a different time, or eat a meal different from the one sold to children paying the full price.
6. Agrees in the operation of child nutrition programs, no child shall be discriminated against because of race, sex, color, or national origin.
7. Agrees to establish and use a fair hearing procedure for parental appeals to the school's decisions on applications and for school officials' challenges to the correctness of information contained in an application or to be continued eligibility of any child for free or reduced-price meals. During the appeal and hearing the child will continue to receive free or reduced priced meals. A record of all such appeals and challenges and their dispositions shall be retained for three (3) years. Prior to initiating the hearing procedures, the parent or local school official may request a conference to provide an opportunity for the parent and school official to discuss the situation, present information, and obtain an explanation of data submitted in the application and decisions rendered. Such a conference shall not in any way prejudice or diminish the right to a fair hearing. The hearing procedure shall provide the following:
  - o A publicly-announced, simple method for making an oral or written request for a hearing.
  - o An opportunity to be assisted or represented by an attorney or other person.
  - o An opportunity to examine, prior to and during the hearing, the documents and records presented to support the decision under appeal.
  - o Reasonable promptness and convenience in scheduling a hearing and adequate notice as to the time and place of the hearing.
  - o An opportunity to present oral or documentary evidence and arguments supporting a position without undue interference.
  - o An opportunity to question or refute any testimony or other evidence and to confront and cross-examine any adverse witnesses.

The hearing be conducted and the decision made by a hearing official who did not participate in the decision under appeal or in any previous conference.

The parties concerned and any designated representative thereof be notified in writing of the decision of the hearing official.

0. Agrees to designate the Superintendent to review applications and make determinations of eligibility. This official will use the criteria outlined in this policy to determine which individual children are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.
0. Agrees to develop and send to each child's parent or guardian a letter as outlined by State Department of Education including an application form for free or reduced-price meals at the beginning of each school year. Applications may be filed at any time during the year. All children from a family will receive the same benefits.

The following information will be available in the office of the Superintendent:

- Eligibility criteria for free and reduced meals
- Parent letter and application
- Public release
- Collection procedure

#### **GUIDELINES REGARDING THE COLLECTION OF DELINQUENT MEAL CHARGES**

The Gering Public School food service department utilizes a computerized point-of-sale system, Infinite Campus. Upon enrollment, all students are given a Student account. Money deposited into this account can be used for the purchase of breakfast, lunch, milk and ala carte items. Parents can check their child's account balance and make deposits in the Parent Portal at [http://www.geringschools.net/parents/Payment Options](http://www.geringschools.net/parents/PaymentOptions):

The food service department recommends that money is pre-paid into the account prior to the point-of-sale. The following payment options are available:

1. Major credit card through the Parent Portal.
2. Check:
  1. Must be made to Gering Public Schools.
  2. Must have student's full name in memo.
  3. If more than one student is on a single check, the check must specify how much money is to be deposited into each account. If a check is returned due to non-sufficient funds (NSF), we will attempt to collect all money owed. In the event it cannot be collected, a third-party collection agency will be utilized.
3. Cash: Must be submitted in a sealed envelope with students' full name and amount on the envelope.

Account Balance Information:

Gering Public Schools expects parents to be responsible for monitoring their student's Café account and maintaining a positive balance. Free and reduced-price meal assistance is available to all patrons at any time throughout the school year. Applications may be obtained from any of our school offices.

The building Principal's office will notify parents of negative account balances. In the event a student's account reaches a negative balance, no extra meals or ala carte items can be charged.

In the event a student's Café account reaches a negative balance of \$10, the following will apply. An alternate lunch will be served, consisting of a peanut butter or cheese sandwich and milk. The student will continue to receive an alternate meal until all charges are paid and the account has a positive balance.

Free and Reduced eligible students are entitled to one reimbursable meal. Extra meals and ala carte items will need to be purchased.

#### **Section 14**

#### **POLICY 503.9 GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS GERING, NE HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

A homeless child or youth is defined as one who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes—

1. Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack

of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals.

2. Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
3. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
4. Migratory children (as defined in section 1309 of the ESSA of 1965, as amended), who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described in this definition.

This definition includes both youth who are unaccompanied by families and those who are homeless with their families. The district will comply with state and federal law as it relates to homeless children or youth.

#### Assurances

1. The district adopts these policies and practices to ensure that homeless children and youths are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless.
2. The district will designate an appropriate staff person as the Local Educational Liaison (LEL) for homeless children and youths, to carry out the duties in compliance with state and federal law.
3. The district adopts these policies and practices to ensure that transportation is provided, at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison), to and from the school of origin. The "school of origin" means the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled. This will be done in accordance with the following, as applicable:
  1. If the homeless child or youth continues to live in the district in which the school of origin is located, the child's or youth's transportation to and from the school of origin shall be provided or arranged by that district.
  2. If the homeless child's or youth's living arrangements in the district served by the school of origin terminate and the child or youth, though continuing his or her education in the school of origin, begins living in an area served by another district, the school of origin and the local district in which the homeless child or youth is living shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs for providing the child with transportation to and from the school of origin. If the two districts are unable to agree upon such method, the responsibility and costs for transportation shall be shared equally.

#### Comparable Services

Each homeless child or youth shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other students in the school in which the child is placed including transportation services, educational programs for children with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency, educational services for which the child or youth meets the eligibility criteria, such as Title I, school nutrition programs, programs in vocational and technical education, and programs for gifted and talented students.

#### Local Educational Liaison

The Superintendent or designee shall serve as the district's Local Educational Liaison who will serve in tracking, monitoring and coordinating programs and activities for these children. The identity and duties of the LEL shall annually be provided to the NDE, school staff, providers and advocates of services to homeless persons, and to homeless students.

1. In general, the LEL shall coordinate:
  1. the provision of services with local social services agencies, the NDE Homeless Education Liaison, community and school personnel, and other agencies or programs providing education, social and related services to homeless children and youths and their families; and
  2. with other local educational agencies on inter-district issues, such as transportation or transfer of school records.
2. Coordination purpose - The coordination shall be designed to:
  1. ensure that homeless children and youths have access and reasonable proximity, to available education and related support services; and

2. raise the awareness of school personnel and service providers of the effects of short-term stays in a shelter and other challenges associated with homelessness.
3. The LEL shall receive appropriate time and training to carry out the duties required by law and this policy, and ensure that:
  1. homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
  2. homeless children and youths enroll in schools of the district, which includes attending classes and participating fully in school activities, and have a full and equal opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic standards as other children and youths;
  3. homeless families, children, and youths receive educational services for which such families, children, and youths are eligible, and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services, and other appropriate services;
  4. the parents or guardians of homeless children and youths are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;
  5. receive individualized counseling from counselors to prepare and improve their readiness for college, including college selection, application, financial aid, and on-campus supports;
  6. unaccompanied youths are informed of their status as independent students under the Higher Education Act of 1965 and may obtain assistance from the LEL to receive verification of such status for purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid;
  7. public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is communicated where such children and youths receive services under the federal laws for homeless children, such as schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens;
  8. enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance state and federal law; and
  9. the parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin and is assisted in accessing transportation to the school that is selected for the youth.

#### Enrollment and Placement

The district will handle enrollment and placement of homeless children in compliance with state and federal law according to the child's or youth's best interest such that it shall:

1. Continue the child's or youth's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness—
  1. in any case in which a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; or
  2. for the remainder of the academic year, if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year; or
2. Enroll the child or youth in any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.
3. The choice regarding enrollment shall be made regardless of whether the child or youth lives with the homeless parents or has been temporarily placed elsewhere.
4. Issues of guardianship, proof of residency, and dress code requirements shall not be cause for delay or denial of enrollment. The district is not prohibited from requiring a parent or guardian of a homeless child to submit contact information.
5. If the school district is unable to determine the grade level of the student because of missing or incomplete records, the child will be placed in the appropriate grade level by the same procedures used for non-homeless children.

#### School Stability

1. In determining the best interest of the child or youth the district shall presume that keeping a homeless child or youth in the school of origin is in the child's or youth's best interest unless doing so is contrary to the request of the child's or youth's parent or guardian, or (in the case of an unaccompanied youth) the youth.

2. The district must consider student-centered factors related to a child's or youth's best interest including the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety, giving priority to the request of the child's or youth's parent or guardian, or (in the case of an unaccompanied youth) the youth.
3. If the district determines that it is not in a child's or youth's best interest to attend the school of origin, or the school requested by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, it must provide a written explanation of the reasons for its determination, in a manner and form that is understandable.

#### Enrollment Disputes

The dispute procedure must be made available for resolving disputes over eligibility, as well as school selection or enrollment.

1. If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school, the district shall immediately provide the child's parent or guardian or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the youth a written explanation of the decision made regarding the school selection including the right to appeal the decision. It shall be provided in a manner and form understandable to such parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth and include the LEL contact information. The child or youth shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. Unaccompanied youths shall be assisted by the LEL in enrolling immediately.
2. Within thirty (30) days of receipt of the initial complaint, the LEL shall carry out the dispute resolution process in accordance with 92 NEC 19-005.002
3. The parent/guardian (or student, if applicable) may file a written appeal of the decision to the Nebraska Commissioner of Education. The Commissioner or designee may file a written response to the appeal within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the appeal.
4. Within thirty (30) days of receipt of the Commissioner's decision, the parent/guardian (or student, if applicable) may file a written appeal of the decision with the State Board of Education and shall be governed by 92 NAC Rule 61.

#### Records

Any record ordinarily kept by the school, including immunization or medical records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs, regarding each homeless child or youth shall be maintained:

1. So that the records are available, in a timely fashion, when a child or youth enters a new school or school district;
2. The district will treat the student's homeless status as a Student Education Record, not deemed to be directory information; and
3. In a manner consistent with the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act.

The LEL shall document the number of homeless children and youths receiving services, and maintain financial records regarding any federal funds used for providing such services.

#### Immunization Requirements

Homeless students will not be denied enrollment for lack of immunization records. The school district will make a reasonable effort to locate immunization records from the information provided or will assist the student in obtaining the necessary immunizations. Permanent exemptions for homeless students from the immunization requirement in this policy will be allowed only for reasons in accordance with the law.

#### Review and Revision

The district shall review and revise any policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and youths in the district. In reviewing and revising such policies, consideration shall be given to issues concerning transportation, immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records and other documentation, and guardianship. Special attention shall be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless children and youths who are not currently attending school.

## TITLE 92 CHAPTER 27

### Preamble:

The educator shall believe in the worth and dignity of human beings. Recognizing the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, the devotion to excellence and the nurture of democratic citizenship, the educator shall regard as essential to these goals the protection of the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal educational opportunity for all. The educator shall accept the responsibility to practice the profession to these ethical standards. The educator shall recognize the magnitude of the responsibility he or she has accepted in choosing a career in education, and engages, individually and collectively with other educators, to judge his or her colleagues, and to be judged by them, in accordance with the provisions of this chapter. The standards listed in this section are held to be generally accepted minimal standards for public school certificate holders in Nebraska with respect to ethical and professional conduct and are, therefore, declared to be the criteria of ethical and professional performance adopted pursuant to the provisions of Section 79-866 R.R.S. for holders of public school certificates. If the certificate holder is employed in a nonpublic school, that context shall be taken into account in the application of these standards.

### Principle I

#### Commitment as a Professional Educator

Fundamental to the pursuit of high educational standards is the maintenance of a profession possessed of individuals with high skills, intellect, integrity, wisdom, and compassion. The educator shall exhibit good moral character, maintain high standards of performance and promote equality of opportunity.

### Principle II

#### Commitment to the Student

Mindful that a profession exists for the purpose of serving the best interests of the client, the educator shall practice the profession with genuine interest, concern, and consideration for the student. The educator shall work to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.

### Principle III

#### Commitment to the Public

The magnitude of the responsibility inherent in the education process requires dedication to the principles of our democratic heritage. The educator bears particular responsibility for instilling an understanding of and confidence in the rule of law, a respect for individual freedom, and a responsibility to promote respect by the public for the integrity of the profession.

### Principle IV

#### Commitment to the Profession

In the belief that the quality of the services to the education profession directly influences the nation and its citizens, the educator shall exert every effort to raise professional standards, to improve service, to promote a climate in which the exercise of professional judgment is encouraged, and to achieve conditions which attract persons worthy of the trust to careers in education. The educator shall believe that sound professional relationships with colleagues are built upon personal integrity, dignity, and mutual respect.



# **Board of Education**

## **2026-27 Meeting Schedule**

*Pending Board Approval*

**REGULAR MEETINGS WILL BE HELD @ THE FRESHMAN ACADEMY at GHS**

|                   | Regular Meeting | Special Meeting | Curriculum Personnel Committee<br>Wiese<br>Maser<br>Trautman | Middle School Improvement Committee<br>Trautman<br>Kautz | Facilities Finance Committee<br>Barrett<br>Lacy<br>Kautz | Policy Committee<br>Trautman<br>Maser<br>Kautz |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
|                   | 2nd Monday      | 4th Tuesday     | 1st Tuesday                                                  | 1st Wednesday                                            | 1st Thursday                                             | 1st Thursday                                   |
| <b>Aug 2026</b>   | 8/10            | TBD             | 8/4                                                          | 8/5                                                      | 8/6                                                      | –                                              |
| <b>Sept 2026</b>  | 9/14            | TBD             | 9/8                                                          | 9/2                                                      | 9/10                                                     | 9/10                                           |
| <b>Oct 2026</b>   | 10/12           | TBD             | 10/6                                                         | 10/7                                                     | 10/8                                                     | –                                              |
| <b>Nov 2026</b>   | 11/9            | TBD             | 11/3                                                         | 11/4                                                     | 11/5                                                     | 11/5                                           |
| <b>Dec 2026</b>   | 12/14           | TBD             | 12/8                                                         | 12/3                                                     | 12/10                                                    | –                                              |
| <b>Jan 2027</b>   | 1/11            | TBD             | 1/5                                                          | 1/6                                                      | 1/7                                                      | 1/7                                            |
| <b>Feb 2027</b>   | 2/8             | TBD             | 2/2                                                          | 2/3                                                      | 2/4                                                      | –                                              |
| <b>March 2027</b> | 3/8             | TBD             | 3/2                                                          | 3/3                                                      | 3/4                                                      | 3/4                                            |
| <b>April 2027</b> | 4/12            | TBD             | 4/6                                                          | 4/7                                                      | 4/2                                                      | –                                              |
| <b>May 2027</b>   | 5/10            | TBD             | 5/4                                                          | 5/5                                                      | 5/6                                                      | 5/6                                            |
| <b>June 2027</b>  | 6/14            | TBD             | 6/8                                                          | 6/3                                                      | 6/10                                                     | –                                              |
| <b>July 2027</b>  | 7/12            | TBD             | 7/6                                                          | 7/7                                                      | 7/8                                                      | 7/8                                            |
|                   |                 |                 |                                                              |                                                          |                                                          |                                                |

## **RESOLUTION APPROVING CERTAIN STAFF TRAININGS**

**WHEREAS**, Gering Public Schools is required by various state and federal laws to train staff on numerous topics; and,

**WHEREAS**, Nebraska law defers to each Board of Education to determine the reasonable length of time for certain staff training requirements; and

**WHEREAS**, to ensure that the District's planned training requirements for the 2026-2027 school year comply with Nebraska's statutory requirements, and to ensure the Board of Education is aware of and approves of other required staff trainings during the 2026-2027 school year, the Board of Education adopts this Resolution to find and determine that the following training requirements are reasonable in scope and length.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Education hereby determines as follows:

1. The following trainings are reasonable in both length and scope and the Superintendent or designee shall identify the District staff who shall be trained as follows:

| <b>Subject</b>             | <b>Required by</b>                                 | <b>Source of Training</b> | <b>Approximate Length of Training</b> | <b>Participants</b>                                |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Behavioral Awareness       | Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-3602 & 79-3603                | ESU 13                    | 60 Minutes                            | Behavioral Point of Contact                        |
| Dating Violence Prevention | Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-2,141                         | ALICAP                    | 34 Minutes (Annually)                 | Grades 6-12 Staff                                  |
| Suicide Prevention         | Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-2,146                         | ALICAP                    | 30 Minutes                            | All Staff                                          |
| CPR/First Aid              | Coaches, Preschool and Other Identified Staff      | PPHD                      | 2 Hours                               | Coaches, Preschool Staff, & Other Identified Staff |
| Standard Response Protocol | Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-2,144(5); NDE Rule 10.011.01B | District Safety Team      | 1 Hour                                | All Staff                                          |
| Fire Drills                | Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-527; Nebraska State Fire Code | District                  | 15 Minutes                            | All Staff                                          |
| Tornado Drills             | Neb. Rev. Stat. § 2,144(8)                         | District                  | 15 Minutes                            | All Staff                                          |

|                                                                                   |                                                                                  |                                                            |                                        |                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Intruder Drills                                                                   | Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-2,144(5);<br>NDE<br>Rule 10.011.01B                         | District                                                   | 2 Drills (60 Minutes Each)             | All Staff                                                       |
| Bullying Prevention                                                               | Neb. Rev. Stat. Title IX<br>§ 79-2,137; NDE<br>Rule 10.011.01F;<br>NDE Guidance  | ALICAP                                                     | 30 Minutes                             | All Staff                                                       |
| Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Requirements for Designated Title IX Positions | Title IX, 20 U.S. Code § 1681                                                    | KSB School Law                                             | 1 Hour                                 | All Staff                                                       |
| Trauma-Informed Practices                                                         | District Requirement                                                             | Educational Impact                                         | 30 Minutes                             | New Staff                                                       |
| School Resource Officers and Building Administrators                              | Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-2704                                                        | NASRO - Basic SRO Course<br><br>SRP and Multiple Trainings | 40 Hours - SRO<br><br>20 Hours - Admin | School Resource Officers and Identified Building Administrators |
| District Assessment Contact - State Assessments                                   | NDE Guidance                                                                     | NDE Training                                               | 60 Minutes Annually                    | Proctors, Teachers and Principals                               |
| Pupil Transportation Drivers                                                      | NDE Rule 91.003.02                                                               | ALICAP                                                     | 2 Hours                                | All Staff that Drive Students                                   |
| Safe Seizure Schools                                                              | Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-3204                                                        | ALICAP                                                     | 1 Hour                                 | All Staff (Every Two Years)                                     |
| Concussion Awareness                                                              | Neb. Rev. Stat. § 71-9104                                                        | ALICAP                                                     | 25 Minutes                             | Coaches                                                         |
| FERPA                                                                             | 20 U.S.C. § 1232g;<br>34 CFR Part 99                                             | District                                                   | 25 Minutes                             | All Staff                                                       |
| Psychological First Aid                                                           | District Requirement                                                             | NDE                                                        | 16 Hours                               | New Crisis Response Team Members                                |
| Civil Rights for Food Service                                                     | 113-1: Civil Rights Compliance and Enforcement – Nutrition Programs & Activities | ALICAP                                                     | 20 Minutes                             | Preschool Staff                                                 |
| Medication Administration                                                         | NDE Rule 59                                                                      | ALICAP                                                     | 46 Minutes                             | School Nurses, Secretaries,                                     |

|                                                      |                           |                                                      |                                    |                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                      |                           |                                                      |                                    | Administrators and Certified Staff as Designated                             |
| Rule 59 Protocols                                    | NDE Rule 59               | ALICAP                                               | 55 Minutes                         | School Nurses, Secretaries, Administrators and Certified Staff as Designated |
| School Resource Officers and Building Administrators | Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-2704 | Basic SRO Course<br><br>Multiple Trainings & Courses | 40 Hours-SRO<br><br>20 Hours-Admin | School Resource Officers and Identified Building Administrators              |

2. The Superintendent or designee is authorized to implement additional training requirements for staff if the Superintendent or designee determines that additional training would be in the best interest of the District and/or is otherwise required by law.

3. The Superintendent or designee is further authorized to deviate from the source of these training requirements if any unexpected circumstances arise and the Superintendent or designee determines that it is in the best interests of the District to require a different training(s).

4. All District staff who are directed to attend or participate in any training requirement(s) must complete such training(s) in good faith and in accordance with this Resolution and the directives of the Superintendent or designee.

This Resolution shall continue until or unless modified by a vote of the majority of a quorum of the Board of Education.

**DATED** this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_ **PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**BY:** \_\_\_\_\_  
President

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary