

# Sandhills High School

Grades 7-12 STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

\*Approved May 8th, 2023 by the Sandhills Board of Education\*



Sandhills Public Schools

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# STUDENT – PARENT HANDBOOK OF SANDHILLS HIGH SCHOOL 2023-2024

## *TABLE OF CONTENTS*

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### Foreword

		Page
Section 1	Intent of Handbook	1
Section 2	Members of the Board of Education	1
Section 3	Administrative Staff	1
Section 4	Teaching & Coaching Staff	2
Section 5	Support Staff	3
Section 6	School Calendar Overview	3

### Article 1 - Mission and Goals

		Page
Section 1	School Mission Statement	5
Section 2	Goals and Objectives	5
Section 3	Mutual Respect	6
Section 4	Complaint Procedures	7

### Article 2 - School Day

		Page
Section 1-2	Daily Schedule	8
Section 3-4	Shortened Schedule	8
Section 5	Severe Weather and School Cancellations	8
Section 6	Open-Closed Campus	9
Section 7	Supervision Responsibility Before/After School	10

### Article 3 - Use of Building and Grounds

		Page
Section 1	Visitors	11
Section 2	Smoke-Free Environment	11
Section 3	Care of School Property	11
Section 4	Lockers	11
Section 5	Searches of Lockers and Other Types of Searches	12
Section 6	Video Surveillance	12
Section 7	Use of Telephone	12
Section 8	Student Valuables	13

Section 9	Lost and Found	13
Section 10	Accidents	13
Section 11	Laboratory Safety Glasses	13
Section 12	Insurance	13
Section 13	Bulletins and Announcements	13
Section 14	Copyright and Fair Use Policy	14

#### Article 4 - Attendance

		Page
Section 1	Attendance Policy	15
Section 2	Attendance and Absences	15
Section 3	Make-up Work	16
Section 4	Attendance is Required to Participate in Activities	17
Section 5	Truancy & Excessive Absenteeism	17

#### Article 5 - Scholastic Achievement

		Page
Section 1	Grading System	19
Section 2	High School Yearly Course Requirements	19
Section 3	Graduation Requirements	20
Section 4	Promotion and Retention	21
Section 5	Schedule Changes	21
Section 6	Interim Reports	21
Section 7	Report Cards and Transcripts	22
Section 8	Parent-Teacher Conferences	22
Section 9	Honor Roll	22
Section 10	National Honor Society	22
Section 11	Academic Integrity	23

#### Article 6 - Support Services

		Page
Section 1	Special Education Services	27
Section 2	Students with Disabilities: Section 504	28
Section 3	Guidance Services	29
Section 4	Health Services	29
Section 5	Transportation Services	33

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

		Page
Section 1	Drug-Free Schools	35
Section 2	Education and Prevention	35
Section 3	Standards of Student Conduct Pertaining to Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco	35

Article 8 - Student Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

		Page
Section 1	Purpose of Student Conduct Rules	37
Section 2	Forms of School Discipline	37
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Short-Term Suspensions</li> <li>•Long-Term Suspensions</li> <li>•Expulsions</li> <li>•Other Forms of Student Discipline</li> </ul>	
Section 3	Student Conduct Expectations	39
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Grounds for Short-Term Suspension, Long-Term Suspension, Expulsion or Mandatory Reassignment</li> <li>•Student Appearance Policy</li> <li>•Electronic Devices</li> <li>•Harassment, Bullying, and Dating Violence Policy</li> <li>•Inappropriate Public Displays of Affection</li> <li>•Specific Rule Items</li> <li>•Network, E-Mail, Internet and Other Computer Use Rules</li> <li>•Risks of MySpace, Facebook and other Social Networking</li> </ul>	
Section 4	Reporting Student Law Violations	53

Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

		Page
Section 1	Extracurricular Activity Philosophy	54
Section 2	Extracurricular Activity Code of Conduct	54
Section 3	Attendance	61
Section 4	Academic Standards	61
Section 5	"Team Selection" and "Playing Time"	62
Section 6	School Dances	62
Section 7	Relationships Between Parents and Coaches/Sponsors	64
Section 8	Good Sportsmanship-Behavior Expectations of Spectators	66
Section 9	Student Fees Policy	67
Section 10	Live streaming of district activities and events	72

Article 10 - State and Federal Programs

		Page
Section 1	Notice of Nondiscrimination	73
Section 2	Designation of Coordinator(s)	73
Section 3	Anti-discrimination & Harassment Policy	73
Section 4	Multicultural Policy	75

Section 5	Notice to Parents of Rights Afforded by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	75
Section 6	Notification of Rights Under FERPA	75
Section 7	Notice Concerning Disclosure of Student Information to Military Recruiters	77
Section 8	Notice to Parents of Students in Programs receiving Title 1 Funding	77
Section 9	Student Privacy Protection Policy	78
Section 10	Parental/Family Involvement or Engagement Policies	81
Section 11	Homeless Students Policy	83
Section 12	Breakfast and Lunch Programs	84
	USDA Notice of Nondiscrimination	85
<b>I Acknowledgment of Receipt Form</b>		<b>87</b>

# Sandhills High School Parent-Student Handbook 2022-23 School Year

## Foreword

### Section 1 Intent of Handbook

The use of this handbook is intended for students, parents and staff as a guide to the rules, regulations, and general information about Sandhills 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 this handbook.

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

### Section 2 Members of the Board of Education

Name	Contact Information
Tedd Teahon, President	308-538-2270
Tyson Cox, Vice President	308-834-3306
Jeff Martindale, Secretary	308-547-2232
Michelle Milleson, Treasurer	308-538-2512
Reed Larsen	308-834-3384
Rory Zutavern	402-440-4383

### Section 3 Administrative Staff (all emails are "names" first.last sandhillsknights.org)

Name	Position	School	Contact Information
JD Furrow	Superintendent K-12 Principal	Sandhills Public Schools	308-538-2224 308-870-2824
Ann Collier	Business Manager & High School Secretary	Sandhills Public Schools	308-538-2224
Monique Leach	Elementary Secretary/Para	Sandhills Public Schools	308-533-2203

Foreword

**Section 4 Teaching Staff & Coaches/Activity Sponsors**

**Sandhills High School**

<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Grades</i>
Cindy Coffman	ESU 10/Speech Path.	K-12
Kris Ganoung	Band & Music	K-12
Michelle Valdez	Agriculture Education	7-12
Zeta Greene	Science	7-12
Adam Marten	Social Science	7-12
Russell Norton	Physical Education	7-12
Janine Catlett	5/6 Grade	5-6
Trish Rodocker	K-12 Guidance & Technology	K-12
Christine Rodgers	Mathematics	7-12
Elise Miller	Business Education	7-12
Kristin Ganoung	Art & Media	K-12
Danielle Thompson	Special Education	7-12
	Language Arts	7-12
<i>Coach/Sponsor</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Grades</i>
Michelle Valdez	FFA	7-12
Russell Norton	Asst. FB, AD	7-12
Elise Miller	FBLA	7-12
Kristin Ganoung	Art	7-12
Jack Moody	Speech, One Act	9-12

Foreword

Adam Marten	Boys BB	9-12
Zeta Green	JH Volleyball & Asst Track	7-12
Tyson Cox	Head Football	7-12
Trish Rodocker	Senior Class	12
Zeta Greene	Student Council	7-12
Chris Rodgers	NHS, Quiz Bowl, HAL	7-12
Jim Latowski	Jr. High Wrestling	7-8
Rick McFadden	HS Wrestling	7-12
Mat Zutavern	HS Wrestling	9-12

**Section 5 Support Staff**

Name	Building	Position
Jody Anderson	Sandhills High School	Custodian/Facilities
Mellissa Freeman	Sandhills Public Schools	Kitchen Supervisor
Roxannie Payne	Sandhills Public Schools	Asst. Kitchen Super.
Kate Shoemaker	Sandhills Public Schools	School Nurse
Monique Leach	Sandhills Public Schools	Elem Sec/Para
Jack Moody	Sandhills Public Schools	5 <sup>th</sup> -12th Grade Para

**Section 6 School Calendar Overview**

**\*Below is the approved overview for 2023-24. Please refer to the live district calendar available at [www.sandhillsknights.org](http://www.sandhillsknights.org). Dates and times are subject to change and changes will most likely occur. Please contact the main office for assistance.**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Important Calendar Events</u>
August 7:	First day for fall sports practice.
August 14 & 15:	Teacher Work Days
August 16:	First day of school
September 4:	No School – Labor Day
October 5:	Parent/Teacher Conferences - 2:00 Dismissal HS, 1:45 Elementary
October 6:	No School – Fall Break
October 23:	No School – Teacher Work Day
November 13:	First day for winter sports practice.



Foreword

**Date**

November 22-24  
December 22  
Dec. 23 – Jan. 3  
Dec. 23 – Dec. 27  
January 2 & 3  
January 4  
February 12  
March 8  
March 28  
March 29 & April 1  
May 11  
May 16  
May 17

**Important Calendar Events**

Thanksgiving Vacation  
End of 1<sup>st</sup> Semester; 2:00 Dismissal HS, 1:45 Elementary  
No School Holiday Vacation  
NSAA Moritorium – No athletic practices/School facilities closed  
Teacher Workdays  
1<sup>st</sup> Day of 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester  
No School – Teacher Workday  
No School – Spring Break (Subject to Change)  
2:00 Dismissal HS, 1:45 Elementary  
No School – Easter Break  
GRADUATION 4:00 p.m.  
End of 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester and Last Day of School  
Teacher Workday

## Article 1 - Mission and Goals

### **Section 1 School Mission Statement**

Welcome to Sandhills Public Schools. The Board of Education, administration and staff are committed to providing an environment where every child can grow and learn in a positive environment. Sandhills High School is accredited through the Nebraska Frameworks on Accreditation and School Improvement. “The mission of Sandhills Public Schools is to provide a quality education in a safe, respectful, equitable and inclusive learning environment to develop productive citizens for an every-changing global society.” The current School Improvement Goal: “Students will improve proficiency in literacy with an emphasis on comprehension and writing across the K-12 content areas.”

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

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

1. A curriculum that is based on state standards; comprehensive, coordinated, and sequential and is directed toward locally approved goals and standards for student learning. It draws upon research, best practice, and reputable theory and provides the foundation for standard 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.
2. An instructional program that focuses on achievement and provides for the needs of all students including learners with disabilities and high ability learners. It draws upon research, best practice, and reputable theory broad enough yet with sufficient depth to allow education for all of the students.
3. 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.
4. 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.

#### Article 1 - Mission and Goals

5. 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.
6. 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. 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.
7. 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.
8. A school system that demonstrates accountability to the school community. School staff periodically assesses and report student progress toward accomplishment of academic content standards. Results are used to plan and make needed changes to improve instruction for all students.
9. 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.
10. 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 insure accountability to the local community.
11. An activities program that is usually 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.
12. A welcoming environment for parents and the community.

### **Section 3 Mutual Respect**

The Sandhills 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.

## Article 1 - Mission and Goals

### **Section 4 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. If no resolution is achieved with the immediate school employee, the complaint is taken to the appropriate administrator (Superintendent/Principal). There are specific procedures to address certain complaints or concerns, such as discrimination or harassment, bullying, disciplinary actions. Those procedures should be used where applicable. Please contact the Superintendent to receive assistance in communicating complaints, concerns, or issues according to procedures as outlined in policy adopted by the Sandhills Board of Education. The proper chain of command in communicating complaints or concerns must be followed to insure proper communication and effective conflict resolution.

## Article 2 - High School Day

### Section 1 Daily Schedule Monday through Thursday

*Breakfast	07:45 a.m. - 07:58 a.m.	Period 5	11:32 a.m. - 12:23 p.m.
Period 1	08:00 a.m. - 08:51 a.m.	Lunch	12:23 p.m. - 12:53 p.m.
Period 2	08:53 a.m. - 09:44 a.m.	Period 6	12:55 p.m. -01:46 p.m.
Period 3	09:46 a.m. -10:37 a.m.	Period 7	01:48 p.m. - 02:39 p.m.
Period 4	10:39 a.m. -11:30 a.m.	Period 8	02:41 p.m. -03:32 p.m.

### Section 2 Friday Schedule

*Breakfast	07:45 a.m. - 07:58 a.m.	Period 5	11:08 a.m. - 11:53 p.m.
Period 1	08:00 a.m. -08:45 a.m.	Lunch	11:53 p.m. - 12:23 p.m.
Period 2	08:47 a.m. - 09:32 a.m.	Period 6	12:25 p.m. -01:10 p.m.
Period 3	09:34 a.m. -10:19 a.m.	Period 7	01:12 p.m. -01:57 p.m.
Period 4	10:21 a.m. - 11:06 a.m.	Period 8	01:59 p.m. -02:44 p.m.

### Section 3 Shortened Schedule - 2:00 Dismissal

*Breakfast	07:45 a.m. - 07:58 a.m.	Period 5	10:44 a.m. -11:23 p.m.
Period 1	08:00 a.m. - 08:39 a.m.	Period 6	11:25 a.m. - 12:04 p.m.
Period 2	08:41 a.m. -09:20 a.m.	Lunch	12:06 p.m. - 12:38 p.m.
Period 3	09:22 a.m. -10:01 a.m.	Period 7	12:40 p.m. -01:19 p.m.
Period 4	10:03 a.m. -10:42 a.m.	Period 8	01:21 p.m. -02:00 p.m.

### Section 4 Shortened Schedule - 10:00 a.m. Start

*Breakfast	No Breakfast Served	Lunch	12:30 p.m. -01:00 p.m.
Period 1	10:00 a.m. - 10:36 a.m.	Period 5	01:02 p.m. - 01:38 p.m.
Period 2	10:38 a.m. -11:14 a.m.	Period 6	01:40 p.m. - 02:16 p.m.
Period 3	11:16 a.m. -11:52 a.m.	Period 7	02:18 p.m. -02:54 p.m.
Period 4	11:54 p.m. -12:30 a.m.	Period 8	02:56 p.m. - 03:32 p.m.

### Section 5 Severe Weather and School Cancellations

The Superintendent/Principal may close school in case of severe weather. Parents and students will be notified via the Connect Ed messaging system regarding school closings. In addition, the district Facebook page will also carry these important announcements. It is the responsibility of the student's parent/guardian to make certain the district office has current and up to date contact information in order to be successfully notified by the Connect Ed system. Representatives of the Superintendent's staff will also notify local news media when inclement weather warrants such action. The information is usually broadcast regularly by radio and television stations (KBBN - 95.3, KBRB - 92.7 FM, KCNI- 96.3 & 1280 AM, KBEAR- 92.3 FM, and KOLN/KGIN TV, KNOP TV, SandhillsExpress.com). Due to the size of the Sandhills District, it is possible to have inclement weather in one area and not others. Parents are encouraged to contact school personnel about questions regarding school closings.

## Article 2 - School Day

Decision to Close Schools. A decision to close school is made when forecasts by the weather service, law enforcement advisories or civil defense officials indicate that it would be unwise to hold school. If possible, a decision about the next school day will be made by 9 p.m. 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. In any case, an announcement will be made with Connect Ed and to the news media when schools will be closed. In some instances, schools will be open, but certain services may be cancelled (bus transportation, student activities, etc.).

After School Starts. Every attempt will be made to avoid closing school once classes are in session. In some instance 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 made by Connect Ed and broadcast by the media. **Parents must 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 not be counted as unexcused as long as the absence is necessary (for safety purposes) and the parents properly notify the school of their decision. Parents may pick up their children in inclement weather during the school day.

What Not To Do. Parents should not attempt to come to school during a tornado warning. **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 Emergency Exit system, Tornado Warning System, and Critical Incident Response.

### **Section 6      Open-Closed Campus**

All students are required to remain on campus during the school day. In order to leave the building, a student's parent must provide written or verbal permission. On occasion, students are allowed, with teacher/staff permission, to leave the building to quickly retrieve something from their vehicle, etc. Any time a student leaves the building they must sign out at the main office and sign in upon return.

## Article 2 - School Day

### Section 7 Supervision Responsibility Before/After School

#### Arrival at School/Dismissal from School

Students are expected to arrive at school no more than 20 minutes prior to the first class or school program in which they are participating. **Prior to that time, the school is not responsible for supervision of the students.** Parents are not to expect supervision of their children earlier than the above time or a guarantee they can enter the building. Teachers, coaches, and staff are welcome to make arrangements to have students arrive early under their direct supervision. Students will be dismissed at the end of the last period of the school day unless there are other circumstances (early dismissal, detention etc.). Upon dismissal, students must leave the school grounds and proceed home or to a previously designated location unless participating in a school-sponsored activity. **The school is not responsible for supervision of students once the students are to have left school grounds.** It is expected that students, who are not involved in a school sponsored activity, will proceed home in a timely manner. If a student is staying after school to receive assistance from a teacher, prior arrangements must be made with that teacher and student(s) must be supervised by that teacher.

Certain days on the calendar are "shortened days," meaning that the school day starts or ends other than on the normal schedule. Parents are responsible 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.

#### Emergency Closing Procedures

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

If conditions allow and supervision is available in the event of an early dismissal, the child will be held in school until the normal dismissal time. If the parent or guardian has not arrived to pick up the child by the normal dismissal time, law enforcement or child protective services may be contacted to ensure the safety of the child.

## Article 3 - Use of Building and Grounds

### **Section 1 Visitors**

All visitors must report to the office, upon entering the main entrance, to communicate their business with main office personnel. Visits to classrooms may be limited or regulated to depending on the circumstances. Visitation by parents or relatives to classrooms are welcomed and encouraged; provided that the visits do not disrupt the educational program, individual students, or create a safety concern. Visitors must recognize the importance of communicating their wishes to visit with the classroom teacher before the visit and to obtain administrative permission. Wanting to visit without reasonable notice is not appropriate. If a concern exists it should be promptly communicated to the classroom teacher and administration if necessary. Simply contact the main office and we will gladly assist you in the process. Student visitors must be approved by the administration or designee before the visit and in accordance to board policy. Student visitors will be allowed to visit for a portion of the school day in order to minimize distraction to the educational process. Prospective transfer/option students are welcome to visit, with their parent or guardian by appointment with the administration. The administration reserves the right to make decisions regarding visitors on a case-by-case basis if deemed necessary.

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

All of our school buildings and grounds are smoke and tobacco-free. We would appreciate your help in meeting the goal of a smoke and tobacco-free environment for our children. When you attend school events, including athletic events, please abide by our District's policy.

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

1. Students are responsible for the proper care of all books, equipment, supplies and furniture supplied by the school.
2. 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 for damaged or lost school property will be assigned at the replacement or repair cost as determined by the Superintendent or designee.

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**

Each student will be assigned a locker and gym locker if appropriate. Students must use their own lockers and are not to share lockers with other students except as assigned by school officials. We recommend that the locker be locked with a combination lock supplied by the school. Students are expected to keep all books, etc., in their assigned locker. Students are also responsible for the cleanliness inside their locker and the outside of their locker. Students may be assessed a fine for damage to lockers.



## Article 3 - Use of Building and Grounds

### **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 personal items placed in or on school property, such as but not limited to student vehicles, cell phones, personal technology, etc. School property is subject to search at any time by school officials. Periodic, random searches of lockers, desks, computers and other such property may be conducted at the discretion of the administration.

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

1. School officials may conduct a search if there is a reasonable basis to believe that the search will uncover evidence of a crime or a school rule violation. The search is to be conducted in a reasonable manner under the circumstances.
2. Illegal items or other items reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety of others or a threat to educational purposes may be taken and kept by school officials. Any firearm or other weapon will be confiscated and delivered to law enforcement officials as soon as practicable.
3. Items, which have been or are reasonably expected to be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process (that is, "nuisance items") may be removed from student possession.

### **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/in 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**

Use of the school's phone will only be allowed with permission of the office staff. There are exceptions when office personnel will take a student from class in order to make or take an important phone call as requested by the parent or guardian. Students may use their personal phones during class with permission from the teacher. The administration reserves the right to restrict cell phone use as needed.

## Article 3 - Use of Building and Grounds

### **Section 8 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. Students should use good judgment and lock all items in their academic or athletic lockers. Students should not leave their bags, valuables, etc., hanging or laying in the hallways. It is the student's responsibility to make sure their locker(s) are properly locked to protect their belongings, including school issued books, equipment, etc. If it is necessary to bring valuable items or more money that is needed to pay for lunch, etc., leave the money or valuables with a staff member in the school office for temporary and safe-keeping. Even then, the school is not in a position to guarantee that the student's property will not be subject to loss, theft, or damage.

### **Section 9 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 10 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 Supt/Principal.

### **Section 11 Laboratory/Shop 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 12 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.

### **Section 13 Bulletins and Announcements**

Bulletin boards and display cases are available for school-related and approved materials to be posted and displayed. Posters to be used in the halls or materials for distribution will need to be approved by the Principal's office. Posters are not to be attached to any painted wall surfaces with tape or adhesive that would harm the painted surface. The person or organization responsible for distributing the posters is responsible to see that all posters are removed within 48 hours after the event or at the discretion of the administration.

## Article 3 - Use of Building and Grounds

### **Section 14 Copyright and Fair Use Policy**

It is the school's policy to follow the federal copyright law. Students are reminded that, when using school equipment and when completing course work, they also must follow the federal copyright laws. The federal copyright law governs the reproduction of works of authorship. Copyrighted works are protected regardless of the medium in which they are created or reproduced; thus, copyright extends to digital works and works transformed into a digital format.

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

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

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

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

### Section 2 Attendance and Absences

Excused and Unexcused Absences. An absence from school will be reported as: (a) an excused absence or (b) an unexcused absence.

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

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

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

Tardy to School. Students will be considered tardy to school if they are not seated in their first assigned class or ready and attentive in their assigned area when the bell for their class rings.

Tardy to Class. Students have a sufficient time period between classes to make it to their next assigned class on time. Students will be considered tardy to class if they are not in their assigned classroom when the tardy bell rings, unless they have a pass from the teacher who detained them.

## Article 4 - Attendance

Tardy Discipline Policy: Students who are tardy for 1<sup>st</sup> period will report to the office to get a pass before entering classes. All Teachers are responsible to give a tardy to late students and log tardies into PowerSchool. The school's intent and purpose is to model proper time management and punctual behavior on the part of students. If a student begins to accumulate multiple tardies, that student will meet with the Superintendent/Principal or designee to discuss a remedy to their lateness which may include disciplinary action including, but not limited to, detention time served at the discretion of the administration.

Leaving School or Class: Students who leave school for any reason during the school day must check out at the office before leaving. Students leaving school must be cleared in advance by a note or phone call from the student's parent or legal guardian. Upon returning to school that same day, students are expected to sign in at the office. A sheet will be available on the office counter for this purpose.

College Visitation: Students wishing to visit a college will follow these guidelines:

1. Communicate with the Guidance Counselor and or Principal in order to obtain approval prior to the visit. It is strongly recommended the visit being arranged with the college by the Guidance Counselor to insure the best services during the visit.
2. Get all schoolwork made up before attending the visit.
3. The student must be accompanied by their parent(s) when visiting a college.
4. Pre-approved college visits, through the Guidance Counselor or Principal, will be counted as a school activity and not against the student's attendance record.

Students who leave school without permission and without signing out in the proper manner, or who leave their assigned classroom without teacher permission, will be considered truant.

### **Section 3      Make-up Work**

Written make-up work may be assigned for each day missed regardless of the type of absence. If make-up work is not completed, students will receive no credit for the work required. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate and make arrangements with their teachers in order to make up missed assignments. The time for making up missed work will be up to each teacher due to the unique circumstances of each classrooms/course. The Superintendent/Principal reserves the right to work with the teacher(s) to grant additional time for a student to complete make-up work in the event of special circumstances. The Supt/Principal reserves the right to make all final decisions related to conflicts due to student make-up work issues.

Make-up work, due to excused absences, is the responsibility of the student. The student is expected to communicate with each classroom teacher prior to any planned excused absence. In the event of an illness, etc, where the student cannot make prior arrangements, they are to communicate with each teacher regarding make-up work the first day back from the absence(s).

If requested, assignment sheets will be prepared for students who are ill. If parents or students request assignment sheets the school should be contacted by no later than 10:00 a.m.

## Article 4 - Attendance

### **Section 4 Attendance is Required to Participate in Activities**

Students must attend school at least by noon of the day of any scheduled school activity in order to participate in the activity. This includes athletic contests, practices and dances. Failure to attend will result in a student being withheld from participation in the activity. The Administration retains the right to grant participation should special circumstances arise because of official, necessary appointments or other unavoidable situations. Parents are to contact the main office to discuss their student's circumstances and gain permission from the administration beforehand.

### **Section 5 Truancy & Excessive Absenteeism**

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

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

Number of Allowed Absences & Excessive Absenteeism. Parents will be notified periodically as student attendance checks are conducted. Parents are encouraged to closely monitor their students' attendance via Power School or by contacting the office. Absences shall be determined on a per day basis for elementary students and on a per class basis for secondary students. When a student has excessive absences, the following procedures shall be implemented:

1. A meeting or meetings between the school attendance officer, school social worker (or school principal or a member of the school administrative staff, if the school has no social worker), the student's parent/guardian and the student (if necessary) to solve the excessive absenteeism problem.
2. Educational counseling to explore curriculum changes such as alternative educational programs to solve the excessive absenteeism problem.
3. Educational evaluation to assist in determining the specific condition(s) contributing to the excessive absenteeism problem, supplemented by specific efforts by the school to help remedy any condition diagnosed.
4. Investigation of the problem by a school social worker (or principal or administrative staff member) to identify conditions contributing to the excessive absenteeism problem. If services for the student and student's family are determined to be needed, the investigator

#### Article 4 - Attendance

shall meet with the parent/guardian and child to discuss any referral to appropriate agencies to remedy the conditions.

If the student is absent more than twenty days per year, or the hourly equivalent and all of the absences are due to documented illness that makes attendance impossible or impracticable or are otherwise excused by school authorities, the attendance officer may report such information to the county attorney of the county in which the student resides. If the student is absent more than twenty days per year, or the hourly equivalent and any of such absences are not excused, the attendance officer shall file a report with the county attorney of the county in which such student resides. The report must be signed by a school representative and designate whether: (a) The school representative requests additional time to work with the student prior to intervention by the county attorney; or (b) The school representative believes that the school has used all reasonable efforts to resolve the student's excessive absenteeism without success and recommends county attorney intervention. If further action is necessary to address the student's attendance, the initial meeting between the parent/guardian of the student, the school, and the county attorney or his/her designee shall be at a location determined by the school.

Students are subject to disciplinary action for excessive absenteeism including suspension and expulsion. It shall be within the discretion of the principal to determine, in light of the circumstances, whether a student may make up work missed because of excessive absenteeism. Disciplinary action for students receiving special education services will be assigned in accordance with the goals and objectives of the student's Individualized Education Program.

The superintendent shall report periodically to the Commissioner of Education as directed by the commissioner regarding the number of and reason for any long-term suspension, expulsion, or excessive absenteeism of a student; referral of a student to the office of the county attorney for excessive absenteeism; or contacting of law enforcement officials other than school resource officers by the district relative to a student enrolled in the district. The superintendent shall report annually to the Commissioner the required data for the number of students who have dropped out of school.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to implement this policy. The implementation may include regulations indicating the disciplinary action to be taken for excessive absenteeism.

## Article 5 - Scholastic Achievement

### Section 1 Grading System

Students will receive letter grades on report cards and transcripts. The following scale will be used to assign letter grades and a grade point average from a percent:

<b>A</b>	<b>93-100</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>92-86</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>85-78</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>77-70</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>69-0</b>

Each teacher will define the grading procedures to be used in their classes. Parents may view their student's grades and progress online at <https://sandhills.powerschool.com/public/>. Usernames and password information is available by contacting the school.

### Section 2 High School Yearly Course Requirements

High school students in all grade levels are required to register in the following courses: Math, Social Studies, Science, Health and Physical Education, Language-Arts, and electives as required. The Guidance Counselor, under the direction of the administration, will assist each student in course selection and registration which best suits the student according to available course offerings in alignment with the student's personal plan for high school and beyond. Additionally, there are many online course opportunities in which students can enroll. In order to create equity, the following "online course guidelines" will be used by the administration in determining who is eligible to take courses online:

#### Online and/or College Course Guidelines - Sandhills High School

**Purpose:** The purpose of online or college coursework will be to provide educational opportunities for motivated students in addition to regular course offerings in the high school schedule. The purpose of online courses is to enhance, not replace, the typical schedule for a high school student.

#### **Eligibility**

- Be a junior or senior or be identified as a high ability learner by the high school. Be willing and motivated to be a self-learner and possess a solid work ethic. ---
- Hold an overall "B" grade point average or higher.
- Have taken the ACT test.
- Have the support of the counselor and principal. The Principal can make exceptions providing the student has demonstrated the integrity and work ethic to successfully complete an independent online course.

#### **Guidelines/Rationale**

Online courses are not meant to replace current courses in the schedule. They are meant to challenge students beyond the regular schedule and further prepare them for the rigors of college. Students enrolling in online courses are expected to complete course requirements during study halls or on their own time. Exceptions to this guideline will only be made under special circumstances (determined by the



## Article 5 - Scholastic Achievement

principal and counselor) where an online course may be taken in place of courses already found in the class schedule.

Online course choices must align with student future goals and interests. Online courses will not be approved if the intent is to simply avoid course offerings in the regular high school schedule.

Final recommendation of students for online courses is the discretion of the Principal and Guidance Counselor.

There is no guarantee the school district will be able to pay for online courses.

Funding is subject to availability on a year-to-year basis. If funding is available, courses that are dual credit will be considered for funding. Otherwise, all tuition, fees, and materials will be the responsibility of the student and parent. The school supports the concept of online learning and will assist students with funding whenever possible. Students will be limited to 1 course per semester.

If funded by the school district, the student and parent agree to reimburse the school for all tuition, fees, and materials in the event the student does not earn at least a "C" or drops the course before completion.

Not all online courses are college credit eligible. The main programs the school will work with to provide online courses are the University of Nebraska System and Mid Plains Community College.

### **Section 3      Graduation Requirements**

To participate in commencement exercises or receive a Sandhills Public Schools diploma a student must fully complete all requirements for graduation prior to the official commencement exercises, and complete other administrative requirements or conditions.

In recognition of the differing academic preparation needs of the graduating student, the following graduation requirements shall be considered the minimum requirement. It is recommended that students choose a variety of courses to expand opportunities and to investigate multiple areas. The Guidance Counselor and Superintendent/Principal will work with each student to ensure all requirements are met and individual interests are entertained as much as possible according to overall course offerings.

#### **235 Required Semester Hours** (10 semester hours equates to a full year or 2 semesters)

40 semester hours of English

5 semester hours of Speech Fundamentals

40 semester hours of Mathematics

30 semester hours of Science

40 semester hours of Social Science

(Must pass American History & American Government/Psychology)

5 semester hours of Senior College Prep

10 semester hours of Physical Education and Health

20 semester hours of Vocational, Fine Arts, Music, or Art Courses

30 semester hours of Elective Courses

10 semester hours of Computer Literacy

5 semester hours of Personal Finance

## Article 5 - Scholastic Achievement

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. Students receiving a Certificate of Attendance shall not be eligible to participate in graduation exercises.

### ***Valedictorian and Salutatorian***

The senior with the highest grade cumulative "percentage" will be named valedictorian for their graduating class. The senior with the second highest cumulative grade "percentage" will be named salutatorian. The cutoff date for grade entries and determination of these honors will be as close to graduation as appropriate to effectively allow for graduation planning and preparation. The Superintendent will make the final decision regarding all logistics and honors associated with Valedictorian and Salutatorian. Students who have equal grade percentages when figured to 2 decimal places will be consider "co-honorees".

### **Section 4 Promotion and Retention**

Students will be placed at the grade level and in the courses best suited to them academically, socially and emotionally as determined by the professional staff and student's parents. Students will typically progress annually from grade to grade. A student may be retained at a grade level or be required to repeat a course or program when such is determined in the judgment of the professional staff to be appropriate for the educational interests of the student and the educational program. In the event of conflict, the Superintendent will work directly with the appropriate staff and parents to mediate a decision that is mutually beneficial for the school and student.

### **Section 5 Schedule Changes**

Students needing schedule changes should notify the Guidance Counselor or Principal. Schedule changes must be initiated by the teachers involved, the Principal or counselor, and the student's parent. Final approval of all schedule changes will be made by the Principal only. In general, all schedule changes must be completed, with required signatures, within the 1st week of each semester. Students will be notified regarding due dates or timelines for schedule/class changes.

### **Section 6 Interim Reports**

Various supplemental reports may be sent to parents throughout the school year concerning student's performance. These reports may describe student work of an exceptional nature or work which needs improving. These reports will be sent as the teacher determines appropriate.

Included in the academic improvement report will be a request from the teacher for parents to contact the teacher by phone to discuss the student's academic progress. Teachers will arrange

## Article 5 - Scholastic Achievement

with the parents for days when the student can meet with the teacher outside the regular class period until the student returns to satisfactory academic standing.

### **Section 7 Report Cards & Transcripts**

Report cards are issued at the end of each semester. Percentage based grades are used to designate a student's progress. A grade of 69 or below carries no credit. A grade of "I" (incomplete) received at the end of a grading period must be made up within two weeks or missing assignments will receive grades of "O" and those grades will be averaged into the final grade. No incompletes will be given at the end of the second semester, as all course work must be completed by the end of the fourth quarter.

### **Section 8 Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences will be held annually in the fall. Refer to the school calendar for the schedule. Final dates/times for conference will be set in the best interest of the school, parents, and students. Conferences with teachers, at any other time, are possible by calling the school office and making arrangements with the teachers.

### **Section 9 Honor Roll**

The purpose of the honor roll is to recognize those students who demonstrate academic excellence. Honor rolls will be determined on a semester basis. Students will be recognized accordingly:

To be eligible for the honor roll a student must be a fulltime student of Sandhills Public School. To be on the High Honor Roll, a student must have a grade point average above 95.0% and no grade below a 93%, students with an average above 93.0% and no grade below an 88% are eligible for Honor Roll. Honor Roll will be determined after the end of each term. Students who have incomplete at that point will not be eligible for honor roll.

### **Section 10 National Honor Society:**

The National Honor Society chapter of Sandhills Public Schools is a duly chartered and affiliated chapter of this prestigious national organization.

#### Admission to the National Honor Society

Membership is open to those students who meet the required standards in four areas of evaluation: scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Standards for selection are established by the national office of NHS and have been revised to meet our local chapter needs. Students are selected to be members by a five-member Faculty Council, appointed by the principal, which bestows this honor upon qualified students on behalf of the faculty of our school each semester.

Students in the 10th, 11th, or 12th grades are eligible for membership. For the scholarship criterion, a student must have a cumulative grade point percentage of 90%. Those students who meet this criterion are invited to complete a Student Activity Information Form that provides the Faculty Council with information regarding the candidate's leadership and service. A history of leadership experiences and participation in school or community service is required.

## Article 5 - Scholastic Achievement

To evaluate a candidate's character, the faculty council uses two forms of input: first, school disciplinary records are reviewed; second, members of the faculty are solicited for input regarding their professional reflections on a candidate's service activities, character, and leadership. These forms and the Student Activity Information Forms are carefully reviewed by the Faculty Council to determine membership. A majority vote of the council is necessary for selection. Candidates are notified regarding selection or non-selection according to a predetermined schedule.

Following notification, a formal induction ceremony is held at the school to recognize all the newly selected members. Once inducted, new members are required to maintain the same level of performance in all four criteria (or better) that led to their selection. This obligation includes regular attendance at chapter meetings when and as scheduled and participation in the chapter service projects(s).

Students or parents who have questions regarding the selection process or membership obligations can contact the chapter advisor Chris Rodgers.

### Removal from National Honor Society

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

1. Prior Conduct. 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. Post-Induction Conduct. 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 decision of the Principal/Superintendent shall be final.

## **Section 11 Academic Integrity**

### **A. Policy Statement**

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

## Article 5 - Scholastic Achievement

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

### B. Definitions

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

1. "Cheating" means intentionally 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:

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

- (1) 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.

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

- (3) 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's answer 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.

- (4) Use of Other Student to Take Test. Having another person take one's place for a test, or taking a test for another student, without the specific knowledge and permission of the instructor.

- (5) 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 miss class on the day of a test, claiming to be sick, when the student's real reason for missing class was because the student was not prepared for the test.

- (b) Papers (includes papers, essays, lab projects, and other similar academic work):

## Article 5 - Scholastic Achievement

- (1) 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.
  - (2) 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 miss class on the day a paper is due, claiming to be sick, when the student's real reason for missing class was because the student had not finished the paper.
- (c) Alteration of Assigned Grades. Any unauthorized alteration of assigned grades by a student in the teacher's grade book or the school records is a serious form of cheating.
2. "Plagiarism" means to take and present as one's own material portion of the ideas or words of another or to present as one's own, an idea or work derived from an existing source without full and proper credit to the source of the ideas, words, or works.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- (1) 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.
  - (2) Falsely Presenting Work as One's Own: Presenting work prepared by another in final or draft form as one's own without citing the source, such as the use of purchased research papers or use of another student's paper.
3. "Contributing" to academic integrity violations means to participate 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.

## Article 5 - Scholastic Achievement

### C. Sanctions

The following sanctions will occur for academic integrity offenses:

1. Academic Sanction. The instructor will refuse to accept the student's work in which the cheating or plagiarism took place, and assign a grade of zero for the work. There is no guarantee the student will be allowed to make up the work. It will be the discretion of the instructor whether to require/allow the student to complete make up work within such time and under such conditions as the instructor may determine appropriate. If the student is allowed the opportunity for makeup work, credit or grading for said work will be up to the instructor. The Superintendent reserves the right to adjust or change the instructor's plan or intent regarding said situations.
2. Reports to Parents and Administration. The instructor will notify the Supt/Principal of the offense and the instructor or Principal will notify the student's parents or guardian.
3. Student Discipline Sanctions. Academic integrity offenses are a violation of school rules. The Principal may recommend sanctions in addition to those assigned by the instructor, up to and including suspension or expulsion. Such additional sanctions will be given strong consideration where a student has engaged in a serious or repeated academic integrity offense or other rule violations, and where the academic sanction is otherwise not a sufficient remedy, such as for offenses involving altering assigned grades or contributing to academic integrity violations.

## Article 6 -Support Services

### **Section 1 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 need special education and related services.

#### How are Students with Disabilities Identified?

Referrals are made by teachers or parents to a Student Assistance Team. If the student assistance team or comparable 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.



## Article 6 -Support Services

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

Accommodations and related services are made available to students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Under Section 504, parents have the following rights:

1. Have your child take part in, and receive benefits from, public education programs without discrimination because of your child's disability.
2. Have the school district advise you of your rights under federal law.
3. Receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation or placement of your child.
4. Have your child receive a free appropriate public education. This includes the right to be educated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate. It also includes the right to have the school district make reasonable accommodations to allow your child an equal opportunity to participate in school and school-related activities.
5. Have your child receive services and be educated in facilities which are comparable to those provided to students without disabilities.
6. Have your child receive an individualized evaluation and receive special education and related services if your child is found eligible under Section 504.
7. Have evaluation, eligibility, educational and placement decisions made based on a variety of information sources and by persons who know your child and who are knowledgeable about the evaluation data and placement options.
8. Have transportation provided to and from an alternative placement setting at no

## Article 6 -Support Services

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 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.

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 3 Guidance Services**

Sandhills Public Schools employ a counselor for the purpose of assisting with the District's testing program, to assist with scheduling and career education, and for students to discuss problems and resolve conflicts. If you wish to see a counselor, stop by a counselor's office and make arrangements for an appointment.

### **Section 4 Health Services**

#### Student Illnesses

Official school personnel will notify parents when a student needs to be sent home from school due to illness. Conditions requiring a student be sent home include: Temperature greater than 100°F, vomiting, diarrhea, unexplained rashes, or on determination by school personnel that the child's condition prevents meaningful participation in the educational program, presents a health risk to the child or others, or that medical consultation is warranted unless the condition resolves.

Please include emergency daytime phone numbers on your child's enrollment card so that you can be reached if your child becomes ill or injured while at school. Please also inform your school health office staff of information you feel is important for your student's success in the classroom and/or safety at school.

#### Guidelines for Administering Medication

Whenever possible your child should be provided medications by you outside of school hours. In the event it is necessary that your child take or have medication available at school, the parents/guardians must provide a signed written consent for the child to be given medication at school. A consent form is available at the school office. If your child has asthma or diabetes and taking medications for asthma, diabetes or another diagnosed medical condition and are capable

## Article 6 -Support Services

of self-managing, contact the school nurse to develop a self-management plan according to current state regulations which are not governed by the school.

Medications must be provided to the school by the parent/guardian in the pharmacy-labeled or manufacturer-labeled bottle. Repackaged medications will not be accepted. All prescribed medications also require a physician's authorization to be given at school. The school nurse may limit medications to those set forth in the Physician's Desk Reference (PDR). Please limit the amount of medication provided to the school to a two-week supply unless agreed upon by administration and parent/guardian.

### School Health Screening

All children in Kindergarten through 4th grade as well as 7<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> grade will be screened for vision, hearing, dental, and BMI (height, weight, BMI percentile). If a parent wishes for their child not to participate in the state required school screening process, said parent must provide physician documentation that states the child has undergone the required screening/inspection within the last 6 months.

### Physical and Visual Examination

Evidence of a physical examination and a visual evaluation is required within six months prior to entrance into kindergarten and, in the case of transfer from out of state, to any other grade. A physical examination is also required prior to entrance into the seventh grade. The physical examination is to be completed by a physician, a physician's assistant, or an advanced practice registered nurse; the visual evaluation is to be completed by any of the forgoing or an optometrist. A parent or guardian who objects to the physical examination and/or visual evaluation may submit a written statement of refusal for his or her child. Waiver forms are available at the school offices. Additional physical examination requirements exist for students participating in athletic participation.

### Immunizations

Students must show proof of immunization. A student who does not comply with the immunization requirements will not be permitted to continue in school. Students with medical conditions or sincerely held religious beliefs which do not allow immunizations must complete a waiver statement or affidavit. Forms are available in school offices. Immunization records or waivers must be submitted to the main office no later than October 1<sup>st</sup> for students beginning on the first day of school. Immunization records or waivers for Students who enroll after the start date of school must be turned in no later than 30 days after their enrollment date. Failure to produce immunization records or waivers can result in the child being excluded from school.

Article 6 -Support Services

**Summary of the School Immunization Rules and Regulations For 2022-2023 School Year**

Student Age Group	Required Vaccines
Ages 2 through 5 years enrolled in a school base program not licensed as a child care provider	4 doses of DTaP, DTP, or DT vaccine 3 doses of Polio vaccine 3 doses of Hib vaccine or 1 dose of Hib given at or after 15 months of age 3 doses of pediatric Hepatitis B vaccine 1 dose of MMR or MMRV given on or after 12 months of age 1 dose of varicella (chickenpox) or <b>MMRV</b> given on or after 12 months of age. Written documentation (including year) of varicella disease from parent, guardian, or health care provider will be accepted. 4 doses of pneumococcal or 1 dose of pneumococcal given on or after 15 months of age
Students entering school (Kindergarten or 1st Grade depending on the school district's entering grade)	3 doses of DTaP, DTP, DT, or Td vaccine, one given on or after their 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday. 3 doses of Polio vaccine 3 doses of pediatric Hepatitis B vaccine or 2 doses of adolescent vaccine if student is 11-15 years of age 2 doses of MMR or MMRV vaccine, given on or after 12 months of age and separated by at least one month 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) or MMRV given on or after 12 months of age. Written documentation (including year) of varicella disease from parent, guardian, or health care provider will be accepted. If the child has had varicella disease, they do not need any varicella shots.
Students entering 11 <sup>th</sup> grade	Must be current with the above vaccinations AND receive 1 dose of Tdap (contain Pertussis booster)
Students transferring from outside the state at any grade	Must be immunized appropriately according to the grade entered.

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

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

Updated 1/26/2018

## Article 6 -Support Services

### Birth Certificate Requirements

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

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

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

### Guidelines for Head Lice

The following guidelines are in place to: better control a nuisance condition; reduce absenteeism due to head lice; and involve parents as partners with the school in control efforts:

1. Parents will be notified if school personnel discover their child has lice. It is recommended that parents promptly seek the appropriate treatment and or medical advice in order to treat the condition and be able to return their child to school. With parent permission the first treatment may be administered by school personnel.
2. The school and its staff will defer to local and or state health officials to provide parent's information for treating and dealing with head lice. It is the school's intent to follow the guidelines of local and state medical officials in working with families when a condition of head lice arises to treat the condition promptly and effectively.
3. A child who has lice should be treated promptly and return to school as soon as proper treatment has been carried out and medical personnel advise it is appropriate for the child to return to school. The school may require a note from a medical professional stating treatment has been conducted and the student may return to school.
4. Families are encouraged to report head lice to the school office to help the school effectively minimize the situation or condition.
5. Classroom-wide or school-wide head checks may be conducted as needed in order to control the condition at school.
6. Based on CDC guidelines, nits (lice eggs) are not considered to be an immediate health threat to others and students will not be sent home for nits. However, parents are encouraged to continue active treatment plans to rid their children of nits and consultation with health officials is encouraged. School officials reserve the right to contact appropriate public health agencies to assist families with multiple issues of lice or nits. For more information, please visit the following CDC website: <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/schools.html>.

## Article 6 -Support Services

### **Section 5      Transportation Services**

Transportation to and from school is provided to students in accordance with law and Board policy. Students may also be provided transported on field trips and when participating in school activities. Students are expected to follow the behavioral expectations for riding school buses.

#### **Behavior on School Buses**

**I. General Conduct Rules Apply:** While riding school buses you are expected to follow the same student conduct rules, which apply when you are on school property or attending school activities, functions or events. There are also special conduct rules for riding school buses. These rules also apply to riding other school vehicles.

#### **II. Special Conduct Rules for Riding School Buses.**

##### **A. Rules for Getting On and Off the Bus**

1. Be on time to be picked up. As a general rule, get to your bus stop five minutes before your scheduled pick up time. If you miss the bus, immediately return to your home and tell your parents so they can get you to school.
2. While waiting for the bus, stay at least 5 feet away from the street, road or highway. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before approaching the bus.
3. You may exit the bus only at your approved destination (your school or your approved bus stop). Exit the bus as directed by the driver. Do not run.
4. If you must cross the street after exiting the bus, always cross in front of the bus where the driver can see you. Wait for the driver to signal to you before crossing the street.
5. Parents must contact the main office or send a note to school if their child is to ride or get off the bus other than their scheduled/planned routine.

##### **B. Rules on the Bus**

1. Be respectful of the bus driver. Immediately follow all directions of the driver and any supervising adult on the bus.
2. Sit in your seat facing forward. Use seat belts in vehicles in which they are available.
3. Talk quietly and use appropriate language.
4. Keep all parts of your body inside the bus.
5. Keep your arms, legs and belongings to yourself.
6. No fighting, harassment, bullying, intimidation or horseplay.
7. Do not throw any object.
8. No eating, drinking, use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs or flammables.
9. Do not bring any weapon (real or imitation) or dangerous objects on the school bus.
10. Do not damage the school bus.

## Article 6 - Support Services

**III. Getting the Driver's Assistance:** If you need assistance from the driver, wait until the bus is at a full stop. If you are close enough, tell the driver what you need. If you are too far away for the driver to hear you, ask a student in front of you to get the driver's attention. If necessary, walk up to the driver, while the bus is at a full stop. If you need immediate assistance for an emergency, take all action needed to safely get the help of the driver.

**IV. Consequences for Rule Violations:** Consequences for school bus misconduct may include restriction or suspension of bus privileges and other disciplinary measures, up to and including expulsion from school.

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

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

The District implements regulations and practices which will ensure compliance with the federal Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act and all regulations and rules promulgated pursuant thereto. The District's safe and drug-free school program is established in accordance with principles of effectiveness as required by law to respond to such harmful effects. The consistent message of the program is that the use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful.

### **Section 2 Education and Prevention.**

The District promotes comprehensive, age appropriate, developmentally based drug and alcohol education and prevention programs. The curriculum includes the teaching of both proper and incorrect use of drugs and alcohol for all students in all grades. The District provides in-service orientation and training for staff with regard to drug and alcohol education and prevention programs.

Drug and Alcohol Use and Prevention. Each student of the District is hereby provided a copy of the standards of conduct for student behavior in the District which prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol on school premises or as a part of any of the school's activities.

Drug and Alcohol Education and Prevention Program of the District Pursuant to the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Laws and Regulations. All students are provided an age appropriate, developmentally based drug and alcohol education and prevention program. The program educates on the adverse effects of the use of illicit drugs and alcohol, with the primary objective being the prevention of illicit drug and alcohol use by students.

Drug and Alcohol Counseling, Rehabilitation and Re-entry Programs. Information concerning available drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, and re-entry programs is available to all of the students upon request of the Counselor. In the event of disciplinary proceedings against a student for any District policy pertaining to the prohibition against the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol, appropriate school personnel will confer with the student and the student's parents or guardian concerning available drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, and re-entry programs that appropriate school personnel consider to be of benefit.

Safe and Drug-Free Schools--Parental Notice. Pursuant to the provisions of the "Every Student Succeeds Act" (ESSA), if upon receipt of information regarding the content of safe and drug free school programs and activities other than classroom instruction a parent objects to the participation of their child in such programs and activities, the parent may notify the District of such objection in writing. Upon the receipt of such notice the student will be withdrawn from the program or activity to which parental objection has been made.

### **Section 3 Standards of Student Conduct Pertaining to Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco.**

These standards are in addition to standards of student conduct elsewhere adopted by board policy or administrative regulation. The District's standards prohibit the possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs or alcohol on school premises, in school vehicles, or as a part of any



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

of the school's activities on or off school premises. Conduct prohibited at places and activities as hereinabove described shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Possession, use, distribution or being under the influence of any controlled substance, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, any hallucinogen, any stimulant, or any depressant.
2. Possession of any prescription drug in an unlawful fashion.
3. Possession, use, distribution or being under the influence of alcohol.
4. Possession, use, distribution, or being under the influence of any abusable glue or aerosol paint or any other chemical substance for inhalation, including but not limited to lighter fluid, whiteout, and reproduction fluid, when such activity constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes.
5. Possession, use, or distribution of any look-alike drug or a look-alike control substance when such activity constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes.
6. Possession, use or distribution of any tobacco and or smoking type product. This includes possession or use of e-cigarettes, vapor products, alternative nicotine products, or other such look-alike products. All are prohibited.

### **Disciplinary Sanctions**

Violation of any of the above prohibited acts will result in disciplinary sanction being taken within the bounds of applicable law, up to and including expulsion and referral to appropriate authorities for criminal prosecution. In particular, students should be aware that:

1. Violation of these standards may result in suspension or expulsion.
2. Prohibited substances will be confiscated and unlawful substances will be turned over to law enforcement authorities.
3. The student may be referred for counseling or treatment.
4. Parents or legal guardian will be notified.
5. Law enforcement will be notified.
6. If it appears there is imminent danger to the student, other students, school personnel, or students involved, emergency medical services will be contacted.

### **Intervention**

The District does not have the authority or responsibility to make medical or health determinations regarding chemical dependency. However, when observed behavior indicates that a problem exists which may affect the student's ability to learn or function in the educational environment, the school has the right and responsibility to refer the student for a formal chemical dependency diagnosis based on behavior observed by school staff.

### **Administration**

The administration is authorized to adopt such administrative rules, regulations or practices necessary to properly implement this policy. Such regulations, rules or practices may vary the procedures set forth herein to the extent necessary to fit the circumstances of an individual situation. Such rules, regulations and practices may include administrative forms, such as checklists to be used by staff to record observed behavior and to determine the proper plan of action.

## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

### Section 1 Purpose of Student Conduct Rules

These student conduct rules are established to maintain a school atmosphere which 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.

### Section 2 Forms of School Discipline

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

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

The following process will apply to short-term suspensions:

1. The Principal or the Principal's designee will make a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances. A short-term suspension will be made upon a determination that the suspension is necessary to help any student, to further school purposes, or to prevent an interference with school purposes.
2. Prior to commencement of the short-term suspension, the student will be given oral or written notice of the charges against the student. The student will be advised of what the student is accused of having done, an explanation of the evidence the authorities have, and be afforded an opportunity to explain the student's version of the facts.
3. Within 24 hours or such time as is reasonably necessary following the suspension, the Principal or administrator will send a written statement to the student and the student's parent or guardian describing the student's conduct, misconduct or violation of the rule or standard and the reasons for the action taken.
4. An opportunity will be given to the student, and the student's parent or guardian, to have a conference with the Principal or administrator ordering the short-term suspension before or at the time the student returns to school. The Principal or administrator shall determine who in addition to the parent or guardian is to attend the conference.
5. A student on a short-term suspension shall not be permitted to be on school grounds without the express permission of the Principal.

B. Long-Term Suspension: A long-term suspension means an exclusion from school and any school functions for a period of more than five school days but less than twenty school days. A student who on a long-term suspension shall not be permitted to be on school grounds without

## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

the express permission of the Principal. A notice will be given to the student and the parents/guardian when the Principal recommends a long-term suspension. The notice will include a description of the procedures for long-term suspension. The procedures will be those set forth in the Student Discipline Act.

### C. Expulsion:

1. Meaning of Expulsion. Expulsion means exclusion from attendance in all schools, grounds and activities of or within the system for a period not to exceed the remainder of the semester in which it took effect unless (a) the misconduct occurred within ten school days prior to the end of the first semester, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect through the second semester, or (b) the misconduct occurred within ten school days prior to the end of the second semester, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect for summer school and the first semester of the following school year, or (c) the expulsion is for conduct specified in these rules or in law as permitting or requiring a longer removal, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect for the period specified therein. Such action may be modified or terminated by the school district at any time during the expulsion period.
2. Suspensions Pending Hearing. When a notice of intent to discipline a student by long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment is filed with the superintendent, the student may be suspended by the principal until the date the long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment takes effect if no hearing is requested or, if a hearing is requested, the date the hearing examiner makes the report of his or her findings and a recommendation of the action to be taken to the superintendent. The suspension pending hearing may be imposed if the principal determines that the student must be suspended immediately to prevent or substantially reduce the risk of (a) interference with an educational function or school purpose or (b) a personal injury to the student himself or herself, other students, school employees, or school volunteers.
3. Summer Review. Any expulsion that will remain in effect during the first semester of the following school year will be automatically scheduled for review before the beginning of the school year in accordance with law.
4. Alternative Education. Students who are expelled may be provided an alternative education program that will enable the student to continue academic work for credit toward graduation. In the event an alternative education program is not provided, a conference will be held with the parent, student, the Principal or another school representative assigned by the Principal, and a representative of a community organization that assists young people or that is involved with juvenile justice to develop a plan for the student in accordance with law.
5. Suspension of Enforcement of an Expulsion. Enforcement of an expulsion action may be suspended (i.e., "stayed") for a period of not more than one full semester

## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

in addition to the balance of the semester in which the expulsion takes effect. As a condition of such suspended action, the student and parents will be required to sign a discipline agreement.

6. Students Subject to Juvenile or Court Probation. Prior to the readmission to school of any student who is less than 19 years of age and who is subject to the supervision of a juvenile probation officer or an adult probation officer pursuant to a court order Court, who chooses to meet conditions of probation by attending school, and who has previously been expelled from school, the Principal or the Principal's designee shall meet with the student's probation officer and assist in developing conditions of probation that will provide specific guidelines for behavior and consequences for misbehavior at school (including conduct on school grounds and conduct during an educational function or event off school grounds) as well as educational objectives that must be achieved. If the guidelines, consequences, and objectives provided by the Principal or the Principal's designee are agreed to by the probation officer and the student, and the court permits the student to return to school under the agreed to conditions, the student may be permitted to return to school. The student may with proper consent, upon such return, be evaluated by the school for possible disabilities and may be referred for evaluation for possible placement in a special education program. The student may be expelled or otherwise disciplined for subsequent conduct as provided in Board policy and state statute.

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

### **Section 3 Student Conduct Expectations**

Students are not to engage in conduct which causes or which creates a reasonable likelihood that it will cause a substantial disruption in or material interference with any school function, activity or purpose or interfere with the health, safety, wellbeing or rights of other students, staff or visitors.

## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

### **A. Grounds for Short-Term Suspension, Long-Term Suspension, Expulsion, Mandatory Reassignment, or Lesser Forms of Discipline.**

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

1. Willfully disobeying any reasonable written or oral request of a school staff member, or the voicing of disrespect to those in authority.
2. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, harassment, or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes or making any communication that reasonable recipient would interpret as a serious expression of an intent to harm or cause injury to another;
3. Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property of substantial value, repeated damage or theft involving property, or setting or attempting to set a fire of any magnitude;
4. Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to any person, including any school employee, school volunteer, or student. Personal injury caused by accident, self-defense, or other action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect some other person shall not constitute a violation of this subdivision;
5. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of or with the intent of obtaining money or anything of value from such student or making a threat which causes or may be expected to cause a disruption to school operations;
6. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon or that has the appearance of a weapon or bringing or possessing any explosive device, including fireworks;
7. Selling, using, possessing or dispensing of alcohol, tobacco, narcotics, drugs, controlled substance, or an inhalant; being under the influence of any of the above; possession of drug paraphernalia, or the selling, using, possessing, or dispensing of an imitation controlled substance as defined in section 28-401 of the Nebraska statutes, or material represented to be alcohol, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance or inhalant. Use of a controlled substance in the manner prescribed for the student by the student's physician is not a violation. The term "under the influence" has a less strict meaning than it does under criminal law; for school purposes, the term means any level of impairment and includes even the odor of alcohol or illegal substances on the breath or person of a student; also, it includes being impaired by reason of the abuse of any material used as a stimulant;
8. Public indecency, sexual conduct, or inappropriate public displays of affection.

## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

9. Engaging in bullying, which includes any ongoing pattern of physical, verbal, or electronic abuse on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by a school being used for a school purpose by a school employee or a school employee's designee, or at school-sponsored activities or school-sponsored athletic events. Bullying carries special consequences. A student cited for bullying will serve at minimum a 5-day out of school suspension and will be suspended from all school activities, including practices, for 3 weeks. Per board policy, bystanders that do not report bullying behavior to appropriate school personnel in a timely fashion are also subject to school discipline.
10. Sexually assaulting or attempting to sexually assault any person. This conduct may result in an expulsion regardless of the time or location of the offense if a complaint alleging such conduct is filed in a court of competent jurisdiction;
11. Engaging in any activity forbidden by law which constitutes a danger to other students or interferes with school purposes. This conduct may result in an expulsion regardless of the time or location of the offense if the conduct creates or had the potential to create a substantial interference with school purposes, such as the use of the telephone or internet off-school grounds to threaten; or
12. Repeated violation of any rules established by the school district or school officials if such violations constitute a substantial interference with school purposes;
13. Truancy or- failure to attend assigned classes or assigned activities; or tardiness to school, assigned classes or assigned activities;
14. The use of language, written or oral, or conduct, including gestures, which is profane or abusive to students or staff members. Profane or abusive language or conduct includes, but is not limited to, that which is commonly understood and intended to be derogatory toward a group or individual based upon race, gender, disability, national origin, or religion;
15. Dressing or grooming in a manner which is dangerous to the student's health and safety or a danger to the health and safety of others or repeated violations of the student dress and grooming standards; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that is lewd or indecent, vulgar or plainly offensive; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that school officials reasonably conclude will materially and substantially disrupt the work and discipline of the school; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that a reasonable observer would interpret as advocating illegal drug use.
16. Willfully violating the behavioral expectations for those students riding Sandhills Public Schools buses.
17. A student who engages in the following conduct shall be expelled for the remainder of the school year in which it took effect if the misconduct occurs during the first semester, and if the expulsion for such conduct takes place during the second semester, the expulsion shall remain in effect for the first semester of the following school year. The Superintendent may modify such year expulsion requirement on a cases-by-case basis, provided that such modification is in writing:
  - a. The knowing and intentional use of force in causing or attempting to cause personal injury to a school employee, school volunteer, or student, except if caused by accident, self-defense, or on the reasonable belief that the force used was necessary to protect some other person and the extent of force used was reasonably believed to be necessary, or

## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

- b. The knowing and intentional possession, use, or transmission of a dangerous weapon other than a firearm. The term “dangerous weapon” includes any personal safety or security device (such as tasers, mace, and pepper spray). If a student desires to carry or possess a personal safety or security device, the student must obtain prior approval from the building principal before bringing such device on school grounds. If a student obtains prior approval from the building principal, the student must store the device during the school day in the main office, or in another secure location designated by the building principal. A student shall not carry a personal safety or security device during the school day.
18. Knowingly and intentionally possessing, using, or transmitting a firearm on school grounds, in a school-owned or utilized vehicle, or during an educational function or event off school grounds, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event. This conduct shall result in an expulsion for one calendar year. "Firearm" means a firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921, as that statute existed on January 1, 2018. That statute includes the following statement: "The term 'firearm' means (a) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (b) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (c) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (d) any destructive device." The Superintendent may modify such year expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis, provided that such modification is in writing.

Bringing a firearm or other dangerous weapon to school for any reason is discouraged; however, a student will not be subject to disciplinary action if the item is brought or possessed under the following conditions:

- a. Prior written permission to bring the firearm or other dangerous weapon to school is obtained from the student's teacher, building administrator and parent.
- b. The purpose of having the firearm or other dangerous weapon in school is for a legitimate educational function.
- c. A plan for its transportation into and from the school, its storage while in the school building and how it will be displayed must be developed with the prior written approval by the teacher and building administrator. Such plan shall require that such item will be in the possession of an adult staff member at all times except for such limited time as is necessary to fulfill the educational function.
- d. The firearm or other dangerous weapon shall be in an inoperable condition while it is on school grounds.

## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

### **B. Additional Student Conduct Expectations and Grounds for Discipline**

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

- (1) **Student Appearance:** Students are expected to dress in a way that is appropriate for school. Students should not dress in a manner that is dangerous to the health and safety of anyone or interferes with the learning environment or teaching process in our school. **It is the Parents' responsibility to ensure their student(s) are sent to school in a manner appropriate for school.** Parents and students are encouraged to contact the administration with student appearance questions. Examples of restricted or prohibited clothing may include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Clothing that shows an inappropriate amount of bare skin or underwear; revealing or baggy; tops and bottoms that do not overlap or any material that is sheer or lightweight enough to be seen through, or otherwise deemed inappropriate by the administration.
  - b. Clothing or jewelry that advertises or promotes beer, alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs.
  - c. Clothing or jewelry that could be used as a weapon (chains, spiked apparel) or that would encourage "horse-play" or that would damage property (e.g. cleats).
  - d. Head wear including hats, caps, bandannas, and scarves during the school day. Appropriate head wear may be worn at after school activities unless otherwise directed by school officials (ex: coaches may require players to not wear hats in doors as part of team protocol).
  - e. Clothing or jewelry which exhibits nudity, makes sexual references or carries lewd, indecent, or vulgar double entendre.
  - f. Clothing or jewelry that is gang related.
  - g. Visible body piercing that is determined to be an educational disruption by the administration.

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



## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

students who are representing the school as part of an extracurricular activity program.

On a first offense of the dress code, the student may call home for proper apparel. If clothes cannot be brought to school, the student will be given school issued clothing in order to remedy the problem. Students will not be allowed to leave campus to change clothes without parent permission and will be counted absent for the time they are gone. Continual violations of the dress code will result in more stringent disciplinary actions, up to expulsion. Further, in the event the dress code violation is determined to also violate other student conduct rules (e.g., public indecency, insubordination, expression of profanity, and the like), a first offense of the dress code may result in more stringent discipline, up to expulsion.

### (2) Electronic Devices

a. Philosophy and Purpose. Sandhills Public Schools discourages students from bringing and/or using personal electronic devices at school. The use of personal 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. By bringing a personal electronic device to school, a student consents to the reasonable search of that device if deemed necessary by the administration due to reasonable suspicion.

b. Definitions. "Electronic devices," include, but are not limited to, cell phones, Mp3 players, iPods, personal digital assistants (PDAs), personal lap top computers, and other electronic instruments which transmit voice, text, or data from one person to another.

### c. Possession and Use of Electronic Devices.

(1) Students are not permitted to possess or use any electronic devices during class time or during times as otherwise provided by this policy. Electronic device usage is prohibited during any class period; including voice usage, digital imaging, or text messaging unless it is under the supervision of the classroom teacher for educational purposes. Our sole intent and purpose are to teach and model proper digital citizenship resulting in the safe, productive and respectful use of technology by all students.

(2) Students are permitted to possess and use electronic devices before school and after school hours and between classes, provided that the student not commit any abusive use of the device as described, but not limited to "violations" on page 45. Administrators have the discretion to prohibit student possession or use of electronic devices on school grounds during these times in

## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

the event the administration determines such further restrictions are appropriate; an announcement will be given in the event of such a change in permitted use.

(3) Electronic devices may be used during class time when specifically approved by the teacher or a school administrator in conjunction with appropriate and authorized class or school activities or events (i.e., student use of a device for a class project; student use of a laptop for a class presentation). Any use of an electronic device by a student during class time must be educational, not personal or for recreation.

(4) Students may use electronic devices during class time when authorized pursuant to an Individual Education Plan (IEP), a Section 504 Accommodation Plan, or a Health Care Plan, or pursuant to a plan developed with the student's parent when the student has a compelling need to have the device (e.g., a student whose parent is in the hospital could be allowed limited use of the cell phone for family contacts, so the family can give the student updates on the parent's condition).

(5) Coaches and activity sponsors reserve the right to restrict the use of electronic devices during activities or activity trips on or off school property. Students are expected to comply with the request of the coach or sponsor when asked to not use personal electronic devices before, traveling to and from, or during the activity. All electronic device conduct rules apply regardless of the location and time of the school sponsored activity.

### d. Violations

(1) Prohibited Use of Electronic Devices: Students shall not use electronic devices for: (a) activities which disrupt the educational environment; (b) illegal activities in violation of state or federal laws or regulations; (c) unethical activities, such as cheating on assignments or tests; (d) immoral or pornographic activities; (e) activities in violation of Board or school policies and procedures relating to student conduct and harassment; (f) recording others (photographs, videotaping, sound recording, etc.) without direct administrative approval and consent of the person(s) being recorded, other than recording of persons participating in school activities that are open to the public; (g) "sexting;" or (h) activities which invade the privacy of others. Such student misuses will be dealt with as serious school violations, and immediate and appropriate disciplinary action will be imposed, including, but not limited to, suspension and expulsion from school.

(2) Electronic devices 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.

## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

(3) First Violation: Depending upon the nature of the violation and the imposition of other appropriate disciplinary action, consequences at a minimum may include a relinquishment of the electronic device to the school administration and a conference between the student and school principal or designee. The electronic device shall remain in the possession of the school administration until the student personally comes to the school's main office and retrieves the electronic device at the time the student is leaving school for the day.

(4) Second Violation: Depending upon the nature of the violation and the imposition of other appropriate disciplinary action, consequences at a minimum may include a relinquishment of the electronic device to the school administration and a conference between the student and the student's parent/guardian and the school principal or assistant principal. The electronic device shall remain in the possession of the school administration until the student's parent/guardian personally comes to the school's main office and retrieves the electronic device.

(5) Third Violation: Depending upon the nature of the violation and the imposition of other appropriate disciplinary action, consequences at a minimum may include a relinquishment of the electronic device to the school administration, a conference between the student and his/her parent/guardian and the school principal or assistant principal, and suspension of the student from school. The electronic device shall remain in the possession of the school administration until the student's parent/guardian personally comes to the school's main office and retrieves the electronic device.

(6) Subsequent Violations: Students who are repeat offenders of this policy shall be subject to the imposition of any appropriate disciplinary action, which may include suspension and expulsion from school.

e. 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.

- (3) Harassment and Bullying Policy: One of the missions of Sandhills Public Schools is to provide safe and secure environments. 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

## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

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

Students who are the 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.

Dating Violence Prevention Policy: Sandhills Public Schools provides physically safe and emotionally secure environments for students and staff. Positive behaviors are encouraged in the educational programs and are necessary for students and staff. Inappropriate behaviors, including but not limited to, dating violence, will not be tolerated and must be avoided by all students and staff.

Pursuant to Section 79-2,140, the Legislature has defined (a) "dating violence" to mean a pattern of behavior where one person uses threats of, or actually uses, physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to control his or her dating partner; and (b) "dating partner" to mean any person, regardless of gender, involved in an intimate relationship with another person primarily characterized by the expectation of affectionate involvement whether casual, serious, or long term.

Strategies and practices are implemented to reinforce positive behaviors and to discourage and protect others from inappropriate behaviors. Dating violence training, as defined by Section 79-2,141(4,) shall be provided to staff deemed appropriate by the Superintendent. The Superintendent will be responsible for reviewing the school district's Student Code of Conduct to ensure that this policy is reflected therein.

- (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. IPDA

## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

is considered a violation of the student conduct code and is grounds for short-term suspension, long-term suspension, expulsion, mandatory reassignment, or less forms of discipline.

- (5) Specific Rule Items: The following conduct may result in disciplinary action which, in the repeated violations, may result in discipline up to expulsion.
- a. Students must have a pass when not in class during class time. Students are to use the pass only for the purpose requested. For example, if given a pass to use the restroom, the student must promptly proceed to and use the nearest restroom and promptly return to class.
  - b. As a general rule, pop, candy, snack, etc. are not allowed in the classrooms. Individual teachers reserve the right to allow such items, from time to time, providing it does not interfere with the educational process. The pop machine is closed to students during the school day, unless special permission is granted by staff. The administration reserves the right to further restrict the consumption of pop, candy, etc. above and beyond the discretion of the classroom teachers.
  - c. Students are expected to bring all books and necessary materials to class. This includes study hall.
  - d. Assignments for all classes are due as assigned by the teacher.
  - e. Students are not to operate classroom back doors without permission of the teacher.
  - f. Classes are ended by the teacher. Students are not to begin to pack up or leave the class until the dismissal bell has rung or the teacher has dismissed the class.
  - g. Students are to be in the classroom and getting ready for class on the tardy bell.
  - h. Special classes such as Industrial Technology, Art, P.E., and computers courses will have other safety or clean-up rules that will be explained to you by that teacher which must be followed.
  - i. Students are not to bring "nuisance items" to school. A nuisance item is something that is not required for educational purposes and which would cause a distraction to the student or others.
  - J. Students are to stand back from the entry steps and doors in the mornings before school and at noon before the bell so that others may pass in and out of the entry doors.
  - k. Snow handling is prohibited.
- (6) Network, E-Mail, Internet and Other Computer Use Rules:
- (a) General Rules:
- (i) The network is provided to staff and students to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to network services and computer equipment is given to staff and students who have agreed to act in a responsible manner. Parental permission is required for student use. Access for all staff and students is a privilege and not a right.
  - (ii) Individual users of the district network are responsible for their behavior, actions, problems, and communications involving and over the network. Users will comply with district rules and will honor the agreements they

## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

have signed. Beyond clarification of such rules, the district is not responsible for restricting, monitoring, editing, or controlling the information, equipment or communications of individuals utilizing the network or the end product or result of such utilization.

## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

- (iii) Network storage areas shall be treated like school lockers for students. Network administrators may review files, information, equipment, messages and communications of staff and students to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the network system responsibly. Users should not expect that files or any information stored or otherwise used or retained on the network, district servers, or in computers, will be private. No reasonable expectation of privacy shall exist in relation to network use.
  - (iv) Users should not expect, and the district does not warrant, any information or products obtained from the network, that files or information stored, obtained or used on the network will be private, and use of the network waives and relinquishes all such privacy rights, interests or claims to confidentiality the user may have under state or federal law.
  - (v) The district will not be liable for, and does not warrant in any way, purchases made by any user over the network. Users shall not make personal purchases of goods and/or services via the district's network.
- (b) Policy and Rules for Acceptable Use of Computers and the Network: The following policy and rules for acceptable use of computers and the network, including Internet, shall apply to all district administrators, faculty, staff and students. The term "Users", as contained herein, shall apply to all such individuals. The Superintendent, or the Superintendent's designee, is hereby delegated all authority and is the ultimate person in charge of the district network and technology resources or equipment, and the same shall also be under the direct supervision of the site or building administrator where located, sometimes herein called "network administrators."
- (i) Users shall not erase, remake, or make unusable anyone else's computer, information, files, programs or disks. In addition to any other disciplinary action or legal action that may occur, any user violating this rule shall be liable for any and all damages to the computer, information, files, programs or disks.
  - (ii) Users shall not let other persons use their name, account, log-on password, or files for any reason (except for authorized staff members).
  - (iii) Users shall not use or try to discover another user's account or password.
  - (iv) Users shall not use the computers or network for non-instructional or non administrative purposes (e.g., games or activities for personal profit).
  - (v) Users shall not use the computer for unlawful purposes, such as illegal copying or installation of unauthorized software.
  - (vi) Users shall not copy, change, or transfer any software or documentation provided by teachers, or other students without permission from the network administrators.
  - (vii) Users shall not write, produce, generate, copy, propagate, or attempt to introduce any computer code, software or information designed to replicate, damage, or otherwise hinder the performance of the network or

## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

any computer's memory, file system, or software. Such software is often called a bug, virus, worm, Trojan horse, or similar name.

- (viii) Users shall not use the computer to annoy or harass others with language, images, or threats. Users shall not access, accept, create or send any obscene, vulgar, lewd, tasteless, or objectionable messages, information, language, or images.
  - (ix) Users shall not damage the network or equipment, damage information belonging to others, misuse network resources, or allow others to misuse network resources. In addition to any other disciplinary action or legal action that may occur, any user violating this or any other rule shall be liable for any and all damages to the computer, network, information, files, programs or disks.
  - (x) Users shall not tamper with computers, networks, printers, or other associated equipment except as directed by the teacher or network administrator.
  - (xi) Users shall not take technology equipment (hardware or software) from the school grounds or remove such from computer work areas without written permission of the network administrator.
- (c) Etiquette and Rules for Use of Computers and the Network: All users of computers and the network are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. Informal rules of behavior have evolved for the use of and communication on the network, Internet and other on-line services. Breaches can result in harsh criticism by others. These rules of behavior include (but are not limited to) the following:
- (i) Be polite. Do not become abusive in your messages to others.
  - (ii) Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language, message, information or images.
  - (iii) Do not reveal your personal account, address or phone numbers, or that of other students or colleagues.
  - (iv) Note that electronic mail (e-mail) is specifically not guaranteed to be private. People who operate the system do have access to mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities. Messages which violate the rules will result in disciplinary action.
  - (v) All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property of others.
  - (vi) Do not place unlawful information on any network system.
  - (vii) Keep paragraphs and messages short and to the point. Focus on one subject per message.
  - (viii) Include your signature at the bottom of e-mail messages. Your signature footer should include your name, position, affiliation, and network or Internet address.



## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

- (ix) Other rules are in place, especially for the 1 to 1 computer initiative, which all students and parents will abide by. The administration reserves the right to modify 1 to 1 computer use rules in order to protect the district's investment. These rules will be communicated verbally, in writing, or in the form of the lease agreement signed by the parent and student at the beginning of the school year.
  - (d) Penalties for Violation of Rules: All of the policies, rules, and procedures for acceptable use of computers and the network are intended to make the computers and the network more reliable for users. They are also intended to minimize the burden of administrating the networks so that more time can be spent on education and enhancing services. Use of the computer and access to telecommunications resources is a privilege and not a right. Violation of the policies, rules, and procedures concerning the use of computers and the network may result in disciplinary action up to, and including, loss of access, suspension and/or expulsion of students from school and loss of access, suspension, termination, non-renewal or cancellation of the contract of administrators, teachers, or other school employees.
  - (e) Student and Parent Agreements: Students and parents will be required to sign a computer and network use agreement/lease as a condition of the student being permitted to use equipment associated with the 1 to 1 laptop initiative. Said lease agreement will contain specific expectations and information regarding proper computer use and care. Those who refuse to sign the agreement will not be allowed to personally possess a school issued laptop. They will, however, be provided computer technology in order to complete work in school.
- (7) Risks of Facebook, Twitter and other Social Networking:  
The purpose of this message is to give our students information about the risks of using social networking sites.

These sites are public sources of information. The information may be seen by your school administrators, your parents, and law enforcement. It is also accessible to people who you don't even know now, but may later want to impress-such as university admissions and scholarship officials and prospective employers. In fact, many large companies now search the internet as a means of conducting background checks on job applicants. What you say now on a site, such as Facebook, may affect you years later.

What you say now on Facebook may also affect you right now. Pictures or writings that show that you have violated student conduct rules may result in school discipline. A picture of a student drinking a beer may very well lead to a suspension from activities if the school learns about it. Criminal charges may be filed against you based on information posted on social networking sites.

## Article 8 - Student Conduct Rules

Parents are encouraged to use the online resources provided by Facebook, and other social networking sites, that teach proper use and warn of the dangers associated with social networking. Our goal, as a school district, is to promote responsible use of technology in a positive and productive manner. School issued laptop computers are to be used for school purposes only. Recreation on social networking sites, games, etc., is not considered appropriate school purposes.

### **Section 4 Reporting Student Law Violations:**

- (1) 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.
- (2) When a Principal or other school official releases a minor student to a peace officer (e.g., police officer, sheriff, and all other persons with similar authority to make arrests) for the purpose of removing the minor from the school premises, the Principal or other school official 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.
- (3) 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 Sandhills 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:
  - (a) Knowingly possessing illegal drugs or alcohol.
  - (b) Assault.
  - (c) Vandalism resulting in significant property damage.
  - (d) Theft of school or personal property of a significant nature.
  - (e) Automobile accident.
  - (f) 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 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations**

### **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 training it offers 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.

#### 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.

#### 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 2 Extracurricular Activity Code of Conduct**

#### **Purpose of the Code of Conduct.**

**Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a guaranteed right.** 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. Participants are expected to understand they will be held to a high standard of character and conduct. Participants also are expected to understand violating the code of conduct can ultimately result in losing privileges associated with extracurricular activities.

## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

The student participants' performance 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 mean student 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: all sports and activities including but not limited to: vocal music, band, speech and drama, One-Act, FBLA, FFA, Student Council, National Honor Society, and other school sponsored organizations and activities. The Code of Conduct also applies to participation in school sponsored activities such as school dances and royalty for such 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. In other words, it is to be understood the enforcement of this policy will be 24 hours a day 7 days a week during the school year and NSAA Calendar year.

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 a student, in school sponsored activity, 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. Students who choose to participate in school sponsored activities, such as camps and leagues, must be aware they can be held to the Code of Conduct even though school is not in session.

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.

## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

**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, 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 (see page 41), 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;

Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations  
11. Engaging in any activity forbidden by law.

## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

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 Sandhills Public School buses or vehicles used for activity purposes.
17. Failure to report for the activity at the beginning of the season. Reporting for one activity may count as reporting on time if there is a change in activity within the season approved by the coach or the supervisor.
18. Failure to participate in regularly scheduled classes on the day of an extracurricular activity or event.
19. 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.
20. 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 and signature sheets. Failure to comply with any rule established by the Nebraska School Activities Association, including, but not limited to, the rules relating to eligibility.
21. Failure to comply with any rule established by the Nebraska School Activities Association, including, but not limited to, the rules relating to eligibility.
22. Social Networking by students should be used with caution. What you say now on social networking sites may affect students discipline wise. Pictures or writings that show that you have violated student conduct rules may result in school discipline. A picture of a student drinking a beer may very well lead to a suspension from activities if the school learns about it. Criminal charges may be filed against you based on information posted on social networking sites.

Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations  
**Drug and Alcohol Violations.**

**Example Meaning of Terms, but not limited to:**

Use or consume includes any level of consumption or use. Use of a controlled substance in the manner prescribed for the student by the student's physician is not a violation.

Under the influence means any level of impairment and includes even the odor of alcohol on the breath or person of a student, or the odor of an illicit drug on the student. Also, it includes being impaired by reason of the abuse of any material used as a stimulant.

Possession includes having control of the substance and also includes being in the same area where the substance is present and no responsible adult present and responsible for the substance. Possession includes situations where, for example but not limited to:

- (1) Alcohol is in a vehicle in which the student is present. The student is considered to be in possession if the student is aware that the alcohol is in the vehicle, even though the student has not touched or consumed the alcohol; and
- (2) Alcohol is present at a party attended by the student. The student is considered to be in possession if the student is aware that alcohol is at the party and fails to immediately leave the party, even though the student has not touched or consumed the alcohol.

In these situations, a violation would not exist if the alcohol is in the control of a parent or guardian or other responsible adult (age 21 or older) such that students are not allowed to access the alcohol. A violation would also not exist if the student did not know or have a reasonable basis to know that alcohol would be present, and the student leaves the location where the alcohol is present as soon the student could safely do so. (Students are expected to leave immediately, but are not to do so in a manner that would endanger them. For example, you are not to leave in a car being driven by a person who has been drinking just to get away from the alcohol party immediately when there is no other way to get home. Instead, you should call for a safe ride home and, while waiting, clearly distance yourself from the alcohol).

**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.

Because of the significance of drug and alcohol violations on the student participants, other students and the school, the following consequences are established for such violations:



## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

### **Drugs and Alcohol.**

Use of Alcohol, Tobacco, Steroids, Illegal or Nonprescription drugs: If the coaching staff, school administration or law enforcement determines that a student (athlete and/or activity participant) is using alcohol, tobacco, or nonprescription drugs off of school grounds or outside of school time, the student will be suspended from all school sponsored activities for **20 school days**. A second offense will result in suspension of **40 school days**. A third offense will result in suspension of **1 calendar year**. If the violation occurs at the end of the school year, the suspension will continue with the beginning of the NSAA calendar until all days of the suspension have been served.

Students may elect to reduce their suspension by 5 days (1<sup>st</sup> offense to 15 days, 2<sup>nd</sup> offense to 35 days) by self-reporting the violation to their coach, sponsor, or school administrator. There will be no reduction allowed for a student's 3<sup>rd</sup> violation.

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.

**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 in the spring will be carried over to the fall 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:

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 where the student has self-reported or otherwise demonstrated excellence in character allowing for such honors.
3. Coaches will provide their letter requirements, in writing, to all participants/players at the beginning of their respective activity season.

**Self-Reporting.** A student who violates the Code of Conduct must self-report. A failure to self-report will lead to a longer suspension or other discipline. The self-report must be made to: the principal, athletic director, or the head coach or sponsor of an activity in which the student

## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

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 the earlier of: (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, what conduct the student engaged in, and any witnesses to the student's conduct, and will be required to put this information in a written statement. In the event the student has received a criminal citation, charge, or ticket, and proclaims innocence of a violation, the student will be required to self-report such offense and provide information as to why they should be found innocent, not as it relates to the criminal offense, but as it relates to the Code of Conduct.

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.

**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.**
4. **When a student is accused by another person of violating one of the standards of the Code of Conduct and school officials determine that such information is reliable.**
5. **When school officials otherwise find sufficient evidence to support a determination that a violation has occurred.**

**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 considering the suspension or their designee will provide the student an

## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

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.

- a. 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 where determined to be appropriate.
- b. 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.
3. 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 Principal or Principal'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.
4. 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. 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.
  - b. The request for a hearing must be received by the Superintendent's office within five days of receipt of the notice letter.
  - c. If a hearing is requested:
    - i. 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.
    - ii. 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.
    - iii. 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.
    - iv. 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.
5. No Stay of Penalty. There will be no stay of the penalty imposed pending completion of the due process procedures

## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

6. 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 3 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 four or more unexcused absences in the semester of participation will 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 the contest, performance, or activity.

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

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 4 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 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. Maintain passing grades in all courses. A student who is not passing one or more classes at progress reporting times will be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activity contests or performances if the grade remains below passing one week after progress reporting time. The student will remain ineligible until the student is passing all classes.
3. Academic requirements do not apply to instructional field trips which are a part of the scheduled course learning experience.

## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

### **Section 5 "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 6 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.

**General Rules of Student Conduct at Dances.** In addition to all rules of student conduct in the Student handbook, students attending dances shall adhere to the following rules of conduct:

1. **Who Can Attend:** Only students of Sandhills Public Schools and their guests may attend:
  - a. Students currently attending Sandhills High School or another Nebraska high school who have not been restricted from attending extracurricular activities at Sandhills High School or their own school are generally considered appropriate dates or invited guests.
  - b. Persons who are in a grade level less than 9 or older than 20 years of age and not attending high school are considered to not be appropriate dates or invited guests for our school dances. All out of school dates will be approved by the Principal at least 1 day prior to the event.
  - c. Some school dances may be restricted to students attending specified grades levels at Sandhills Public Schools. For any dances at the middle school level, only students attending Sandhills Public Schools in the grade(s) for which the dance is being held may attend.

## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

- d. Students who have been suspended from school or from extracurricular activities may not attend.
  - e. 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.
  - f. Students will be expected to be at a school sponsored dances for the duration of the event. This includes being prompt for a designated start time. No student or guest will be allowed to leave early and be able to return to the dance. Once a student or guest leaves the dance, they are no longer the responsibility of Sandhills Public Schools.
  - g. Students or their guests who engage in inappropriate behavior, whether on or off of the dance floor, may be asked to leave.
2. **Prohibited Substances:** Alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and tobacco 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.

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.

3. **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.

### **Homecoming Royalty and Similar Honors**

**\*IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Standards and procedures for homecoming will be revisited annually by the administration in order to provide the most appropriate homecoming experience in the best interest of the students. Both schools will work together to plan a homecoming that bests reflect the overall needs of students from both schools. The specific details, pertaining to homecoming, will be communicated to students and parents in a timely manner to allow for proper preparations regarding homecoming.

### **Junior/Senior Prom Rules**

Students able to attend:

Banquet - Any junior or senior in good academic/activity standing from Sandhills or Thedford High Schools and his/her date.

## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

Prom Dance - Any Sandhills or Thedford High School Student (grades 9-12) in good academic standing and his/her date. Out of school the administration or prom sponsors shall approve dates.

### Juniors and Seniors may invite:

Any district approved student date. Dates shall not include junior high students. Any adult date that turns 21 years of age up to and including the day of the prom is prohibited. All out of school dates must be registered in the office with the correct name, date, grade, age and address by Wednesday noon of prom week. Any students who are dates of Sandhills or Thedford High School Students are expected to conduct themselves as if they were a Sandhills or Thedford High School student. All students who choose to leave the prom will be considered out and WILL NOT be let back into prom or the After Prom Party.

### **Section 7 Relationships Between Parents and Coaches/Sponsors**

Both 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.

## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

- 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:
  - o Philosophy of the coach
  - o Expectations the coach has for your child
  - o Locations and times of all practices and contests
  - o Team requirements
  - o Procedure should your child be injured
  - o Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation
- Communication coaches expect from parents
  - o Concerns expressed directly to the coach
  - o Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
  - o 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!! 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 Call to set up an appointment with the coach
  - 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)
- What should a parent do if the meeting with the coach did not provide satisfactory resolution?
  - o Call the Supt/Principal or Designee to set up a meeting with the administration, coach, and parent present.
  - o At this meeting, an appropriate next step can be determined, if necessary.



## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

- o It is not appropriate to contact individual board members at any time regarding activity concerns. Board members are to only entertain such concerns at board meetings in which said person(s) with the concern have been properly placed on the board meeting agenda. Contact the Superintendent with questions regarding the proper procedure for communicating concerns at board meetings.

### **Section 8 Good Sportsmanship-Behavior Expectations of Spectators**

Good sportsmanship is expected to be exhibited by all coaches, sponsors, students, parents and other spectators. The school can be punished by NSAA for a lack of good sportsmanship at NSAA sanctioned events. More importantly, activities are more enjoyable for the students when good sportsmanship is displayed.

#### Responsibilities of Spectators Attending Interscholastic Athletics and Other Extracurricular Activities

1. Show interest in the contest by enthusiastically cheering and applauding the performance of both teams.
2. Show proper respect for opening ceremonies by standing at attention and remaining silent when the National Anthem is played.
3. Understand that a ticket is a privilege to observe the contest, not a license to verbally attack others, or to be obnoxious. Maintain self-control.
4. Do not "boo," stamp feet or make disrespectful remarks toward players or officials.
5. Learn the rules of the game, so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.
6. Know that noisemakers of any kind are not proper for indoor events.
7. Obey and respect officials and faculty supervisors who are responsible for keeping order. Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials.
8. Stay off the playing area at all times.
9. Do not disturb others by throwing material onto the playing area.
10. Show respect for officials, coaches, cheerleaders and student-athletes.
11. Pay attention to the half-time program and do not disturb those who are watching.
12. Respect public property by not damaging the equipment or the facility.
13. Know that the school officials reserve the right to refuse attendance of individuals whose conduct is not proper.

## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

14. Refrain from the use of alcohol and drugs on the site of the contest.

### **Section 9 Student Fees Policy**

The Board of Education of Sandhills 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 "I," 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.

(1) Guidelines for non-specialized attire required for specified courses and activities. Students have the responsibility to furnish and wear nonspecialized 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 nonspecialized 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

## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

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.

### (2) Personal or consumable items & miscellaneous

(a) Extracurricular Activities. Students have the responsibility to furnish any personal or consumable items for participation in extracurricular activities.

### (b) Courses

(i) 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, pencils, paper, pens, erasers, notebooks, trappers, 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.

(ii) 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.

(iii) 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.

(iv) 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.

(3) 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

## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

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.

(4) 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.

(5) 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.

(6) 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.

(7) 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 students' 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.

(8) Participation in before-and-after-school or prekindergarten services. Students are responsible for fees required for participation in before-and-after-school or prekindergarten services offered by the District, except to the extent such services are required to be provided without cost.

(9) 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.

(10) 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

## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

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.

(11) 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.

(12) 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.

(13) 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: (1) participation in extracurricular activities, (2) postsecondary education costs, and (3) summer school or night school.

### **Appendix "I" to 2023-2024 Student Fees Policy of Sandhills Public Schools- Additional Specification of Required Materials and Fees**

#### **STUDENT FEE WAIVER PROCEDURES**

The board recognizes that while certain fees, specialized equipment, or specialized attire are appropriate and authorized, some students and their families are not financially able to afford them. The school district will grant waivers upon request to the students of families eligible for free or reduced priced meals under the Federal Child Nutrition Program.

Waivers for possible fees must be requested prior to the waiver deadline of **September 1, 2023**. Waivers will not be approved retroactively for fees previously paid or specialized items, or attire purchased by students. Only those fees and items eligible for waivers as required by state statute shall be waived.

Parents or students eligible for waivers shall make an application on the form provided by the school district. Applications must be renewed annually. Denial of a waiver may be appealed to the superintendent, but eligibility is strictly dependent upon meeting financial guidelines established by the Child Nutrition program.

The school district will treat the application and waiver process as any other student record a student confidentiality an access provisions will be followed.

Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

The school district will annually notify parents and students of the waiver. The student fee policy and guidelines will be published annually in the Student Handbook.

**STUDENT FEE ASSESSMENTS**

The following fees, charges or fines may be assessed during the school year for students involved in the activities described. Student may apply for waivers of fees under district waiver guidelines. The student fee policy and guidelines will be published annually in the Student Handbook.

\*Note: The following fees represent anticipated amounts or possible maximums. Changes may occur and will be communicated with students and parents as much as possible.

<u>Program/Activity</u>	<u>General Description of Fee or Material</u>	<u>Fee Amount</u>
Ag Education	Ag Education Projects	\$10 - \$400
Art	Field Trip Meals, etc.	\$20
Lunch	Lunch Charges & Milk	up to \$4 .25 extra milk
Music	Food at Music Contests	\$30
Boys Basketball	Camps & Shoes	\$300
FBLA	Dues, Conventions, Meals, Rooms, etc.	\$1100
Football	Camps and Shoes	\$450
FFA	Official Dress, Rooms, Meals, Dues, etc.	\$800
Gate Admission	All home SHS activities	\$3 each
Girls Basketball	Camps and Shoes	\$300
Play Production	Meals	\$30
Speech Competition	Meals	\$30
Track	Shoes	\$150
Volleyball	Camps, Shoes, Knee Pads, etc.	\$300
Wrestling	Camps, Shoes, etc.	\$300

## Article 9 - Extra-Curricular Activities - Rights, Conduct, Rules and Regulations

\*In compliance with LB 249, enacted into Nebraska Law on May 29, 2003, costs listed in this document may be the responsibility of the student or school district. Specific information will be shared with student participants at the beginning of the program or activity.

### **Section 10 Live Streaming of District Activities and Events**

Notice is hereby given that district events may be live streamed via available internet or web-based technology. The district recognizes the benefit to consider live streaming events for the district's parents, patrons, friends, and relatives. Any official NSAA event, such as district or state contests, may not be live streamed without expressed permission from the NSAA. Regular season games, contests, events, etc., may be live streamed at the discretion of the district.

**\*NOTE: Smoking, which includes possession or use of e-cigarettes, vapor products, alternative nicotine products, or other such look-alike products is prohibited and falls under the code of conduct.**

## Article 10 - State and Federal Programs

### Section 1 Notice of Nondiscrimination

It is the policy of the Sandhills Public Schools and the Nebraska Department of Education not to discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race, color, religion, marital status, age, national origin, or genetic information in its educational programs, admission policies, employment, or other agency programs.

### 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	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: Sandhills Public Schools, 107 Gandy Ave P.O. Box 29, Dunning, NE 68833, 308-538-2224.

### Section 3 Anti-discrimination & Harassment Policy

Elimination of Discrimination. The Sandhills 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: Sandhills 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 Sandhills 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, gender, gender identity, 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 Sandhills 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.

#### 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: (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**

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

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

#### Section 6 **Notification of Rights Under FERPA**

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the district receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible

student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask 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 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

#### 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 course 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 Blaine or Thomas County Sheriff Department or Nebraska State Patrol 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 7 Notice Concerning Disclosure of Student Recruiting Information**

Federal law 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 8 Notice to Parents of Students in Programs Receiving Title I Funding**

**Staff Qualifications:** Parents may request, and the District will provide the parents of students attending any school receiving Title I funds on request (and in a timely manner), information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers, including at a minimum, the following:

- (A) Whether the student's teacher-
  - (i) has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
  - (ii) is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
  - (iii) is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
  
- (B) Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

**Testing Opt-Out.** Parents may request, and the District will provide the parents of students attending any school receiving Title I funds on request (and in a timely manner), information regarding any State or District policy regarding student participation in any State or District assessments, including the District's policy and procedure on the parental right to opt the child out of such assessment(s). The District shall also make widely available

through public means (including by posting in a clear and easily accessible manner on the District's website) information on each State or District assessment, including:

- (A) the subject matter assessed;
- (B) the purpose for which the assessment is designed and used;
- (C) the source of the requirement for the assessment;
- (D) the amount of time students will spend taking the assessment, and the schedule for the assessment; and
- (E) the time and format for disseminating results.

Language Instruction Programs. If the District receives Title I funds, parents of English learners will be informed regarding how the parents can-

- (A) be involved in the education of their children; and
- (B) be active participants in assisting their children to-
  - (i) attain English proficiency;
  - (ii) achieve at high levels within a well-rounded education; and
  - (iii) meet the challenging State academic standards expected of all students.

The District will also inform parents of an English learner identified student of opportunities to participate in various school programs, as set forth in ESSA.

Please contact the administrative office to receive the foregoing information.

## **Section 9 Student Privacy Protection Policy**

It is the policy of Sandhills 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 10**

### **Parental/Family Involvement Policies**

- A. General - Parental/Community Involvement in Schools: Sandhills 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 students' 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. School Wide and Family Engagement Policy: Sandhills Public Schools intends to follow the Schoolwide Parent and Family Engagement Policy guidelines in accordance with federal law, *Section 11 16(a -j) ESSA, (Every Student Succeeds Act) of 2015*



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.

- Parents and family members of all students are welcomed and encouraged to become involved with their child's school and education; this includes parents and family members that have limited English proficiency, limited literacy, are economically disadvantaged, have disabilities, racial or ethnic minority background or are migratory children. Information related to school and parent programs, meetings, school reports and other activities are sent to the parents of participating children in a format, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.
  - Annually a Title 1 meeting is held to look over the parent involvement plan as well as the school/parent compact. This meeting is usually held prior to the start of fall parent/teacher conferences.
  - Translators will be available if necessary.
  - Helping Children Learn monthly newsletter
  - Individual classroom activities
  - Veteran's Day Program
  - Book Fair
  - Schoology
  - See Saw App.
  - Power School/progress reports
  - Surveys
- Parents are involved in the planning, development, review, evaluation and improvement of the Schoolwide program, Parent and Family Engagement Policy and the School-Parent Compact at an annual parent meeting scheduled at a convenient time. This would include the planning and implementation of effective parent and family involvement activities.
  - Annually a Title 1 meeting is held to look over the parent involvement plan as well as the school/parent compact. This meeting is usually held prior to the start of fall parent/teacher conferences.
  - Surveys
- 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.
  - Annually a Title 1 meeting is held to look over the parent involvement plan as well as the school/parent compact. This meeting is usually held prior to the start of fall parent/teacher conferences.
  - Individual Classroom activities
  - Veteran's Day Program
  - Book Fair
  - Schoology
  - See Saw App.
  - PowerSchool/progress reports
- Opportunities are provided for parents and family members to participate in decisions related to the education of their child/children. The school and local educational agency shall provide other reasonable support for parental involvement activities.
  - Annually a Title 1 meeting is held to look over the parent involvement plan as well as the school/parent compact. This meeting is usually held prior to the start of fall parent/teacher

conferences.

- Surveys
  
- Parents of participating children will be provided timely information about programs under this part, a description and explanation of the curriculum in use, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress and the achievement levels of the challenging State academic standards. The school will provide assistance, opportunities, and/or materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement in a format, and when feasible, in a language the parents and family members can understand.
  - o Annual Title I meeting
  - o Surveys
  - o A translator will be available if needed.
  
- Educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, with the assistance of parents in the value and utility of contributions of parents, how to reach out to, communicate with and work with parents as equal partners.
  - Professional Development
  - Surveys
  
- Coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with other Federal, State and local programs, including preschool programs that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.
  - Professional development.

### **Section 11 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 Sandhills Public Schools based on it being the school of origin, the new school and Sandhills 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 12 Breakfast and Lunch Programs**

The District has agreed to participate in the National School Lunch Program and accepts responsibility for providing free and reduced priced 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, disability, religion, age, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, or other protected status.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, One Petticoat Lane, 1010 Walnut Street, 3rd Floor, Suite 320, Kansas City, Missouri 64106, (816) 268-0550 (voice), Fax (816) 268-0599, (800) 877-8339 (telecommunications device for the deaf), or [ocr.kansascity@ed.gov](mailto:ocr.kansascity@ed.gov). 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 priced 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 priced 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: 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 priced 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:

- A publicly-announced, simple method for making an oral or written request for a hearing.
  - An opportunity to be assisted or represented by an attorney or other person.
  - An opportunity to examine, prior to and during the hearing, the documents and records presented to support the decision under appeal.
  - Reasonable promptness and convenience in scheduling a hearing and adequate notice as to the time and place of the hearing.
  - An opportunity to present oral or documentary evidence and arguments supporting a position without undue interference.
  - 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.
8. 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 priced meals.
9. 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 priced 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

**RECEIPT OF 2023-24 STUDENT - PARENT HANDBOOK  
OF SANDHILLS HIGH SCHOOL**

**Accessed at [www.sandhillsknights.org](http://www.sandhillsknights.org)**

Parents will submit an online form that will acknowledge the receipt of this handbook. It is understood that a parent may request a hard copy of the handbook if they prefer. Direct hard copy requests to the high school main office at 308-538-2224. It is understood that the handbook contains student conduct and discipline rules and information about Safe and Drug-Free Schools and that the student agrees to follow such conduct and discipline rules. This receipt also serves to acknowledge that it is understood that the District's policies of nondiscrimination and equity, and that specific complaint and grievance procedures exist in the handbook that should be used to respond to harassment or discrimination.