

Minden Public Schools  
Board of Education  
Board of Education Board Retreat  
Minden High School Media Center  
543 West 5th  
Minden, NE 68959-0301  
Tuesday, July 29, 2025 4:00 PM

1. Call to Order
  - 1.a. Open Meetings Act is Posted
  - 1.b. Mission Statement
  - 1.c. Roll Call
  - 1.d. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Public Comment
3. Action Items
  - 3.a. Consider, Discuss, and Take Action on 2025-26 Preschool, East Elementary, Middle School, High School, and Staff Handbooks
4. Discussion Items
  - 4.a. Preliminary 2025-26 Budget
5. Adjournment per Board President Action at 5:34 pm

## **2025-2026 School Year**

**District Handbook Changes 2025-2026:** The Perry Law Firm has reviewed all handbooks. Our current version contains the most current laws and procedures.

[Certified Handbook](#)

[Classified Handbook](#)

- All Policy changes are automatically updated
- Staff Handbooks were simplified and updated with MPS-specific guidelines and procedures.

### **Activity Handbooks 2025-2026:**

[2025-2026 Activity Handbook](#)

- Minor grammatical changes

[2025-2026 Coaches Handbook](#)

- Minor grammatical changes

### **Middle School Handbook 2025-2026**

Changes are marked in red on the attached handbook document.

[CLJ Student Handbook](#)

\*Minor grammatical changes highlighted in yellow (link attached)

### **High School Handbook Changes for 2025-2025**

[Minden High School 2025-2026 Student Handbook](#)

Proposed changes to the High School Handbook are highlighted in **ORANGE**

- Minor grammatical changes
- Updated Board Policies links used in the student handbook
- Minor changes to reflect the new 2025-2026 school year
- Changes were made to the handbook to better align with the CLJ Middle School Handbook.
- Due to printing costs, an abbreviated copy will be printed in student planners.

[East Elementary Parent/Student Handbook](#)

#### **Updates to Parent/Student Handbook:**

Minor changes to reflect the new 2025-2026 school year

[Minden Public Preschool Handbook 25-26](#)

#### **Updates to Preschool Handbook:**

\* Change made to the snack information

**MINDEN HIGH SCHOOL  
STUDENT - PARENT HANDBOOK  
2025-2026**

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## **Minden Public Schools Student-Parent Handbook 2025-2026 School Year**

The handbook has been prepared to clarify procedures, policies, and expectations at Minden High School. Our intent is to lead students toward becoming disciplined, contributing, productive members of society by providing quality learning experiences and upholding high expectations for all students. Students are encouraged to be involved and take advantage of the various learning opportunities offered at Minden High School.

Students, teachers, parent/ guardian(s), and support staff working collaboratively with mutual respect and understanding will result in providing our children a quality education. Thank you for your support and cooperation.

~Don Hosick- Principal and Jason Strong- Assistant Principal

### **Mission Statement**

"Minden Public Schools, with the community, strives to develop productive and responsible citizens through an environment that empowers them to seek, understand, and appreciate learning," speaks to our goal of equipping our children with the academic and social skills that they need to be successful citizens now and in the future.

### **School Improvement Goal**

All students will show measurable growth in academics and social-emotional well-being through the enhanced support provided at each tier of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports process.

### **Section 1 Intent of Handbook**

This handbook serves as a guide for students, parents, and staff regarding the rules, policies, and general information about Minden Public Schools. Students are responsible for reading and understanding the contents of the handbook. Parents are encouraged to use it as a resource and help their child follow the outlined expectations. Relevant Board policies are referenced throughout for additional clarity (e.g., MPS Policy #####). Full policy details are available on the district website: [www.mindenwhippets.org](http://www.mindenwhippets.org).

### **Section 2 School Calendar**

The Minden High School Calendar may be accessed at the following link:

[Minden High School Calendar 2025-2026](#)

## **Article 1 – Mission and Goals**

### **Section 1 Mutual Respect**

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

### **Section 2 Complaint/Grievance Procedures (MPS Policy 1240)**

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

#### **Complaint procedure**

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

### **Section 3 Student Conflict Resolution**

If a student has a problem with another student(s) that he/she cannot resolve by discussing the issue directly with the student(s), he/she should ask for help from a high school staff member. The staff member will intervene and determine the level of intervention necessary. If the staff member cannot help in finding the solution, the issue may be directed to the high school counselor or principal. Any student at any time may bring any problem directly to the school guidance counselor or principal to address. Minden High School staff members have the authority to serve as mediators and or arbitrators for the resolution of student conflict. Any student issue brought to the attention of a member of the high school staff will be addressed.

Conflict resolution steps are:

- Step 1. If possible, privately talk to the other student about the problem.
- Step 2. Ask a staff member for help resolving the conflict.
- Step 3. Take the issue to the high school guidance counselor or principal.

## **Article 2 – School Day**

### **Section 1 Bell Schedule**

First Bell is at 8:00 am except for Late Start Schedule

#### **Regular Schedule Mon/Thurs**

Period 1	8:00-8:48
Breakfast	8:48-8:55
Period 2	8:55-9:43
Period 3	9:46-10:34
Period 4	10:37-11:25
Period 5	11:28-12:06
Period 6	1:00-1:48
Period 7	1:51-2:39
Period 8	2:42-3:30

#### **Block Schedule For Tues/Wed**

Period 1/2	8:00-9:37
Breakfast	8:50-8:57
Period 3/4	9:42-11:12
ACCESS	11:15-11:44
LUNCH	11:44-12:22
Period 5/6	12:25-1:55
Period 7/8	2:00-3:30

#### **Friday Schedule**

Period 1	8:00-8:38
Breakfast	8:38-8:45
Period 2	8:45-9:23
Period 3	9:26-10:04
Period 4	10:07-10:45
Period 5	10:48-11:26
LUNCH	11:26-12:07
Period 6	12:10-12:48
Period 7	12:51-1:29
Period 8	1:32-2:10

#### **1:10 Early Release Schedule**

Period 1	8:00-8:31
Breakfast	8:31-8:38
Period 2	8:38-9:09
Period 3	9:12-9:43
Period 4	9:46-10:17
Period 5	10:20-10:51
Period 6	10:54-11:25
LUNCH	11:25-12:02
Period 7	12:05-12:36
Period 8	12:39-1:10

#### **Late Start Schedule**

Period 1	10:00-10:35
Period 2	10:38-11:13
Period 3	11:16-11:51
LUNCH	11:51-12:21
Period 4	12:24-12:58
Period 5	1:01-1:36
Period 6	1:39-2:14
Period 7	2:17-2:52
Period 8	2:55-3:30

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

The superintendent may close public schools in case of severe weather or an emergency. The school will notify parents and guardians, as well as the local media, when the schools will be closed. This includes broadcast on television stations NTV, KHAS, and KOLN-KGIN; radio stations KRVN, KRNY, and KSYZ, as well as the website for Minden Public Schools, [mindenwhippets.org](http://mindenwhippets.org). Minden Public Schools also uses an automated notification system, Thrillshare, and social media to inform parent/guardian and staff of school closings and delayed starting times. For details about Thrillshare, please contact the high school office.

If school must be cancelled or dismissed early because of inclement weather, practices and contests will be postponed/ cancelled as a rule.

## **Section 3 Arrival at School/Dismissal From School**

Building doors open daily at 7:30 AM. Classes begin each day at 8:00 AM and end Monday through Thursday at 3:30 PM, Friday at 2:10 PM. Students arriving before 7:55 AM must remain in the high school commons area. At 7:55 AM students may proceed to their first class. Any student arriving to class after 8:00 AM will be considered tardy and must report to the office.

No groups of individuals should be in the building after 4:30 pm without a sponsor. Any organizational meetings or group activities meeting in the school must have a sponsor.

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

### **Section 1 Visitors**

All visitors must report to the office, upon entering the main entrance, to sign in and receive a visitor's pass. Visits by parents are encouraged; provided that the visits do not disrupt the educational program, individual students, or create a safety concern. Students who wish to have parents, guardians, relatives visit the school are asked to contact the office to arrange a visitation time a minimum of one day prior to the visit.

## **Section 2 Smoke-Free Environment (MPS Policy 1120)**

All of our school buildings and grounds are smoke and tobacco-free. No smoking or tobacco is allowed on school grounds or at any school activity.

For purposes of this policy, tobacco means any tobacco product (including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, and chewing tobacco), vapor products (such as e-cigarettes), electronic nicotine delivery systems, alternative nicotine products, tobacco product look-alikes, and products intended to replicate tobacco products either by appearance or effect. This does not preclude adults from wearing non-visible nicotine patches, or using nicotine gum without displaying the product container, as part of a smoking cessation program.

## **Section 3 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 damage property, break windows, or cause other harm to school property or equipment will be required to pay the cost to repair or replace the item.
3. Students in grades 9-12 are required to keep a student planner. The planner is meant to encourage all students to prepare for class and provide communication between home and school. Replacement cost is \$5.00

School-issued items that are stolen or damaged from unlocked lockers are the responsibility of the student to whom they were issued.

## **Section 4 Lockers**

Each student will be assigned a locker. Students must use their assigned lockers and are not to share lockers with other students, except as assigned by school officials. Students are expected to keep all books, etc., in their assigned locker. Students are also responsible for the cleanliness inside their locker and the door of their locker. Students may be assessed a fine for damage to lockers.

Students in grades 9-12 will be furnished with a combination lock on request. A replacement fee of \$10.00 will be charged if the lock is not returned at the end of the year. We encourage all students to place locks on their academic, athletic, and band lockers and use it at all times.

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

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

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

## **Section 7 Recording of Others (MPS Policy 1102)**

To ensure the privacy and confidentiality of student information, no person is authorized to record or transmit any sound or image of any person (including themselves) without the prior consent or authorization.

## **Section 8 Use of Cell Phones**

Students may not use cell phones or any other electronic/ battery-powered devices which transmit voice, text, or data from one person to another while students are in the high school/middle school building during regular school hours. A student who violates this rule will be required to turn their phone/device into the office and face additional consequences as outlined below:

### **(1) Possession and Use of Electronic Devices**

Students are not permitted to use electronic devices during class time or passing periods unless authorized by staff. Cell phone use—including calls, texting, or taking photos—is strictly prohibited during class. Phones must be turned off or silenced and stored in a locker or backpack; they may not be carried on the student’s person (e.g., in pockets, coats, or waistband). The school

is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged devices brought into the building.

### (2) Approved Use of Electronic Devices

Electronic devices may be used during class only with teacher or administrative approval for authorized academic activities (e.g., using a camera in photography class or a personal device for a class presentation).

### (3) Authorized Use for Individual Needs

Students may use electronic devices during class if permitted by an IEP, 504 Plan, Health Care Plan, or a parent-approved plan addressing a compelling need. Such use requires prior approval from the principal (e.g., limited use for family updates during a medical situation).

## **Section 9 Headphones, Earbuds, and Similar Devices**

Headphones, earbuds, and other non-essential devices are not allowed during instructional time unless approved by the teacher for educational purposes. Use may be permitted in study hall with staff permission. At any time, a teacher or administrator may require a student to stop using a device. Non-compliance will result in the device being turned in to the office and may lead to disciplinary consequences, including detention or suspension, as outlined in the MHS Student Code of Conduct.

## **Section 10 Violations and Consequences**

Electronic devices may not be used for activities that disrupt learning, violate laws, promote cheating, involve immoral or pornographic content, breach school conduct or harassment policies, or invade others' privacy. Such misuse will result in serious disciplinary action, including possible suspension or expulsion. Devices used in violation of this policy may be confiscated and secured in the main office. They will be returned to the student or parent/guardian at an appropriate time, following school procedures.

### **Consequences for Electronic Device Violations**

**First Violation:** The device will be confiscated and held in the office until the end of the next school day. A conference will be held between the student and the principal or assistant principal. Electronic devices confiscated the last day of the school week will be returned after the end of the day that school is in session.

**Second Violation:** The device will be confiscated and held in the office until the

end of the next school day. A conference with the student, parent/guardian, and the principal or assistant principal will be required.

**Third Violation:** The device will be held for 30 calendar days. A parent must retrieve it in person. Additional consequences may include a parent conference and school suspension.

**Subsequent Violations:** Repeat offenses may result in more severe disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, as outlined in the MHS Student Code of Conduct.

### **Section 11 Personal Property**

Students are responsible for their own belongings. They are strongly advised not to bring large amounts of money or valuable items to school. The school is not liable for lost, stolen, or damaged personal property.

### **Section 12 School Announcements and Posting Guidelines**

Daily announcements will be read over the intercom each morning and posted on the school website. All posters or materials for hallway display or distribution must be approved by the high school office and removed within 48 hours after the event.

### **Section 13 Copyright**

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.

## **Article 4 – Attendance (MPS Policy 5008)**

### **Section 1 Attendance and Building Entry**

Regular and punctual attendance is expected. Students must enter and exit through the front high school doors. Side doors and the middle school doors are only to be used in an emergency.

## **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 should be cleared through the Principal's office in advance, whenever possible. An absence or tardy, even with parental approval, may not be considered excused by the school. All absences, except for illness and/or death in the family, require advance approval. An absence for any of the following reasons will be typically 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. Documented illness which causes a student to be absent from school.
  - c. Documented doctor or dental appointment which requires a student to be absent from school.
  - d. Documented court appearances that are required by a court order.
  - e. School sponsored activities which require students to be absent from school.\*
  - f. Other absences which have received prior approval from the principal.

\* Will be considered an Excused School Sponsored Activity.

The principal has the discretion to deny approval for a student's absence, 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 other relevant reasons.

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.

## **Section 3 Tardy to Class**

Students are expected to arrive on time to each class. Any student not in their assigned classroom when the tardy bell rings—without a pass from a staff member—will be marked tardy.

### **1st Period and Lunch Tardies**

Punctuality is an essential life skill. Students are expected to arrive at school and return from lunch on time, demonstrating respect for others and responsibility for their privileges, including open campus lunch.

Consequences for Tardies:

- 1st Offense: Verbal warning; tardy recorded
- 2nd Offense: 30-minute detention (to be served within 24 hours)
- 3rd Offense: Open campus lunch revoked for 7–14 school days
- 4th Offense: Open campus lunch revoked for 30–45 school days
- 5th Offense: Open campus lunch revoked for the remainder of the quarter or semester (whichever is longer)

#### **Section 4 Leaving School or Class**

Students must check out through the office before leaving school during the day and must have prior approval from a parent or legal guardian. Upon return, students must check in at the office.

Leaving school without permission or without signing out, or leaving class without teacher approval, will be considered truancy.

#### **Section 5 Make-up Work**

Written make-up work may be assigned for all absences. If not completed, no credit will be given. Time allowed for completion is set by the teacher. It is the student's responsibility to contact teachers to request make-up assignments.

#### **Section 6 Attendance is Required to Participate in Activities**

To participate in a school activity, students must be in attendance for at least half the school day prior to the event. Exceptions may be made for school-sponsored events, medical appointments, or other circumstances beyond the student's control, with prior approval.

If a student will be absent, a parent/guardian must contact the high school office to request an exception. "School activities" include, but are not limited to, athletic/activity events, practices, and dances. Unexcused absences may result in loss of participation. Final decisions rest with the principal or activities director.

#### **Section 7 Unexcused Absences/Truancy**

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

## **Section 8 Excessive Absenteeism**

When a student accumulates excessive absences, the school will:

- Hold a meeting with the student, parent/guardian, and school staff. Refusal to attend will be documented.
- Provide educational counseling, which may include curriculum adjustments or alternative learning options.
- Conduct evaluations to identify academic or psychological factors.
- Investigate underlying causes and, if appropriate, refer the student or family to support services (e.g., counseling, financial assistance, or family resources).

## **Section 9 Habitual Truancy Reporting**

Students with 10 or more absences or the hourly equivalent in a semester may be deemed habitually truant.

If truancy continues:

- A written notice will be issued to the parent/guardian.
- If within one (1) week after the time the notice is given such person is still violating the school attendance laws or policies, the principal shall file a report with the county attorney or appropriate truancy diversion program.

## **Article 5 – Student Achievement**

### **Section 1 Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to uphold the standards of academic integrity set by their teachers and administration. These standards ensure fair grading, promote learning, and reflect personal responsibility.

### **Section 2 Violations of Academic Integrity**

**1. Cheating:** Cheating involves misrepresenting academic work to gain unfair advantage.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Using unauthorized materials during a test
- Sharing or copying answers
- Having someone else take a test
- Submitting false reasons to delay tests or assignments
- Submitting another’s work or reusing your own past work without permission
- Receiving excessive help that misrepresents student effort
- Failing to contribute fairly in group work
- Altering grades without authorization

**2. Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s ideas or words as your own without proper credit (including Chat GPT and other AI programs)

It includes:

- Submitting work prepared by someone else
- Copying text or ideas without citation
- Using purchased papers or reusing another student’s work

### **3. Contributing to Violations:**

Helping another student cheat or plagiarize, or failing to report known violations, also constitutes a breach of academic integrity.

### **Section 3 Consequences**

- Academic Sanctions: Affected work will receive an “F” and may need to be redone under teacher-specified conditions.
- Administrative Notification: The teacher will inform the principal and the student’s parent or guardian.
- Disciplinary Sanctions: Additional consequences, including suspension or expulsion, may apply for serious or repeated offenses.

### **Section 4 Academic Progress**

Students and parents can monitor academic progress at any time via PowerSchool. Printed report cards are available upon request through the high school office.

Questions about specific grades should be directed to the student’s teacher.

## **Section 5 Grading System (Policy 5204)**

Minden High School uses the following grading scale:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>% Range</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>% Range</u>
A	93-100	C	78-83
B+	91-92	D+	76-77
B	86-90	D	70-75
C+	84-85	F	0-69

INC: work not completed at the end of a grading period. Additional time required for make up work will be determined on an individual basis.

## **Section 6 Schedule Changes**

Students needing schedule changes should notify the office. All schedule changes must be initiated by the teachers involved, the principal or counselor, and the student's parent or guardian. Schedule change request forms must be completed and returned to the counselor's office no later than the end of the fifth day of each semester. Final approval of all schedule changes will be determined by the principal.

## **Section 7 Report Cards**

Grades will be finalized at the end of each quarter. Individual report cards will not be mailed out to parents/guardians unless a request is made to the high school office. Letter grades are used to designate a student's progress.

## **Section 8 Retaking Classes**

Retaking a course is subject to availability. Both attempts will appear on the transcript, and both grades will be included in the GPA. Class rank is calculated at the end of each semester.

## **Section 9 Pass/No Grade Option**

Juniors and seniors may take up to 30 credit hours using the Pass/No Grade option. A grade of 70% or higher earns a "P" and credit; a grade below 70% results in "NG" with no credit awarded.

## **Section 10 Excessive Absences**

Students will not receive a passing grade in courses where credit is lost due to excessive absences.

## **Section 11 Noon Study Hall**

All students who are failing 2 or more classes on the first day of the week will be required to report to noon study. Students may be recommended for noon study hall by their classroom teachers. Seniors failing courses needed for graduation will also be required to attend noon study hall.

Students who fail to attend study hall will be marked unexcused and will be subject to student code of conduct procedures. Students who choose to be non-productive during noon study hall will also face appropriate consequences in accordance with the student code of conduct.

## **Section 12 Graduation Requirements (Policy 5205)**

220 semester hours (5 hours credit per course per semester)

English 40 semester hours

Physical Ed. 10 semester hours

Social Studies 30 semester hours

Speech 5 semester hours

(W. Geography, US History & Am. Gov't)

Personal Finance 5 semester hours

Science 30 semester hours

Computer Science 5 semester hours

Math 30 semester hours

Required 155 semester hours

Electives 65 semester hours

## **Section 13 Transferring in Credits (Policy 5003)**

The administration may implement reasonable rules for determining which credits will be accepted and may limit credits to verifiable programs or institutions, such as a private school or the University of Nebraska High School online program.

## **Section 14 Grade Point Average and Class Rank**

Grade point averages and class ranks are calculated at the end of each semester and are cumulative over four years. To be officially ranked, students must be enrolled in at least four GPA-eligible academic courses.

## **Section 15 Honor Roll**

Recognized each semester:

- High Distinction: GPA 3.75–4.00
- Honor Roll: GPA 3.35–3.74

Students must take at least four GPA-eligible academic courses and have no grades of D+, D, F, INC, or NG\* in any class.

### **Section 16 Laurels**

Awarded annually based on that school year's GPA:

- Gold Laurels: GPA 3.75–4.00
- Purple Laurels: GPA 3.35–3.74

Students must take at least four GPA-eligible courses and have no D+, D, F, INC, or NG\* in any class.

### **Section 17 Distinguished Service Graduates**

Students meeting the criteria for Distinguished Service Graduate will be honored at both Honors Night and Graduation. Details are available through the counselor's office.

### **Section 18 Activity Eligibility**

Eligibility for extracurricular activities is based on academic progress, reviewed approximately every three weeks. All eligibility decisions take effect the Monday after grades are reviewed.

#### **1st Academic Period (Early Quarter):**

Students failing two or more classes have one week to improve their grades. If still failing after that period, they become ineligible for all extracurricular activities until the next progress report. Students with four or more failing grades may not practice.

#### **2nd Academic Period (Mid-Quarter):**

Students previously ineligible may regain eligibility if passing. Those now failing two or more classes have one week to raise their grades. If not passing after that, they are ineligible for the remainder of the quarter.

#### **3rd Academic Period (End of Quarter):**

Students failing two or more classes at the end of the quarter have one week to improve. If still failing, they remain ineligible until the next reporting period.

**NSAA Rule:** In addition to the above MHS eligibility policy, to remain eligible for NSAA activities, students must pass at least 20 credit

hours (four semester courses) the previous semester.

**Between Semesters (Winter Break):**

Eligibility for activities held after 1st semester but before 2nd semester is based on fall semester grades. Students must have passed at least 20 credit hours to remain eligible until 3rd quarter progress reports.

**Section 19 Activities Affected by the Progress Ineligibility List**

- All extra-curricular and co-curricular events
  - All dances (homecoming, winter ball, prom, etc)
  - High school athletic contests
  - Field and motivational trips
  - Pep and marching band (parades included)
  - All instrumental and vocal music contests
  - All speech and drama contests
  - All inter-high competitions and academic competitions
- (Grades based on current cumulative grade.)

**Section 20 Correspondence Courses/Dual Enrollment/College Courses**

Students interested in taking correspondence, independent study, dual enrollment, or college courses for credit must receive prior approval from the administration before enrolling. Students enrolled in such courses must demonstrate that they are staying current with their coursework and maintaining a passing grade to remain eligible for extracurricular activities.

**Section 21 Activity Ticket**

Students may purchase an activity ticket for \$35, which grants admission to all home events except SWC and NSAA-sponsored competitions. Tickets must be purchased before participating in any NSAA activity. Some students may qualify for a free ticket—contact the office for details.

**Section 22 Activity Trips/Transportation Waiver**

Any student participating in a Minden activity sponsored trip is expected to ride to an event with the team. Participants are allowed to be transported following an event by a parent or guardian (parent/guardian must complete the sign out sheet with the

designated coach). If a participant is riding from an event with anyone except for a parent/guardian, a student transportation waiver needs to be completed, approved, and filed with the high school office before noon the day prior to the event. Please stop by any office to pick up a waiver or download one from the district website.

All students riding in a school vehicle equipped with seat belts must wear the seat belts at all times when the vehicle is moving.

## **Article 6 - Support Services**

### **Section 1 Special Education Services**

Please see policy #6600 for Special Education information including the evaluation and verification process.

### **Section 2 Students with Disabilities: Section 504 (MPS Policy 1250)**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is designed to prohibit discrimination based on disability in any program activity receiving federal money. Please see policy 1250 for Section 504 information including evaluation and verification.

### **Section 3 Health Services**

School health personnel will notify parents when a student needs to be sent home from school due to illness.

### **Section 4 Guidelines for Administering Medication**

Whenever possible, students should be provided medications outside of school hours. In the event it is necessary that a student take or have medication at school, the parents/guardians must provide a signed written consent for the student to be given medication at school. Medications must be provided to the school by the parent/guardian in the pharmacy-labeled or manufacturer-labeled bottle.

### **Section 5 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 an affidavit.

### **Section 6 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.

### **Section 7 Transportation Services (MPS Policy 5501)**

Transportation to and from school is provided to students in accordance with law and Board policy. While riding a school bus, a student must follow the same student conduct rules which apply when the student is on school property or attending school activities, functions, or events.

Parents of rural school students will be contacted by the transportation supervisor before the start of school. Questions on transportation matters may call 308-832-2440.

## **Article 7 – Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco (MPS Policy 5104)**

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

Minden Public Schools are designated as a drug-free zone. The use, possession, distribution, manufacture, or sale of illicit drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or electronic nicotine devices is strictly prohibited on school grounds, in school vehicles, or at school-sponsored events.

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

The district offers a comprehensive, age-appropriate drug and alcohol education curriculum for all students. Programs emphasize the risks of substance abuse and promote prevention.

### **Section 3 Counseling and Support**

Information on drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, and re-entry programs is available through the school counselor.

### **Section 4 Parental Rights**

Parents may opt their child out of non-instructional safe and drug-free programs by submitting a written objection to the school.

### **Section 5 Student Conduct Standards**

Students are prohibited from possessing, using, distributing, or being under the influence of:

1. Controlled substances (e.g., marijuana, narcotics, stimulants, hallucinogens, depressants)
2. Prescription drugs used unlawfully
3. Alcohol
4. Inhalants (e.g., glue, aerosol paint, or chemicals used to get high)
5. Look-alike drugs or substances
6. Tobacco products, including vapes and nicotine device

## **Section 6 Disciplinary Actions**

Violations may result in disciplinary measures, including suspension, expulsion, and criminal prosecution. Additional consequences for students in extracurricular activities may apply, as determined by the Activities Director and coaches/sponsors.

Possible actions include:

- Suspension or expulsion
- Confiscation of substances and referral to law enforcement
- Referral for counseling or treatment
- Parent/guardian notification
- Emergency medical intervention, if needed

## **Article 8 – Student Conduct Rules**

### **Section 1 Minden High School Code of Conduct**

The Student Code of Conduct is grounded in the U.S. Constitution, Nebraska state law, and Minden Public Schools Board policies. Students are not to engage in conduct which causes, or which creates a reasonable likelihood that it will cause, a substantial disruption in or material interference with any school function, activity or purpose or interfere with the health, safety, well-being or rights of other students, staff, or visitors. Enforcement of these rules will align with applicable laws and district guidelines.

Infractions are grouped by severity but do not represent an exhaustive list. School administration reserves the right to interpret violations and adjust consequences based on the nature and context of the offense. Disciplinary actions may be more or less severe than those listed when deemed appropriate by the principal, assistant principal, or superintendent.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **Group 1 Offenses**

- 1.01 Littering on school grounds or building
- 1.02 Improper care or deliberate damage to books or school property (writing on school materials, on walls, or restroom stalls, etc.). Fines may also be imposed for damaged materials.
- 1.03 Inappropriate display of affection (holding hands, kissing, etc.).
- 1.04 Violation of dress code (other clothes may be given to the student to wear).
- 1.05 Bringing or consuming food or pop in school without permission
- 1.06 Addressing a teacher by his or her first name in a non-derogatory manner during school or at a school activity
- 1.07 Tardy three or more times during a semester
- 1.08 Skipping detention
- 1.09 Bringing laser pointers or water guns to school
- 1.10 Use of profanity spoken, written, or illustrated
- 1.11 Improper use of computers (intentional damage, use of e-mail during school day, etc.).

### **Group 1 Consequences**

- 1.1 First offense: oral reprimand and/or detention
- 1.2 Second offense: detention
- 1.3 Third offense: long term detention
- 1.4 Fourth offense: in-school suspension
- 1.5 Fifth offense: in-school suspension
- 1.6 Sixth offense: short-term out of school suspension
- 1.7 Seventh offense: long-term, out-of-school suspension
- 1.8 Eighth offense: recommendation to superintendent for expulsion

### **Group 2 Offenses**

- 2.1 Disrespect to other students
- 2.2 Possession of pocket knife (single edged blade no longer than two and a half inches)
- 2.3 Removal from class (student/teacher/principal conference)
- 2.4 Insubordination or belligerence

### **Group 2 Consequences**

- 2.1 First offense: long term detention
- 2.2 Second offense: in-school suspension

- 2.3 Third offense: in-school suspension
- 2.4 Fourth offense: out-of-school suspension
- 2.5 Fifth offense: long-term out-of-school suspension
- 2.6 Sixth offense: recommendation to the superintendent for expulsion

### **Group 3 Offenses**

- 3.1 Truancy (skipping class or part of a class, including noon study hall and/or academic study hall)
- 3.2 Attempting to start a fight in school, on school property, or during a school sponsored activity (a student would not be considered to have violated the policy if a student acted in self-defense)
- 3.3 Causing physical injury to another student or staff member without malice
- 3.4 Continuing, and with purpose, to hurt or humiliate another person
- 3.5 Parking or driving violations (including reckless driving on school property)

### **Group 3 Consequences**

- 3.1 First offense: long term detention and possible referral to Student Assistance Program
- 3.2 Second offense: in-school suspension
- 3.3 Third offense: in-school suspension
- 3.4 Fourth offense: out-of-school suspension
- 3.5 Fifth offense: long-term, out-of-school suspension
- 3.6 Sixth offense: recommendation to the superintendent for expulsion

### **Group 4 Offenses**

- 4.1 Smoking, chewing tobacco, and/or possession of tobacco on school grounds or within the school building or during school sponsored activities (this includes tobacco products, tobacco related devices, imitation tobacco products, lighters, or any type of electronic cigarette (Vapor, Juul, E-Cigarette, etc))
- 4.2 Unexcused absences for one or more days of school (notice the attendance policy)
- 4.3 Fighting in school, on school property, or during a school sponsored activity (a student is not considered to have violated the policy if the student acts in self-defense).

- 4.4 Vandalism or damage to school property under \$100.00
- 4.5 Theft of school or personal property under \$50.00
- 4.6 Verbal abuse, harassment, profanity towards, or disrespect for school personnel or students

#### **Group 4 Consequences**

- 4.1 First offense: in-school suspension, with possible report to the appropriate law enforcement agency
- 4.2 Second offense: out-of-school suspension, with possible report to the appropriate law enforcement agency
- 4.3 Third offense: long-term out-of-school suspension, with possible report to the appropriate law enforcement agency
- 4.4 Fourth offense: recommendation to the superintendent for expulsion, with possible report to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

#### **Group 5 Offenses**

- 5.1 Using violence, force, coercion, threat, or substantial interference with school purposes
- 5.2 Unlawfully possessing, consuming, or being under the influence of any drug, narcotic, or alcohol; unlawfully possessing or consuming any “look-alike” drug, or drug paraphernalia; or the abuse of over-the-counter drugs at school, at school-sponsored events, or prior to attending school or school events
- 5.3 Assault or battery on an employee or student of the Minden Public Schools
- 5.4 Intentionally pulling a fire alarm
- 5.5 Engaging in any activity forbidden by law, which interferes with school purpose
- 5.6 Stealing of or vandalism to personal or school property
- 5.7 Making a bomb threat; possession of fireworks or stink bomb
- 5.8 Threatening or causing bodily harm to school personnel or students

#### **Group 5 Consequences**

- 5.1 First offense: long-term; out-of-school suspension, with possible report to the appropriate law enforcement agency
- 5.2 Second offense:

recommendation to the superintendent for expulsion,  
with possible report to the appropriate law  
enforcement agency

### **Group 6 Offenses**

6.1 Possession of a weapon (knife or gun, etc.) as defined by local law enforcement. A student who is determined to have knowingly and intentionally possessed, used, or transmitted a firearm on school grounds, in a school-owned vehicle being used for a school purpose, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event will be expelled from school for a period of not less than one year. \*The term firearm means a firearm as such term is defined in Section 921 of Title 18, United States Code. The superintendent or school board may modify the expulsion requirement for a student on a case-by-case basis. Students in violation of the gun-free schools policy will also be reported to the proper law enforcement officials.

### **Group 6 Consequences**

6.1 First offense: recommendation to superintendent for expulsion

## **Section 2 Forms of School Discipline (MPS Policy 5101)**

Students who violate the student conduct rules may be subject to the following forms of discipline:

1. Short-Term Suspension: Students may be excluded by the principal or the principal's designee from school or any school function for a period of up to five (5) school days (short-term suspension) on the following grounds:
  - a. Conduct that constitutes grounds for expulsion, whether the conduct occurs on or off school grounds; or
  - b. Other violations of rules and standards of behavior adopted by the Board of Education or the administrative or teaching staff of the school, which occur on or off school grounds, if such conduct interferes with school purposes or there is a nexus between such conduct and school.
  
2. Long-Term Suspension: A long-term suspension means an exclusion from school and any school functions for a period of more than five (5) school days but less than twenty (20) school days. A student who is on a long-term suspension shall not be

permitted to be on school grounds without the express permission of the principal. Pursuant to the Nebraska Student Discipline Act, a notice will be given to the student and the parents/guardian when the principal recommends a long-term suspension. The notice will include a description of the procedures for long-term suspension; the procedures will be those set forth in the Student Discipline Act.

3. Expulsion: Expulsion means exclusion from attendance in all schools, grounds and activities of or within the system for a period not to exceed the remainder of the semester in which it took effect unless the misconduct occurred (a) within ten (10) school days prior to the end of the first semester.
4. Emergency Exclusion: A student may be excluded from school in the following circumstances:
  - a. If the student has a dangerous communicable disease transmissible through normal school contacts and poses an imminent threat to the health or safety of the school community; or
  - b. If the student's conduct presents a clear threat to the physical safety of himself, herself, or others, or is so extremely disruptive as to make temporary removal necessary to preserve the rights of other students to pursue an education.
5. Other Forms of Student Discipline: Administrative and teaching personnel may also take actions regarding student behavior, other than removal of students from school, which are reasonably necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or prevent interference with the educational process. Such actions may include, but are not limited to, counseling of students, parent conferences, rearrangement of schedules, requirements that a student remain in school after regular hours to do additional work, restriction of extracurricular activity, or requirements that a student receive counseling, psychological evaluation, or psychiatric evaluation upon the written consent of a parent or guardian to such counseling or evaluation.

### **Section 3 Student Appearance (MPS Policy 5101)**

Students are expected to dress appropriately for the school environment. Attire must not pose safety risks, disrupt learning, or display offensive or inappropriate content. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action, up to expulsion.

Inappropriate attire includes, but is not limited to:

- Clothing/jewelry promoting alcohol, tobacco, or drugs
- Items that could be used as weapons or encourage horseplay (e.g., chains, spiked apparel, cleats)
- Headwear inside the building (hats, caps, bandannas)
- Clothing with nudity, sexual references, or vulgar content
- Gang-related clothing or accessories
- “Sagging” pants, exposed undergarments, excessive bare skin, tube tops, halters, midriff shirts
- Shorts, skirts, or skorts shorter than mid-thigh
- Visible body piercings that disrupt learning
- Chains of any kind worn externally
- Holes in pants or jeans above the knee

Additional Notes:

- Dress code applies at all school-sponsored activities. Headwear may be allowed at athletic events, but inappropriate clothing will result in removal from the event.
- Final decisions on attire are made by the principal or superintendent.
- Apparel, accessories, or grooming that suggest gang affiliation or promote drugs or disruption are strictly prohibited and may be confiscated.

Disciplinary Procedure:

First Offense: Student must change or call home for proper attire. If clothing cannot be provided, in-school suspension will be assigned for the day. Students may not leave campus to change.

- Repeat Offenses: May lead to more serious consequences, including suspension or expulsion.

- Note: If the dress code violation also breaks other conduct rules (e.g., public indecency, profanity), stronger disciplinary actions may be taken even on the first offense.

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

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

- a. 1st Offense: Student will be directed to stop.
- b. 2nd Offense: Student will be directed to stop, and parents will be notified.
- c. 3rd Offense: Student will be suspended from school for a minimum of one (1) day, and parents and student will need to meet with the administration to address the ongoing conduct.

If this type of behavior continues, or if the IPDA is lewd or constitutes sexual conduct, the student could face long-term suspension or expulsion.

#### **Section 5 Law Violations**

Any student act that may warrant expulsion and appears to violate Nebraska law will be reported to law enforcement as soon as possible by the principal or designee.

#### **Section 6 Anti-Bullying: (MPS Policy 5415)**

The District is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all students and staff. Bullying or harassment should be reported promptly to a teacher or the principal. Students who report bullying will be protected from retaliation.

#### **Section 7 Technology Use and Network Access (MPS Policy 6800)**

### General Rules

Minden Public Schools provides network access for educational purposes such as research and communication. Access is a privilege—not a right—and requires responsible behavior. All users are expected to follow district guidelines and accept responsibility for their actions on the network.

Network use is not private. Files and communications may be monitored by network administrators to ensure appropriate use. Users waive any expectation of privacy. The district is not liable for personal purchases or outcomes of network use. No purchases may be made using the school's network.

### Acceptable Use Guidelines

The following rules apply to all student users:

- Do not access, alter, or damage others' files, information, or programs.
- Do not share your username, password, or account access.
- Do not attempt to access another user's account or information.
- Do not engage in illegal activity (e.g., software piracy or unauthorized installations).
- Do not copy or distribute software or files without permission.
- Do not create or spread malicious software or harmful code.
- Do not use the network to harass others or send offensive content.
- Do not misuse or damage network systems, devices, or resources.

Violations may result in loss of access, disciplinary action, or legal consequences.

#### a. General Rules:

- i. The network is provided to staff and students to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to network services is given to staff and students who have agreed to act in a responsible manner. 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 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.

- 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 purchases of goods and/or services via the district's network.

**b. Rules for Acceptable Use of Computers and the Network:**

The following rules for acceptable use of computers and the network, including Internet, shall apply to all students:

- i. Students shall not erase, remake, or make unusable anyone else's computer, information, files, or programs.
- ii. Students shall not let other people use their name, account, log-on password, or files for any reason (except for authorized staff members).
- iii. Students shall not use or try to discover another user's account or password.

- iv. Students shall not use the computer for unlawful purposes, such as illegal copying or installation of unauthorized software.
- v. Students shall not copy, change, or transfer any software or documentation provided by teachers, or other students without permission from the network administrators.
- vi. Students shall not write, produce, generate, copy, propagate, or attempt to introduce any computer code, software or information designed to self-replicate, damage, or otherwise hinder the performance of the network or any computer's memory, file system, or software.
- vii. Students 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.
- viii. Students shall not damage the network or equipment, damage information belonging to others, misuse network resources, or allow others to misuse network resources.

## **Article 9 – Student Fees Policy (MPS Policy 5416)**

### **Section 1 Student Fees Policy**

The District's general policy is to provide 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. Parents, guardians, and students are encouraged to contact their building administration for further specifics. The District's entire Student Fees Policy 5416 is available on the District's website.

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

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

The School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex,

disability, race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, sexual orientation or gender identity, or other protected status in the admission, access to its facilities or programs or activities, treatment, or employment.

## **Section 2 Designation of Coordinators**

Any person having concerns or needing information about the District's compliance with anti-discrimination laws or policies should contact the Superintendent of Schools at: 543 West 5th Street, Minden, Nebraska 68959, telephone number (308)832-2440.

## **Section 3 Multicultural Education**

The District's multicultural education program aims to help students become productive members of society by promoting:

- An understanding of the history, contributions, and impact of diverse cultures and races (including African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and European Americans); and
- The skills to respectfully study, work, and live with people of different backgrounds.

The program also prepares students to recognize and eliminate stereotypes, discrimination, and harassment based on ethnicity, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, age, or disability.

## **Section 4 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (MPS Policy 1250)**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is designed to prohibit discrimination based on disability in any program activity receiving federal money. This statute obligates public schools to provide equal access and equal opportunity to otherwise qualified persons with disabilities.

For a student to be eligible for a 504 plan, the student must have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more

major life activities. It must be because of the impairment that the student is unable to gain equal access and benefit from the school programs and services. If you have questions regarding section 504 plans, please contact the building administrator.

### **Section 5 Notification of Rights Under FERPA (MPS Policy 5202 & 5202A)**

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 to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- 3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational

interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another School District in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

- 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 Officer  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

A complete description of the above policy can be located on the Minden Public Schools website at [www.mindenwhippets.org](http://www.mindenwhippets.org) under Menu - Documents - Board Policies or by clicking on the following link: [Student Records \(Policy 5202\)](#) and [FERPA Rights \(Policy 5202A\)](#)

## **Section 6 Directory Information Disclosure**

The District may release designated directory information unless a parent or eligible student opts out in writing within two (2) weeks of receiving this notice.

Directory information includes:

Student's name, address, phone number, and parent/guardian contact information

- School and dates of attendance
- Grade level and enrollment status
- Date and place of birth
- Participation in extracurricular activities
- Awards and honors
- Weight and height (for athletic team members)
- Student photograph
- Previous school attended

To opt out, submit a written request to the Superintendent's office. Without written notice, consent will be presumed.

### **Section 7 Military Recruiters**

The District provides military recruiters access to routine directory information for high school students unless a parent or guardian submits a written request to the principal to withhold it. Without written notice, the information will be shared.

### **Section 8 Parental/Community Involvement in Schools (MPS Policy 6400)**

In the event any parent, guardian, or educational decision maker of a student has a complaint or objection to textbooks, tests, curriculum materials, activities, digital materials, websites or applications used for learning, training materials for teachers, administrators, or staff, and any other instructional materials, the parent, guardian, or educational decision maker may request a personal conference with appropriate school personnel to discuss such concerns in accordance to the Minden Public Schools District Policy 6400

### **Section 9 Homeless Students (MPS Policy 5418)**

Homeless children and youth are entitled to the same free, appropriate public education—including preschool—as all other students.

If you are aware of a homeless student, please contact the District's Homeless Coordinator. The full policy is available on the District's

website.

## **Article 11 – Additional Standards for Minden High School Students**

### **Section 1 Graduation Attire**

All MHS graduates must wear purple gowns, caps, and purple/black/silver tassels, purchased through the school-approved vendor.

Approved Additions:

- Distinguished Service Graduates (200+ community service hours): Gold cords (received at Honors Night)
- Honor Graduates (3.75+ cumulative GPA): Graduation medal (presented during the ceremony)

Not Allowed:

- No additional pins, cords, flowers, stoles, ribbons, or decorations
- Caps may not be decorated and must be worn as issued

All attire must remain uniform and unaltered during the ceremony.

### **AVAILABILITY OF HANDBOOKS**

The 2025-2026 Student-Parent Handbook of Minden Public Schools is available on the internet at [www.mindenwhippets.org](http://www.mindenwhippets.org)

Because of the expense of printing the handbooks, we are asking that you consider using the internet to access and review the 2025-2026 Student-Parent Handbook. Using the internet to access the handbook will allow the district to direct printing dollars to instructional needs and eliminate the need for you to search for your handbook when you have questions throughout the year. Thank you for considering this new use of technology to improve school-home communication.

Please return to the Principal's Office by August 25, 2025. This will allow us time to get the handbook to all students and parents before school starts while avoiding the necessity of printing more copies of the handbooks than necessary.

- Thank you for providing the 2025-2026 Student-Parent Handbook online. I will review it on the internet. My signed receipt below acknowledges receipt of the handbook in a satisfactory manner via the internet.
  
- I prefer a paper copy of the handbook.

-----  
Name

**RECEIPT OF 2025-2026 STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK**

This signed receipt acknowledges receipt of the 2025-2026 Student-Parent Handbook of Minden Public Schools. We understand that the handbook contains student conduct and discipline rules and information about Safe and Drug-Free Schools and that we agree to follow such conduct and discipline rules. This receipt also serves to acknowledge that we understand the District's policies of non-discrimination and equity, and that specific complaint and grievance procedures exist in the handbook which should be used to respond to harassment or discrimination.

-----  
Student Signature

-----  
Parent or Legal Guardian Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT - PARENT HANDBOOK**  
**C.L. JONES MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**2025-2026**

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## **Minden Public Schools Student-Parent Handbook 2025-2026 School Year**

On behalf of the staff at C.L. Jones Middle School, we would like to welcome you to the start of the 2025-2026 school year. Thank you for taking the time to read this handbook together. We look forward to working with you. It will be a wonderful school year!

The handbook has been prepared to clarify procedures, policies, and expectations at C.L. Jones Middle School. Our intent is to lead students toward becoming disciplined, contributing, productive members of society by providing quality learning experiences and upholding high expectations for all students. It is critical to help each student identify the importance of individual worth through the personal development of initiative, resourcefulness, and responsibility. Students are encouraged to be involved and take advantage of the various learning opportunities offered at C.L. Jones Middle School.

Students, teachers, parent/guardian(s), and support staff working collaboratively with mutual respect and understanding will result in providing our children a quality education. Thank you for your support and cooperation. Please feel free to contact us or visit the building throughout the school year.  
Sincerely, Nathan Strasburg - Principal and Ed Rowse- Assistant Principal

### **Mission Statement**

"Minden Public Schools, with the community, strives to develop productive and responsible citizens through an environment that empowers them to seek, understand, and appreciate learning," speaks to our goal of equipping our children with the academic and social skills that they need to be successful citizens now and in the future.

### **School Improvement Goal**

All students will show measurable growth in academics and social-emotional well-being through the enhanced support provided at each tier of the Mult-Tiered System of Supports process.

### **Section 1 Intent of Handbook**

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

Although the information found in this handbook is detailed and specific on many topics, the handbook is not intended to be all encompassing so as to cover every situation and circumstance that may arise during any school day, or school year. This handbook does not create a "contract." The administration reserves the right to make decisions and make rule revisions at any time to implement the educational program and to assure the well-being of all students 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, and state and federal statutes and regulations. The Policies of the Board of Education may cover areas not addressed in this Handbook. Every parent or guardian and student should familiarize themselves with Board Policies online at: [Board Policies Minden Public Schools](#).

### **Section 2 School Calendar**

[2025.2026 school calendar MPS CLJMS](#)

## Article 1 – Mission and Goals

### Section 1 Mutual Respect

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

### Section 2 Complaint Procedures

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

#### 1. Complaint procedure

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

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

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

Step 4. Address the concern to the Board of Education if the matter is not resolved at Step 3.

#### 2. Conditions Applicable to All Levels of Complaint Procedure

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

#### 3. Student Conflict Resolution

If a student has a problem with another student(s) that he/she cannot resolve by discussing the issue directly with the student(s), he/she should ask for help from a middle school staff member. The staff member will intervene and determine the level of intervention necessary. If the staff member cannot help in finding the solution, the issue may be directed to the middle school counselor or principal. Any student at any time may bring any problem directly to the school guidance counselor or principal to address. C. L. Jones Middle School staff members have the authority to serve as mediators and or arbitrators for the resolution of student conflict. Any student issue brought to the attention of a member of the middle school staff will be addressed.

Conflict resolution steps are:

Step 1. If possible, privately talk to the other student about the problem.

Step 2. Ask a staff member for help resolving the conflict.

Step 3. Take the issue to the middle school guidance counselor or principal.

## Article 2 – School Day

### Section 1 Daily Schedule

Period 1	8:00 a.m. - 8:52 a.m.	Period 5	11:28 a.m. - 12:16 p.m.
Period 2	8:55 a.m. - 9:43 a.m.	Period 6	1:00 p.m. - 1:48 p.m.
Period 3	9:46 a.m. - 10:32 a.m.	Period 7	1:51 p.m. - 2:39 p.m.
Period 4	10:37 a.m. - 11:25 a.m.	Period 8	2:42 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

### Section 2 Shortened Schedules

#### 2:10 Early Release Schedule

Period 1	8:00 a.m. - 8:42 a.m.	Period 5	10:48 a.m. - 11:26 a.m.
Period 2	8:45 a.m. - 9:23 a.m.	Period 6	11:29 a.m. - 12:07 p.m.
Period 3	9:26 a.m. - 10:04 a.m.	Period 7	12:51 p.m. - 1:29 p.m.
Period 4	10:07 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.	Period 8	1:32 p.m. - 2:10 p.m.

#### 1:10 Early Release Schedule

Period 1	8:00 a.m. - 8:35 a.m.	Period 5	10:20 a.m. - 10:51 a.m.
Period 2	8:38 a.m. - 9:09 a.m.	Period 6	10:54 a.m. - 11:25 p.m.
Period 3	9:12 a.m. - 9:43 a.m.	Period 7	11:28 p.m. - 11:59 p.m.
Period 4	9:46 a.m. - 10:17 a.m.	Period 8	12:39 p.m. - 1:10 p.m.

#### Late Start Schedule

Period 1	10:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.	Period 5	1:01 p.m. - 1:36 p.m.
Period 2	10:38 a.m. - 11:13 a.m.	Period 6	1:39 p.m. - 2:14 p.m.
Period 3	11:16 a.m. - 11:51 a.m.	Period 7	2:17 p.m. - 2:52 p.m.
Period 4	11:54 a.m. - 12:29 p.m.	Period 8	2:52 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

### Section 3 Severe Weather and School Cancellations

The Superintendent may close public schools in case of severe weather or an emergency. The school will notify parents and guardians, as well as the local media, when the schools will be closed. This includes broadcast on television stations NTV, KHAS, and KOLN-KGIN; radio stations KRVN, KRNY, and KSYZ, as well as the website for Minden Public Schools, [mindenwhippets.org](http://mindenwhippets.org). Minden Public Schools also uses an automated notification system, Thrillshare, to inform parent/guardian and staff of school closings and delayed starting times. For details about Thrillshare, please contact the middle school office.

Parental Decisions. Parents may decide to keep their children at home during inclement weather because of personal circumstances. Students absent because of severe weather when school is in session will generally be considered an excused absence.

Pickup During Inclement Weather. Parents should not come to school during severe weather, such as during a tornado warning since students will be moved into safe areas of the building and will not ordinarily be released during inclement weather or dangerous circumstances.

#### **Section 4      Open-Closed Campus**

All students are required to remain on campus during the school day, unless prior written parental permission and administrative approval is received. Students who eat off campus must sign out at the office prior to leaving and check-in at the office upon returning. Students are to enter the building using the south doors of CLJMS. Students are not to bring pop, chips, sandwiches, etc. back onto the school grounds. If a student is tardy back to class after an off-campus lunch, there will be a conference between the student, parents/guardians of the student and the building principal. Students who eat on campus are not to leave the campus after eating. This includes students who have permission slips to eat elsewhere.

#### **Section 5      Supervision Responsibility Before/After School**

##### Arrival at School/Dismissal From School

Building doors open daily at 7:30 AM. Classes begin each day at 8:00 AM and end Monday through Thursday at 3:30 PM, Friday at 2:10 PM. Students arriving before 7:55 AM must go directly to C. L. Jones Middle School gym. Students are not to go to lockers or classrooms before 7:55 AM without permission from a teacher. At 7:55 AM students will be released from the gym and are free to go to lockers and classrooms. Any student arriving to class after 8:00 AM will be considered tardy and must report to the office.

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

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

##### Signing a Child In and Out of School

Parents or guardians are required to check in with the office if they are entering after their child’s first class or leaving prior to their child’s final class. The parent or guardian must report to the main office for this purpose. Parents may not go directly to the classrooms. The schools will only release children to adults designated by the parent or an emergency contact.

## Article 3 – Use of Building and Grounds

### Section 1 Visitors

All visitors must report to the office, upon entering the main entrance, to sign in and receive a visitor's pass. Visits by parents are encouraged; provided that the visits do not disrupt the educational program, individual students, or create a safety concern. Students who wish to have parents, guardians, relatives visit the school are asked to contact the office to arrange a visitation time. In most cases, visitations will be arranged during the student's lunch hour when he/she is free to entertain his/her guest.

### Section 2 Smoke-Free Environment

All of our school buildings and grounds are smoke and tobacco-free. No smoking or tobacco is allowed on school grounds or at any school activity.

### 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 damage property, break windows, or cause other harm to school property or equipment will be required to pay the cost to repair or replace the item.
3. Students in grades 4, 5 and 6 are required to keep a student planner. The planner is meant to encourage all students to prepare for class and provide communication between home and school. Replacement cost is \$5.00

School-issued items that are stolen or damaged from unlocked lockers are the responsibility of the student to whom they were issued.

### Section 4 Lockers

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

Students may not display images, information or messages that may cause a substantial disruption to the operations of the school. If a staff member sees or learns of an image or message that may cause a disruption, the staff member may ask the student to remove the image or message from the locker. If the student refuses, then the administration will meet with the student and parents to discuss the situation. The principal shall have the final say on whether a student needs to remove the image or message from the locker.

Students in grades 6 - 8 will be furnished with a combination lock on request. A replacement fee of **\$6.00** will be charged if the lock is not returned at the end of the year. We encourage all students to place this lock on their locker and use it at all times.

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

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

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

1. School officials may conduct a search if there is a reasonable basis to believe that the search will uncover evidence of a crime or a school rule violation. The search is to be conducted in a reasonable manner under the circumstances.
2. Random searches of student lockers, desks, and other similar school property provided for use by students may be conducted at the discretion of the administration.
3. Drug or alcohol tests may be conducted on students based on reasonable suspicion.
4. Drug or alcohol tests may be conducted on a random basis for students participating in extracurricular activities.
5. Searches of the District's computer system may be conducted at the discretion of the administration at any time.

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

## **Section 7 Recording of Others**

To ensure the privacy and confidentiality of student information, no person is authorized to record or transmit any sound or image of any person (including themselves) without the prior consent or authorization of either (1) the person or persons being recorded or whose image or sound is being transmitted, (2) by authorized staff for purposes of child welfare (for example, to record images of injuries to students caused or believed to be caused by another person), or (3) the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee. This prohibition applies to all persons, including students, parents, and community members, regardless of the content or context of the image or sound; however, this provision shall not apply to District-sponsored athletic or activity events where the focus of

the recording or transmission is on the student performances or activity. Nothing in this provision shall prohibit the recording of an Individualized Education Program meeting if the recording is necessary to ensure that the parent understands the IEP or the IEP process or to implement other parental rights guaranteed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

#### **Section 8 Use of Cell Phones**

Students may not use cell phones or any other electronic/ battery-powered devices which transmit voice, text, or data from one person to another while students are in the high school/middle school building during regular school hours. A student who violates this rule will be required to turn their phone/device into the office and face additional consequences as outlined below:

##### **(1) Possession and Use of Electronic Devices.**

Students are not permitted to use electronic devices during class time or passing periods unless authorized by staff. Cell phone use—including calls, texting, or taking photos—is strictly prohibited during class. Phones must be turned off or silenced and stored in a locker or backpack; they may not be carried on the student's person (e.g., in pockets, coats, or waistband). The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged devices brought into the building.

(2) Approved Use of Electronic Devices: Electronic devices may be used during class only with teacher or administrative approval for authorized academic activities (e.g., using a camera in photography class or a personal device for a class presentation).

##### **(3) Authorized Use for Individual Needs**

Students may use electronic devices during class if permitted by an IEP, 504 Plan, Health Care Plan, or a parent-approved plan addressing a compelling need. Such use requires prior approval from the principal (e.g., limited use for family updates during a medical situation).

#### **Section 9 Headphones, Earbuds, and Similar Devices**

Headphones, earbuds, and other non-essential devices are not allowed during instructional time unless approved by the teacher for educational purposes. Use may be permitted in the study hall with staff permission. At any time, a teacher or administrator may require a student to stop using a device. Non-compliance will result in the device being turned in to the office and may lead to disciplinary consequences, including detention or suspension, as outlined in the MHS Student Code of Conduct.

#### **Section 10 Violations and Consequences**

Electronic devices may not be used for activities that disrupt learning, violate laws, promote cheating, involve immoral or pornographic content, breach school conduct or harassment policies, or invade others' privacy. Such misuse will result in serious disciplinary action, including possible suspension or expulsion.

Devices used in violation of this policy may be confiscated and secured in the main office. They will be returned to the student or parent/guardian at an appropriate time, following school procedures.

### **Consequences for Electronic Device Violations**

**First Violation:** The device will be confiscated and held in the office until the end of the next school day. A conference will be held between the student and the principal or assistant principal. Electronic devices confiscated the last day of the school week will be returned after the end of the day that school is in session.

**Second Violation:** The device will be confiscated and held in the office until the end of the next school day. A conference with the student, parent/guardian, and the principal or assistant principal will be required.

**Third Violation:** The device will be held for 30 calendar days. A parent must retrieve it in person. Additional consequences may include a parent conference and school suspension.

**Subsequent Violations:** Repeat offenses may result in more severe disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, as outlined in the MHS Student Code of Conduct.

### **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. The school does not guarantee or represent that the student's property will not be subject to loss, theft, or damage.

### **Section 9 Bulletins and Announcements**

School announcements are read each morning by the first period class teacher. The announcements are posted in the media center, cafeteria, above drinking fountains, and on the school website. Posters or other information to be used in the halls or materials for distribution need to be approved by the Principal's office. As a rule, approved documents will only be posted above the drinking fountains. The person or organization responsible for distributing the posters is responsible for seeing that all posters are removed within 48 hours after the event or when directed by the Principal.

### **Section 10 Copyright and Fair Use**

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.

## **Section 11 Behavioral Points of Contact**

The District maintains a registry of local mental health and counseling resources, including those resource services that can be accessed by families and individuals outside of school. To gain more information about these resources, parents and/or students should contact their building principal. This information, as well as the District's behavioral points of contact, are also listed on the District's website.

## **Article 4 – Attendance**

### **Section 1 Attendance**

Regular and punctual student attendance is required. The administration is responsible for developing further attendance rules and regulations and staff are 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 should be cleared through the Principal's office in advance, whenever possible. An absence or tardy, even with parental approval, may not be considered excused by the school. All absences, except for illness and/or death in the family, require advance approval. An absence for any of the following reasons will be typically 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 requires students to be absent from school.
  - d. Court appearances that are required by a court order.
  - e. School sponsored activities which require students to be absent from school.
  - f. Other absences which have received prior approval from the Principal.

The Principal has the discretion to deny approval for a student's absence, 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 other relevant reasons.

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 assigned class or ready and attentive in their assigned area when the bell for their first-class rings.

Tardy to Class. Students have sufficient time 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 a staff member. Specific tardy guidelines once students are in the classroom doorway are at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

Leaving School or Class. Students who leave school for any reason during the school day must check out of the office before leaving. Students leaving school must be cleared in advance by the student's parent or legal guardian. Upon returning to school that same day, students must check in at the office.

Students who leave school without permission and without signing out in the proper manner, or who leave their assigned classroom without teacher permission, may 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. The time each student is allowed for make-up work will be determined by the teacher. The student has the responsibility to contact teachers, initially, regarding make-up assignments.

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

On the day of a middle school activity, a participant must be in school at least one-half day to be eligible to attend. Absences for school-sponsored activities, dental and doctor appointments, as well as circumstances beyond the athletes control may be exceptions to this rule. If a participant is going to be absent on the day of the activity, the parent/guardian must check with the middle school office to see if an exception to the rule may be made. A "school activity" includes athletic contests, practices, and dances. Failure to attend may result in a student being withheld from participation in the activity. The Principal retains the right to grant participation should exceptional circumstances prevail.

### **Section 5 Truancy**

A student who engages in unexcused absences may be considered truant under 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 aged six (6) to eighteen (18) to attend school regularly without lawful reason, shall within three (3) days report such violation to the Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent or designee shall immediately cause an investigation into any such report to be made. The Superintendent or designee 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 or designee 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.

Excessive Absenteeism. Students who accumulate five (5) **excused/unexcused absences** in a quarter **may be** deemed to have "excessive absences." Such 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. One or more meetings shall be held between a school attendance officer, school social worker, or other person designated by the school administration and the parent/guardian and the student to report and attempt to solve the truancy problem. If the parent/guardian refuses to participate in such a meeting, the principal shall place in the student's attendance records documentation of such refusal.
2. Educational counseling to determine whether curriculum changes, including but not limited to, enrolling the child in an alternative education program that meets the specific educational and behavioral needs of the child.
3. Educational evaluation, which may include a psychological evaluation, to assist in determining the specific condition, if any, contributing to the truancy problem, supplemented by specific efforts by the school to help remedy any condition diagnosed.
4. Investigation of the truancy problem by the school social worker, or if such school does not have a school social worker, another person designated by the administration to identify conditions which may be contributing to the truancy problem. If services for the child and his or her family are determined to be needed, the person performing the investigation shall meet with the parent/guardian and the child to discuss any referral to appropriate community agencies for economic services, family or individual counseling, or other services required to remedy the conditions that are contributing to the truancy problem.

Reporting Habitual Truancy. Students who accumulate twenty **(20) excused or unexcused absences** or the hourly equivalent per year shall be deemed to be habitually truant. If the student continues to be or becomes habitually truant, the principal shall serve a written notice to the person violating the Nebraska truancy laws (i.e., the person who has legal or active charge or control of the student) warning him or her to comply with the provisions of that law. If within one (1) week after the time the notice is given such person is still violating the school attendance laws or policies, the Principal shall file a report with the **county attorney or make a truancy program referral to** the county in which such person resides.

## **Article 5 – Scholastic Achievement**

### **Section 1 Grading System**

Students at C. L. Jones Middle School are expected to pass every academic class. In 6th, 7th, and 8th grade, if a student does not pass a class(es), he/she may be required to retake the class(es) until a passing grade is achieved. Middle level age students' academic and conceptual development varies significantly. Tests, daily assignments, school attendance, behavior, completeness of assignments, cooperation, NRT test scores, effort, and in class modifications are some of the elements which will be considered when determining a student's grade. A student

working up to his/her ability will not be failed. The decision to require a student to retake a class will be based on the recommendation of the principal, classroom teacher, FAST director, guidance counselor, parent(s), and the teacher team for that grade level.

Students will receive letter grades on report cards and transcripts. The following grading system will be used at C. L. Jones Middle School:

<b>A</b> = 4.0 93 - 100	<b>C</b> = 2.0 78 - 83	<b>Com</b> = Commendable	<b>Inc</b> = Incomplete
<b>B+</b> = 3.5 91 - 92	<b>D+</b> = 1.5 76 - 77	<b>S</b> = Satisfactory	<b>NG</b> = No Grade
<b>B</b> = 3.0 86 - 90	<b>D</b> = 1.0 70 - 75	<b>N</b> = Needs Improvement	
<b>C+</b> = 2.5 84 - 85	<b>F</b> = 0 69 - 0		

Staff members may use whatever method they determine professionally appropriate in the day to day grading, but shall prepare grade reports based on numerical values. Each staff member, however, must be able to defend whatever method chosen. The following criteria should be used in determining the numerical value of the grade.

1. Achievement in relation to class objectives.
2. Class participation.
3. Mental ability of a student in relation to the total class and required work.
4. Evidence the student is exceeding the class requirements and delving further.

**Commendable** - The student has worked to the best or above his/her ability.

**Satisfactory** - The student is performing at an acceptable level and his/her proficiency is improving in that particular instructional area.

**Needs Improvement** - The student is putting forth little or no effort to reach his/her highest level.

**Incomplete**- may be given to a student at the end of a grading period. The teacher must inform the student, parents, and administrator of the reason for the incompleteness and the amount of time that will be allowed to complete the work.

**No Grade**- is to be used when a student has been removed from a course and not allowed to complete the required work.

If the student has made an appropriate attempt to complete assigned work, he/she will not earn a zero in the gradebook. If the student has made no attempt to complete the assigned work, he/she may earn a zero in the gradebook until an appropriate attempt is made. Incomplete work must be completed and submitted within a reasonable amount of time. For example: Incomplete assignments from the first quarter should be submitted before the start of the second quarter.

### **FAST - FOCUSED ACADEMIC STUDY TIME**

Seventh and eighth grade teachers, coaches, and the principal agree that classroom work is the top priority at C. L. Jones Middle School. Therefore, any student in the seventh or eighth grade who is doing failing work will not be allowed to compete in athletic contests, or accompany the athletic team to away contests. Students doing failing work will be placed in the FAST program which meets during 8th period.

FAST is the acronym for Focused Academic Study Time. Its purpose is to provide additional time for students to work with teachers on daily assignments, thus improving their grades in the various subject areas. Lists of failing students need to be submitted to the office each Tuesday morning by 8:00 AM. When students are in FAST, even if they improve their grade to a passing score by the next school day, they will remain in FAST until the following Monday (at a minimum).

FAST is a focused study hall assigned to any student failing any class. All student academic progress is monitored weekly following the guidelines outlined in the student handbook. When it becomes clear a student is failing a class, he/she will be placed in the FAST program. Once a student is placed in the program, he/she will remain there until he/she has attained an average in every class that is determined by the individual teachers as passing, or the principal.

In order to improve academic performance, teachers are expected to supply the FAST room director with a copy of all past assignments that need to be completed and a list of current assignments. Sixth through eighth grade teachers will post daily assignments to the C. L. Jones Middle School Web page prior to the last hour of the day. The posting will provide the FAST room director access to all current assignments. If available, teachers are encouraged to visit the FAST room during the last period of the day to help students with their assignments.

## **Section 2 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 school's professional staff. 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.

## **Section 3 Schedule Changes**

Students needing schedule changes should notify the office. Schedule changes must be initiated by the teachers involved, the Principal or counselor, and the student's parent or guardian. Final approval of all schedule changes will be made by the Principal.

## **Section 4 Interim Reports**

Various supplemental reports may be made available 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 and administration determines appropriate.

## **Section 5 Report Cards**

Report cards are issued at the end of each quarter. Letter grades are used to designate a student's progress. A grade of "F" (failing) carries no credit. A grade of "I" (incomplete) received at the end of a grading period must be made up within two (2) weeks or missing assignments will receive grades of "0" and those grades will be averaged into the final grade. No incompletes will

be given at the end of the fourth quarter, as all coursework must be completed by the end of the fourth quarter. All grades are subject to adjustment by the Principal for academic reasons.

### **Section 6 Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Research clearly shows a student's academic achievement is improved when parents are involved. A collaboration between the school and home needs to be established and nurtured. Four days are scheduled for parent-teacher conferences. The days are approved by the MPS Board of Education. Dates for the conferences appear in the school calendar.

In addition, both teachers and parents may schedule an informal conference whenever necessary.

### **Section 7 Honor Roll**

The purpose of the honor roll is to recognize those students who demonstrate academic excellence. An academic "Honor Roll" for grades 6, 7, and 8 in middle school is made up at the end of each semester. Students with core semester grades of "B" or above will receive honor roll recognition. All core class grades are figured the same for honor roll status. Honor roll lists are published in school and community publications.

### **Section 8 Awards**

Students at CLJMS are provided many opportunities for recognition. At the end of each year students are presented a certificate commending them for various awards, activities, and/or achievements. Areas of recognition include, but are not limited to: Perfect Attendance, Student Council, Kearney County Spelling Bee, Quiz Bowl, Honor Roll (Semester 1 for 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade), President's Education Award (6<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade), Band (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade), Athletics (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade), and other opportunities as they are presented each year.

### **Section 9 Student Council**

The student council promotes leadership within the student body and encourages students and staff to work together to improve our school and promote school pride. The student council allows for student representation at CLJMS. Student Council representatives for grades 4-8, will be elected at the beginning of each school year.

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

#### Independent Evaluation

If a parent disagrees with an evaluation completed by the school district, the parent has a right to request an independent educational evaluation at public expense. Parents should direct inquiries to school officials to determine if the school district will arrange for further evaluation at the school's 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 (3) years by the student's IEP team. The IEP team will review existing evaluation data on the student and will identify what additional data, if any, is needed. The school district will obtain parental consent prior to conducting any reevaluation of a student with a disability.

#### Individual Education Program (IEP)

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

#### Special Education Placement

The student's placement in a special education program is dependent on the student's educational needs as outlined in the Individual Education Program (IEP). To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated with students who are not disabled. Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment will occur 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 at 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.

## **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 greater cost to you than would be incurred if your child were placed in a program operated by the school district.
9. Have your child be given an equal opportunity to participate in nonacademic and extracurricular activities offered by the school district.
10. Examine all relevant records relating to decisions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, and placement. Obtain copies of educational records at a reasonable cost on the same terms as records are provided to students without a disability unless the fee would effectively deny you access to the records.
11. Receive a response from the school district to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of your child's records.

12. Request amendment of your child's educational records if there is reasonable cause to believe that they are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of your child. If the school district refuses this request, it shall notify you within a reasonable time, and advise you of the right to a hearing.
13. File a local grievance in accordance with school policy.
14. Request an impartial hearing related to decisions regarding your child's identification, eligibility, and educational program or placement with opportunity for participation by the person's parents or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure. This is provided in the local grievance procedure.

### **Section 3 Health Services**

#### **Student Illnesses**

School health personnel will notify parents when a student needs to be sent home from school due to illness. Conditions requiring a student be sent home may include: **Fever**, vomiting, diarrhea, unexplained rashes, live head lice, or on determination by the school nurse 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.

#### **Guidelines for Administering Medication**

Whenever possible, students should be provided medications outside of school hours. In the event it is necessary that a student take or have medication at school, the parents/guardians must provide a signed written consent for the student to be given medication at school. A consent form is available at the school health office. If a student has asthma or diabetes and is capable of self-managing his or her health condition, the student may coordinate with the health office to develop a self-management plan.

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. Medications may require a physician's authorization to be given at school or, for asthma and anaphylaxis, a health care professional who prescribed the medication for treatment of the student's condition. The school nurse may limit medications as the nurse deems appropriate.

#### **School Health Screening**

**Yearly screenings of students are provided who do not have a current physical.**

#### **Physical and Visual Examination**

Evidence of a physical examination and a visual evaluation is required within six (6) 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 foregoing 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 in the school health office. 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 an affidavit.

Unimmunized students may nonetheless be excluded from school in the event of a disease outbreak.

### 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.

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. Children will be sent home from school for live head lice.
2. Health office staff will provide written treatment information and instructions, including how to check and identify head lice.
3. Families are encouraged to report head lice to the school health office.

## **Section 4      Transportation Services**

Transportation to and from school is provided to students in accordance with law and Board policy. Students may also be provided transportation on field trips and when participating in school activities. Students are expected to follow the following rules while riding school buses:

### **Behavior on School Buses**

1. General Conduct Rules Apply: While riding a school bus, a student must follow the same student conduct rules which apply when the student is 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.
2. 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 (5) minutes before your scheduled pick-up time. If you miss the bus, immediately return to your home, and tell your parents so they can take you to school.
2. While waiting for the bus, stay at least five (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.

#### B. Rules on the Bus

1. Be respectful of the bus driver. Immediately follow all directions of the driver and any paraeducator or 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.
3. Getting the Driver's Assistance: If you need assistance from the driver, wait until the bus is at a full stop. If you are close enough, tell the driver what you need. If you are too far away for the driver to hear you, ask a student in front of you to get the driver's attention. If necessary, walk up to the driver, while the bus is at a full stop. If you need immediate assistance in an emergency, take all action needed to safely get the help of the driver.
4. Consequences for Rule Violations: Consequences for school bus misconduct may include restriction or suspension of bus privileges and other disciplinary measures, up to and including expulsion from school.

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

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

The District is a safe and drug-free schools zone. Any use, possession, distribution, manufacture, sale, consumption, or ingestion of illicit drugs or tobacco products on school grounds, at a school activity, or in a school vehicle is strictly prohibited. **MPS Policy 5104**

## **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.

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 will be provided with 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.

Safe and Drug-Free Schools—Parental Notice. Pursuant to the provisions of federal law, 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, then the parent may notify the District of such objection in writing. Upon 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**

The District prohibits the possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs (including electronic nicotine delivery systems) and alcohol on school premises, in school vehicles, or as a part of any of the school's activities on or off school premises. The conduct prohibited includes, 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 look-alike controlled substance when such activity constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes.
6. Possession, use or distribution of any tobacco product.

## **Disciplinary Sanctions**

Violation of any of the above prohibited conduct will result in student discipline, up to and including expulsion and referral to appropriate authorities for criminal prosecution. In particular, students should be aware that:

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

### **Athletic Drug and Alcohol Policy**

Every athlete shall abstain from drinking, possession or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Every athlete shall abstain from the use of tobacco or any nicotine delivery device. Every athlete shall abstain from using any drugs other than those prescribed by a medical doctor for medical purposes.

1. Any athlete found in violation of the drug and alcohol policy will be suspended from all athletic contests for 21 days. The suspension begins with the first contest of the season. If the violation takes place out of season the suspension will begin with the first athletic contest of the next sport in which the athlete participates.
2. Any athlete found in violation of the drug and alcohol policy will have the suspension lifted if he/she participates and completes an alcohol and/or drug evaluation program recommended by the school.
3. Any student involved in a second offense violation of the drug and alcohol policy will be treated on an individual basis. The athlete will meet with a council of coaches and the administration to determine disciplinary measures.
4. Due to the lack of an established treatment program for habitual tobacco use or nicotine delivery via vaping, any athlete found in violation of the tobacco/nicotine vaping policy will be suspended from two athletic contests. If the violation takes place out of season, the suspension will begin during the first sports season in which the athlete participates.

## **Article 8 – Student Conduct Rules**

### **Section 1 Purpose of Student Conduct Rules (Policy 5101)**

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 these student conduct rules will result in disciplinary action.

### **Section 2 Forms of School Discipline**

Students who violate the student conduct rules may be subject to the following forms of discipline:

1. Short-Term Suspension: Students may be excluded by the Principal or the Principal's designee from school or any school function for a period of up to five (5) school days (short-term suspension) on the following grounds:
  - a. Conduct that constitutes grounds for expulsion, whether the conduct occurs on or off school grounds; or
  - b. Other violations of rules and standards of behavior adopted by the Board of Education or the administrative or teaching staff of the school, which occur on or off school grounds, if such conduct interferes with school purposes or there is a nexus between such conduct and school.

The following process will apply to short-term suspensions:

- a. The Principal or the Principal's designee will make a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances. A short-term suspension will be made upon a determination that the suspension is necessary to help any student, to further school purposes, or to prevent an interference with school purposes.
  - b. Prior to commencement of the short-term suspension, the student will be given oral or written notice of the charges against the student. The student will be advised of what the student is accused of having done, an explanation of the evidence the authorities have, and be afforded an opportunity to explain the student's version of the facts.
  - c. Within 24 hours or such additional time as is reasonably necessary, but not more than 48 hours, following the suspension, the Principal or administrator will send a written statement to the student and the student's parent or guardian describing the student's conduct, misconduct, or violation of the rule or standard and the reasons for the action taken.
  - d. An opportunity will be given to the student, and the student's parent or guardian, to have a conference with the Principal or administrator ordering the short-term suspension before or at the time the student returns to school. The Principal or administrator shall determine who in addition to the parent or guardian is to attend the conference. The Principal shall document their attempt to make a reasonable effort to hold a conference with the parent or guardian.
  - e. A student on a short-term suspension shall not be permitted to be on school grounds without the express permission of the Principal.
- 
2. Long-Term Suspension: A long-term suspension means an exclusion from school and any school functions for a period of more than five (5) school days but less than twenty (20) school days. A student who is on a long-term suspension shall not be permitted to be on school grounds without the express permission of the Principal. Pursuant to the Nebraska Student Discipline Act, a notice will be given to the student and the parents/guardian when the Principal recommends a long-term suspension. The notice will include a description of the procedures for long-term suspension; the procedures will be those set forth in the Student Discipline Act.

### 3. Expulsion:

- a. Meaning of Expulsion. Expulsion means exclusion from attendance in all schools, grounds and activities of or within the system for a period not to exceed the remainder of the semester in which it took effect unless the misconduct occurred (a) within ten (10) school days prior to the end of the first semester, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect through the second semester, or (b) within ten (10) school days prior to the end of the second semester, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect for summer school and the first semester of the following school year, or (c) unless the expulsion is for conduct specified in these rules or in law as permitting or requiring a longer removal, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect for the period specified therein. Such action may be modified or terminated by the school district at any time during the expulsion period. A student who has been expelled shall not be permitted to be on school grounds without the express permission of the Principal. A notice will be given to the student and the parents/guardian when the Principal recommends an expulsion. The notice will include a description of the procedures for expulsion; the procedures will be those set forth in the Student Discipline Act.
- b. Suspension Pending Hearing. When a notice of intent to discipline a student by long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment is filed with the superintendent, the student may be suspended by the principal until the date the long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment takes effect if the principal determines that the student must be suspended immediately to prevent or substantially reduce the risk of (a) interference with an educational function or school purpose or (b) a personal injury to the student himself or herself, other students, school employees, or school volunteers. If the student is suspended pending the outcome of the hearing, the student may complete classwork and homework, including, but not limited to, examinations missed during the period of suspension. During this period, the student will not be required to attend the alternative programs for expelled students in order to complete classwork or homework.
- c. Summer Review. Any expulsion that will remain in effect during the first semester of the following school year will be automatically scheduled for review before the beginning of the school year in accordance with law.
- d. Alternative Education: Students who are expelled may be offered an alternative education program that will enable the student to continue academic work for credit toward graduation. A student will not be required to attend the alternative education program to complete classwork and homework. In the event an alternative education program is not provided, a conference will be held with the parent, student, the Principal, or another school representative assigned by the Principal, and a representative of a community organization that assists young people or that is involved with juvenile justice to develop a plan for the student in accordance with law.
- e. Suspension of Enforcement of an Expulsion: Enforcement of an expulsion action may be suspended (i.e., “stayed”) if the Superintendent approves the suspension of an expulsion. As a condition of such suspended action, the student and parents will be required to sign a discipline agreement.

- f. Returning from Expulsion. At the conclusion of an expulsion, the District will reinstate the student and accept nonduplicative, grade-appropriate credits earned by the student during the term of expulsion from any Nebraska accredited institution or institution accredited by one (1) of the six (6) regional accrediting bodies in the United States.
4. Emergency Exclusion: A student may be excluded from school in the following circumstances:
- a. If the student has a dangerous communicable disease transmissible through normal school contacts and poses an imminent threat to the health or safety of the school community; or
  - b. If the student's conduct presents a clear threat to the physical safety of himself, herself, or others, or is so extremely disruptive as to make temporary removal necessary to preserve the rights of other students to pursue an education.

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

If the emergency exclusion will be for five (5) school days or less, the procedures for a short-term suspension shall be followed. If the Superintendent or designee determines that an emergency exclusion shall extend beyond five days, a hearing may, upon a parent or guardian's request, be held and a final determination made within ten (10) school days after the initial date of exclusion. Such appeal procedures shall substantially comply with the procedures set forth in this Handbook for a long-term suspension or expulsion and be modified by the Board of Education only to the extent necessary to accomplish the hearing and determination within this shorter time period.

5. Other Forms of Student Discipline: Administrative and teaching personnel may also take actions regarding student behavior, other than removal of students from school, which are reasonably necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or prevent interference with the educational process. Such actions may include, but are not limited to, counseling of students, parent conferences, rearrangement of schedules, requirements that a student remain in school after regular hours to do additional work, restriction of extracurricular activity, or requirements that a student receive counseling, psychological evaluation, or psychiatric evaluation upon the written consent of a parent or guardian to such counseling or evaluation. The actions may also include in-school suspensions. When in-school suspensions, after-school assignments, or other disciplinary measures are assigned, the student is responsible for complying with such disciplinary measures. A failure to serve such assigned discipline as directed will serve as grounds for further discipline, up to expulsion from school.
6. Student Conduct Expectations. Students are not to engage in conduct which causes, or which creates a reasonable likelihood that it will cause, a substantial disruption in or material interference with any school function, activity or purpose or interfere with the health, safety, well-being or rights of other students, staff, or visitors.

7. Grounds for Short-Term Suspension, Long-Term Suspension, Expulsion or Mandatory Reassignment. The following conduct has been determined by the Board of Education to have the potential to seriously affect the health, safety or welfare of students, staff, and other persons or to interfere with the educational process otherwise seriously. 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.
- a. Willfully disobeying any reasonable written or oral request of a school staff member, or the voicing of disrespect to those in authority.
  - b. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, harassment, or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes or making any communication that a reasonable recipient would interpret as a serious expression of an intent to harm or cause injury to another.
  - c. 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.
  - d. 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.
  - e. 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.
  - f. 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.
  - g. Engaging in selling, using, possessing, or dispensing of alcohol, tobacco, narcotics, drugs, controlled substance, or an inhalant; being under the influence of any of the above; possession of drug paraphernalia, or the selling, using, possessing, or dispensing of an imitation controlled substance as defined in section 28-401 of the Nebraska statutes, or material represented to be alcohol, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance or inhalant. Tobacco means any tobacco product (including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, and chewing tobacco), vapor products (such as e-cigarettes), electronic nicotine delivery systems, alternative nicotine products, tobacco product look-alikes, and products intended to replicate tobacco products either by appearance or effect. Use of a controlled substance in the manner prescribed for the student by the student's physician is not a violation. The term "under the influence" has a less strict meaning than it does under criminal law; for school purposes, the term means any level of impairment and includes even the odor of alcohol or illegal substances on the breath or person of a

- student; also, it includes being impaired by reason of the abuse of any material used as a stimulant.
- h. Public indecency or sexual conduct.
  - i. 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.
  - j. 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.
  - k. 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.
  - l. A repeated violation of any rules established by the school district or school officials if such violations constitute a substantial interference with school purposes.
  - m. Truancy or failure to attend assigned classes or assigned activities; or tardiness to school, assigned classes or assigned activities.
  - n. 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 (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), gender, disability, national origin, or religion.
  - o. 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.
  - p. Willfully violating behavioral expectations for riding school buses or vehicles.

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

- a. The knowing and intentional use of force in causing or attempting to cause personal injury to a school employee, school volunteer, or student, except if caused by accident, self-defense, or on the reasonable belief that the force used was necessary to protect

some other person and the extent of force used was reasonably believed to be necessary, or

- b. The known 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 to school grounds. If a student obtains prior approval from the building principal, the student must store the device during the school day in the student’s locker, in the main office or in another secure location designated by the building principal. A student shall not carry a personal safety or security device during the school day.

Further, a student will be expelled for one (1) calendar year if the student knowingly and intentionally possesses, uses, or transmits 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. The term “firearm” means a firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921, as that statute existed on January 1, 1995. The only exception to this rule is if the student obtains prior written permission to bring the firearm on school grounds by the Superintendent for a school-related purpose.

8. Additional Student Conduct Expectations and Grounds for Discipline. The following additional student conduct expectations are established. Failure to comply with such rules may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including an expulsion.
9. Student Appearance: Students are expected to dress in a way that is appropriate for the school setting. Students should not dress in a manner that is dangerous to the health and safety of anyone or interferes with the learning environment or teaching process in our school. The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of attire that are not appropriate at school:
  - a. Clothing or jewelry that advertises or promotes beer, alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs.
  - b. Clothing or jewelry that could be used as a weapon (chains, spiked apparel)
  - c. Clothing or jewelry which exhibits nudity, makes sexual references, or carries lewd, indecent, or vulgar double meaning.
  - d. Any other clothing that the administration deems inappropriate for the school setting. This includes “sagging” pants or exposing under garments or an inappropriate amount of bare skin, tube tops, halters, midriff shirts, or any items suggestive in nature. Shorts, skirts, or skorts must reach mid-thigh or longer. Chains of any sort worn from the pocket, around the waist, dangling off one’s pants, etc. are not allowed. Visible body piercing that disrupts the educational setting is forbidden. Students may wear necklaces, but the length of the chain links may not exceed 1/4 inch.

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. The school environment shall be free from the threats or harmful influence of any groups that advocate drugs or disruptive behavior. The presence of any apparel, jewelry, accessory, notebook, or manner of grooming which by the nature of its color, arrangement, trademark, or any other attribute, which denotes membership in such groups will not be permitted. Such group's clothing may vary from school to school, and may change from year to year; therefore, it is the responsibility of the administration to determine appropriateness of clothing or accessories. Students wearing inappropriate clothing will be asked to change or have parent/guardian bring them clothing. Any inappropriate notebooks, graffiti, jewelry, or accessories will be confiscated.

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 assigned to in-school suspension for the remainder of the day. Students will not be allowed to leave campus to change clothes. Continual violations of the dress code may result in more serious 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 serious discipline, up to expulsion.

Headwear such as hats, caps, bandanas, scarves, are not to be worn during the school day. Headwear is to be removed when entering the building.

Standards on student dress apply to all school sponsored activities. However, students may wear caps, etc. to athletic activities. Students who choose to wear inappropriate clothing to extra-curricular activities will be asked to leave. MPS Policy 5101

#### 9. Academic Integrity:

- i. 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 for students to learn as much as possible from instruction, for students to be given grades which accurately reflect the student's level of learning and progress, to provide a level playing field for all students, and to develop appropriate values.

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

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

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

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

- (i) Advance Information: Obtaining, reviewing, or sharing copies of tests or information about a test before these are distributed for student use by the instructor. For example, a student engages in cheating if, after having taken a test, the student informs other students in a later section of the questions that appear on the test.
  - (ii) Use of Unauthorized Materials: Using notes, textbooks, pre-programmed formulae in calculators, or other unauthorized material, devices or information while taking a test except as expressly permitted. For example, except for “open book” tests, a student engages in cheating if the student looks at personal notes or the textbook during the test.
  - (iii) Use of Other Student Answers: Copying or looking at another student’s answers or work, or sharing answers or work with another student, when taking a test, except as expressly permitted. For example, a student engages in cheating if the student looks at another student’s paper during a test. A student also engages in cheating if the student tells another student answers during a test or while exiting the testing room, or knowingly allows another student to look at the student’s answers on the test paper.
  - (iv) Use of Other Student to Take Test. Having another person take one's place for a test, or taking a test for another student, without the specific knowledge and permission of the instructor.
  - (v) Misrepresenting Need to Delay Test. Presenting false or incomplete information in order to postpone or avoid the taking of a test. For example, a student engages in cheating if the student misses class on the day of a test, claiming to be sick, when the student’s real reason for missing class was because the student was not prepared for the test.
- (b) Papers (includes papers, essays, lab projects, and other similar academic work):
- (i) Use of Another’s Paper: Copying another student’s paper, using a paper from an essay writing service, or allowing another student to copy a paper, without the specific knowledge and permission of the instructor.
  - (ii) Re-use of One’s Own Papers: Using a substantial portion of a piece of work previously submitted for another course or program to meet the requirements of the present course or program without notifying the instructor to whom the work is presented.
  - (iii) Assistance from Others: Having another person assist with the paper to such an extent that the work does not truly reflect the student’s work. For example, a student engages in cheating if the student has a draft essay reviewed by the student’s parent or sibling, and the essay is substantially re-written by the student’s parent or sibling. Assistance from home is encouraged, but the work must remain the student’s.
  - (iv) Failure to Contribute to Group Projects. Accepting credit for a group project in which the student failed to contribute a fair share of the work.
  - (v) Misrepresenting Need to Delay Paper. Presenting false or incomplete

information in order to postpone or avoid turning in a paper when due. For example, a student engages in cheating if the student misses class on the day a paper is due, claiming to be sick, when the student's real reason for missing class was because the student had not finished the paper.

- (c) Alteration of Assigned Grades. Any unauthorized alteration of assigned grades by a student in the teacher's grade book or the school records is a serious form of cheating.
- (2) "Plagiarism" means to take and present as one's own a material portion of the ideas or words of another or to present as one's own an idea or work derived from an existing source without full and proper credit to the source of the ideas, words, or works. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:
  - (a) Failure to Credit Sources: Copying work (words, sentences, and paragraphs or illustrations or models) directly from the work of another without proper credit. Academic work frequently involves the use of outside sources. To avoid plagiarism, the student must either place the work in quotations or give a citation to the outside source.
  - (b) Falsely Presenting Work as One's Own: Presenting work prepared by another in final or draft form as one's own without citing the source, such as the use of purchased research papers or use of another student's paper.
- (3) "Contributing" to academic integrity violations means to participate in or assist another in cheating or plagiarism. It includes but is not limited to allowing another student to look at your test answers, to copy your papers or lab projects, and to fail to report a known act of cheating or plagiarism to the instructor or administration.
- (4) Sanctions: The following sanctions will occur when a student engages in cheating, plagiarism, or contributing to an academic integrity offense:
  - (i) Academic Sanction. The instructor will refuse to accept the student's work in which the academic integrity offense took place, assign a grade of "F" or zero for the work, and require the student to complete a test or project in place of the work within such time and under such conditions as the instructor may determine appropriate. In the event the student completes the replacement test or project at a level meeting minimum performance standard, the instructor will assign a grade which the instructor determines to be appropriate for the work.
  - (ii) Report to Parents and Administration. The instructor will notify the Principal of the offense and the instructor or Principal will notify the student's parents or guardian.
  - (iii) Student Discipline Sanctions. Academic integrity offenses are a violation of school rules. The Principal may recommend sanctions in addition to those assigned by the instructor, up to and including suspension or expulsion. Such additional sanctions will be given strong consideration where a student has engaged in serious or repeated academic integrity offense or other rule violations, and where the academic sanction is otherwise not a sufficient remedy, such as for offenses involving altering assigned grades or contributing to academic integrity violations.

10. 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. Students will face the following consequences for IPDA:
- 1st Offense: Student will be directed to stop.
  - 2nd Offense: Student will be directed to stop, and parents will be notified.
  - 3rd Offense: Student will be suspended from school for a minimum of one (1) day, and parents and student will need to meet with the administration to address the ongoing conduct.
- If this type of behavior continues, or if the IPDA is lewd or constitutes sexual conduct, the student could face long-term suspension or expulsion.

11. Law Violations

Any act of a student which is a basis for expulsion and which the Principal or designee knows or suspects is a violation of the Nebraska Criminal Code will be reported to law enforcement as soon as possible.

12. Anti-Bullying:

One of the missions of the District is to provide safe and secure environments for all students and staff. Students who are the victim of bullying or harassment or who observe such occurrences are to promptly report the problem to their teacher or to the Principal so the problem can be addressed. Students who make reports of bullying activity will not be retaliated against for making the report. A complete description of the above policy can be located on the Minden Public Schools website under board policy Anti-Bullying (Policy 5415).

13. Network, E-Mail, Internet, and Other Computer Use Rules:

a. General Rules:

- The network is provided to staff and students to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to network services is given to staff and students who have agreed to act in a responsible manner. Access for all staff and students is a privilege and not a right.
- 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 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.
- 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 purchases of goods and/or services via the district's network.
- b. Rules for Acceptable Use of Computers and the Network: The following rules for acceptable use of computers and the network, including Internet, shall apply to all students:
- i. Students shall not erase, remake, or make unusable anyone else's computer, information, files, or programs.
  - ii. Students shall not let other people use their name, account, log-on password, or files for any reason (except for authorized staff members).
  - iii. Students shall not use or try to discover another user's account or password.
  - iv. Students shall not use the computer for unlawful purposes, such as illegal copying or installation of unauthorized software.
  - v. Students shall not copy, change, or transfer any software or documentation provided by teachers, or other students without permission from the network administrators.
  - vi. Students shall not write, produce, generate, copy, propagate, or attempt to introduce any computer code, software or information designed to self-replicate, damage, or otherwise hinder the performance of the network or any computer's memory, file system, or software.
  - vii. Students 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.
  - viii. Students shall not damage the network or equipment, damage information belonging to others, misuse network resources, or allow others to misuse network resources.

## Article 9 – Student Fees Policy

### Section 1 Student Activity Fees

The District’s general policy is to provide 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.

Under the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act, the District has set forth in policy its guidelines or policies for specific categories of student fees. 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 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. The District’s entire Student Fees Policy is available on the District’s website.

#### 2025-2026 Specification of Required Materials and Fees

Program	General Description of Fee or Material	\$ Amount of Fee (Anticipated or Maximum) or Specific Material Required
Physical Education classes	Appropriate clothing (non-specialized attire)	Tennis shoes & socks, running shorts, T-shirt
Art and shop classes and special projects	Appropriate clothing (non-specialized attire)	Old shirt for painting; other clothing which may get paint on it or otherwise be damaged; protective clothing for shop classes
Music—Optional band courses	Musical instruments	Musical instruments and accessories (reeds, valve oil, etc.) Limited instruments available for use by any student. Damage deposit of \$20.00 for use of school owned instrument.
School Meals		Breakfast—\$1.25 Lunch—\$3.50 Adults—\$4.50??? Prices are maximums based on one meal per day, will vary depending on the number of meals or items purchased by the student, and may be adjusted during the year.

## Article 10 – State and Federal Programs

### Section 1 Notice of Nondiscrimination

The School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, sexual orientation or gender identity, or other protected status in the admission, access to its facilities or programs or activities, treatment, or employment.

## Section 2 Designation of Coordinators

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

Law, Policy, or Program	Issue or Concern	Coordinator
Title VI	Discrimination or harassment based on race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), 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 Disabilities 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: 543 West 5th Street, Minden, Nebraska 68959, telephone number (308)832-2440.

## Section 3 Multicultural

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

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

1. Have your child take part in, and receive benefits from, public education programs without discrimination because of his/her disability.
2. Have the school district advise you of your rights under federal law.
3. Receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation, or placement of your child.
4. Have your child receive a free appropriate public education.
5. Have your child receive services and be educated in facilities which are comparable to

those provided to every student.

6. Have evaluation, educational and placement decisions made based on a variety of information sources and by persons who know the student and who are knowledgeable about the evaluation data and placement options.
7. Have transportation provided to and from an alternative placement setting (if the setting is a program not operated by the district) at no greater cost to you than would be incurred if the student were placed in a program operated by the district.
8. Have your child be given an equal opportunity to participate in nonacademic and extracurricular activities offered by the district.
9. Examine all relevant records relating to decisions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, and placement.
10. Request mediation or an impartial due process hearing related to decisions or actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program, or placement. (You and your child may take part in the hearing. Hearing requests are to be made to the Superintendent.)
11. File a local grievance.

### **Section 5 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 to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another School District in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

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:

1. Student's Name, address, telephone listing, and the name, address, telephone listings (if not unlisted), e-mail address and work or other contact information of the student's parent/guardian or other adult acting in loco parentis or with authority to act as parent or guardian in educational matters for the student;
2. School and dates of attendance;
3. Student's current grade;
4. Student's enrollment status (e.g. full-time or part-time);
5. Student's date of birth and place of birth;
6. Student's extra-curricular participation;
7. Student's achievement awards or honors;
8. Student's weight and height if a member of an athletic team;
9. Student's photograph; and
10. School or school district the student attended before he or she enrolled in Minden Public Schools.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the District does not designate as directory information personally identifiable information from students' education records where the District

determines that the disclosure to the potential recipient poses a risk to student safety or well-being, including but not limited to circumstances where the potential recipient is a registered sex offender and the personally identifiable information would permit the potential recipient to communicate with or otherwise contact the student.

A parent or eligible student has the right to refuse to let the District designate 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 information about the student designated as directory information is as follows: two (2) weeks from the time this information is first received. Please contact the Superintendent's office to indicate your refusal to have your child's information designated as directory information.

The District may disclose information about former students without meeting the conditions in this section.

The District's policy is for education records to be kept confidential except as permitted by the FERPA law, and the District does not approve any practice which involves an unauthorized disclosure of education records. In some courses student work may be displayed or made available to others. Also, some teachers may have persons other than the teacher or school staff, such as volunteers or fellow students, assist with the task of grading student work and returning graded work to students. The District does not either approve or disapprove such teaching practices and designates such student work as directory information and/or 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.

## **Section 6 Combined District and School Title I Parent and Family Involvement**

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 is available for review on the District's website.

## **Section 7 Student Privacy Protection Policy**

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 time 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.

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 8 Homeless Students**

The District shall ensure that homeless children and youths shall have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths. Any person with knowledge of a homeless student in the District should contact the District’s Homeless Coordinator. A copy of the District’s Homeless Policy is available on the District’s website, [Policy 5418](#).

## AVAILABILITY OF HANDBOOKS

The 2025-2026 Student-Parent Handbook of Minden Public Schools is available on the internet at [www.mindenwhippets.org](http://www.mindenwhippets.org)

Because of the expense of printing the handbooks, we are asking that you consider using the internet to access and review the 2025-2026 Student-Parent Handbook. Using the internet to access the handbook will allow the district to direct printing dollars to instructional needs and eliminate the need for you to search for your handbook when you have questions throughout the year. Thank you for considering this new use of technology to improve school-home communication.

Please return to the Principal's Office by **August 25, 2025**. This will allow us time to get the Handbook to all students and parents before school starts while avoiding the necessity of printing more copies of the Handbooks than necessary.

- Thank you for providing the 2025-2026 Student-Parent Handbook online. I will review it on the internet. My signed receipt below acknowledges receipt of the Handbook in a satisfactory manner via the internet.**
  
- I prefer a paper copy of the Handbook.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

## RECEIPT OF 2025-2026 STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

This signed receipt acknowledges receipt of the 2025-2026 Student-Parent Handbook of Minden Public Schools. We understand that the handbook contains student conduct and discipline rules and information about Safe and Drug-Free Schools and that we agree to follow such conduct and discipline rules. This receipt also serves to acknowledge that we understand the District's policies of non-discrimination and equity, and that specific complaint and grievance procedures exist in the handbook which should be used to respond to harassment or discrimination.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Legal Guardian's Signature

# **Minden East Elementary School**

## Parent/Student Handbook

2025-2026

### **Mission Statement:**

The Minden Public Schools mission is to equip students with the academic and social skills necessary to be successful citizens.

### **Contact Information:**

Superintendent: Mr. James Widdifield

District Office Phone: (308)832-2440

Email: james.widdifield@mindenwhippets.org

Principal: Mrs. Sandy Pohl

East Elementary Phone: (308)832-2460

Fax:(308)832-2647

Email: sandy.pohl@mindenwhippets.org

### **Intent of Handbook:**

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

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

The Policies of the Board of Education may cover areas not addressed in this Handbook. Every parent or guardian and student should familiarize themselves with Board Policies online at: [mindenwhippets.org](http://mindenwhippets.org).

### **School Hours:**

8:05-3:20 Monday-Thursday

8:05-2:00 Friday

Students arriving before 7:55 are to go to their designated area. Adult supervision is not available for students arriving at school prior to 7:30 am or remaining after 3:25 pm. Students should not be in the building before 7:30 am.

### **Breakfast/Lunch:**

Breakfast and lunch will be served daily. Breakfast is optional to all students. Students can choose to eat school lunch or bring their own lunch from home. Milk is available.

Students who qualify for free or reduced price lunches will also qualify for F/R breakfast prices. Free and reduced applications are available in the East Elementary Office or District Office.

All children will be given a lunch number. If money is needed, a statement will be sent home or emailed to families upon request. Questions concerning breakfast or lunch should be directed to the director of food services.

### **ANTI-DISCRIMINATION, ANTI-HARASSMENT, and ANTI-RETALIATION (Policy 1200/1210/5401)**

The Minden Public School District hereby gives this statement of compliance and intends to comply

with all state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination. This school district intends to take any necessary measures to assure compliance with such laws against any prohibited form of discrimination.

The Minden Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race, color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, sexual orientation, or gender identity or other protected status in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Students: Mr. James Widdifield, Superintendent, 543 West 5th Street, Minden, NE 68959 (308) 832-2440; james.widdifield@mindenwhippets.org  
Employees and Others: James Widdifield, Superintendent, 543 West 5th Street, Minden, NE 68959 (308) 832-2440; james.widdifield@mindenwhippets.org

Complaints or concerns involving discrimination or needs for accommodation or access should be addressed to the appropriate Coordinator. For further information about anti-discrimination laws and regulations, or to file a complaint of discrimination with the Office for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education (OCR), please contact OCR at One Petticoat Lane, 1010 Walnut Street, 3rd Floor, Suite 320, Kansas City, MO 64106, (816)268-0550 (voice) (816) 268-0599 (fax), (800) 877-8339 (telecommunications device for the deaf), or ocr.kansascity@ed.gov.

A complete description of the above policy can be located on the Minden Public Schools website at [www.mindenwhippets.org](http://www.mindenwhippets.org) under Menu - Documents - Board Policies or by clicking on the following link: [Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment, Anti-Retaliation \(Policy 5401\)](#), [Title XI Discrimination \(Policy 1200\)](#), & [Policy 1210](#).

### **Attendance:**

According to school board policy 5008, the circumstances for all absences from school will be identified as School Excused or Not School Excused. Absences should be cleared through the principal's office in advance whenever possible. All absences, except for illness and/or death in the family, require advance approval.

School Excused: Any of the following circumstances that lead to an absence will be identified as a school excused absence, provided the required attendance procedures have been followed:

- 1) Impossible or impracticable barriers outside the control of the parent or child prevent a student from attending school. The parent must provide the school with documentation to demonstrate the absence was beyond the control of the parent or child. This could include, but is not limited to documented illness, court, death of a family member, or suspension.
- 2) Other absences as determined by the principal or the principal's designee.

Not School Excused: Absences that are not school excused may result in a report to the county attorney and may be classified as follows:

1)Parent acknowledged absences are those in which the parent communicated with the school in the prescribed manner that the child is absent and is the parent's responsibility for the extent of the school day. This includes, but is not limited to, illness, vacations, and medical appointments.

**Please see school board policy 5008 for further information regarding excessive absenteeism.**

### **Absence Notification:**

Parents or guardians must notify the school prior to 8:30 if their child is to be absent or tardy.

For parent convenience, an answering machine will take calls prior to 8:00. If a student is not in school as expected, the principal's office will attempt to contact the parent or guardian. If the parent or guardian cannot be contacted, the office will contact administration and possibly the proper law enforcement authorities to investigate the absence.

Students who are absent for less than one-fourth of the school day are counted present for the day. If their absence occurs at the beginning of the day, they are tardy. A child who is present for less than one-fourth day is likewise counted absent for a full day. Students are considered tardy when they are not in their classroom when the tardy bell rings at 8:10. Any student arriving after 8:10 must check in at the office.

### **Curriculum:**

The Nebraska State Department of Education requires all Nebraska schools to provide instructional experiences for students in curricular areas that include the components described as follows:

English Language Arts-Amplify CKLA

The reading and language arts program helps children develop skills in phonics, reading, speaking, listening, composition, spelling, grammar, and handwriting. Opportunities for appreciation of literature, self-expression, and creativity are also provided.

Mathematics-Math Expressions

The mathematics program helps children develop skills in number usage, basic number operations, problem solving, geometry, measurement, etc.

Social Studies-Lessons in accordance with the NE state standards

Social Studies lessons emphasize experiences that help children to develop an understanding of the world and its people. Such experiences draw from history, geography, economics, government, citizenship, careers, human relations, current issues, and cultural studies. Science-Stemscopes

The science program emphasizes experiences that will help children develop an understanding of basic scientific concepts. Such experiences draw from the physical, life, earth, and space sciences.

Health/Physical Education

The health program promotes the development of healthy attitudes and living habits and includes mental, physical, social, public health, nutrition, and safety/drug education. The physical education program promotes the development of physical coordination, large and small muscle control, and positive mental and social attitudes. It helps children maintain physical fitness, develop wholesome leisure activities, and acquire habits of safety.

## Music

The music program provides an opportunity for children to be creative and expressive through experiences in singing, listening, making and playing instruments, and reading musical notation. It enables children to gain an appreciation for many forms of music, both past and present.

## Art

The art program provides an opportunity for children to understand, appreciate, and make judgment about their own art and artwork of the past and present, as well as have the experiences in creatively producing art themselves.

## Media Center

The school library has over 6,000 titles of quality books, and students are encouraged to check these out to take them home to read. Books are due back in ten school days. If a book is lost, the person who checked it out must pay for it. Report cards may be held if the book is not paid for.

## GATE (Gifted and Talented Enrichment)

The GATE program provides a specialized instruction to those students in grade 1-3 who have been identified as gifted.

## Guidance

The guidance program provides an opportunity for all K-3 students to participate in class social skills, anti-bullying strategies, and personal safety types of activities. Individual guidance is available on a limited basis.

## Title

Title I is a federally funded program for students as supplementary help in reading and/or math. It is designed to complement and reinforce the regular education program through a variety of learning situations. The schoolwide Title plan can be found on the school website.

## Special Education

Special Education services and instruction are provided for those students who qualify under federal and state guidelines. There is resource assistance in the academic areas and speech assistance in the articulation and language areas. Additional services are also available if a student qualifies according to Nebraska Department of Education Rule 51.

## **Parent and Community Involvement:**

A Parent Advisory Committee is formed for East Elementary including representatives from East Elementary and the Preschool. Please refer to the board policy #6400 for further information. East Elementary is a schoolwide Title I school. We encourage parent and family involvement.

## **Safety During Pickup and Delivery of Children:**

For the safety of all children, we ask that parents deliver children curbside or drive through from the street going south on Minden Avenue in front of the school. Bus delivery takes place on the north side of East Elementary. It is important not to stop on First Street to let your child in or out of your vehicle. When picking up your children and there is a need for the child to cross the street, parents are asked to meet the child on the school side of the street and walk across with them. Children

must cross at the crosswalks. Do not stop in the street and wait for your child to come to the car. Instead, seek a legal parking space in order to park and get your child.

Only persons with a special parking permit may park in the specialized handicapped zones.

Handicap stalls are in front of the school.

Parents should inform the teacher or school office by note or phone call if your child is to go somewhere else after school other than their normal means to go home.

### **School Closing Information:**

If a storm develops during the school day, public and private communications will be used to advise parents of early release. If roads are impassable for a school bus, storm routes will be declared. In this case, the parents should bring the children to the established storm route bus stops. Parents will be notified of their storm route.

School Closing Information will be broadcast on: NTV

School Notification System-Phone messaging system

School facebook page, app., and website

### **School Nurse:**

The school nurse is scheduled at East each day. Medications sent by parents should be sent in the original container. All medication, whether prescription or over the counter, must be administered by or under the supervision of the school nurse. A medication permission slip will need to be filled out by the parent or guardian. Parents/guardians will be notified if there is a serious injury or illness with their child. In an emergency, the nurse may accompany the student to the doctor's office if the parents can not be reached.

Parents should not send their child to school if any of the following symptoms appear:

- 1)Fever over 100 degrees within the last 24 hours
- 2)Presence of vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours
- 3)Child feels too ill to function properly in the school setting
- 4)An onset of communicable diseases such as chicken pox, strep infections, scabies, lice, or ringworm
- 5)Sore throat accompanied by fever or visible pus
- 6)Earache with discharge or fever

If there is a question on whether your child is or is not too ill to attend school, parents may call the school nurse. Children with head lice can return to school following treatment and if there is no evidence of live lice. More information from the school nurse can be accessed on the school website.

### **Student Conduct and Discipline:**

The administration and staff are to implement strategies and practices to identify and prevent inappropriate behaviors by all students, including anti-bullying education for all students. Please refer to student discipline policy 5101 and the anti-bullying policy 5415 which can be accessed on the school website or at the East Elementary office. Students will refrain from violating or impairing the rights of others and not engage in conduct that deprives other students of an orderly atmosphere for learning. Students found to have destroyed, or otherwise harmed, school district property may be required to reimburse the school district. Parents may be notified in the event of behavioral or attitudinal problems. In school or out of school suspension may be necessary according to school district policy 5101.

### **Anti-Bullying Policy:**

One of the missions of the district is to provide a physically safe and emotionally secure environment for students and staff. Please refer to school district anti-bullying policy 5415.

### **Custody and Parental Rights:**

Disagreements between family members are not the responsibility of the school district. The school district will not take the side of one family member in a disagreement about custody or parental rights. Current court orders that have been issued shall be followed by the school district. It shall be the responsibility of the person requesting an action by the school to inform and provide the school with a copy of the most recent court order allowing such action. This does not prohibit an employee from listening to a student's concerns.

### **Drug Free Schools:**

The district shall implement regulations and practices which will ensure compliance with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act and all regulations and rules promulgated pursuant thereto. Please refer to school district policy 5104.

### **Student Abuse/Neglect:**

School employees and all adults are bound by Nebraska State Law to report any suspected case of child abuse or neglect to authorities to investigate. Please refer to board policy #5402.

### **Section 504:**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is designed to prohibit discrimination based on disability in any program activity receiving federal money. This statute obligates public schools to provide equal access and equal opportunity to otherwise qualified persons with disabilities.

For a student to be eligible for a 504 plan, the student must have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. It must be because of the impairment that the student is unable to gain equal access and benefit from the school programs and services. If

you have questions regarding section 504 plans, please contact Sandy Pohl at 832-2460. Please refer to board policy #1250 for further information.

### **Volunteer Programs:**

The Literacy Links program has been established in order to enhance learning by using an intergenerational atmosphere connecting adult volunteers and students. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the office. Volunteers may not be relatives of any children in classes for which they volunteer. Background checks and public health concerns will be taken into consideration when allowing volunteers within the school setting.

### **School Visits:**

Parents/guardians are welcome to eat school lunch with their child, but are asked to inform the office prior to lunchtime. Public health concerns will be taken into consideration when allowing visitors into the school setting. Persons wishing to post bulletins, announcements, or distribute information in the school building must receive permission from the building principal and/or superintendent beforehand.

Parents may visit the school according to board policy 1010. The school requests that parents not plan visits during the first two weeks of school or the last two weeks of school and during MAP or State testing. All visitors must enter and exit through the main doors and check in at the office for a visitors badge. Children not attending the school may not visit unless accompanied by an adult and prior arrangements are made with the classroom teacher. For the least amount of disruption, the school encourages visits to be no longer than one hour in length. In most cases, visitations would be best arranged during the student's lunch when he/she is free to entertain his/her guest.

### **Personal Items at School:**

Children and parents should request permission from their teachers before bringing animals to school. This is typically discouraged due to various animal allergies. Toys, gaming, electronic devices, money, or other non-required items should not be brought to school unless permission is granted by the teacher. The school is not responsible for damage to or the theft of items brought to school. Cell phones should be turned off during the school day and left in the office. Children are not to bring any items that might be potentially dangerous to themselves or others. Please do not have flowers, balloons, etc. delivered to the school for special occasions. It is difficult for students to get these gifts safely home from school.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences and Report Cards:**

Scheduled, individual parent/teacher conferences are held twice per year at East Elementary. Since the conferences involve confidential information, guests should not be present. Notes are sent home with the students prior to the conference date which state the scheduled conference times. Specialists will be available to visit prior to or following the conference with their classroom teacher.

Report cards will be sent home following each nine weeks of school. All students are expected to work at a level commensurate with their ability. Parents of students doing poor work shall be notified and shall be told of any retention.

### **NOTIFICATION 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 to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- 3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another School District in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

- 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 Officer  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

A complete description of the above policy can be located on the Minden Public Schools website at [www.mindenwhippets.org](http://www.mindenwhippets.org) under Menu - Documents - Board Policies or by clicking on the following link: [Student Records \(Policy 5202\)](#) and [FERPA Rights \(Policy 5202A\)](#)

### **Student Appearance and Clothing:**

Students will be expected to keep themselves well groomed and neatly dressed at all times. Clothing which depicts illegal drug use or advertisements of tobacco, alcohol, obscene gestures, or foul language are specifically prohibited.

Children should be adequately dressed with warm clothing during cold weather. This includes a heavy winter coat or snowsuit, hat, gloves, and snow boots. During playground times when snow is on the ground, students not wearing snow pants and snow boots are asked to stay on the areas with no snow. Please mark warm clothing with the child's full name. Unmarked items that are found will be placed in the lost and found. Clothing that is not claimed by the end of the school year will be given to charity. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

Generally during cold winter weather, students will not be taken outside for playground breaks if either wind chill index or the temperature is at or below 10 degree F.

On physical education days, students should wear comfortable clothing and shoes that will enable them to perform all P.E. activities to their best ability. This should include clothing that is not too tight and tennis shoes.

### **Telephone Calls:**

If parents/guardians have an emergency message for their child, please call the school office before 2:45 (Monday-Thursday) and 1:30 (Friday) to allow adequate time for the message to be delivered before the end of the school day. Students' personal cell phones or smart watches should be checked into the office each morning prior to school beginning and may be picked up before going home.

### **Use of Surveillance:**

There are video surveillance cameras used on the East Elementary School property. Please see policy #5406 for surveillance/search and seizure information.

### **Homeless Students:**

Please see policy #5418 for homeless student information.

### **Release of Students:**

Students being released before the end of the school day will only be released to immediate family members or individuals authorized by parents or legal guardians. Identification is required when an adult picking up the student is unfamiliar to staff.

### **Celebrations:**

Classrooms are allowed three holiday parties per year. These are usually on Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. Planning for refreshments for these parties are decided by the individual classroom teacher. Parents who wish not to have their child participate in these parties should inform the classroom teacher and make other arrangements for the child during that time.

K-3 children like to celebrate their own birthdays by bringing treats for their classmates. However, this is not required. Guidelines in regard to types of treats, etc. are left to the individual classroom teacher to be arranged with the parents. Students should use means to distribute invitations to selected friends for personal parties other than passing them out at school. School personnel cannot give out family addresses or telephone numbers.

### **Bicycles at School:**

Bicycles are to be parked in the racks provided on the north and south side of the school, and they should remain there until the end of the school day. Students should not borrow or tamper with any bicycle that does not belong to them. The school is not responsible for damage or theft while bicycles are parked on school property. Bicycles may be registered with the Minden Police Department.

Students should follow bicycle "driver" rules. Students should walk their bikes while on school property as well as walking them across the street at the crosswalks.

### **Bus Transportation:**

The Director of Transportation is Dave Schoone. He can be contacted at [dave.schoone@mindenwhippets.org](mailto:dave.schoone@mindenwhippets.org) or (308)830-3934. Please refer to board policy #5501.

### **Special Education**

Please see policy #6600 for Special Education information including the evaluation and verification process.

### **Copyright Laws**

Students are expected to comply with copyright laws.

### **INTERNET SAFETY AND ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (Policy 6800)**

#### **A. Internet Safety Policy**

Minden Public Schools policy is to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). With respect to the District's computer network, the District shall: (a) prevent user access to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via the Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) provide for the safety

and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications; (c) prevent unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful activities online; (d) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; (e) obtain verifiable parental consent before allowing third parties to collect personal information online from students; and (f) implement measures designed to restrict minors' access to materials (visual or non-visual) that are harmful to minors.

A complete description of the above policy can be located on the Minden Public Schools website at [www.mindenwhippets.org](http://www.mindenwhippets.org) under Menu - Documents - Board Policies or by clicking on the following link: Internet Safety and Acceptable Use (Policy 6800)

## COMPUTER NETWORK

### Introduction and Purpose

Through the school's computer network, students and staff have access to an extensive supply of programs, information, and resources that enhance learning and teaching. A part of the school network involves access to the Internet. The internet allows students and teachers entry to servers located all over the world. With access to these servers, students and teachers can locate a great deal of educational information.

### Rights and Responsibilities

There is information on the Internet that is not appropriate for student use, and measures have been taken to prevent access to inappropriate information. However, the school cannot control all the information available on the Internet. All students and staff are expected to act responsibly, ethically, and legally when working on the Internet. It is important to remember that any inappropriate data which exists on the Internet cannot be accessed without the user's direct command.

### Use

1. No student may work on the internet without first obtaining permission from a supervising staff member.
2. The supervising staff member must give permission to a student before any material from the Internet is printed, downloaded, or saved to disk.
3. No student is to subscribe to any databases, ListServes, or other sources without prior permission from the supervising staff member.
4. Students are never to give out personal information such as home address or phone number.
5. There will be no non-educational use of student e-mail usage during school hours, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.
6. Social networks and non-educational sites are prohibited during school hours, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.
7. The Internet user is held responsible for his or her actions and activity on the Internet. Unacceptable uses of the network will result in the suspension of computer privileges. Here are some examples of unacceptable use (this list is not inclusive):

- Using the network for illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other contracts, or to obtain information blueprinting illegal activities
- Using the network for financial or commercial gain.
- Degrading or disrupting equipment, software, or system performance.
- Vandalizing the data of another user.
- Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities.
- Invading the privacy of individuals.
- Downloading, storing, or printing files or messages that are profane, obscene, or that use language that offends or tends to degrade others.
- Sending any text, image, movie or sound that contains pornography, profanity, obscenity, or language that offends or tends to degrade others.
- Re-posting personal communications without the author's prior permission.

6. The school provides all students with a school email account. This account is owned by the Minden Public Schools and is not to be considered private. Communication using this account is to be for school-related academic purposes. Inappropriate emails, such as flaming, bullying, associating the account with any third-party service, etc., will result in disciplinary action and removal from the email account.

7. Students may not download any application, music, video, picture, etc., without the approval of a supervising staff member.

8. Students may not add or delete accounts from the school-issued iPad.

9. Digital devices, personal or school-issued, may not be used or activated while in a locker room or restroom.

10. Digitally recording another person, i.e. pictures, video, or audio, may not be made without the permission of the individual being recorded.

11. The District owns all digital equipment, software, and accounts provided to students by the Minden Public Schools. School officials may review, inspect, and access the equipment and/or data at any time.

The student is responsible at all times for the proper use of the network. As a general rule, if a student is not sure that the material is appropriate, he or she should ask the supervising staff member.

## CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

a. Philosophy and Purpose. The District strongly discourages students from bringing and/or using electronic devices at school. The use of electronic devices can be disruptive to the educational process and are items that are frequently lost or stolen. In order to maintain a secure and

orderly learning environment and to promote respect and courtesy regarding the use of electronic devices, the District hereby establishes the following rules and regulations governing student use of electronic devices and procedures to address student misuse of electronic devices.

b. Definitions.

(1)“Electronic devices” include, but are not limited to, cell phones, mp3 players, iPods, personal digital assistants (PDAs), compact disc players, portable game consoles, cameras, digital scanners, laptop computers, and other electronic or battery-powered instruments which transmit voice, text, or data from one person to another. (By definition, this does include Apple Watches, headphones, earbuds, or similar type devices).

For more information, refer to Board policy #6800.

Possession and Use of Electronic Devices.

Cell phones are not to be kept on or with the student during the day, including stored in backpacks.

(1) Students are not permitted to possess or use any electronic devices during class or during passing time except as this policy provides. Cell phone usage is strictly prohibited during any class period, including voice usage, digital imaging, or text messaging. Student cell phones

brought into the building will be shut off or silenced if being stored in a locker. Phones should not be kept on a student during the time they are inside the building. The definition of “in personal possession” for this policy includes being in clothing (coat, jacket, waistband, pocket, or readily accessible by student). The only approved locations for phones while a student is in the building is in a student’s locker. If a student chooses to bring their electronic device/cell phone into the school building, the district will not be held responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

(2) 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 camera during a photography class; student use of a non-school issued device for a class presentation).

(3) 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) with prior Principal’s permission.

Headphones:

Students shall not wear headphones, earbuds, or other non-essential devices during classroom instructional time. Students must remain attentive during instructional time. Teachers may allow students to use these devices if such device is being used as an instructional tool.

Students that are in study halls may also use them with permission. At any point during the school day, a teacher or administrator may request students to discontinue the use of the device for reasons of disruption or interference to educational purposes. Students that do not comply with this policy shall have such equipment relinquished to the office and remain there until it is appropriate for the

item to be returned. Students will also face additional consequences, including but not limited to detention, suspension according to the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Playground Rules:**

Parents should read the following rules and review them with your child.

#### **Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible!**

- 1) Stay inside the fences, off the fences, and off the lawn. There is a concrete walk access to the hard surface from all building exits.
- 2) Notify the supervising teacher if a ball has rolled off the playground and onto the street. Children should retrieve balls only with permission of the teacher and then with the teacher present to assist. Only older, responsible children should be sent to retrieve the ball.
- 3) Please leave baseballs, bats, and golf balls at home.
- 4) Play flag or touch football. Tackle football is not allowed.
- 5) Kick balls away from the building.
- 6) Go feet first down the slides in a sitting position. Use the steps to climb up to the slides.
- 7) Only one person going across the monkey bars at a time. Do not climb or sit on top of bars.
- 8) Stay in a swing until it stops moving. Swings should be used only in a sitting position to go back and forth. Wait for the swing to stop to get out of the swing.
- 9) Walk on the play structure.
- 10) Stay on the hard surface when the ground is covered in snow unless wearing snow gear.
- 11) When the bell rings, students line up immediately.
- 12) Return school equipment to the proper basket.

Teachers and paras will use individual discretion as to other areas of the playground.

Parents who do not want their children to play outdoors because of health reasons must send a written request to school. The school nurse will review persistent repetition of this desire to stay inside. Parents are to check in with the office before going to the playground. Adults are requested to report their mission and relationship to the child to the teacher on duty before they stop to visit with any child on the playground.

# MINDEN PUBLIC PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK



**2025-2026**

## **MPS Preschool Mission Statement**

Our mission at Minden Public Schools Preschool is to provide a loving, secure atmosphere where children can grow in their intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development.

## **Minden Public Schools Mission Statement**

Minden Public Schools mission is to equip students with the academic and social skills necessary to be successful citizens.

## **Philosophy**

We have adopted the following guidelines from the NEBRASKA EARLY LEARNING GUIDELINES resource for Birth to 5 as part of our philosophy concerning children's growth and learning:

**\*CHILDREN ARE ACTIVE LEARNERS.**

**\*LEARNING IS MOST MEANINGFUL WHEN IT IS INTEGRATED ACROSS ALL AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT.**

**\*CHILDREN DEVELOP IN PREDICTABLE STEPS, BUT AT THEIR OWN PACE.**

**\*DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING ARE ROOTED IN CULTURE AND SUPPORTED BY THE FAMILY.**

We believe that through adult support, children's learning can be enriched and extended. Teachers, caregivers, and families should value one another as partners in children's development. The role of the adult is to promote and stimulate children's development and facilitate their learning. The adult guides learning experiences through strategies that encourage children to think creatively, problem-solve, make decisions, and expand their thinking skills. Adults assure that environments are predictable and promote consistent and nurturing relationships.

The family is the child's first and most important teacher, and provides the child with a foundation for both healthy development and a positive attitude toward learning. Our staff is excited to partner with you to give your child a positive early childhood educational experience by attending the Minden Public Schools Preschool.

We support inclusive learning environments. Opportunities for learning occur as part of typical life activities and routines both planned and spontaneous. Inclusion of children with differing abilities, children from diverse cultures, and children learning English as a second language, will foster caring attitudes and teach children about interdependence and acceptance of human differences. In high quality early childhood programs, inclusion is simply an example of the regular practice of meeting the individual needs of each child and family.

Play is an important time scheduled into the preschool day. Play has been described as a child's "work." Experience through play, knowledge, curiosity, and sense of wonder are foundations for children's learning.

We believe in providing well-rounded educational experiences. There will be lots of activities working with large and fine motor skills, as well as self-help skills. There will be sensory, discovery, and exploratory activities. There will be opportunities to problem solve, with math and science concepts. Language, literacy, social and emotional development, as well as, music, technology, and creative arts are all a critical part of the development of the preschool child.

## **Curriculum**

Our program's philosophy is based on **High/Scope**, a nationally recognized curriculum for early childhood. In the High/Scope approach to early childhood education, adults and children share control. It is recognized that the power to learn resides in the child, hence the focus on active learning practices. When we accept that learning comes from within, we achieve a critical balance in educating young children. The adult's role is to support and guide young children through their active learning adventures and experiences. Through active learning, children have direct and immediate experiences, deriving meaning from them through reflection. Young children construct knowledge that helps them to make sense of their world.

In addition to using a daily schedule corresponding to a high/scope curriculum, there will also be activities used from the Handwriting Without Tears curriculum, including the areas of writing, Language & Literacy, and Math.

The High/Scope Preschool "Wheel of Learning" explains the five basic principles--active learning, positive adult-child interactions, a child-friendly learning environment, a consistent daily routine, and team-based daily child assessment, which form the framework of the High/Scope approach.

The Minden Public Preschool also follows Nebraska's Birth to Five Learning and Development standards. These standards include: social and emotional development, approaches to learning, health and physical development, language and literacy development, mathematics, science, and creative arts. Details of these can be referenced at the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Early Childhood website or by contacting the teachers/administration at Minden Public Preschool.

## **ASSESSMENT**

Minden Public Preschool participates in "Results Matter in Nebraska," which is required of all District and ESU preschool programs by the Nebraska Department of Education. Results Matter is a child, program, and family outcomes measurement system designed and implemented to improve programs and supports for all young children birth to age five. All districts and ESUs participate in the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment system. GOLD is an authentic, observational assessment system for children from birth through kindergarten. It is designed to help you get to know children well--what they know and can do, and their strengths, needs, and interests. With this information, the teaching staff can guide children's learning by planning engaging experiences that are responsive to individual and group needs.

Child development and learning is complex. It would be overwhelming to try to measure every skill and behavior that children demonstrate in these early years. The Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment system measures the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that are most predictive of school success. Following is an outline of GOLD's, "OBJECTIVES FOR DEVELOPMENT & LEARNING." There are thirty-six objectives, which are organized into nine areas of development and learning. The NDE requires preschool programs to collect anecdotal note information to complete the GOLD assessment in the areas of Social-Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy, and Math. There are two objectives in a tenth area, English Language Acquisition. They help you follow a child's progress in acquiring receptive and expressive skills in English. This objective applies for any preschooler who is learning English as a second language.

## OBJECTIVES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

### Social-Emotional

1. Regulate own emotions and behaviors
  - a. Manages feelings
  - b. Follows limits and expectations
  - c. Takes care of own needs appropriately
2. Establishes and sustains positive relationships
  - a. Forms relationships with adults
  - b. Responds to emotional cues
  - c. Interacts with peers
  - d. Makes friends
3. Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations
  - a. Balances needs and rights of self and others
  - b. Solves social problems

### Physical

4. Demonstrates traveling skills
5. Demonstrates balancing skills
6. Demonstrates fine-motor manipulative skills
7. Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination
  - a. Uses fingers and hands
  - b. Uses writing and drawing tools

### Language

8. Listens to and understands increasingly complex language
  - a. Comprehends language
  - b. Follows directions
9. Uses language to express thoughts and needs
  - a. Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary
  - b. Speaks clearly
  - c. Uses conventional grammar
  - d. Tells about another time or place
10. Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills
  - a. Engages in conversations
  - b. Uses social rules of language

### Cognitive

11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning
  - a. Attends and engages
  - b. Persists
  - c. Solves problems
  - d. Shows curiosity and motivation
  - e. Shows flexibility and inventiveness of thinking
12. Remembers and connects experiences
  - a. Recognizes and recalls
  - b. Makes connections
13. Uses classification skills
14. Uses symbols and images to represent something not present
  - a. Thinks symbolically
  - b. Engages in socio-dramatic play

### Literacy

15. Demonstrates phonological awareness
  - a. Notices and discriminates rhyme

- b. Notices and discriminates alliteration
- c. Notices and discriminates smaller and smaller units of sound
- 16. Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet
  - a. Identifies and names letters
  - b. Uses letter—sound knowledge
- 17. Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses
  - a. Uses and appreciates books
  - b. Uses print concepts
- 18. Comprehends and responds to books
  - a. Interacts during read-alouds
  - b. Uses emergent reading skills
  - c. Retells stories
- 19. Demonstrates emergent writing skills
  - a. Writes name
  - b. Writes to convey meaning

#### Mathematics

- 20. Uses number concepts and operations
  - a. Counts
  - b. Quantifies
  - c. Connects numerals with their quantities
- 21. Explores and describes spatial relationships & shapes
  - a. Understands spatial relationships
  - b. Understands shapes
- 22. Compares and measures
- 23. Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

\*Science and Technology, Social Studies, and The Arts are all integral parts of our preschool curriculum, but are not required to collect assessment data.

#### English Language Acquisition

- 37. Demonstrates progress in listening to and understanding English
- 38. Demonstrates progress in speaking English

#### **Long-Range Goals of the High/Scope Curriculum**

1. Develop the child's ability to make decisions about what he/she is going to do and how he/she is going to do it, and to plan use of time and energy.
2. Develop the child's self-discipline and his/her ability to identify personal goals and to pursue and complete self-chosen tasks.
3. Develop the child's ability to work with other children and adults so that work done is a result of group planning, cooperative effort, and shared leadership.
4. Develop the child's ability to use a variety of skills in the arts, physical movement, and knowledge of objects as a base of educational concepts.
5. Develop the child's ability to express himself/herself – to speak, write, dramatize, and graphically represent his/her experiences and to communicate these experiences to others.

6. Develop the child's ability to comprehend others' self-expression by reading their writing, and understanding artistic, and graphic representations.
7. Develop the child's ability to apply the reasoning capacity he/she has developed in a wide range of naturally occurring situations and with a variety of materials.
8. Develop the child's spirit of inquiry and of openness to knowledge and the points of view of other people (develop creativity and self-starting skills).

## Minden Public Schools Preschool

Monday - Tuesday - Wednesday - Thursday

### Daily Routine

Wash/Fine Motor  
Snack  
Music Time  
Circle Time  
Center Time  
Clean-Up  
Story Time  
Small Group  
Recess  
Outside/Dismissal

1

### Description of Daily Routine

Our preschool program follows a predictable sequence of events known as the daily routine. This provides a structure which children can make choices and follow their interests through active involvement. Following a consistent routine day after day gives children the sense of security they need to be able to make choices and take risks, which opens the door to exciting learning opportunities. Plan-do-review (planning time, work time, recall time), Story Time, Small Group Time, Music Time, Large & Fine Motor activities, and Snack Time, will always be included during the program day. The length and order of the segment may vary depending on the routine that works best for the setting, schedule, and population of the children enrolled each year.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **WHO TO CALL IF YOUR CHILD IS GOING TO BE ABSENT:**

#### **PLEASE CALL BOTH PLACES:**

Call Minden Public Schools Transportation Building--308-830-3934

Call Minden Public Preschool-----308-832-2460

If there is no answer, please leave us a message.

### **THE PRESCHOOL STAFF NEEDS TO KNOW IF:**

- Your child will not be attending school;
- You are not able to keep a scheduled meeting;
- Your telephone number or address changes;
- You change jobs or emergency contacts;
- You have a family crisis that will affect your child.

### **ARRIVAL INFORMATION:**

Morning session students: earliest drop off begins at 7:30 however class begins at 8:00

Afternoon session students: drop off is at noon

### **EMERGENCY DROP-OFF INFORMATION:**

If there is no one to meet your child at his/her designated drop-off point or if you have made prior arrangements to pick your child up at the preschool and you are late, then your child will wait at East Elementary.

### **PRESCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION AND SCHEDULE:**

If the school district has a late start, there will be no A.M. preschool. The P.M. class will be in session. If the school district cancels school, there will be no preschool.

The preschool calendar generally follows the MPS calendar. If there is a scheduled early dismissal for MPS, due to transportation issues, there will be no P.M. preschool class. Please refer to your monthly preschool calendar for any changes from the MPS calendar.

## **PRESCHOOL TRANSPORTATION (when available)**

- 1.) All children need to be **ready and brought to the bus by the parent or caregiver** due to safety and time issues. **Please watch** for the bus/van near the designated arrival time (The bus pick-up/drop-off schedule should become more consistent after the second week of preschool). The bus/van driver will **honk** when they arrive. Transportation will **wait 3 minutes** before continuing on the route.
- 2.) All children, 6 and under, riding on the small bus with seat belts, are **required to ride in a child restraint seat**. If a child unbuckles his/her seatbelt, the driver will stop immediately and will not proceed until the child is buckled. If this continues to be a problem, the parent will be contacted so that the issue can be addressed.
- 3.) Children will not be left unattended in the bus.

4.) **Parent or caregiver will acknowledge the driver when the child is being dropped off.** Under no circumstances will a child be dropped off at a home without an adult contact with the driver. If no one is home, the child will be brought to the **emergency drop off location.**

5.) **Each child is allowed one pick up and drop off location. This allows for consistency of our transportation route.**

6.) While riding the bus, children are to **remain seated** until the bus comes to a complete stop and the driver opens the door. Children are to speak in a **quiet voice** and are to keep their **hands and feet to themselves** while riding the bus. Transportation is a privilege, and for the safety of your child, and others, noncompliance with these rules, will result in your child not being able to use transportation.

7.) If your **child will NOT be riding the bus**, it is the parent's responsibility to **call the Transportation Office (830-3934)**. If no one is there, you may leave a message on the answering machine. Please call by 7:30 a.m. if your child is in the morning class and 10:30 a.m. if attending the afternoon class. Please **call the Preschool site (832-2460)**, also, as this keeps us informed as to illnesses, etc., as well as providing good communication and safeguards for transporting young children.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

All staff are required to follow confidentiality guidelines concerning all children. That means that your child's classroom staff can only answer questions pertaining to your child. Please do not ask the van/bus driver about your child or any other child as they will refer you to your child's classroom teacher.

## **BIRTHDAY POLICY**

A child's birthday is a very special day for both the child and his/her family. Some examples of ways to celebrate your child's birthday at preschool would be to bring a baby picture of your child to share with the class or a special book that your child likes could be read and shared with the class on that day. Please make plans with your child's teacher if you plan to do something special. Party invitations need to be distributed outside of the preschool setting by parents.

## **CLOTHING**

Your child will be active both indoors and outdoors. During inclement weather, we plan indoor activities. It is important for your child to be dressed in comfortable clothing that will adapt to food spills, paint, sand and water play, running, jumping, sitting on the floor, and interactive games (a change of clothes in your child's backpack is a great idea). Please be sure your child has appropriate shoes and clothing for outdoor play for all seasons. Be sure to label all jackets, sweaters, hats, mittens, scarves, boots, backpacks, etc. It is also important that children wear clothing that allows the child to be as independent as possible. Being independent reinforces your child's self-confidence.

## **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

The students will practice for fire drills, tornado drills, lockdown, and evacuation drills throughout the school year. If ever there would be an actual incident take place, our first priority would be to keep your child safe. Please do not come up to the school, as that would hinder law enforcement efforts. We request that you listen to the radio, TV or school calling/messaging system for further instructions.

## **PERSONAL POSSESSIONS/BACKPACK**

Please do not allow your child to bring food, candy, toys, or money to school unless requested by the classroom staff. No weapons are allowed.

A backpack is a great way for your child to bring artwork and notes back and forth to school. A regular size backpack works well. Please remember to label the backpack on the inside for your child's safety.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Your participation is greatly valued in the program. Please consider being an active participant in your child's education. Parent input is valuable in making improvements in our program. Here are some ideas for volunteering:

- \*Volunteering in the classroom by interacting with your child during classroom activities;
- \*Reading to the children;
- \*Assisting on field trips;
- \*Sharing your talents with us, or talking and sharing with the children about your hobby, or profession;
- \*Contributing toys, materials, and/or clothing (i.e. hats, mittens, boots, coats, to be kept in the classroom to use on those days someone has forgotten something, and clothing for needed changes during the school day);
- \*Providing snack for the week, 3-4 times throughout the school year;
- \*Volunteering to be a representative for the preschool on Minden Public Schools Parent Advisory Committee (PAC).

## **COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME & SCHOOL**

We encourage open communication between parents and staff through:

- \*monthly newsletters
- \* communication through app
- \*two observational reports of your child's development (GOLD)
- \*parent-teacher conferences and/or home visits

## **SNACK**

Each preschool session will include a snack that meets USDA Child Nutrition Program guidelines. One way you can be involved in your child's preschool experience is by providing healthy snack items for the class throughout the school year.

Below are some suggestions for healthy snacks:

**Fruit**

**Vegetables**

**Popcorn**

**String cheese**

**Graham crackers**

**Yogurt**

**Pretzels**

**Applesauce**

**Granola bars**

**Goldfish**

**Crackers**

**Meat sticks**

**Fruit snacks**

**Trail mix (nut-free)**

**Please avoid bringing:**

- Candy or desserts
- Chips
- Soda or sweetened drinks
- Foods containing peanuts or tree nuts (*please check labels for allergens*)

Children may choose to drink water, or—if preferred by parents—purchase milk from the cafeteria.

**Thank you for providing snacks for preschool!**

To protect against foodborne illness, we can only accept pre-packaged or store-bought food items.

**A snack schedule will be provided. Please plan to bring snack on your scheduled day.**

## **FEE SCHEDULE FOR PRIVATE PAY FAMILIES**

The regular monthly fee for a child to attend Minden Public Preschool is \$120.00. This includes 3 ½ hour preschool sessions, 4 days a week, with transportation, if desired, and living in the Minden city limits. This rate will not be prorated for short months, sick days, snow days, holidays, or teacher in-service days. The Minden Public School District also uses a sliding scale formula for parent fees in order to maximize the participation of economically and categorically diverse groups of children and to ensure that participating children and families have access to comprehensive services. If a family qualifies for the reduced school lunch program, the monthly preschool fee will be \$80.00. A family qualifying for the free school lunch program, will pay a monthly preschool fee of \$60.00.

The monthly payments for preschool are due the first (1<sup>st</sup>) of each month, beginning August 18<sup>th</sup> with the final payment due on May 1<sup>st</sup>. A reminder concerning payment will be attached to the monthly newsletter/calendar. Payments are your responsibility and are delinquent on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. If payments are delinquent for two pay periods, your child will be dismissed from preschool in order to make room for other private pay children. You may drop your payment off at Minden Public Schools Central Office. If you would like to send your payments by mail, they may be mailed to:

Minden Public Schools  
Attn: Preschool  
PO Box 301  
Minden, NE 68959-0301

## **PARENT PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING CONFLICTS**

PARENT

PRESCHOOL TEACHER

PRESCHOOL SUPERVISOR  
(Sandy Pohl-Elementary Principal)

MPS SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS  
(James Widdifield-Superintendent)

**2025-2026  
TEACHER HANDBOOK  
MINDEN  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
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**Minden Public Schools Teacher Handbook  
2025-2026 School Year**

**FOREWORD**

**Section 1                    Intent of Handbook**

Welcome to Minden Public Schools! This handbook is intended for teachers and other certificated staff to provide general information about Minden Public Schools and guide the District’s policies, rules, regulations, employment benefits, and performance expectations.

This handbook refers to “teachers” in a way that is intended to apply to all certificated staff, including administrative staff, to the extent that it deals with professional expectations and conduct.

Each teacher is responsible for becoming familiar with the handbook and knowing its contents. Although the information in this handbook is detailed and specific on many topics, the handbook is not intended to be all-encompassing, covering every situation and circumstance that may arise. This handbook is intended to supplement other documents that deal with your employment, including your employment contract, the negotiated agreement between the Minden Public Schools and the Minden Education Association, and the policies and regulations of the Board of Education. In reading this handbook, please understand that state or federal law, the negotiated agreement, and Board policies and regulations will control where a direct conflict exists.

Every staff member is subject to the Policies of the Board of Education. As such, every certified staff member should review the Policies of the Board of Education, available online at: <https://www.mindenwhippets.org/page/board-policies>

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

This handbook will be in effect for the 2025-2026 and subsequent school years unless replaced by a later edition.

## Article 1 – CONTRACT DAYS

### Section 1 Contract Days

Teachers are contracted for 185 contract days for the school year. Individual teachers shall serve contract days on varying schedules as established by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.

### Section 2 Severe Weather and School Cancellations

The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to close the school in case of severe weather. Representatives of the superintendent's staff will notify local news media when inclement weather warrants such action. Radio and television stations broadcast this information regularly. Minden Public School also uses an automated phone notification system to inform parents and staff of school closings and delayed start times.

Decision to Close School: When the weather service and civil defense officials forecast that it would be unwise for students to attend school, a decision to close school is made. If possible, a decision about the next school day will be made by 9 p.m. to announce during the 10 p.m. news. An early decision is not always possible because of uncertain weather conditions. The superintendent or designee will assess conditions during the night and decide early in the morning (by 6 a.m. if possible). In any case, an announcement will be made to the news media when the school is closed, and the automated calling system will be activated. The school will sometimes be open, but certain services may be canceled (bus transportation, preschool, student activities). Some staff may be designated as required to come to school, even in a school closing.

After School Starts: Every attempt will be made to avoid closing school once classes are in session. In some instances, closing school during the day is inevitable if children safely return home before the brunt of a major storm hits. In these cases, as much advance notice as possible will be given. If school is closed during the day, staff will be notified, and parents will be notified via media broadcast and the automated calling system. Teachers will be responsible for remaining with students until all students have safely left school or the administration has made arrangements for the remaining students.

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. You should treat the absence like any other for legitimate causes, provided parents properly notify the school of their decision. Parents may pick up their children in inclement weather (except in a tornado) at any time during the school day.

Students will not typically be dismissed from school during severe weather based on a telephone request.

Emergency Conditions Minden Public School has a signal that, when activated, includes the necessity to evacuate the building or move to safer building areas. All regular drills are held as required by law throughout the school year. **School officials are not permitted to release students from the school building during a tornado warning. You should implement the school's established safety procedures for an emergency exit alert or a tornado warning.**

### **Section 3 Make-Up Days**

In the event teachers are not required to report for duty due to inclement weather conditions or other circumstances whereby a duty day is canceled, such days shall not be credited as a contract day served. As needed, the administration will schedule make-up days during the contract year to allow all teaching staff to serve the full number of contract days.

## **Article 2 – EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, AND BENEFITS**

### **Section 1 Employment**

On or after March 15 of each school year, teachers may be requested to accept employment for the next school year. Teachers need to respond to the request to signify acceptance, as a failure to indicate acceptance of employment by the designated date shall constitute cause for amendment or termination of the teacher's contract.

Should a teacher wish to resign from employment, the teacher must give written notice of resignation to the Superintendent. The Board of Education may act upon the request to resign. Mid-year resignations and resignations given late in the spring for the following school year can present significant planning problems for the District. If a mid-year resignation is submitted, or a resignation for the following school year is submitted after March 15 or after the teacher has signed acceptance of employment for the next school year, the Board of Education may act not to accept the resignation unless a suitable replacement can be found.

### **Section 2 Assignments**

The professional duties to be performed by a teacher with the District shall be subject to assignment by the Superintendent or designee. A teacher will be expected to devote full time during days of school to the teacher's position and to perform the assigned duties diligently and faithfully to the best of the teacher's professional ability. Job descriptions, where available, may provide additional information about the position duties.

In addition to the normal duties traditionally required of teachers, a teacher may be assigned such "extra duty" assignments to support the extra-curricular programs of the District, which shall be upon such terms and conditions and at such additional rate of compensation as the Teacher and the District may agree upon or as set forth in the negotiated agreement. The extra-curricular program of the District is an integral part of the overall educational program of the District. As such, a teacher shall not unreasonably refuse to accept such extra-duty assignments. In addition,

performance in an extra duty assignment is a part of evaluating the teacher's overall performance for the District.

### **Section 3 Personnel File**

The District will follow the requirements of state and federal law and regulations with regard to a teacher's personnel file.

### **Section 4 Grievances and Complaints**

Teacher grievances regarding wages, hours, and conditions of employment outlined in the negotiated agreement shall be governed by the grievance or complaint procedure in the negotiated agreement. All other employment-related grievances or complaints shall be addressed through the administrative chain of command, including the process outlined in board policy.

### **Section 5 Compensation**

Regular Salary and Extra-Duty Compensation. Compensation is paid only as authorized by the Board of Education. Teachers are paid a salary based on placement on the salary schedule outlined in the collectively negotiated agreement between the District and the collective bargaining agent for the certificated teaching staff, and the extra-duty salary schedule is also incorporated into the negotiated agreement.

Salary Payments. Salary is payable over twelve equal installments. Teachers will be paid on the payroll date each month. In no event shall the Board advance more than one month's salary to any staff member. Upon separation of a teacher's employment, or fulfillment of the contract, the teacher may, at the option of the Board, be paid all salary due in one lump sum.

### **Section 6 Benefits**

Teachers are provided benefits in accordance with the negotiated agreement.

Continued health insurance benefits are available through COBRA, subject to certain qualifying requirements. A Notice of COBRA Continuation Coverage Rights is available in the Superintendent's Office.

### **Section 7 Payroll and Payroll Deductions**

Payroll deductions shall be made per law, the negotiated agreement, and/or the teacher's consent.

### **Section 8 Expense Reimbursement**

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

The district provides necessary instructional materials. If teachers need additional materials for instruction or school-related purposes, they should request them from the Building Principal.

Reimbursement for purchase of materials, meals, or other expenses related to travel must be submitted to and approved by either the Building Principal or, if the expense relates to an activity, by the Athletic Director. The request for reimbursement should include an itemized receipt sufficient to establish that the expense was actually incurred and that the expense was reasonable and related to a school purpose. There is no guarantee that teachers will be reimbursed for the purchase of materials or meals. Therefore, teachers should obtain prior authorization from the Building Principal before making such purchases.

## **Section 9      Injuries at Work**

### Accidents

Every accident that results in a personal injury must be reported to the Principal immediately. In the event the injury involves a student, the teacher responsible for the student, either as teacher, coach, or sponsor, is responsible for making the report. If the injury occurs in the teacher's presence, the teacher is also responsible for making a report.

### Workers Compensation

Teachers are required to immediately report any work-related injury and/or work-related medical condition to their supervisor and complete all appropriate paperwork.

## **Article 3 – ABSENCES FROM WORK**

### **Section 1      Paid Leaves**

The Negotiated Agreement identifies all leaves (paid or unpaid). If any teacher has a question about their availability or access to leaves, they must contact the business office for verification.

Laurie Haight is the contact person when substitutes are needed. You can contact her in the Superintendent's Office at 308-832-2440 during the school day or 308-832-0338 on evenings or weekends. If leave needs to be canceled or rescheduled, the staff member must contact Laurie as soon as possible.

### **Section 2      Payroll Deductions for Absences in Excess of Paid Leave**

Should a teacher be absent from work in excess of the teacher's accumulated sick leave or other paid leaves called for in the negotiated agreement, the teacher's salary and fringe benefits (including the cost of premiums for group health insurance) may be reduced by the day or days of work missed on a per diem basis calculated using the number of days missed as the numerator, and the number of total contract days for the school years as the denominator.

### **Section 3      Jury Duty Leave**

A teacher summoned for jury service must promptly notify the Building Principal. The teacher will be allowed time off for jury duty, pursuant to law.

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

If a teacher reports for jury duty in the morning and is then dismissed from jury duty for the remainder of the day, the employee is to report for work and resume duties for the balance of the day, except as may be otherwise arranged by the Building Principal.

## **Section 4      Family and Medical Leave Act**

### **Employee Rights and Responsibilities under the Family and Medical Leave Act**

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

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

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

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

Military Leave Entitlement. Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active-duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

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

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

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

Eligibility Requirements. A teacher is eligible if they have been employed with Minden Public Schools for at least one year, for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if there are at least 50 employees of Minden Public Schools within 75 miles of your work location.

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

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

Use of Leave. A teacher does not need to use FMLA leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. The teacher must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to disrupt the District's operations unduly. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis.

Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave. The teacher may choose, or the District may require the use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. The teacher must comply with the District's normal paid leave policies to use paid leave for FMLA leave.

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

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

The District will inform employees if leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement. If the District determines that

the leave is not FMLA-protected, the District will notify the employee.

**Enforcement.** An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer.

For additional information, you may refer to the FMLA posters on employee bulletin boards or contact the U.S. Wage and Hour Division at:

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

[www.wagehour.dol.gov](http://www.wagehour.dol.gov)

To submit a request for FMLA use or to plan for benefit payment while on FMLA leave, contact James Widdifield at (308) 832-2440.

### **Section 5 Military and Family Military Leave**

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

Teachers requesting to take military leave or family military leave under the Nebraska statutes must notify the Superintendent at least 14 days in advance of taking such a leave if the leave will be for five or more consecutive days and consult with their Building Principal to schedule the leave so as not to disrupt operations of the District unduly. For leaves of less than 5 days, the teacher is to notify the Superintendent of the leave request as soon as practicable. Teachers are to attach a copy of their orders to a leave request form when they prepare the request for military leave.

### **Section 6 Adoption Leave**

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

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

### **Section 7 Subpoena to Testify Leave**

A teacher must promptly notify the Building Principal when the teacher receives a lawfully issued subpoena to testify in court or to give a deposition that may require an absence from duty.

If the subpoena involves a job-related matter in which the teacher is testifying on behalf of the District, the absence will be treated like jury duty leave.

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

### **Section 8 Voting Leave**

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

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

## **Article 4 – DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Section 1 Hours of Work & Meetings**

Regular, dependable, in-person attendance at work is essential to a teacher's employment position.

Certified employees are required to serve at the playground, lunchroom, and hall supervision as designated by the Principal.

Teachers shall attend meetings assigned by the Superintendent of Schools, principals, department heads, and team leaders.

### **Section 2 Arrival at Duty Assignments**

Elementary and Secondary teachers are to be in the building by no later than 7:40, to be in their classroom no later than 7:40, and to remain on duty until 3:40. Teachers and other certificated employees who are part-time or work on adjusted schedules are to be in the building at least 15 minutes before their class or assigned duty begins, and to be in their classroom or assigned duty area at least 15 minutes after their class or assignment ends. During the school day, teachers are to be in their assigned classroom at least five minutes before each period begins to ensure that students are not unsupervised within the classroom.

### **Section 3 Leaving School**

Teachers are always on duty during the school day and are considered on duty even during designated planning periods. Teachers are provided with an uninterrupted lunch period of not less than 30 minutes each day during which they are not assigned teaching, supervisory, or other duties.

Teachers may not leave school during duty hours without the approval of the Principal. If the absence has been approved, the teacher must check out with the Principal's office when leaving and check back in with the Principal's office upon return. Teachers who need to leave during the

school day for illness or emergency are to check out with the Principal's office and ensure that a responsible person has been notified of their unexpected absence so student coverage may be provided.

#### **Section 4 Lesson Plans**

On each contract day, teachers must prepare written lesson plans that cover at least three days of advance instruction. The plans must be in a format accessible to the Principal or substitute teacher if the teacher is absent from school. The lesson plans must be sufficiently clear in establishing objectives and related activities so that they are easily used by a substitute teacher or other staff member not familiar with previous classroom activities or progress. The lesson plans must reference other instructional sources immediately available to enhance the instructional lesson.

#### **Section 5 Daily Class Records**

Every teacher is required to keep a complete and easily understandable written or electronic record of the attendance and achievement of every student.

Upon request, a student's individual record in the teacher's class record shall be made available for review or copying. Information relating to other students should not be allowed to be seen by other students or parents.

#### **Section 6 Classroom and School Procedures**

Teachers are expected to adhere to the following classroom and school procedures in the performance of their duties:

##### 1. Use of Cell Phones

Teachers may not use personal cell phones during duty time unless they are using a District-issued application or website that directly relates to their teaching duties.

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

##### 2. Use of Teacher Aides

Teacher aides provide valuable assistance in the educational process and allow teachers to carry out their responsibilities in a more efficient and effective manner. A teacher aide must not, however, assume teaching responsibilities. The teacher must maintain the role of leadership and responsibility for the students, with the teacher aide in a supportive role. Teachers ultimately bear responsibility for the actions that occur in the classroom. A teacher aide is not a sufficient substitute for a teacher's duties. Teacher aides may be used to assist the teacher by, among other tasks, assisting with instructional activities under the direction of the

teacher, helping to supervise students, copying tests and other written material, organizing class materials, preparing bulletin boards, grading tests or class work, and calculating and recording grades. Teacher aides are to work only on their assigned workdays and within their assigned work hours. If the teacher desires the aide to work hours other than the assigned work hours or assigned workday, contact the administration for approval.

### 3. Use of Student Aides

Student aides are to be directly supervised by the teacher and not to leave the building, or be in the halls, or anywhere they are not supervised. Student aides are not to be used to assist the teacher by helping supervise another student, grade tests or class work, calculate student grades, or record grades. Keys are never to be given to students, whether they are student aides or not. Student aid should not be present to assist a teacher without another adult present after the end of regular teacher duty hours.

### 4. Classroom Environment

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

## **Section 7 Supervision of Students**

Proper supervision of students is necessary for teachers and other adults responsible for students. Teachers and other adults responsible for student supervision are expected to meet the four “P’s” for student supervision and safety.

### 1. Proper Supervision

- Report to all duty assignments on time.
- Circulate through your duty area, paying particular attention to areas and activities that pose an increased risk of injury.
- Be vigilant while supervising students. Never leave the classroom unattended; the need to make a copy is not greater than the need to supervise students. If an emergency requires that a teacher leave the classroom, request that another nearby staff member cover the class, or notify the office so someone can help. If the teacher is on recess duty, the teacher’s responsibility is to supervise the students in the assigned area. When talking with other adults or students, the primary duty is supervision, and the teacher is to be aware of what all students are doing.
- If the teacher has seen or has been informed that a particular student has a propensity to act dangerously or in an unpredictable manner, the teacher’s supervision of that student must increase with the known risk of injury. (Remember, though, that this type of information may be confidential—do not share confidential information about students except with other staff who need

to know the information to perform their jobs.)

- Be careful when touching students. Corporal punishment is prohibited. Touching students should be limited to what is necessary to protect them from harm (e.g., falling from playground equipment) and what professional educators determine is appropriate for proper student relationships.
- Be careful with language. Profanity or abusive language may not be used. Teachers must be good role models for students. If a student uses such language, the teacher should correct the student and take appropriate disciplinary action, including reporting the student to the administration.

2. Proper Instructions

- Proper instructions are important to reduce the risk of injury when students undertake an activity, especially an activity that has an increased risk of harm to students.
- Repeat the instructions when completing a task with a heightened risk of danger, as often as needed. Do not assume that they will be remembered because students heard the directions once.

3. Proper Maintenance of Buildings, Grounds, and Equipment

- Conduct periodic inspections of equipment under your control or in your area of supervision.
- If equipment is broken and presents a risk of injury, immediately take it out of service (if it can't be moved, tape a "Do Not Use" sign) and notify the Principal immediately so repairs may be undertaken.

4. Proper Warnings

- If you know a hazard that can likely cause injury, take steps to warn other staff and students. Tell the Principal immediately so additional warnings may be given.

Contact the Principal for Assistance

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

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

Student Searches

The Principal should also be contacted before performing searches of students or their belongings. A student suspected of having an item in violation of school rules should be directed to wait until another adult is present, or to follow the teacher to the office if the

teacher cannot leave their assigned area without causing risk of harm to others. Do not use physical force to detain or make the student accompany you except as reasonably necessary to protect the student or others.

### Student Rights

Students should be treated fairly and given the same treatment without consideration of race (including skin color, hair texture, and protective hairstyles), color, religion, gender, or disability. Students who need reasonable special accommodations should be given those accommodations as needed so they can participate in school and school activities. Further, students have the right to have their school records kept confidential. Such information should be shared only with other school staff needing the information to perform their duties.

## **Section 8 Managing Student Conduct**

Discipline is everyone's responsibility. It begins with the student being responsible for their behavior and understanding the consequences it may cause. The teacher is responsible for articulating classroom expectations at the beginning of the school year, implementing the classroom expectations on a consistent basis, and being familiar with the student handbook. All staff are responsible for all students in the hallways, restrooms, assemblies, pep rallies, other open spaces, and during lunch. Consequences for inappropriate behavior may include students making up time before or after school, a student or a parent conference, or a referral to an administrator.

The following guidelines will assist in maintaining appropriate student conduct and complying with the process required for student discipline.

1. On the first day of class, students must be made aware of classroom expectations.
2. It is important to document student behavior in your classroom, calls to parents, referrals, and/or communications with a student.
3. If, after attempts to improve student behavior, problems continue, talk to the Principal about possible alternatives in discipline procedures. Be attentive and respond to “bullying.”
4. If a student continues to cause problems, inform the Principal. Be sure to state the problem clearly and expectations in terms of assistance, as, at times, the student’s and teacher’s stories are different. Be prepared to provide documentation.
5. Follow up on any referral. The student may not go to the Principal or the counselor when sent.
6. Refer students with continued and significant behavioral problems to the student assistance team for a determination of whether they need special services. Contact the counselor if you have questions about the procedure.

7. Talk with other teachers about the classroom management techniques they use to establish an atmosphere conducive to learning in their classroom. A large repertoire of classroom management techniques always enhances learning.
8. Read and understand the student handbook and the student conduct rules of the District.
9. Use good judgment when dealing with difficult situations involving students. Physical confrontation generally escalates tense situations. Corporal punishment is prohibited in the District and is not to be used. Physical force may only be used to the extent reasonably necessary to protect the student, yourself, and others, and to protect property as may be reasonable.
10. Student rules violations that are also violations of state law must be reported to law enforcement. Report such conduct to the Principal so that this law may be followed.

### **Section 9 Dispensing Medication**

Teachers are not permitted to give any medication to students unless trained under the Medication Aid Act. Students who need to take prescription medicine must have a signed parent release form on file in the office. Medications are to be taken in the presence of the office staff, the nurse, or a medication aide and are to be stored in the nurse's office, except for students who have a diabetes self-management or asthma self-management plan. Medical procedures are not to be administered in the classroom except in accordance with the District's Safety and Security Management Plan and the District's Emergency Protocol. Any questions about these rules are to be addressed to the Principal.

### **Section 10 Reporting Child Abuse**

Teachers are to promptly report to the appropriate law enforcement agency and the Principal when they have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, including sexual abuse, or circumstances which reasonably would result in abuse or neglect. Administrative staff may sometimes choose to make a report for a teacher. However, simply informing a Principal or supervisor does not end the teacher's responsibility; teachers are legally obligated to make certain a report is made if they do not do it themselves.

## **Article 5 – PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

### **Section 1 Professional Ethics Standards**

The School District expects its certificated employees to adhere to the professional ethics standards established by the Nebraska Department of Education, as such standards may be modified from time to time. The professional ethics standards that certified employees are expected to adhere to include those below. References to "educator" shall include all certificated employees of the District.

#### **Preamble**

The educator shall believe in the worth and dignity of human beings. Recognizing the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, the devotion to excellence, and the nurture of democratic citizenship, the educator shall regard as essential to these goals the protection of the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal educational opportunity for all. The educator shall accept the responsibility to practice the profession according to these ethical standards.

The educator shall recognize the magnitude of the responsibility he or she has accepted in choosing a career in education and engage, individually and collectively with other educators, in judging his or her colleagues and being judged by them in accordance with the provisions of this code of ethics.

The standards listed in this section are generally accepted minimum standards for ethical and professional conduct for public school certificate holders in the State of Nebraska and for all educators, including administrators.

**Principle I - Commitment as a Professional Educator:**

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

In fulfillment of the educator's contractual and professional responsibilities, the educator:

- A. Shall not interfere with the exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities of students, colleagues, parents, school patrons, or school board members.
- B. Shall not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, sexual orientation or gender identity, or other protected status in its programs and activities.
- C. Shall not use coercive means, or promise or provide special treatment to students, colleagues, school patrons, or school board members to influence professional decisions.
- D. Shall not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact for which the educator is responsible.
- E. Shall not exploit professional relationships with students, colleagues, parents, school patrons, or school board members for personal gain or private advantage.
- F. Shall not sexually harass students, parents, school patrons, employees, or board members.
- G. A teaching certificate, administrative certificate, or certificate enabling a person to engage in any of the activities for which a special services counseling certificate is issued in Nebraska shall not have been revoked for cause in another state.
- H. Shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation in the performance of professional duties.
- I. Shall report any known violation of paragraphs G, E, or B above to the Superintendent.
- J. Shall seek no reprisal against any individual who has reported a violation of this rule.

**Principle II - Commitment to the Student:**

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

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

- A. Shall permit the student to pursue reasonable independent scholastic effort and shall permit the student access to varying points of view.
- B. Shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter for which the educator is responsible.
- C. Shall make reasonable efforts to protect the student from conditions that interfere with the learning process or are harmful to health or safety.
- D. Shall conduct professional educational activities per sound educational practices that are in the student's best interest.
- E. Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information that has been obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes, or is required by law.
- F. Shall not tutor for remuneration students assigned to his or her classes unless approved by the Board of Education.
- G. Shall not discipline students using corporal punishment.

**Principle III - Commitment to the Public:**

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

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

- A. Shall not misrepresent an institution with which the educator is affiliated and shall take added precautions to distinguish between the educator's personal and institutional views.
- B. Shall not use institutional privileges for private gain or to promote political candidates, political issues, or partisan political activities.
- C. Shall neither offer nor accept gifts or favors that will impair professional judgment.
- D. Shall support the principle of due process and protect all individuals' political, citizenship, and natural rights.
- E. Shall not commit any act of moral turpitude, nor commit any felony under the laws of the United States or any state or territory.
- F. Shall, with reasonable diligence, attend to the duties of his or her professional position.

**Principle IV - Commitment to the Profession:**

In belief that the quality of the services to the education profession directly influences the nation and its citizens, the educator shall exert every effort to raise professional standards, to improve service, to promote a climate in which the exercise of professional judgment

is encouraged, and to achieve conditions which attract persons worthy of the trust to careers in education. The educator shall believe that sound professional relationships with colleagues are built upon personal integrity, dignity, and mutual respect.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the profession, the educator:

- A. Shall provide, upon the request of an aggrieved party, a written statement of specific reasons for recommendations that lead to the denial of increments, significant changes in employment, or termination of employment.
- B. Shall not misrepresent his or her professional qualifications, nor those of colleagues.
- C. Shall practice the profession only with proper certification and shall actively oppose the practice of the profession by persons known to be unqualified.

### **Principle V - Commitment to Professional Employment Practices:**

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

In fulfillment of the obligation to professional employment practices, the educator:

- A. Shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or responsibility on the basis of professional preparation and legal qualifications.
- B. Shall not knowingly withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or employer, or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.
- C. Shall give prompt notice to the employer of any change in the availability of service.
- D. Shall conduct professional business through designated procedures, when available, that the employing agency has approved.
- E. Shall not assign unqualified personnel tasks for which an educator is responsible.
- F. Shall permit no commercial or personal exploitation of his or her professional position.
- G. Shall use time on duty and leave time for the purpose for which it is intended.

## **Section 2 Evaluations**

Teacher evaluations will be conducted per the District's evaluation policy. Supervisors reserve the right to observe, appraise, or evaluate teachers more frequently than required by policy on an as-needed basis. Teachers are expected to participate constructively and positively in the evaluation process and to accept and implement the administration's constructive suggestions and improvement strategies.

## **Section 3 Role Model**

Teachers serve as role models for students, and their actions and conduct reflect on the school as a whole. Teachers must conduct themselves professionally at all times.

### A. Notification of Arrest

Teachers must notify the Superintendent by the next business day after:

1. Arrest or Criminal Charges. The teacher is arrested, ticketed, or issued a criminal charge when:
  - a. The maximum penalty for the crime equals or exceeds six months' incarceration.
  - b. The crime relates to abuse, neglect, or endangerment of a minor, a minor was allegedly a victim or a witness, or the crime involves alleged sexual misconduct.
  - c. Conviction would impact the performance of a teacher's job responsibilities, including offenses that:
    - i. Would impact the responsibility to be a role model for students or relations with other employees of Minden Public Schools;
    - ii. Would impact the teacher's ability to operate a motor vehicle if the teacher, at times, needs to travel during duty time, or the teacher drives students, or
    - iii. This would impact the teacher's Commercial Driver's License if the teacher's job requires the employee to have a CDL.
  - d. The arrest or the alleged criminal activity occurred while the teacher was on duty, on Minden Public Schools property, in a school-owned or utilized vehicle, or at a school-supervised activity or school-sponsored function.Teachers must also promptly report to the Superintendent whenever the teacher has been sentenced to be incarcerated for any period, even if the offense is not otherwise reportable.
2. Certificate or License. The teacher becomes aware that a complaint has been filed against the teacher that could affect a certificate or license required for the teacher's position. This includes proceedings of the Nebraska Department of Education related to an alleged violation of the NDE Standards of Conduct and Ethics, Chapter 27, and Health and Human Services proceedings related to an alleged violation of the professional standards of conduct for the teacher's position.
3. Child Abuse. The teacher becomes aware that a report of child abuse or neglect has been made against the teacher under the Child Protection Act.

Further, teachers must fully disclose any Child Protection Act investigation that resulted in an "inconclusive" determination at any time. Teachers must disclose such findings within ten days following the Teacher's notice of such determination.

Teachers must fully disclose the existence and nature of the above proceedings and promptly notify the Superintendent of their disposition.

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

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

## B. Civility

Each teacher shall behave with civility, fairness, and respect in dealing with fellow employees, students, parents, patrons, visitors, and anyone else having business with Minden Public Schools. Uncivil behaviors are prohibited. Employees may be subject to disciplinary action for engaging in uncivil behavior, including termination.

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

Any teacher aware of another teacher's uncivil behavior shall report the conduct to the teacher's immediate supervisor or the Superintendent. The person making the report will not be retaliated against.

## C. Tobacco

The use of tobacco products is prohibited on school grounds.

"Tobacco products" means any tobacco product (including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, and chewing tobacco), vapor products (such as e-cigarettes), electronic nicotine delivery systems, alternative nicotine products, tobacco product look-alikes, and products intended to replicate tobacco products either by appearance or effect. This does not preclude adults from wearing non-visible nicotine patches or using nicotine gum without displaying the product container as part of a smoking cessation program.

## **Section 4 Relationships**

Teachers need to maintain effective working relationships with the administration and all co-workers, including other teachers and support staff. Teachers must also maintain appropriate relationships with students and the community, including parents and patrons. Appropriate relationships are established by extending social courtesies, following through on commitments and promises, complying with administrative directives and Board policies, being prompt and responsive to questions and concerns, being honest and consistent, and not intruding into personal matters outside the scope of duties or gossiping or spreading rumors about others.

### Professional Boundaries Between Employees and Students

All teachers are expected to observe and maintain professional boundaries between themselves and students. Violation of professional boundaries will be regarded as misconduct and may result in disciplinary action.

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

Using e-mail, text messaging, instant messaging, or social networking sites to discuss with

- A student's matter that does not pertain to school-related activities, such as the student's homework, class activity, school sport, club, or other school-sponsored activity. Electronic communications with students are to be sent simultaneously to multiple recipients, not to just one student, except where the communication is clearly school-related and inappropriate for persons other than the individual student to receive (for example, e-mailing a message about a student's grades).
- Engaging in social-networking friendships or communications with a student on social networking sites. Material that employees post on social networks that is publicly available to those in the school community must reflect the professional image applicable to the employee's position and not impair the employee's capacity to maintain the respect of students and parents or impair the employee's ability to serve as a role model for children. Employees shall not friend, communicate with, or follow students on social networking sites.
- Engaging in sexual activity, a romantic relationship, or dating a student or a former student within one year of the student graduating or otherwise leaving the District.
- Making any sexual advance - verbal, written, or physical - towards a student.
- Showing sexually inappropriate materials or objects to a student.
- Discuss sexual topics that are not related to a specific curriculum with a student.
- Telling sexual jokes to a student.
- Invading a student's physical privacy (e.g., walking in on the student in a restroom).
- The employee initiates hugging or other physical contact with a student when the student does not seek or want this attention.
- Being overly "touchy" with a specific student.
- Allowing a specific student to get away with misconduct that is not tolerated from other students, except as appropriate for students with an IEP or 504 Plan.
- Discussing with the student the employee's problems that would normally be discussed with adults (e.g., marital problems).
- Taking a student for a ride in an employee's personal vehicle without the express permission of the student's parent or school administrator, unless another adult is in the vehicle.

- Taking a student on an outing without obtaining prior express permission from the student's parent or school administrator.
- Inviting a student to the employee's home without prior express permission from the student
- Parent and school administrator.
- Going to the student's home when the student's parent or a proper chaperone is not present.
- Giving gifts of a personal nature to a specific student.
- Discussing alcohol, tobacco, or other illicit drugs in a non-instructional setting, such as describing a party that the employee attended.
- Discussing another student's or employee's personal matters when it is not appropriate outside of the instructional setting.
- "Grooming," which includes building trust with a student and individuals close to the student in an effort to gain access to and time alone with the student, with the ultimate goal of engaging in sexual contact or sexual penetration with the student, regardless of when in the student's life the sexual contact or sexual penetration would take place.

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

A teacher who violates this policy may face discipline, up to and including termination of employment, and may be referred to the appropriate certification or credentialing agencies for further discipline. A violation of this policy will result in referral to the Department of Health and Human Services, law enforcement, or both.

### **Section 5 Professional Attire**

Teachers need to project a professional image to students, parents, co-workers, and patrons. Appropriate attire and grooming are one of the means of projecting a professional image. Teachers are expected to maintain professional attire and grooming when on duty. As professionals, teachers are expected to be aware of the standards that need to be maintained. As a minimal guide, teachers should not wear clothing that students would not be permitted to wear at school. The administration may establish more detailed guidelines for individual teachers should that be necessary.

### **Section 6 Private Tutoring**

Teachers are encouraged to provide individual assistance to students as a part of their duties. Teachers who engage in private tutoring for pay (compensation of any kind from a source other than the District) are subject to the following rules:

1. The teacher may not arrange to provide private tutoring for any child enrolled in the teacher's class.
2. The teacher is not to provide private tutoring in a school building.
3. The teacher is not to provide private tutoring during duty time.
4. The teacher is not to advertise or promote the teacher's private tutoring services in the school or the school's communications systems except with the Superintendent's or designee's express permission.

### **Section 7 Outside Employment**

Teachers shall not perform duties unrelated to District employment during duty hours without the prior permission of the Superintendent. In addition, teachers shall not engage in employment that conflicts with their school duties. Teachers are not required to notify the District of outside employment except: (1) teachers who are also employed by another Nebraska school district to comply with Nebraska State Retirement System regulations, and (2) teachers who have a work-related injury in order to comply with workers' compensation requirements.

### **Section 8 Safe Transportation**

When driving a school vehicle or transporting students, teachers must abide by all rules of the road and any applicable rules of the Nebraska Department of Education and the District relating to driving a motor vehicle. All occupants must utilize seat belts and child restraint systems.

Teachers are not to use cell phones or engage in distractions when transporting students. This rule applies to the driver regardless of whether the vehicle is in motion. The only exception is in emergencies.

## **Article 6 – ACADEMIC MATTERS**

### **Section 1 Teaching to Student Understanding to Assure Learning**

Each teacher is responsible for teaching in a manner to meet the mission of the District and to assure student understanding and learning of the principles and concepts to be presented to students within the curriculum adopted by the District. Teachers will model classroom instruction on the educational model implemented by the District and reflected in the teacher evaluation instrument adopted by the Board of Education. Teachers are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the instructional model and the principles of instruction set forth in the evaluation instrument.

State and federal laws and regulations have been enacted that require that students with certain needs be provided instruction and services consistent with those special needs. Examples include students who have been verified as in need of special education ("special education students"), students with other disabilities that impact the educational program ("504 students"), and limited English proficient students ("LEP or ELL students"). The District's policy is to comply with the state and federal laws and regulations in all respects. Teachers assigned special

education, 504, or LEP/ELL students must provide instruction and services consistent with legal requirements and Board policy and regulation requirements.

## **Section 2 Measuring and Reporting Academic Achievement**

Grades and Grading. Measuring and accurately reporting the level of each student's academic achievement is of critical importance to students, parents, staff, the board of education, and the community. To this end, each teacher shall develop a variety of assessment instruments and techniques to measure student achievement in the curriculum adopted and implemented by the school district, record the results of such assessment, and report such results on report cards. Teachers should measure student learning and understanding frequently during each quarter to accurately evaluate each student's academic achievement for that period.

Recording Grades. Each teacher shall record grades in the daily class record or other applicable electronic format. Enough grades must be recorded in the grade book to justify each student's quarter and semester grades. Teachers must be able to support and justify the grades that each student earns.

### Reconsideration of Grades/Marks

Questions raised concerning duly assigned grades should be resolved cooperatively in a conference involving the teacher(s) and the Principal. In the event a grade is questioned by parents or students, the parents/guardians and/or student may be included in the conference.

Failure to resolve the issue may result in a second conference involving the Superintendent or designee and the participants in the initial conference described above. The superintendent will not unilaterally change the grades designated by teachers unless the Superintendent determines that the grade is inconsistent with the requirements of law, Board policy, or the District's best interests.

Reduced Credit. Some students in certain situations may qualify for fewer than the number of credits normally granted for a course. If a student is excessively absent from a class for any particular

For this reason, a teacher may request reduced credit. The principal should approve all cases of reduced credit.

Reports to Parents. Grades and credit are assigned on a quarter or semester basis. Reports will be made available to parents at the close of each school year quarter.

## **Section 3 Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences are critical for teachers to dialogue with students' parents (or guardians) regarding student achievement and learning. To this end, Parent-Teacher conferences will be scheduled and held during the school year. Teacher attendance at Parent-Teacher conferences is mandatory. A teacher may only be excused from attendance in writing by the Superintendent and in advance.

Teachers are expected to be prepared for such conferences. Part of being prepared includes completing grade books and all student assignments, work, or tests completed before the Parent-Teacher conference.

## **Article 7 – USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT**

### **Section 1 Drug-Free Workplace**

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

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

As a condition of employment, teachers will abide by the District's drug-free workplace policies and notify the Superintendent of any criminal drug statute arrest, citation, or conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than 5 days after such arrest, citation, or conviction. Disciplinary sanctions, including termination of employment and referral for prosecution, will be imposed for violations of the District's drug-free workplace policies.

### **Section 2 Weapon-Free Workplace**

The District prohibits any person from possessing a weapon at a school attendance facility, on school property, at a school-supervised activity, or at a school-sponsored function. Any teacher who violates this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Teachers shall refer to the District's Board Policies on weapons to determine what qualifies as a weapon. If a teacher remains uncertain whether an object constitutes a weapon, the teacher must consult the Superintendent in advance for a final determination.

### **Section 3 Use of District Computer Network and Internet**

Teachers have access to the District's computer network and the Internet to enhance and support student instruction. However, it is important to remember that the equipment and software are the property of the District.

As a condition of using the computers and the Internet, teachers agree to the following:

1. Since copyright laws protect software, teachers will not make unauthorized copies of software found on school computers by any means. Teachers will not give,

- lend, or sell copies of software to others unless the original software is identified as shareware or in the public domain.
2. If a teacher downloads public domain programs for personal use or non-commercially redistributes a public domain program, the teacher assumes all risks regarding determining whether a program is in the public domain.
  3. Teachers shall not access obscene material, child pornography, or otherwise inappropriate matter for educational or work-related uses or contrary to the District's mission. Teachers are not permitted to knowingly access information that is profane, obscene, or offensive toward a group or individual based upon race (including skin color, hair texture, and protective hairstyles), color, national origin, religion, disability, age, sex, or other protected category. Further, teachers are prohibited from placing such information on the Internet.
  4. Teachers will protect the privacy of other computer users' areas by not accessing their passwords without written permission. Teachers will not copy, change, read, or use another person's files. Teachers will not engage in "hacking" or attempt to gain unauthorized access to system programs or computer equipment.
  5. Teachers will not disclose their passwords and account names to anyone or attempt to ascertain or use anyone else's password and account name.
  6. Teachers will not attempt to log in to the system as someone other than themselves without the other person's prior permission.
  7. Teachers will not use the school network or computers for financial gain or any commercial or illegal activity.
  8. The District reserves the right to inspect a teacher's school computer and computer usage at any time. Teachers have no privacy rights or expectations of privacy regarding the use of the District's computers or Internet system.
  9. The computer system is not a public forum. It is provided to advance the District's mission only.
  10. Teachers shall not use or access the Internet for any reason that would violate the request that a teacher serve as a role model for students.

Any violation of any part of this agreement or any other activity that school administrators deem inappropriate will be subject to disciplinary action.

#### **Section 4 Use of School Facilities**

A teacher who is issued school keys or fobs shall not lose them and shall not allow others to have access to or use their keys or fobs. Teachers are permitted to have access to school facilities during non-school time, provided such access is for work-related purposes or has been approved in advance by the Principal.

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

#### **Section 5 Care of School Property**

Teachers are responsible for properly caring for all books, equipment, computers, supplies, and furniture supplied by the school. If an item needs maintenance or repair, report it to the Principal. If a teacher learns that a student has damaged school property or equipment, or if a teacher is responsible for damage to school property, the teacher must promptly report it to the Principal so the item may be replaced or repaired (if possible). Appropriate responsibility for the cost of replacement or repair may be determined.

### **Section 6 Video Surveillance**

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

### **Section 7 Recording of Others**

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

### **Section 8 Copyright and Fair Use Policy**

It is the District's policy to follow the federal copyright law. Teachers are reminded that when using school equipment and performing school duties, they must also 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.

## **Article 8 – STATE AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS**

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

The School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, sexual orientation or gender identity, or other protected category in admission or access to, or treatment of employment, in its programs and activities. The Coordinators listed in Section 2 have been designated to handle inquiries regarding complaints, grievance procedures, or the application of these policies of nondiscrimination.

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

Office for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education (OCR)  
 One Petticoat Lane  
 1010 Walnut Street, 3rd Floor, Suite 320  
 Kansas City, Missouri 64106  
 (816) 268-0550; Fax (816) 268-0599, (800) 877-8339 (telecommunications device for the deaf), or [ocr.kansascity@ed.gov](mailto:ocr.kansascity@ed.gov).

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)  
 Gateway Tower II  
 400 State Avenue, Suite 905  
 Kansas City, KS 66101  
 (800) 669-4000; TTY: (800) 669-6820; Fax (913) 551-6957

**Section 2 Designation of Coordinators**

Any person inquiring about the District’s compliance with anti-discrimination laws, policies, or other programs should contact or notify the following person(s) designated as the coordinator for such laws, policies, or programs. The contact address for the coordinator is: 543 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Minden, NE 68959, (308) 832-2440.

Law, Policy, or Program	Issue or Concern	Coordinator
Title VI	Discrimination or harassment based on race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, or national origin; harassment	Superintendent
Title IX	Discrimination or harassment based on sex; gender equity	Superintendent
Section 504 of the	Discrimination, harassment,	Superintendent

Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disability Act (ADA)	or reasonable accommodations of persons with disabilities	
Homeless student laws	Children who are homeless	Superintendent
Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities	Safe and drug free schools	Superintendent

**Section 3 Confidentiality of Student Records (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) gives parents and family members, and students over 18 years of age, rights of access and confidentiality with respect to education records. Employees are expected to provide access rights and maintain the confidentiality of education records in accordance with FERPA and Board policy. Further information about FERPA and the District’s policies under FERPA can be found in the Board's policy and the student handbook.

**RECEIPT OF 2025-2026 TEACHER HANDBOOK  
OF MINDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

This signed receipt acknowledges receipt of the 2025-2026 Teacher Handbook. It acknowledges that I will read and familiarize myself with the handbook and Board Policies and understand that the District's policies include specific complaint and grievance procedures for reporting harassment or discrimination.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher's Signature

**2025-2026**  
**Classified Employees Handbook**  
**Minden Public Schools**

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## **FOREWORD**

### **Section 1 Intent of Handbook**

Welcome to Minden Public Schools! This handbook is intended for classified employees and provides general information about the District and serves as a guide to its policies, rules, regulations, employment benefits, and performance expectations.

This handbook refers to “classified employees” as all staff not required by their position to hold a teaching or administrative certificate.

Each classified employee is responsible for becoming familiar with the handbook and its contents. Although the information in this handbook is detailed and specific on many topics, the handbook is not intended to be all-encompassing, to cover every situation and circumstance that may arise. This handbook is intended to supplement other documents that deal with your employment, including your employment contract and the policies and regulations of the Board of Education. In reading this handbook, please understand that where a direct conflict exists, state or federal law, the negotiated agreement, and Board policies and regulations adopted after this handbook will control.

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

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

Every staff member is subject to the Policies of the Board of Education. As such, every classified staff member should review the Policies of the Board of Education, available online at: <https://www.mindenwhippets.org/page/board-policies>

This handbook will be in effect for the 2025-2026 and subsequent school years unless replaced by a later edition.

## **Article 1 – SCHOOL CALENDAR AND SCHEDULES**

### **Section 1 Severe Weather and School Closures**

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

## **Article 2 – EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, AND BENEFITS**

### **Section 1 Employment**

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

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

Classified employees are "at-will" employees, and the school district may terminate them at any time. The administration may also deliver notice of termination at any time.

### **Section 2 Assignments**

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

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

### **Section 3 Personnel File**

The District will follow state and federal law and regulation requirements regarding employee personnel files.

### **Section 4 Grievances and Complaints**

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

### **Section 5 Expense Reimbursement**

Reimbursement for authorized mileage will be paid to employees required to drive their own vehicles during their regularly scheduled working hours between two or more work sites. Employees must receive prior approval from their supervisor before incurring any mileage.

Claims for reimbursement should be submitted to the employee's immediate supervisor. The allowable rate shall be governed by Board policy, unless otherwise required by law. The District is not liable for physical damage to employee vehicles. A request for reimbursement shall be accurate. Any employee who falsifies a reimbursement request may be terminated from employment.

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

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

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

## **Section 6 Overtime**

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

For overtime purposes, classified employees may be classified as either "exempt" or "non-exempt." Employees who are classified as exempt are not eligible for overtime, while those who are "non-exempt" are eligible.

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

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

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

Overtime pay for non-exempt employees will be paid at the rate of not less than 1½ times the employee's regular rate of pay for hours worked in excess of the 40-hour workweek. Employees with two or more non-exempt positions may be eligible for overtime pay based on the total

number of hours worked in one workweek. If applicable, the employee and the Superintendent will agree upon the overtime rate in compliance with FLSA regulations.

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

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

### **Article 3 – ABSENCES FROM WORK**

#### **Section 1      Absence Procedures**

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

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

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

#### **Section 2      Paid Leave - Sick and Personal Leaves**

Employees may be provided with sick, personal, or other forms of paid leave in accordance with Board policy and administrative approval. The district provides these leaves for the intended purpose. Abuse of leave privileges affects the students, other staff, and the entire District and will not be permitted.

#### **Section 3      Payroll Deductions for Absences in Excess of Paid Leave**

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

#### **Section 4 Leaves of Absence**

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

Laurie Haight is the contact person when substitutes are needed. You can contact her in the Superintendent's Office at 308-832-2440 during the school day or 308-832-0338 on evenings or weekends. If leave needs to be canceled or rescheduled, the staff member must contact Laurie as soon as possible.

#### **Section 5 Unpaid Leaves**

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

#### **Section 6 Jury Duty Leave**

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

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

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

#### **Section 7 Family and Medical Leave**

##### **Employee Rights and Responsibilities under the Family and Medical Leave Act**

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

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

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care, or childbirth;
- To care for your child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;

- To care for your spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes you unable to perform your job.

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

Military Leave Entitlement. Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active-duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

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

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

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

Eligibility Requirements. An employee is eligible if they have been employed with Minden Public Schools for at least one year, for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if there are at least 50 employees of the District within 75 miles of your work location.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Enforcement. An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer.

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

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

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

[www.wagehour.dol.gov](http://www.wagehour.dol.gov)

Contact the superintendent to submit a request for FMLA use or to plan for benefit payment while on FMLA leave.

### **Section 8 Military and Family Military Leave**

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

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

### **Section 9 Adoption Leave**

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

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

### **Section 10 Subpoena to Testify Leave**

Employees must promptly notify their immediate supervisor when they receive a lawfully issued subpoena to testify in court or to give a deposition that may require an absence from duty.

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

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

### **Section 11 Voting Leave**

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

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

absence. The immediate supervisor may specify the hours during which the employee may be absent for voting leave.

## **Article 4 – DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Section 1 Hours of Work & Meetings**

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

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

### **Section 2 Arrival at Duty Assignments**

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

### **Section 3 Leaving School**

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

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

### **Section 4 School Procedures**

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

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

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

2. Checking Out of Equipment. All equipment must be checked out through the Superintendent. School equipment may be used only for school purposes. School

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

## **Section 5      Supervision of Students**

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

### 1.      Proper Supervision

- Report to all duty assignments on time.
- Circulate through your duty area, paying particular attention to areas and activities that pose an increased risk of injury.
- Be vigilant while supervising students. Never leave the students unattended; the need to make a copy is not greater than the need to supervise the students. If an emergency requires that an employee must leave students, the employee must request that another nearby staff member supervise those students or notify the office so someone can help. If the employee is on recess duty, the employee’s responsibility is to supervise the students in the assigned area. When talking with other adults or students, remember that the employee’s primary duty is supervision, and the employee is to be aware of what all students are doing.
- If the employee has seen or has been informed that a particular student has a propensity to act dangerously or in an unpredictable manner, the employee’s supervision of that student must increase with the known risk of injury. (Remember, though, that this type of information may be confidential—do not share confidential information about students except with other staff who need to know the information to perform their jobs.)
- Be careful with touching students. Touching students should be limited to what is necessary to protect the student. Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school district and is not to be used. Physical force may only be used to the extent reasonably necessary to protect the student, yourself, and others, and to protect property as may be reasonable.
- Use good judgment when dealing with difficult situations involving students. Physical confrontation generally escalates tense situations.
- Be careful with language. Profanity or abusive language should not be used. Be a good role model for students. If a student uses such language, you should correct the student and take disciplinary action as is appropriate, which may include making a report to the administration.

### 2.      Proper Instructions

- Proper instructions are important to reduce the risk of injury when students undertake an activity, especially an activity that has an increased risk of harm to students.

Repeat the instructions as often as needed when completing a task with a heightened risk of danger. Do not assume that because students heard the directions once, they will be remembered.

3. Proper Maintenance of Buildings, Grounds, and Equipment

- Conduct periodic inspections of equipment under your control or in your area of supervision.
- If equipment is broken and presents a risk of injury, immediately take it out of service (if it can't be moved, tape a "Do Not Use" sign) and notify the Principal immediately so repairs may be undertaken.

4. Proper Warnings

- If you have knowledge of a hazard that can likely cause injury, take steps to warn other staff and students. Tell your immediate supervisor immediately so additional warnings may be given.

Contact the Principal for Assistance

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

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

Violations of student rules that are also violations of state law must be reported to law enforcement. Report such conduct to the Principal so this law may be followed.

Student Searches

Only certified staff may conduct student searches. The Principal must be contacted so they can be present during searches of students or their belongings. A student suspected of having an item in violation of school rules should be directed to wait until a certificated staff member is present. Do not use physical force to detain the student or to make the student accompany you, except as reasonably necessary to protect the student or others.

**Section 6 Reporting Child Abuse**

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

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

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

This requirement shall apply to all school employees participating in interstate amateur athletic competitions, including coaches and volunteers. The term "promptly" means "within 24 hours."

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

## **Article 5 – PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

### **Section 1 Ethics Standards**

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

#### *Principle I - Commitment as a School Employee:*

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

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

1. Shall not interfere with the exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities of students, colleagues, parents, school patrons, or school board members.
2. Shall not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, sexual orientation or gender identity, or other protected status.

3. Shall not use coercive means, or promise or provide special treatment to students, colleagues, school patrons, or school board members in order to influence personal decisions.
4. Shall not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact for which the employee is responsible.
5. Shall not exploit school relationships with students, colleagues, parents, school patrons, or school board members for personal gain or private advantage.
6. Shall not sexually harass students, parents, school patrons, employees, or board members.
7. Shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation in the performance of job duties.
8. Shall report any known violation of paragraphs 2 or 5 above to the Superintendent.
9. Shall seek no reprisal against any individual who has reported a violation of this rule.

*Principle II - Commitment to the Student:*

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

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

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

*Principle III - Commitment to the Public:*

The magnitude of the responsibility inherent in the education process requires dedication to the principles of our democratic heritage. The classified employee is responsible for instilling an understanding of confidence in the rule of law, respect for individual freedom, and a responsibility to promote respect from the public for the profession's integrity.

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

1. Shall not misrepresent an institution with which the employee is affiliated and shall take added precautions to distinguish between the employee's personal and institutional views.
2. They shall not use institutional privileges for private gain or to promote political candidates, issues, or partisan political activities.
3. Shall neither offer nor accept gifts or favors that will impair judgment to be exercised in the course of employment.

4. Shall support the principle of due process and protect all individuals' political, citizenship, and natural rights.
5. Shall not commit any act of moral turpitude, nor commit any felony under the laws of the United States or any state or territory.
6. With reasonable diligence, shall attend to the duties of the employee's position.

*Principle IV - Commitment to Classified Position Employment Practices:*

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

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

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

*Competent Performance*

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

Therefore, each employee shall:

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

Each employee shall:

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

Each supervisor shall:

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

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

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

*Management techniques:* The employee shall:

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Section 2      Role Model**

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

### **Section 3 Professional Boundaries**

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

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

- Using e-mail, text messaging, instant messaging, or social networking sites to discuss with a student a matter that does not pertain to school-related activities, such as the student's homework, class activity, school sport, club, or other school-sponsored activity. Electronic communications with students are to be sent simultaneously to multiple recipients, not to just one student, except where the communication is clearly school-related and inappropriate for persons other than the individual student to receive (for example, e-mailing a message about a student's grades).
- Engaging in social-networking friendships or communications with a student on social networking sites. Material that employees post on social networks that is publicly available to those in the school community must reflect the professional image applicable to the employee's position and not impair the employee's capacity to maintain the respect of students and parents or impair the employee's ability to serve as a role model for children. Employees shall not friend, communicate with, or follow students on any social networking site.
- Engaging in sexual activity, a romantic relationship, or dating a student or a former student within one year of the student graduating or otherwise leaving the District.
- Making any sexual advance - verbal, written, or physical - towards a student.
- Showing sexually inappropriate materials or objects to a student.
- Discussing with a student a sexual topic that is not related to a specific curriculum.
- Telling sexual jokes to a student.
- Invading a student's physical privacy (e.g., walking in on the student in a restroom).
- The employee initiates hugging or other physical contact with a student when the student does not seek or want this attention.
- Being overly "touchy" with a specific student.
- Allowing a specific student to get away with misconduct that is not tolerated from other students, except as appropriate for students with an IEP or 504 Plan.

- Discussing with the student the employee's problems that would normally be discussed with adults (e.g., marital problems).
- Taking a student for a ride in an employee's personal vehicle without the express permission of the student's parent or school administrator unless another adult is in the vehicle.
- Taking a student on an outing without obtaining prior express permission from the student's parent or school administrator.
- Inviting a student to the employee's home without prior express permission of the student's parent and the school administrator.
- Going to the student's home when the student's parent or a proper chaperone is not present.
- Giving gifts of a personal nature to a specific student.
- Discussing alcohol, tobacco, or other illicit drugs in a non-instructional setting, such as describing a party that the employee attended.
- Discussing another student's or employee's personal matters when it is not appropriate outside of the instructional setting.
- "Grooming," which includes building trust with a student and individuals close to the student in an effort to gain access to and time alone with the student, with the ultimate goal of engaging in sexual contact or sexual penetration with the student, regardless of when in the student's life the sexual contact or sexual penetration would take place.

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

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

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

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

#### **Section 4 Relationships**

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

#### **Section 5 Civility**

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

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

Any employee aware of another employee's uncivil behavior shall report the conduct to the employee's immediate supervisor or to the Superintendent. The person making the report will not be retaliated against.

#### **Section 6 Notification of Arrest, etc.**

Employees must notify the Superintendent by the next business day after:

1. Arrest or Criminal Charges. The employee is arrested, ticketed, or issued a criminal charge when:
  - a. The maximum penalty for the crime equals or exceeds six months' incarceration.
  - b. The crime relates to abuse, neglect, or endangerment of a minor, a minor was allegedly a victim or a witness, or the crime involves alleged sexual misconduct.
  - c. Conviction would impact the performance of an employee's job responsibilities, including offenses that:
    - i. Would impact the responsibility to be a role model for students or relations with other employees of the District;
    - ii. Would impact the employee's ability to operate a motor vehicle if the employee's work duties include driving; or
    - iii. Would impact the employee's Commercial Driver's License if the employee's job requires that the employee have a CDL.
  - d. The arrest or the alleged criminal activity occurred while the employee was on duty, on District property, in a school-owned or utilized vehicle, or at a school-supervised activity or school-sponsored function.

Employees must also promptly report to the Superintendent whenever they have been sentenced to be incarcerated for any period of time, even if the offense is not otherwise reportable.

2. Certificate or License. The employee becomes aware that a complaint has been filed against the employee that could affect a certificate or license required for the employee's position.
3. Child Abuse. The employee becomes aware that a report of child abuse or neglect has been made against the employee under the Child Protection Act.

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

Employees must fully disclose the existence and nature of the above proceedings and promptly notify the Superintendent of their disposition.

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

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

### **Section 7 Evaluations**

Employee evaluations will be conducted in accordance with the District's evaluation policy. Supervisors reserve the right to observe, appraise, or evaluate employees more frequently than required by policy on an as-needed basis. Employees are expected to make themselves available for evaluation on request, to participate constructively and positively in the evaluation process, and to accept and implement constructive suggestions and improvement strategies developed by the administration.

### **Section 8 Employee Complaints or Concerns**

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

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

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

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

### **Section 9 Attire**

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

### **Section 10 Outside Employment**

Employees shall not perform duties unrelated to District employment during duty hours or engage in employment that conflicts with their school duties.

### **Section 11 Employee Fundraising**

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

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

## **Article 6 – USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT**

### **Section 1 Drug-Free Workplace**

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

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, disposition, possession, or use of tobacco, alcohol, or a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace. The possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs or alcohol, the use of glue or aerosol paint or any other chemical substance for inhalation, and being under the influence of illicit drugs, alcohol, or inhalants, is prohibited in any place on school grounds, in a school utilized vehicle or any location over which the District had control. The possession or distribution of a look-alike drug or look-alike controlled substance is similarly prohibited. Any level of impairment from illicit drugs, alcohol, or inhalants, and the presence of

any odor of illicit drugs (such as marijuana) or alcohol on an employee in the workplace or on duty time shall be a violation of the drug-free workplace. In addition, employees are expected to serve as role models for students. They will be considered to have violated the District's expectations in the event the employee commits a criminal drug or alcohol offense outside the workplace or off-duty time.

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

## **Section 2      Smoke and Tobacco-Free Workplace**

The use of tobacco products is prohibited on school grounds.

“Tobacco products” means any tobacco product (including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, and chewing tobacco), vapor products (such as e-cigarettes), electronic nicotine delivery systems, alternative nicotine products, tobacco product look-alikes, and products intended to replicate tobacco products either by appearance or effect. This does not preclude adults from wearing non-visible nicotine patches or using nicotine gum without displaying the product container as part of a smoking cessation program.

## **Section 3      Weapon-Free Workplace**

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

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

## **Section 4      Use of School Facilities**

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

School supplies (paper, staples, etc.), school equipment (copiers, fax machines, telephones, etc.), and school postage are to be used for approved school-related purposes only. Excess or surplus

supplies or equipment, including items placed in the trash, must not be removed for non-school use without approval from the Principal.

### **Section 5 Recording of Others**

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

## **Article 7 – STATE AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS**

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

Minden Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, sexual orientation or gender identity, or other protected status in admission or access to, or treatment of employment, in its programs and activities. The Coordinators listed in Section 2 have been designated to handle inquiries regarding complaints, grievance procedures, or the application of these policies of nondiscrimination.

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

Office for Civil Rights (OCR)  
One Petticoat Lane  
1010 Walnut St. 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Suite 320

The U.S. Equal Employment  
Opportunity Commission (EEOC)  
Gateway Tower II

Kansas City, MO 64106  
 (816) 268-0550 (voice)  
 Fax (816) 268-0599

400 State Avenue, Suite 905  
 Kansas City, MO 66101  
 (800) 669-4000  
 TDD: (800) 669-6820

(800) 877-8339 (telecommunications device for people who are deaf or hard of hearing), or [ocr.kansascity@ed.gov](mailto:ocr.kansascity@ed.gov).

**Section 2 Designation of Coordinators**

Any person inquiring about the District’s compliance with nondiscrimination laws, policies, or other programs should contact or notify the following person(s) designated as the coordinator for such laws, policies, or programs. The coordinator's contact address is Minden Public Schools, 543 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Minden, Nebraska 68959; phone: (308) 832-2440.

Law, Policy, or Program	Issue or Concern	Coordinator
Title VI	Discrimination or harassment based on race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, or national origin; 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 Special Services Director for student matters
Homeless student laws	Children who are homeless	Superintendent
Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities	Safe and drug free schools	Superintendent

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

Minden 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, and other employees, students, or other persons is prohibited. In addition, the District will endeavor to protect employees and students from reported discrimination or harassment by non-employees or others in the workplace and educational environment.

For purposes of this policy, discrimination or harassment based on a person’s sex, disability, race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, religion, veteran status,

national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, sexual orientation or gender identity, or other protected status is prohibited. The following are general definitions of what might constitute prohibited harassment:

1. In general, verbal or physical conduct related to a person's protected status constitutes harassment when it unreasonably interferes with the person's work performance or creates an intimidating work, instructional, or educational environment.
2. Federal regulations define age harassment as a form of age discrimination. It can consist of demeaning jokes, insults, or intimidation based on a person's age.
3. Federal and state regulations have defined sexual harassment as a form of sex discrimination. It can consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature by supervisors or others in the workplace, classroom, or educational environment. Sexual harassment may exist when:
  - a. Supervisors or managers make submission to such conduct either an explicit or implicit term and condition of employment (including hiring, compensation, promotion, or retention);
  - b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used by supervisors or managers as a basis for employment related decisions such as promotion, performance evaluation, pay adjustment, discipline, work assignment, etc.
  - c. The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, classroom, or educational environment.

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

### Grievance Procedures

1. Employees should initially report all instances of discrimination or harassment to their immediate supervisor. However, if the employee is uncomfortable in presenting the problem to the supervisor, or if the supervisor is the problem, the employee is encouraged to go to the next level of supervision.
2. If the employee's complaint is not resolved to their satisfaction within five to ten working days, or if the discrimination or harassment continues, please report your complaint to the Superintendent. If a satisfactory arrangement cannot be obtained through the Superintendent, the complaint may be processed to the Board of Education.
3. The supervisor or the Superintendent will promptly and thoroughly investigate all complaints. These situations will be treated with the utmost confidence and will be consistent with the resolution of the problem. Based on the results of the

investigation, appropriate corrective action, up to and including discharge of offending employees or removal of offending students, may be taken.

4. The person who makes the complaint shall not be threatened or retaliated against for alleging a violation of this anti-discrimination policy or for using this grievance procedure.

#### **Section 4 Grievance Procedure for Persons with a Disability**

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

1. Complaints shall be filed with the ADA and Section 504 Coordinator. Complaints shall be made in writing, unless the Complainant's disability prevents such, in which event the Complaint can be made verbally.
2. Complaints shall set forth: (a) the name of the Complainant, (b) the address and telephone number or other such information sufficient to enable the Coordinator to contact the Complainant, (c) a brief description of the alleged violation, and (d) the relief requested by the Complainant.
3. Complaints shall be investigated by the Coordinator or the Coordinator's designee. Investigations shall be thorough, but informal, and the Complainant shall be given a full opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint.
4. The Coordinator shall make a decision on the Complaint within 30 days of the filing of the Complaint, unless such time period is extended by agreement with the Complainant or a longer period is reasonably necessitated by the circumstances. The decision shall be made in writing, set forth the Coordinator's proposed resolution of the Complaint, and forwarded to the Complainant.
5. The Complainant shall have 10 days from the date the Coordinator's decision is sent to the Complainant to accept or reject the Coordinator's proposed resolution. The Complainant shall be deemed to have accepted the proposed resolution unless the Complainant rejects the proposed resolution within such time period.
6. If the Complainant rejects the proposed resolution, the Complainant shall be allowed to file a request for reconsideration within 10 days from the date the Coordinator's decision is sent to the Complainant. The request for reconsideration shall be filed with the Coordinator. Upon receipt of the request for reconsideration, the Coordinator shall promptly forward the request for reconsideration and all evidence received by the Coordinator in connection with the Complaint to a third person for review (either an administrator or other employee of the District, or members of the Board of Education or Committee of the Board).
7. A decision on the request for reconsideration shall be made within 10 days after the request for reconsideration was filed unless the Board or the Committee of the Board is the reviewer. In this event, the decision shall be made within 30 days of filing the request for reconsideration, unless such time period is extended by agreement with the Complainant, or the circumstances reasonably necessitate a longer period.



**RECEIPT OF 2025-2026 CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK OF  
MINDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

This signed receipt acknowledges receipt of the 2025-2026 Classified Employee Handbook of Minden Public Schools. This receipt acknowledges that I understand that I will read and be familiar with the handbook, that I understand the handbook contains a disclaimer of contract, that I understand that the handbook includes the District's policies of non-discrimination and equity, and that specific complaint and grievance procedures exist in the handbook which should be used for responding to harassment or discrimination.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

# Minden Public Schools



## **HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS OF ACTIVITY PARTICIPANTS**

**2025-2026**

(Updated 7/1/2025)

# MPS Athletic Department Goals 2025-2026

## **1. Student athletes and their academic success are a priority**



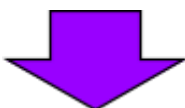
- A. Grade checks every three weeks for athletes in/out of season
- B. Academic policy-failing two classes = ineligible
- C. Reward high achieving student athletes with 3.75 academic award

## **2. Emphasis is on teamwork and working collaboratively to achieve success**



- A. Teammates supporting each other and working together towards a common goal
- B. Athletic teams and coaches supporting other teams by attending events
- C. Off-season conditioning- all athletes working hard together positively supporting everyone (Over 150 kids participated in summer conditioning)

## **3. Strive for excellence focusing on character and leadership development, preparing student athletes with essential skills to succeed in life**



- A. Community Service Projects
- B. Help with youth sports by volunteering at Optimist events

## **4. Promote good sportsmanship on and off the field/court of competition with the emphasis on our staff, athletes and fans respecting the sport, themselves and others.**



- A. Developing the ability to handle adversity/failure positively and move forward.
- B. Limit the number of yellow cards, unsportsmanlike penalties, technicals, etc.
- C. Positive cheering from our parents and student section

# Minden Public Schools

## Parent/Student Athletic Handbook

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Dear Parents:

The role of the parent in the education of a student is important. The support shown in the home is often manifested in the ability of the student to accept the opportunities presented at school, in the classroom, and through co-curricular activities.

There is a value system – established in the home, nurtured in the school – which young people are developing. Their involvement in the classroom and other activities contributes to that development. Integrity, fairness, and respect are lifetime values taught through athletics. These are the principles of good sportsmanship. With them, the spirit of competition thrives, fueled by honest rivalry, courteous relations, and graceful acceptance of the results.

Students and parents who show sportsmanship are true leaders in the community. As a parent of a student at our school, your sportsmanship should include:

- Realizing that athletics are part of the educational experience, and benefits of involvement go beyond the final score of the game;
- Encouraging our students to perform their best, just as we would urge them on with their classwork, knowing that others will always turn in better or lesser performances;
- Participating in positive cheers that encourage our students; and discouraging the cheers that would redirect that focus including those that taunt and intimidate opponents, their fans, and officials;
- Learning, understanding, and respecting the rules of the game, the officials who administer them, and their decisions;
- Respecting our opponents as fellow students, acknowledge them for striving to do their best;
- Developing a sense of dignity under all circumstances.
- Be a fan....not a fanatic.

These and other expectations are included in the attached guidelines, which we hope you will take a few moments to review. They give us a road map to follow toward a more educational atmosphere for interscholastic athletics.

You can have a major influence on your student's attitude about academics and athletics. The leadership role you take in sportsmanship will influence your child, and our community, for years to come. We look forward to serving you in the year ahead and appreciate your continued support.

### **Parent's Role in Interscholastic Athletics - NSAA**

#### **Communicating with your children**

Make sure that your children know that win or lose, scared or heroic, you love them, appreciate their efforts and are not disappointed in them. This will allow them to do their best without fear of failure. Be the person in their life they can look to for constant positive reinforcement.

Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic ability, competitive attitude, sportsmanship and actual skill level. Be helpful but don't coach them. It's tough not to, but it is a lot tougher for the child to be flooded with advice and critical instruction. Teach them to enjoy the thrill of competition, to be "out there trying," to be working to improve their skills and attitudes. Help them develop the feeling for competing, for trying hard, for having fun. Try not to relive your athletic life through your child in a way that creates pressure. If they are comfortable with you win or lose, then they are on their way to maximum enjoyment. Don't compete with the

coach. If your child is receiving mixed messages from two different authority figures, he or she will likely become disenchanted. Don't compare the skill, courage, or attitude of your child with other members of the team.

Get to know the coach(s). Then you can be assured that his or her philosophy, attitudes, ethics, and knowledge are such that you are happy to have your child under his or her leadership. Always remember that children tend to exaggerate, both when praised and when criticized.

Temper your reaction and investigate before overreacting.

### **Communicating with the coach**

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

- Philosophy of the coach
- Expectations the coach has for your child
- Locations and times of all practices and contests
- Team requirements
- Procedure should your child be injured
- Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation

Communication coaches expect from parents:

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
- Specific concerns in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:

- The treatment of your child, mentally, and physically
- Ways to help your child improve
- Concerns about your child's behavior

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes

Appropriate procedures for discussing concerns with the coaches:

- Chain of Command-Player meets with coach(s)
  - Parent and player meet with coach
  - Parent and player meet with coach and AD (and principal if requested)
  - Parent and player meet with superintendent
- 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). Give it 24-48 hours before speaking to the coach(s).

### **The Athlete's Code of Conduct - NSAA**

I recognize that being a member of the community carries with it responsibilities and rewards, and that as an athlete in the community, I must not only embrace those responsibilities, but also conduct myself both on and off the playing field in a way which exhibits respect for myself and for others. I therefore resolve to:

- conduct myself with dignity as an athlete and as a citizen of the community, recognizing and accepting that I must accept accountability for my behavior and its outcomes.
- honor my obligations and promises.

- exercise self-control.
- be willing to be fair with others in my dealings on and off the playing field.
- take pride in myself and my accomplishments, but never at the expense of demeaning another person or group.
- respect the efforts of others.
- respect authority.
- play by the spirit, not just the letter, of the rules of the game and the rules of life.
- strive to make my community—whether that be the team on which I play or the community in which I live—better because of my contributions as a member and as a citizen.

### **Athlete's Fair Play Code - NSAA**

1. I will participate because I want to, not just because my parents or coaches want me to.
2. I will play by the rules and in the spirit of the game.
3. I will control my temper since fighting and disrespect can spoil the activity for everyone.
4. I will respect my opponents.
5. I will do my best to try to be a true team player.
6. I will remember that winning isn't everything. Having fun, improving my skills, making friends and doing my best are also important.
7. I will acknowledge all good plays or performances by both my teammates and my opponents.
8. I will remember that coaches and officials are there to help me. I will accept their decisions, show them respect, and understand they have given their time to be with me.

### **Fan's Fair Play Code - NSAA**

1. I will remember that young people play sports for THEIR enjoyment, not to entertain me.
2. I will not have unrealistic expectations and will understand that doing one's best is as important as winning. I understand that ridiculing an athlete for making a mistake is not acceptable behavior.
3. I will respect the official's decisions and will encourage all participants to do the same.
4. I will respect and show appreciation for the coaches and understand that they have given their time to provide activities for our young people.
5. I will encourage athletes and coaches to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
6. I will show respect for my team's opponents because I realize there would be no game without them.
7. I will not use bad language and will not harass athletes, coaches, officials, or other spectators.
8. I will always show good sportsmanship since young people learn best by example.

# Benefits of Co-Curricular Activities

“A winning part of a complete education!”

Participation in school activities benefits everyone--students, staf, administration, and the community---now...and in the future.

Let's take a look at reasons why:

- ✓ Activities support the academic mission of schools. Participation in high school activities is a valuable part of the overall high school experience.
- ✓ Activity programs provide opportunities for character development and unique learning labs for valuable life lessons and universal values -- teamwork, sportsmanship, self-discipline, and hard work. These are qualities students need if they are to become responsible adults, productive citizens, and skilled professionals.
- ✓ Activities foster success in later life. Participation in high school activities is often a predictor of later success -- in college, a career, and in becoming a healthy, contributive member of society.
- ✓ Research shows that students involved in co-curricular activities are more likely to have:
 

*Higher GPAs	*Lower dropout rates
*Higher college admission tests	*Fewer discipline referrals
*Better attendance	*Affiliation with peers who are academically focused
- ✓ Participation promotes positive health behaviors and deters negative ones by placing a premium on personal health and fitness as prerequisites to optimal performance. Those who participate in co-curricular activities are less likely to engage in risky behaviors (i.e. teen pregnancy, drugs).
- ✓ From a cost standpoint, activity programs are an exceptional bargain when matched against the overall school district's education budget. At a cost of only one to three percent (or less in many cases) of an overall school's budget. There is no better or more effective investment being made in America's education programs today.
- ✓ Participation enhances the overall educational experience of the student.

## RESPONSIBILITY OF AN ATHLETE

Most coaches would expect an athlete to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. The team's goals, welfare, and success must come before any individual.
2. An athlete needs to consistently attend practice sessions. This also includes weekend and holiday periods.
3. Players must be receptive to coaching.
4. Team members are responsible for all issued uniforms and equipment.
5. As a member of the team, an athlete must agree to and follow the team rules. Athletes need to remember that they are ambassadors and represent not only themselves, but also the coaching staff and the school.
6. If injured, an athlete must report all injuries to either the coach or athletic director.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF A COACH

At Minden, a coach has the responsibility of the following:

1. The selection of the squad.

2. The determination of the style of play, including the offensive and defensive philosophy.
3. The teaching and instruction at practice sessions.
4. The determination of who starts and how long an athlete plays in a contest.
5. The decision of who plays what position.
6. The establishing of team rules.
7. The selection of team captains.
8. The establishing of the requirements to earn a letter.
9. The communication with athletes and parents with respect to when practice sessions will be held, and when the sessions will start and finish.

Being a parent is often challenging. Being a parent of an athlete frequently complicates this effort and responsibility. There are many relationships that are involved in being the parent of an athlete along with the relationships you have with the coach.

### **Player/Coach Relationship**

Unfortunately, many adults feel that they understand or perhaps know more than many coaches. Everyone becomes an expert. While this new found expertise might heighten your appreciation of a sport, as a parent, however, you are not the coach.

The player-coach relationship is perhaps the most critical relationship in athletics. Unfortunately, a parent can have a pronounced effect on this very important and delicate relationship. While you may not agree with all decisions of a coach, how and when you express your feelings can have a decided effect upon your child.

If you express a negative opinion in front of your child, you need to remember that he or she will return to practice the next day and may carry with him or her your convictions. Your son or daughter will then have to interact with this coach. You, as the parent, can greatly affect this delicate relationship.

Receiving technical or strategic instruction at home may interfere and conflict with the instructional process at practice sessions and games. This may ultimately impede your son or daughter's progress and affect their playing time or whether they win a starting position.

### **Relationship with Officials**

Officials agree to and follow a code of ethics. They really do not care or have a vested interest in which team emerges as the victor. It is also important to understand that they are a very necessary part of a game. A contest cannot be played without them.

So while you may not agree with all of their calls (who does?), please do not harass and taunt them. It is also important to remember that they are in charge of the contest and have complete authority to have unruly spectators removed. In many sports, a team will see the same official several times during the season. Coaches, athletic administrators and schools often work hard to establish a rapport and good working relationship which can easily be damaged by spectator.

### **Spectator / Cheerleader**

Cheerleaders try to infuse spirit into the fans / spectators and to lead them in selected cheers. Taking this responsibility into your own hands is not appropriate. Fans who leave the stands to

direct cheers may often cause or lead to confrontations with the opponents. Following the cheerleader directions, therefore, is absolutely necessary at all athletic contests. The emotion and atmosphere at athletic contests can be very exciting and the cheerleaders need to be allowed to direct and control this aspect.

## Minden Public School

# Athletic Chain of Command

At Minden, the following chain of command is in effect:

- Player meets with coach(s)
- Parent and player meet with coach
- Parent and player meet with coach and AD (and principal if requested)
- Parent and player meet with superintendent
- 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 (24 hour rule-give it 24 hours).

If there are any questions or concerns, the athlete should first contact the appropriate coach. If there is no resolution, he or she would then go to the head coach, etc.

### Warning for participant 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 injuries can range from minor cuts, bruises, sprains, and muscle strains to more serious injuries to the body, 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 instructions, appropriate protective equipment, and strict observance of the rules injuries are still a possibility. At Minden, we will do all that we can to ensure a safe and healthy environment for our athletes. Prior to practicing each athlete will be required to have a physical and have completed the ImPACT test.**

In compliance with the New Concussion Awareness Law, LB 260, Minden Public Schools is making you aware of concussions in sports.

### **A Parent's Guide to Concussion in Sports**

#### **What is a concussion?**

A concussion is a brain injury which results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function. A concussion occurs when the brain is violently rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as a result of a blow to the head or body. An athlete does not have to lose consciousness ("knocked out") to suffer a concussion.

#### **Concussion Facts**

It is estimated that over 140,000 high school athletes across the United States suffer a concussion each year. (Data from NFHS Injury Surveillance System)

- Concussions occur most frequently in football, but girl's lacrosse, girl's soccer, boy's lacrosse, wrestling, and girl's basketball follow closely behind. All athletes are at risk.
- A concussion is a traumatic injury to the brain.
- Concussion symptoms may last from a few days to several months.
- Concussions can cause symptoms which interfere with school, work and social life.
- An athlete should not return to sports while still having symptoms from a concussion as they are at risk for prolonging symptoms and further injury.
- A concussion may cause multiple symptoms. Many symptoms appear immediately after the injury, while others may develop over the next several days or weeks. The symptoms may be subtle and are often difficult to fully recognize.

Minden Public Schools is using the Sway Test to help evaluate student athletes in the case of a possible concussion. Sway Testing is a computerized exam utilized in many professional, collegiate, and high school sports programs across the country to successfully diagnose and manage concussions. If an athlete is believed to have suffered a head injury during the competition, Sway is used to help determine the severity of head injury and when the injury has fully healed. This program is provided free of charge to Minden athletes. If a concussion is suspected, the athlete will be required to retake the test. Both the baseline and post-injury test data is used to help evaluate the injury. The information gathered can be shared with your family doctor. The test data will enable these health professionals to determine when return-to-play is appropriate and safe for the injured athlete. If an injury of this nature occurs to your child, you will be contacted with all the details. This information along with additional information can be found on the "School Nurse" section of the Minden Public Schools website. Below is a list of more information on concussion in sports you can access on the NSAA website under Parent Info and NSAA Sports Medicine: [www.nsaahome.org](http://www.nsaahome.org)

- Frequently Asked Questions on LB 260
- NFHS Concussion In Sports FREE Online Course
- NFHS Concussion In Sports FREE Online Course Information
- NFHS Concussion Information
- Concussion Fact Sheet
- A Parent's Guide to Concussions in Sports
- Concussion Awareness – Brain Injury Association of Nebraska

### **ACTIVITY ELIGIBILITY**

In order to represent a high school in interscholastic athletic competition, a student must abide by eligibility rules set forth by the Nebraska School Activities Association. IF YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND ANY OF THE RULES STATED BELOW, CONSULT THE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL OR ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR.

### **NSAA Eligibility**

2.1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS 2.1.1 Student Eligibility. Only those students meeting the eligibility requirements as established in the Constitution, Bylaws, or Approved Rulings are permitted to represent their member school in interscholastic competition in those activities which are under the jurisdiction of the Nebraska School Activities Association APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR SECTION 2.1.1 The administrative staff of each high school is responsible for determining the eligibility of each of its students participating in

activities. a. Schools must check the following for each high school transfer student: 1. If the student attended school the previous semester. 2. If the student has been or will be in school for the first eleven days of the present semester. 3. If the student's age meets eligibility requirements. 4. If the student passed and received at least twenty credit hours the previous semester. 5. If the number of semesters of high school membership is less than eight semesters. 6. If the legal domicile of both of the student's natural parents is within the school district. 7. If the student has attended another high school within your school district. b. Schools must check the following for each student who is enrolling in high school and attended junior high the immediate preceding semester: 1. If the student's age meets eligibility requirements. 2. If the student has exceeded eight semesters of school membership or four seasons of participation. 3. If the student has participated in a non-school competition during the season of the sport.

Below is a link to the NSAA page that speaks more specifically about eligibility.

<https://nsaa-static.s3.amazonaws.com/textfile/yb/c&b.pdf>

#### **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 should show evidence of sincere effort towards scholastic achievement. To be eligible for participation in extracurricular activities students must:

1. Be enrolled in at least 25 credit hours in the semester of participation.
2. Maintain passing grades in all courses. A student who is not passing two or more classes at progress reporting times will be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activity contests or performances if the grade remains ineligible until the student is failing no more than one class.
3. Academic requirements do not apply to:
  - a. Instructional field trips which are part of the scheduled course learning experience; or
  - b. Activities or events which are part of the student's grade requirements.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat §§ 79-254 to 79-296

Date of Adoption: January 11, 2011

#### **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY PROCESS**

The eligibility of students participating in extracurricular activities is based on academic reporting periods, which occur at approximately three-week intervals. All decisions for eligibility are made on the Monday following the deadline.

#### **First Academic Period of the Quarter**

Students failing two or more classes at the time of the first academic progress reporting period notification period have one week to raise the classes to passing grades.

Students still failing two or more classes after the one week grace period. Students still failing two or more classes after the one week grace period will be ineligible from all extracurricular activities until the next academic progress reporting notification period. Students will not travel with the organization in scheduled activities if early dismissal from the school day is required. Students will not be allowed to participate in any

contests. Practice time is determined on the basis of the number of classes failing: if four or more classes, no practice is allowed.

### Second Academic Period of the Quarter

The second academic progress reporting time is approximately the sixth week of the quarter. Students become eligible at this time if they were in the first progress report ineligibility list. Students failing two or more classes at this time will have one week to raise the classes to passing. Students who are still failing two or more classes at the end of the one week grace period will then be ineligible for all extracurricular activities for the remainder of the quarter.

### Third Academic Period of the Quarter:

Students failing two or more classes at the end of the quarter three have one week to raise the classes to passing grades. Students failing two or more classes after the one week grace period will be ineligible from all extracurricular activities until the next academic progress report notification period. NSAA eligibility at the semester is determined by semester grades. Students must pass twenty hours (four courses) the previous semester to be eligible for NSAA activities during the current semester.

### Eligibility For Activities Held Between Semester One And Semester Two

In the event that any school activities are held after the end of the first semester of the school year but before the second semester starts, all students who passed at least 20 credit hours (four semester classes) for the fall semester are eligible to participate in any activities during this time. This will be the basis of eligibility until the first progress reports of the third quarter are sent.

### NOTIFICATION STATUS

Notification of ineligibility will be conducted by the principal, assistant principal, or by designee, each academic progress report period on an individual basis with students.

### CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

Students interested in taking correspondence courses or independent study courses for credit must have those courses approved by the administration prior to enrolling in the course. Students taking such courses shall prove that they are keeping current with their correspondence work and that they are currently passing the course work to stay eligible for extracurricular activities.

### EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES LIST:

- All extra-curricular and co-curricular events
- All dances (homecoming, winter ball, prom, etc)
- Senior high athletic contests
- Field and motivational trips
- Pep and marching band (parades included)
- All instrumental and vocal music contests
- All speech and drama contests
- All inter-high competitions and academic competitions  
(Based on Current Cumulative Grades).

### EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

#### **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 provide 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 student's 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 to be restricted, and to exercise common-sense.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR EXPECTATIONS AND CODE OF CONDUCT**

All students involved in activities will adhere to the rules and regulations in the Minden High School Student Handbook, School Board Policies, NSAA Bylaws and their individual sport/activity handbook rules. Students will also adhere to the Extracurricular Code of Conduct.

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

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

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 means student activities or organizations which are supervised or administered by the school district which do not count towards 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, cheerleading, dance team, Pep Band, Vocal, Band, Speech, One-Act, Amethyst, FBLA, FCCLA, Spanish Club, Art Club, Student Council, Student Advisory Board, 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 sports season established by the NSAA and extends to the last day of the spring sports season established by the NSAA, whether or not the student is a participant in an activity at the time of such conduct.

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

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

**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 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, bullying, 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 of 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. (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 any activity forbidden by law which constitutes a danger to other students, interferes with school purposes or an extracurricular activity, or reflects a lack of high ideals.
11. Repeated violations of any of the school rules.
12. Truancy or failure to attend assigned classes or assigned activities; or tardiness to school, assigned classes, or assigned activities.
13. 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.
14. 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.
15. Willfully violating the behavioral expectations for those students riding Minden Public Schools buses or vehicles used for activity purposes.
16. 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 supervisor.
17. Failure to participate in regularly scheduled classes on the day of an extracurricular activity or event.
18. Failure to attend scheduled practices or 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.
19. All other reasonable rules or regulations adopted by the coach or sponsor of an extracurricular activity shall be followed, provided that participants shall be advised by

the coach or sponsor of such rules and regulations by written handouts or posting on bulletin boards prior to the violation of the rule or regulation.

20. Failure to comply with any rule established by the Nebraska School Activities Association, including, but not limited to, the rules relating to eligibility.

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

## **Drug and Alcohol Violations**

### Meaning of Terms:

Use or consume 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:

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.
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 over) 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 as 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 consequences 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:

## **Drugs and Alcohol**

An activity participant who violates the drug or alcohol rules (other than steroids) shall be prohibited from participating in any extracurricular activity for the following minimum periods (If the infraction is out of season, the suspension shall begin with the first practice of the next season in which the student participates):

**MPS Board Policy 5103:**

1. First Violation: 45 days.
2. Second or Any Subsequent Offense: One calendar year.
3. Reduction for Self-Reporting: If the student has self-reported, the first violation shall be reduced to 21 days for the first violation. A commensurate reduction (approximately one-half, as determined by the administration) for a second or subsequent violation shall be given for self-reporting.
4. Reduction for Participation in Chemical Dependency Program: If the student and parents agree to participate in a school-approved program for chemical dependency, the consequence will be reduced to only the next activity in which the student was to participate (including at least one contest) in the case of a first violation, and to a commensurate reduction (approximately 80%, as determined by the administration, for a second or subsequent violation). The program must be administered by a certified alcohol and drug abuse counselor and be approved by the school authorities. The student will need to successfully complete the approved chemical dependency program. Proof of successful completion of program must be submitted in writing to the Activities Director. Failure to participate and successfully complete the approved chemical dependency program may cause the participating student to be suspended from extracurricular activities for one calendar year. All costs associated with the program are to be borne by the student/parent or guardian.
5. 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 limited by the foregoing, and may be established in the good discretion of the administration.

**Tobacco/Vaping/E-cigarettes Violations**

An activity participant who violates the drug or alcohol rules (other than steroids) shall be prohibited from participating in any extracurricular activity for the following minimum periods:

1. First Violation:

OPTION 1: Because there is no established treatment program for habitual tobacco use, the first offense for tobacco use will be seven (7) calendar days suspension from all activity contests.

2. Second Violation:

The member will be suspended for thirty (30) calendar days from all contests but will be allowed to practice and travel with the team.

3. Third Violation:

The member will be suspended for ninety (90) calendar days from all activity practices and contests.

**Participation After Violations:** If a member is found guilty or admits of violating a training rule during his or her off-season, and that athlete has not attended the initial meeting or practice of another activity (with the exception of illness, etc.), they may not participate in an activity to evade due punishment.

**Misdemeanor or Felony:** Any student involved or charged with any type of misdemeanor or felony will be treated on an individual basis by the Coaches Council. The presiding official for a hearing involving a member will be the Activities Director. The Activities Director will be responsible for seeing that due process is followed in every respect.

**When Suspension Begins:** 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 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.

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 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 plea of no contest and an adjudication of delinquency by the juvenile court.
3. When a student admits to violating one of the standards of the Code of Conduct.

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

1. Investigation: The school official(s) considering the suspension will conduct a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances and determine whether the suspension will help the student or other students, further school purposes, or prevent an interference with a school purpose.

2. Meeting: Prior to commencement of the suspension, the school official considering the suspension or their designee will provide the student an opportunity to give the student's side of the story. The meeting for this purpose may be held in person or via a telephone conference.
- 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 to 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 Athletic Director or the Athletic Director's designee will send a written statement to the student and the student's parents or guardian. The statement will describe the student's conduct violation and the discipline imposed. The student and parents/guardians will be informed of the opportunity to request a hearing.
4. Informal Hearing Before Superintendent: The student or student's parents/guardians 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/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 (10 calendar days if school is not in session). The written decision will be mailed or otherwise delivered to the participant and parents/guardians.
    - IV. A record of the hearing (copies of documents provided at the hearing and a tape recording of the informal hearing) will be kept by the school if requested sufficiently in advance for the hearing by the parent/guardian.
5. No Stay Penalty. There will be no stay of the penalty imposed pending completion of the due- process procedures.
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 class. Students who have “unexcused absences” or “skipped” class periods will be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activity contests or performances until that instructional time is made up and/or absence is verified with building administration.
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 at least one half day unless prior arrangements have been made with the administration. Exceptions may be made for extenuating circumstances, such as doctor/dentist appointments or family emergencies. The exception must be approved by the Principal or Athletic Director.

### **PARTICIPATION ON AN ATHLETIC TEAM**

It is important to understand that participation on an athletic team at Minden High School is a privilege and not a right. Being on and maintaining one’s membership on the team means accepting all the responsibilities of an athlete. However, unlike recreation and intramural teams, equal or guaranteed playing time does not exist. In an effort to win, a coach will use players best suited to the conditions or demands of the contest at that time.

### **PRACTICE SESSIONS AND GAMES**

Practice sessions are normally closed to spectators and there is a very sound reason for this. These sessions are the equivalent of a teacher’s classroom and there is real, quality instruction taking place. Interruptions and interference to an athlete’s concentration and focus in practice cannot be allowed any more than a disruption would be tolerated in an academic setting. Education in any setting cannot be compromised.

At Minden, practice sessions:

1. May last two hours.
2. May start and end at different times due to the schedule of the coach or of our facilities. Check with the coach for specific times.
3. Will not be held when school is dismissed due to inclement weather.
4. Will not be held when school is not in session due to inclement weather.
5. May be held on Saturdays or over holiday periods.

Spectators at games, however, are very much encouraged. Positive nurturing support of teams and athletes can be very helpful to performance in athletic contests.

### **ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT TRAVEL POLICY – TRANSPORTATION WAIVERS**

Any student participating in a Minden activity sponsored trip is expected to ride to an event with the team. Participants are allowed to be transported following an event by a parent or guardian (parent/guardian must complete the sign out sheet with the designated coach). If a participant is riding from an event with anyone except for a parent/guardian, a student transportation waiver needs to be completed, approved, and filed with the high school office before noon the day prior to the event. Please stop by any office to pick up a waiver or download one from the district website.

All students riding in a school vehicle equipped with seat belts must wear seat belts at all times when the vehicle is moving.

### **SPORTSMANSHIP**

Since athletics should be educational in nature, it is important that all parents, coaches, players, and fans demonstrate good sportsmanship and serve as role models for our athletes and students. Sportsmanship is an overall display of respect for the rules of the sport and for all others – players, coaches, officials, and fans (National Federation News, March 1995, p. 10) it also involves a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity. The NSAA has sportsmanship bylaws and rules that we must comply with. This means:

- There can be no vulgar or inappropriate language from our fans or spectators.
- Taunting or trash talking of our opponents and their cheerleaders will not be tolerated.
- Fans should be supportive and positive. Cheering should be done for our team and not against our opponent.
- We should not impede or interfere with our opponent's cheerleaders from leading their cheers.
- In some specific sports, such as basketball and volleyball, we should not yell while an opponent takes a foul shot or as a player attempts to serve.

### **ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR**

- Applause during introduction of players, coaches, and officials.
- Players shaking hands with opponents who foul out while both sets of fans recognize the player's performance with applause.
- Accept all decisions of officials
- Cheerleaders lead fans in positive school yells in a positive manner.
- Handshakes between participants and coaches at the end of a contest, regardless of outcome.
- Treat competition as a game, not war.
- Coaches/players search out and congratulate opposing participants or coaches.
- Applause at the end of a contest for the performance of all participants.
- Everyone showing concern for injured players, regardless of team.
- Encourage only sportsmanlike conduct.

### **UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR**

- Yelling or waving arms during an opponent's free-throw attempt.
- Disrespectful or derogatory yells, chants, songs, or gestures.
- Booing or heckling an official's decision.
- Criticizing officials in any way; displays of temper with an official's call.
- Yells that antagonize the opponents.
- Refusing to shake hands or give recognition for good performances.
- Blaming loss of a game on officials, coaches, or participants.
- Taunting or name-calling to distract an opponent.
- Use of profanity or displays of anger that draw attention away from the game.
- Doing your own yells instead of following the lead of the cheerleaders.

If you hear or see something inappropriate, please help in the effort to show sportsmanship by saying something to the offending individual. Remember that purchasing a ticket provides you with the opportunity and privilege to watch the contest, it is not a license to verbally assault others or to be obnoxious.

Being great role models to those around us can make a long lasting difference in the lives of those we see and touch. Thank you for your cooperation and help. We CAN do something positive by working together.

### **BOOSTER CLUB**

The Booster Club is not a vehicle to remove coaches, advance vested interests or to alter Athletic Department policy. It is a service and support organization which works in harmony with Minden and its activities and athletic programs.

The Director of Athletics serves as the liaison between the club and the school. He also serves as an advisor to the Booster Club. All requests for purchase come through the Director of Athletics who determines their priority. Consideration of requests is given to the budget, strategic plans and an overriding belief that any purchase should help the total athletic program and not a single team. No individual coach or team should directly approach the Booster Club with a request.

All parents are encouraged to join this worthwhile organization and to become an active member. The Booster Club holds monthly meetings, has several standing committees, and hosts numerous events throughout the year.

# Minden Public Schools



## Coach and Sponsor Handbook

2025-2026

(Updated 6/5/2025)

### MINDEN HIGH SCHOOL GENERAL INFORMATION

Location:	622 W. 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street
Telephone:	(308) 832-2254
School Fax:	(308) 832-1892
School Mascot:	Whippet
School Colors:	Purple and White
Superintendent:	Mr. James Widdifield
Principal:	Mr. Don Hosick
Activities Director:	Mr. Jason Strong
MS Activities Director:	Mr. Ed Rowse
Conference Affiliation:	Southwest Conference
Conference Schools:	Broken Bow, Cozad, Gothenburg, Holdrege, McCook, Minden, Ogallala

## Athletic Programs for our Students

<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>
Volleyball	Football
Cross Country	Cross Country
Girls Golf	Boys Golf
Softball	Wrestling
Girls Basketball	Boys Basketball
Girls Track	Boys Track
Wrestling	

## TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

### Television Stations:

KOLN-KGIN	1-402-467-4321 (Lincoln)
10-11 News	1-308-382-6100 (GI)
NBC NE	1-402-463-1321
NTV	1-800-445-9900

### Newspapers:

MINDEN COURIER	832-2220
LINCOLN JOURNAL	1-800-742-7315
KEARNEY HUB	1-800-950-6113
HASTINGS TRIBUNE	1-800-742-6397
OMAHA WORLD HERALD	1-402-444-1201

### Other:

Associated Press	1-800-300-8340
NSAA	1-402-489-0386

## PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of all activities is to provide students with opportunities outside the regular classroom. In all activities, students gain valuable friendships and social experiences. They learn to strive together for common goals as well as learn discipline and commitment.

Minden Public Schools takes great pride in its school sponsored activities. All coaches are expected to adhere to strict policies regarding their conduct. First, they are asked to be positive role models and leaders of their team. They should also foster a healthy self-esteem of themselves and school pride. Last, and maybe most important, is the treatment of all people involved in activities. Coaches must treat all members, parents, co-workers, officials, and spectators with respect and diplomacy. All students are encouraged and welcomed to try out for any of the extracurricular activities available as they are integral parts of school life.

## **Coaches Code Of Ethics**

### National Federation of State High School Associations and NSAA

The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. An interscholastic program should be designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. Each student should be treated with the utmost respect, and his or her welfare should be considered in decisions by the coach at all times. Accordingly, the following guidelines for coaches have been

adopted by the NFHS Board of Directors.

- The coach shall be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the student and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.
- The coach shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with students, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.
- The coach shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse.
- The coach shall avoid the use of alcohol and tobacco products when in contact with players.
- The coach shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct his or her program in harmony with the total school program.
- The coach shall master the contest rules and shall teach them to his or her team members. The coach shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.
- The coach shall exert his or her influence to enhance sportsmanship by spectators, both directly and by working closely with cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, booster clubs, and administrators.
- The coach shall respect and support contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.
- The coach should meet and exchange cordial greetings with the opposing coach to set the correct tone for the event before and after the contest.
- The coach shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give a student special consideration.
- The coach shall not scout opponents by any means other than those adopted by the league and/or state high school athletic association.

#### Coaches' Code of Ethical Conduct and Expectations - NSAA

This code of conduct is for coaches to keep and/or post in the office for easy reference. It is important that every coach be an exemplary role model and maintain the highest standard of conduct at all times. Coaches represent the community, school and activity. Many people observe their conduct closely. The coach must recognize that the purpose of co-curricular activities is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of participants.

#### **EXPECTATIONS**

As a coach at Minden I will:

- \* Emphasize academics as our number one priority
- \* Encourage students to participate in a variety of activities to the best of their abilities.
- \* Treat students, officials and others with dignity and respect.
- \* Supervise and control students at all times.

- \* Maintain a physically and emotionally safe environment.
- \* Not tolerate abuse of officials, faculty or students.
- \* Establish and model fair play, sportsmanship and appropriate conduct.
- \* Establish student safety and welfare as a high priority.
- \* Use discretion when criticizing or reprimanding students.
- \* Be consistent in requiring students to follow rules and standards of the school and activity
- \* Not recruit students from other schools.
- \* Not allow the use of illegal drugs, alcohol or tobacco.
- \* Educate students about the dangers of illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
- \* Not use profanity, nor allow the use of profanity.

## **COMMUNICATION**

As a coach at Minden I will:

- \* Maintain open and ongoing communication with advisors, coaches, students and parents.
- \* Hold a parent meeting to review:
  - \* Basic policies, procedures and expectations.
  - \* The Student Code of Ethics and Parent Pledge.
  - \* Minden's voluntary drug testing/zero tolerance policy.
  - \* Academic requirements and expectations at Minden.
  - \* Anticipated schedule.

## **PARTICIPATION**

As a coach at Minden I will:

- \* Recruit as many students as possible to try out for a team or group.
- \* Keep as many students as possible on the team or group.
- \* Allow as many students as possible to compete or perform without compromising the quality of effort or performance.

## NSAA BYLAWS FOR COACHES AND SPONSORS 2.12

### **2.12 COACHES AND SPONSORS**

2.12.1 School's Responsibility. The entire management of a school's activity program must be under the control of school authorities, and any team competing in interschool competition must be under the direction of a member of the school's faculty.

2.12.1.1 When a team or individuals from a school compete in interschool competition, the team or individuals must be accompanied by the head coach, or assistant coach as defined by the rules, or a school administrator, or certificated faculty member.

2.12.2 Head Coach, Assistant Coach, or Sponsor. In order to serve as a head or assistant coach or sponsor of any activity sponsored by the Nebraska School Activities Association, the individual must possess a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate or Nebraska Administrative and Supervisory Certificate and have a written contract of employment as a coach or sponsor with the school in which he/she is to perform these duties.

2.12.2.1 Individuals who possess a Provisional Trades Certificate and/or Special Services Certificate endorsed in coaching may be employed by a school district as a head or assistant coach in NSAA sponsored activities.

2.12.2.2 The head coach/sponsor, assistant coach/sponsor, or certificated faculty member has the following responsibilities:

1. Supervise the individuals or team representing the school in the competition.
2. Serve as the school's spokesperson in all administrative matters, controversial situations, obtaining medical assistance, talking with representatives of the media and any discussion with contest officials or judges.
3. In basketball, the only individual who is permitted to use the coach's box or approach the scorer's table for a correctable error situation. 30 2019-2020 NSAA
4. Be seated on the team bench or within the team area during basketball, volleyball, baseball, football, soccer, and softball contests.
5. Accept awards presented to the school and/or coach.

#### APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 2.12

Concussion in Sports, Heat Illness Prevention, Sudden Cardiac Arrest Education All coaches and volunteers are required to complete the NFHS Concussion in Sports, Heat Illness Prevention, and Sudden Cardiac Arrest Training courses at least once every three years. These courses should be taken prior to any pre-season or regular season physical workouts that the respective coach would be present for or involved in administering. Any course taken after May 1 would be considered valid for the following school year. All first year coaches are required to complete all three courses prior to the start of the activity season which they are to coach. Obtaining Special Services Certificate for Coaching:

1. Complete (2) online NFHS courses at [www.nfhslearn.com/courses](http://www.nfhslearn.com/courses). Fundamentals of Coaching First Aid, Health and Safety for Coaches
2. Fingerprint cards are required if you have not continuously lived in Nebraska for the past five (5) years.
3. Complete the Nebraska Department of Education Special Services Certificate application at [www.education.ne.gov/TCERT](http://www.education.ne.gov/TCERT).
4. Submit original certificates to the Nebraska Department of Education indicating completion of the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching & NFHS First Aid, Health and Safety for Coaches.
5. The Nebraska Department of Education will send the Special Services Certificate electronically to the individual's email address included on the application.
6. The certificate will be valid for five (5) years and can be renewed. All head coaches are required to attend an NSAA Rules Meeting or complete an NSAA Rules Meeting online annually. Failure to do so will result in possible late fees and suspension penalties. Online rules meetings are initially offered at no cost to coaches or officials, followed by a period with a \$25 "Late" Fee, followed by a period with a \$50 "Delinquent" Fee. The following sanctions and fees are applicable to those coaches who fail to complete the rules meeting by the expiration of the "Delinquent" Fee period. Absence from the required rules meeting OR FAILURE TO COMPLETE THE ONLINE RULES MEETING will result in the following sanctions: First Offense in Three-Year Period The head coach will be suspended from coaching in any competition in that activity until  
(1) The head coach COMPLETES THE NSAA'S ONLINE RULES MEETING OFFERED AT THE LATE FEE of \$100; and (2) the head coach successfully completes the open book test for officials/judges of that activity (70% or higher); and the school's administration verifies that the coach has read all the supporting NSAA, National Federation, and safety information. During this regular season suspension period, the head coach may continue to coach the team at practices. Second and Subsequent Offenses in Three-Year Period The head coach will be suspended from coaching in all NSAA end-of-season play (sub-districts, districts, playoffs, and

state competition). (1) The head coach COMPLETES THE NSAA'S ONLINE RULES MEETING OFFERED AT THE LATE FEE of \$200; and (2) the head coach successfully completes the open book test for officials/judges of that activity (70% or higher); and the school's administration verifies that the coach has read all the supporting NSAA, National Federation, and safety information. During this regular season suspension period, the head coach may continue to coach the team at practices.

2.12.3 **Coaches' Aides.** Schools may contract non-certificated personnel to assist with their activities programs, but such personnel shall be coaches' aides.

2.12.3.1 The individuals must have a job description.

2.12.3.2 The individual shall not initiate nor change instruction given by the head coach and must carry out specific directions given by the head coach.

2.12.3.3 The individual may assist in starting, executing, and completing the specific plan of the learning experience as defined and directed by the head coach.

2.12.3.4 The aide should be specifically prepared for duties assigned, to include the handling of emergency situations that arise in the course of his/her work.

2.12.3.5 Coaches' aides are not to be given the sole responsibility of directing or supervising students during 2019-2020 NSAA 31 practice. The head coach should be in the immediate practice area.

2.12.3.6 When traveling to and from and participating in interschool competition, the team or individuals are to be accompanied by the head coach/sponsor, assistant coach/sponsor, or in case of an emergency, a certificated faculty member.

### **Child Abuse Reporting Policy.**

As a part of the new federal law of "Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017", this Child Abuse Reporting Policy has been added to include sports and will be covered with all coaches and sponsors each year.

Minden School board Policy 5402.

#### Child Abuse and Neglect

School employees shall promptly report to the appropriate law enforcement agency and the principal when they have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, including sexual abuse, or circumstances which reasonably would result in abuse or neglect. The principal will ensure that the report has been made to the proper law enforcement agency or other agency as required by law.

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

#### ATHLETIC CHAIN OF COMMAND

At Minden, the following chain of command is in effect:

- Player meets with coach(s)
- Parent and player meet with coach
- Parent and player meet with coach and AD (and principal if requested)
- Parent and player meet with Superintendent

If there are any questions or concerns, the athlete should first contact the appropriate coach. If there is no resolution, he or she would then go to the head

coach and then progress if necessary.

### CONCUSSION AWARENESS AND GUIDELINES

The NSAA has made it mandatory for all coaches and volunteers to take the free NFHS-"Concussion in Sports" course annually. They have also recommended other sponsors of activities to also take the course due to accidents happening in other activities like speech, drama, music, cheer, and dance. Please complete the NFHS course <http://www.nfhslearn.com> and print off the document at the end of the course that says you have completed it and return it to the activities director prior to your activity starting. Below is a list of concussion information that can be found on the NSAA website for your review.

- Frequently Asked Questions on LB 260
- NFHS Concussion In Sports FREE Online Course
- NFHS Concussion In Sports FREE Online Course Information
- [NFHS Concussion Information](#)
- [School Board Policy 6283](#)
- [Concussion Fact Sheet](#)
- [A Parent's Guide to Concussions in Sports](#)
- [Concussion Awareness- Brain Injury Association of Nebraska](#)

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 71-9102 to 71-9106

Date of Adoption: June 9, 2014

#### Concussions

1. Training.  
The Superintendent or designee shall make available training approved by the chief medical officer of the State on how to recognize the symptoms of a concussion or brain injury and how to seek proper medical treatment for a concussion or brain injury to all coaches of school athletic teams.
2. Education.  
The Superintendent or designee shall require that concussion and brain injury information be provided on an annual basis to students and the students' parents or guardians prior to such students initiating practice or competition. The information provided to students and the students' parents or guardians shall include, but need not be limited to:
  - a. the signs and symptoms of a concussion;
  - b. the risks posed by sustaining a concussion; and
  - c. the actions a student should take in response to sustaining a concussion, including the notification of his or her coaches.
3. Response to Concussions.
  - a. Removal. A student who participates on a school athletic team shall be removed from practice or game when he or she is reasonably suspected of having sustained a concussion or brain injury in such practice or game after observation by a coach or a licensed healthcare professional who is professionally affiliated with or contracted by the school.
  - b. Return-to-Play. A student who has been removed from a practice or game as a result of being reasonably suspected of having sustained a concussion or brain injury shall not be permitted to participate in any school supervised team athletic activities involving physical exertion, including, but not limited

to, practices or games, until the student: (i) has been evaluated by a licensed healthcare professional, (ii) has received written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities from the licensed healthcare professional, and (iii) has submitted the written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities to the school accompanied by written permission to resume participation from the student's parent or guardian.

The coach or administration may require that the student's return to full activities be on a stepwise progression back to full participation, or otherwise establish conditions for return to participation that are more restrictive than those defined by the licensed health care professional if the coach or an administrator reasonably deems such to be appropriate.

The signature of an individual who represents that he or she is a licensed healthcare professional on a written clearance to resume participation that is provided to the school shall be deemed to be conclusive and reliable evidence that the individual who signed the clearance is a licensed healthcare professional. The school is not required to determine or verify the individual's qualifications.

- c. Parent Notification. If a student is reasonably suspected after observation of having sustained a concussion or brain injury and is removed from an athletic activity per the preceding paragraph, the parent or guardian of the student shall be notified by the Superintendent or designee of the date and approximate time of the injury suffered by the student, the signs and symptoms of a concussion or brain injury that were observed, and any actions taken to treat the student.
  - d. Return to Learn. The Superintendent or designee shall develop a return to learn protocol for students who have sustained a concussion. The return to learn protocol shall recognize that students who have sustained a concussion and returned to school may need informal or formal accommodations, modifications of curriculum, and monitoring by medical or academic staff until the student is fully recovered.
4. Responsibility of Coaches.  
Coaches shall comply with this policy and apply their safety and injury prevention training. A coach who fails to do so is subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to termination of employment.
  5. Students and Parents.  
It is recognized that coaches cannot be aware of every incident in which a student has symptoms of a possible concussion or brain injury. As such, students and their parents have a responsibility to honestly report symptoms of a possible concussion or brain injury to the student's coaches on a timely basis.

## ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY FOR HIGH SCHOOL

In order to represent a high school in interscholastic athletic competition, a student must abide by eligibility rules set forth by the Nebraska School Activities Association. IF YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND ANY OF THE RULES STATED BELOW, CONSULT THE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL OR ATHLETIC DIRECTOR.

NSAA Bylaws:

2.1.1 Student Eligibility. Only those students meeting the eligibility requirements as established in the Constitution, Bylaws, or Approved Rulings are permitted to represent a member school in interscholastic competition in those activities which are under the jurisdiction of the Nebraska School Activities Association.

### APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR SECTION 2.1.1

The administrative staff of each high school is responsible for determining the eligibility of each of its students participating in activities.

a. Schools must check the following for each high school transfer student:

- 1) If the student attended school the previous semester.
- 2) If the student has been or will be in school for the first eleven days of the present semester.
- 3) If the student's age meets eligibility requirements. (A student is ineligible if 19 years of age before August 1st of the current year.)
- 4) If the student passed and received at least twenty hours the previous semester.
- 5) If the number of semesters of high school membership is less than eight semesters.
- 6) If the legal domicile of both of the student's natural parents is within the school district.
- 7) If the student has attended another high school within your school district.

b. Schools must check the following for each student who is enrolling in high school and attended junior high the immediate preceding semester: (A student must be enrolled in at least twenty hours per week

- four full credit courses and be in regular attendance.)

- 1) If the student's age meets eligibility requirements. (A student is ineligible if 19 years of age before August 1st of the current year.)
- 2) If the student has exceeded eight semesters of school membership or four seasons of participation.
- 3) If the student has participated in non-school competition during the season of the sport.

The eligibility of students participating in extra-curricular activities is based on current cumulative grades\* at each academic reporting period, which occur at approximately three week intervals. All decisions for eligibility are made on the Monday following the deadline.

### First academic reporting period of the quarter:

Students failing two or more classes (current cumulative grade\*) at the time of the first academic progress reporting period notification period have one week to raise the classes to passing grades (current cumulative grades\*). Students still failing two or more classes (current cumulative grade\*) after the one week grace period will be ineligible from all extra-curricular activities\*\* until the next academic progress reporting notification period. Students will not travel with the team if dismissal from school time is necessary for departure. Practice time is determined on the basis of the number of classes failing: if four or more classes (current cumulative grades\*), no practice is allowed.

Second academic reporting period of the quarter:

The second academic progress reporting time is approximately the sixth week of the quarter. Students become eligible at this time if they were on the first progress report ineligibility list. Students failing two or more classes (current cumulative grades\*) at this time will *have* one week to raise the classes to a passing grade. Students who are still failing two or more classes (current cumulative grades\*) at the end of the one week grace period will then be ineligible for all extra-curricular activities for the remainder of the quarter.

Quarter grading period (end of quarter):

Students failing two or more classes at the end of quarter one or quarter three *have* one week to raise the classes to passing grades (current cumulative grades\*). Student still failing two or more classes (current cumulative grades\*) after the one week grace period will be ineligible from all extra-curricular activities\*\* until the next academic progress report notification period. NSAA eligibility at the semester is determined by semester grades. Students must pass twenty hours (four courses) the previous semester to be eligible for NSAA activities during the current semester.

NOTIFICATION OF STATUS

Notification of ineligibility will be conducted by the principal, assistant principal, or by designee each academic progress reporting period on an individual basis with students.

\*CURRENT CUMULATIVE GRADE DEFINITION

During the first quarter of school, "current cumulative grades" are defined as THE FIRST QUARTER GRADES. During the second quarter of school, "current cumulative grades" are defined as THE FIRST (FALL) SEMESTER CUMULATIVE GRADES.

During the third quarter of school, "current cumulative grades" are defined as THE THIRD QUARTER GRADES. During the fourth quarter of school, "current cumulative grades" are defined as SECOND (SPRING) SEMESTER CUMULATIVE GRADES.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ACTIVITIES HELD BETWEEN SEMESTER ONE AND SEMESTER TWO:

In the event that any school activities are held after the end of the first semester of the school year but before the second-semester starts, all students who passed at least 20 credit hours (four-semester classes) for the fall semester are eligible to participate in any activities during this time. This will be the basis of eligibility until the first progress reports of the third quarter are sent.

\*\*EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES DEFINITION:

- All extra-curricular activities and co-curricular events
- All dances (homecoming, prom, winter ball, etc.)
- Senior high athletic contests
- Field and motivational field trips
- Pep and marching band (parades included)
- All instrumental and vocal music contests
- All speech and drama contests.
- All inter-high competitions and academic competition.

For students who have aspirations of competing in athletics at the collegiate level, it is recommended that they register with the NCAA Clearinghouse sometime during their junior year. All Division I and II athletes must be registered with the clearinghouse in order to be eligible to compete. To register, athletes should see the counselor or activities director. See attached guidelines and website info for NJCAA, NAIA, and NCAA.

### NJCAA GUIDELINES

The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) has also increased its requirements. The high school graduate continues to be eligible immediately, as will one who has received a high school equivalency diploma, or has been certified as passing a national test, such as the G.E.D. Non-high school graduates can establish eligibility by completing one term of college work, and passing 12 credits. <http://www.njcaa.org>. [http://static.psb.in.com/p/q/dfnfnhoddbrbmx/Eligibility\\_Pamphlet\\_16-17.pdf](http://static.psb.in.com/p/q/dfnfnhoddbrbmx/Eligibility_Pamphlet_16-17.pdf)

### NAIA GUIDELINES

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletes (NAIA) has also set tougher standards for student athletes. <http://www.naia.org>. <http://www.playnaia.org/page/eligibility.php>

**If you will graduate from high school in the spring and enroll in college the coming fall, the requirements are simple.** High school graduation, plus **two out of three** of these requirements

- Achieve a minimum overall high school GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.
- Graduate in the top half of your high school class.
- Achieve the NAIA's minimum test score requirement:

- **18 ACT\*\*\* or**
- **860 SAT (Critical Reading and Math), if taken before March 2016**  
**940 SAT (Evidence-Based Reading and Writing + Math), if taken in March 2016 or after.\*\***

*\*\* Students who scored between 860 and 930 on the March 2016 or later SAT test will be granted an automatic SAT test score minimum exception to compete during the 2016-17 academic year. The NAIA Eligibility Center will automatically apply this SAT test score minimum exception in the eligibility determination process. [Learn more about this change.](#)*

*\*\*\* Students who scored between 16 and 17 on the March 2016 or later ACT test will be granted an automatic ACT test score minimum exception to compete during the 2016-17 academic year. The NAIA Eligibility Center will automatically apply this ACT test score minimum exception in the eligibility determination process.*

### NCAA Division I

1. Complete a total of 16 core courses. See school counselor for the complete list of what counts as a "CORE COURSE."

- 4 years of English
- 3 years of Math
- 2 years of Natural/Physical Science
- 2 years of Social Sciences
- 1 year of an additional course in English, math, or natural/physical science
- 4 years of courses in any of the above or a foreign language

2. Meet minimum GPA and ACT score benchmarks. (the higher the GPA, the lower the ACT can be; the higher the ACT, the lower the GPA can be.) See your school counselor for details.

## NCAA Division II

1. Complete a total of 16 core courses. See school counselor for the complete list of what counts as a "CORE COURSE."

3 years of English

2 years of Math

2 years of Natural/Physical Science

2 years of Social Sciences

3 year of an additional course in English, math, or natural/physical science

4 years of courses in any of the above or a foreign language

2. Meet minimum GPA and ACT score benchmarks. (the higher the GPA, the lower the ACT can be; the higher the ACT, the lower the GPA can be.) See your school counselor for details.

## GUIDELINES. REGULATIONS. PRACTICES. REQUIREMENTS

All athletes must meet the following requirements before they begin practice:

- Return the updated physical and parent permission form, signed by parent/guardian and physician to the head coach, School Nurse, or Activity Director's office. Complete the ImPACT Testing baseline test.

- Follow and complete any other procedures or requirements as directed by their respective coaches.

All coaches must follow Rule 10 and NSAA guidelines for athletic participation in grades 9-12.

a. Football: eight quarters per week.

b. Girls/Boys Basketball: six quarters per day.

c. Volleyball: six matches in a week unless in a tournament.

d. Cross Country: two meets per calendar week.

## TEAM SELECTION

The head coach and the assistants for that particular activity will conduct team selections and placement. With the exception of golf (due to facilities), there is no cut policy that has been adopted. Athletes do need to be aware that this does not mean that they are guaranteed a uniform. Suiting up for games must be earned and will be up to the discretion of the coaching staff. Make sure beforehand that all athletes are aware of the selection procedure that will be used in determining who gets to suit up. The only exception to this is the junior high program, which all participants are allowed to suit up and play. Coaches should encourage high school students to be their student managers. If middle school students are used for managers, they will not be released from school to attend high school games. These students may travel with the team when travel departure times occur after the school day has ended.

## SUPERVISION

Coaches and sponsors must supervise athletes/activities at all times to ensure athletes are using proper technique, safety precautions and preventing the possibility of injury, harassment, bullying, vandalism, and negligence.

## EXTRACURRICULAR EXPECTATIONS AND CODE OF CONDUCT

All students involved in activities will adhere to the rules and regulations in the Minden High School Student Handbook, School Board Policies, NSAA Bylaws and their individual sport/activity handbook rules. Students will also adhere to the Extracurricular Code of Conduct.

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

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

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 means student activities or organizations which are supervised or administered by the school district which do not count towards 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, cheerleading, dance team, Pep Band, Vocal, Band, Speech, One-Act, Amethyst, FBLA, FCCLA, Spanish Club, Art Club, Student Council, Student Advisory Board, 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 sports season established by the NSAA and extends to the last day of the spring sports season established by the NSAA, whether or not the student is a participant in an activity at the time of such conduct.

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

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

**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 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, bullying, 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 of 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. (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 any activity forbidden by law which constitutes a danger to other students, interferes with school purposes or an extracurricular activity, or reflects a lack of high ideals.
11. Repeated violations of any of the school rules.
12. Truancy or failure to attend assigned classes or assigned activities; or tardiness to school, assigned classes, or assigned activities.
13. 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.

14. 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.
15. Willfully violating the behavioral expectations for those students riding Minden Public Schools buses or vehicles used for activity purposes.
16. 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 supervisor.
17. Failure to participate in regularly scheduled classes on the day of an extracurricular activity or event.
18. Failure to attend scheduled practices or 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.
19. All other reasonable rules or regulations adopted by the coach or sponsor of an extracurricular activity shall be followed, provided that participants shall be advised by the coach or sponsor of such rules and regulations by written handouts or posting on bulletin boards prior to the violation of the rule or regulation.
20. Failure to comply with any rule established by the Nebraska School Activities Association, including, but not limited to, the rules relating to eligibility.

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

## **Drug and Alcohol Violations**

### **Meaning of Terms:**

Use or consume 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:

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.
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 over) 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 as 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 consequences 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:

### **Drugs and Alcohol**

An activity participant who violates the drug or alcohol rules (other than steroids) shall be prohibited from participating in any extracurricular activity for the following minimum periods (If the infraction is out of season, the suspension shall begin with the first practice of the next season in which the student participates):

1. First Violation: 45 days.
2. Second or Any Subsequent Offense: One calendar year.
3. Reduction for Self-Reporting: If the student has self-reported, the first violation shall be reduced to 21 days for the first violation. A commensurate reduction (approximately one-half, as determined by the administration) for a second or subsequent violation shall be given for self-reporting.
4. Reduction for Participation in Chemical Dependency Program: If the student and parents agree to participate in a school-approved program for chemical dependency, the consequence will be reduced to only the next activity in which the student was to participate (including at least one contest) in the case of a first violation, and to a commensurate reduction (approximately 80%, as determined by the administration, for a second or subsequent violation). The program must be administered by a certified alcohol and drug abuse counselor and be approved by the school authorities. The student will need to successfully complete the

approved chemical dependency program. Proof of successful completion of program must be submitted in writing to the Activities Director. Failure to participate and successfully complete the approved chemical dependency program may cause the participating student to be suspended from extracurricular activities for one calendar year. All costs associated with the program are to be borne by the student/parent or guardian.

5. 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 limited by the foregoing, and may be established in the good discretion of the administration.

### **Tobacco/Vaping/E-cigarettes Violations**

An activity participant who violates the drug or alcohol rules (other than steroids) shall be prohibited from participating in any extracurricular activity for the following minimum periods:

1. First Violation:

OPTION 1: Because there is no established treatment program for habitual tobacco use, the first offense for tobacco use will be seven (7) calendar days suspension from all activity contests.

2. Second Violation:

The member will be suspended for thirty (30) calendar days from all contests but will be allowed to practice and travel with the team.

3. Third Violation:

The member will be suspended for ninety (90) calendar days from all activity practices and contests.

**Participation After Violations:** If a member is found guilty or admits of violating a training rule during his or her off-season, and that athlete has not attended the initial meeting or practice of another activity (with the exception of illness, etc.), they may not participate in an activity to evade due punishment.

**Misdemeanor or Felony:** Any student involved or charged with any type of misdemeanor or felony will be treated on an individual basis by the Coaches Council. The presiding official for a hearing involving a member will be the Activities Director. The Activities Director will be responsible for seeing that due process is followed in every respect.

**When Suspension Begins:** 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 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.

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 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 plea of no contest and an adjudication of delinquency by the juvenile court.
3. When a student admits to violating one of the standards of the Code of Conduct.

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

1. Investigation: The school official(s) considering the suspension will conduct a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances and determine whether the suspension will help the student or other students, further school purposes, or prevent an interference with a school purpose.
2. Meeting: Prior to commencement of the suspension, the school official considering the suspension or their designee will provide the student an opportunity to give the student's side of the story. The meeting for this purpose may be held in person or via a telephone conference.
  - 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 to 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 Athletic Director or the Athletic Director's designee will send a written statement to the student and the student's parents or guardian. The statement will describe the student's conduct violation and the discipline imposed. The student and parents/guardians will be informed of the opportunity to request a hearing.
4. Informal Hearing Before Superintendent: The student or student's parents/guardians 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/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 (10 calendar days if school is not in session). The written decision will be mailed or otherwise delivered to the participant and parents/guardians.
    - IV. A record of the hearing (copies of documents provided at the hearing and a tape recording of the informal hearing) will be kept by the school if requested sufficiently in advance for the hearing by the parent/guardian.
5. No Stay Penalty. There will be no stay of the penalty imposed pending completion of the due- process procedures.
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 class. Students who have "unexcused absences" or "skipped" class periods will be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activity contests or performances until that instructional time is made up and/or absence is verified with building administration.
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 at least one half day unless prior arrangements have been made with the administration.  
Exceptions may be made for extenuating circumstances, such as doctor/dentist appointments or family emergencies. The exception must be approved by the Principal or Athletic Director.

### **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 should show evidence of sincere effort towards scholastic achievement. To be eligible for participation in extracurricular activities students must:

1. Be enrolled in at least 25 credit hours in the semester of participation.
2. Maintain passing grades in all courses. A student who is not passing two 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 failing no more than one class.
3. Academic requirements do not apply to:
  - (A) Instructional field trips which are a part of the scheduled course learning experience; or
  - (B) Activities or events which are a part of the student's grade requirements.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat §§ 79-254 to 79-296

Date of Adoption: amended February 13, 2012

#### CHANGING SPORTS

Individuals may be allowed to change sports during a season but are encouraged they do so within 10 days after the season starts. EXCEPTION: If both coaches involved agree that changing sports is for the benefit of the student involved or the coach of the new sport agrees that it is ok. If a student switches sports after he has practiced or participated in one sport then NSAA rules restrict the student from practice or competition for seven school days.

#### PRACTICE TIMES AND PROCEDURES

Practice times will be set up by the individual coach. All athletes are expected to be on the field or court at the time designated by the coach. If an athlete cannot be at practice, he/she must contact the coach before practice begins. Each coach may have specific attendance requirements or procedures for athletes to follow.

Practices held when school is not in session (vacations and holidays, etc.) must be approved in advance. Practices will NOT be allowed when school is dismissed early or called off due to weather. ALL DOORS MUST BE LOCKED AND EVERYONE OUT WHEN LEAVING. COACHES LEAVE LAST!!!!

Every coach should know the legal aspects involved with negligence and liability. Be prudent in all you do and make sure that you or an assistant is always supervising all phases of your locker room facilities, practices, and games.

#### ATTENDANCE GAME DAY

An athlete must be in school at least one-half day the day of a game in order to participate. Absences for school sponsored activities, dental and doctor appointments, as well as circumstances beyond their control may be exceptions to this rule. If an athlete is gone for any reason on a game day, please check with the office to find out if an exception has been made. Only the administration has the right to make exceptions to this rule.

#### PRACTICES ON WEDNESDAY AND SUNDAY

According to the Nebraska School Activities Association, no activity contest may be scheduled on Sunday. In addition to this, the school wishes to work cooperatively with

the churches in the community. All Wednesday practices must be completed and lockers cleared out by 6:00 p.m. Any Sunday activities must be limited to afternoons only and must not be required. The exceptions to these guidelines are as follows:

A Wednesday varsity football or volleyball by NSAA scheduled activity.

A Sunday athletic practice prior to a varsity event on Monday or when an athletic team is in the state district play-off on Monday or graduation in May.

#### INCLEMENT WEATHER

In Nebraska, strong storm systems often come bringing with it heavy rain, snow, ice, and occasionally hail and tornadoes. It is important that we are clear on what coaches and sponsors will do during severe weather conditions.

If school must be cancelled or dismissed early because of inclement weather, practices and contests will be postponed/ cancelled as a rule. Certified staff members are directly responsible for all students under their supervision at any school sponsored activity. When severe weather strikes, staff members will determine in their best judgment, what action will be in the best interest for the safety of the students.

Coaches will make every effort to keep school officials and parents informed of any changes from the normal routine if weather becomes an issue. No student will be released to anyone other than their parent/guardian, or an adult designated by the parent or guardian.

#### TRANSPORTATION

School transportation will be provided to all contests or practices away from Minden. Students are expected to ride to and from contests with the team. In no case may an athlete drive his/her own car. Middle school students who are used as student managers for high school teams will not be released from school to attend away events with the high school team. These students may travel with the team when travel departure times occur after the school day has ended. Coaches are responsible for getting transportation requests and departure times to the Activities Director at the beginning of the season to ensure arrangements have been made.

#### ACTIVITIES DEPARTMENT TRAVEL POLICY- TRANSPORTATION WAIVER

Any student participating in a Minden activity sponsored trip is expected to ride to an event with the team. Participants are allowed to be transported following an event by a parent or guardian (parent/guardian must complete the sign out sheet with the designated coach). If a participant is riding from an event with anyone except for a parent/guardian, a student transportation waiver needs to be completed, approved, and filed with the high school office before noon the day prior to the event. Please stop by any office to pick up a waiver or download one from the district website.

All students riding in a school vehicle equipped with seat belts must wear the seat belts at all times when the vehicle is moving.

#### HEALTH & SAFETY

Every coach should check daily on the aspects of safety on the field, gym, locker room, etc., as well as the overall health of players. Any hazard to safety should be brought to the attention of the Activities Director. No one is allowed in the building without a coach or faculty sponsor.

#### USE OF WEIGHT ROOM

A program will be made available in the weight room for use by all athletes. All athletes using the weight room must also be supervised. There are no exceptions to this rule.

#### VIDEO TAPING

Video tape equipment is available for use with all school sponsored activities. Each coach should make his/her own arrangements for having contests taped. We now have the indoor and will have an outdoor camera to use at those sites.

### PICTURES

The Activities Director, along with the head coach, will arrange a time and place for all team pictures. Make sure that your team or group is ready to go at the designated time.

### PARENT'S NIGHT

A parents' night will be scheduled to honor the parents for all the time and effort they have put into the season. Complimentary admissions will be made available. The Activities Director will make the necessary arrangements for these events.

## LETTERING REQUIREMENTS

### FOOTBALL

- Athlete must complete the sport season.
- Athlete must attend all practices and contest unless excused by the coach.
- Athlete must comply with all school and athletic policies and training requirements. An athlete must play in twice as many quarters as the number of games scheduled on the varsity level.
- The coach may recommend granting of a letter in case of injury or other extenuating circumstances.

### VOLLEYBALL

- Athletes must complete the sport season.
- Athlete must attend all practices and contests unless excused by the coach.
- Athlete must comply will all school and athletic policies and training requirements.
- Athlete must play in 8 varsity games.
- Athlete may earn credit towards lettering by attending 18 of the summer weight/agility workouts offered to all students (18 weight/agility workouts would count for 3 games. 3 is the max)
- The coach may recommend granting of a letter in case of injury or other extenuating circumstances.

### CROSS COUNTRY

- Athlete must complete the sport season and be in good standing.
- Athlete must attend all practices and contests unless excused by the coach.
- Athlete must comply with all school and athletic policies and training requirements.
- Athlete can attain a letter by accomplishing earning (4) pts. During the season.
  - 1 pt. For completed logbook
  - 1 pt. For each time you are a top 6 runner
  - 1pt. For running under 23:00 (G) or 19:00 (B) in 5K
  - 1pt. If you qualify for state
  - 1pt. If the team qualifies for state
  - 1pt. For a 3m PPM or longer
    - @ 7:20 for Girls
    - @ 6:20 for Boys
- All seniors will letter who are in good standing.
- Freshmen may earn a letter.

-The coach may recommend granting of a letter in case of injury or other extenuating circumstances.

## BASKETBALL

-Athlete must complete the sport season.

-Athlete must attend all practices and contests unless excused by the coach.

-Athlete must comply with all school and athletic policies and training requirements.

-An athlete must play in 4 game quarters less than the total number of regularly scheduled games in a season.

-The coach may recommend granting of a letter in case of injury or other extenuating circumstances.

## WRESTLING

-Be a good teammate.

-Be Punctual to all practices and contests.

-Advance from Championship Semifinals to Finals in a varsity contest.

-Score 30 varsity team points or more.

-Qualify for State!

-The coach may recommend granting a letter in case of injury or any other extenuating circumstances.

## TRACK

-Athlete must complete the sport season and be in good standing.

-Athlete must attend all practices and contests unless excused by the coach.

-Athlete must comply with all school and athletic policies and training requirements.

-Place (score) in 3 meets.

-Freshmen/Sophomore meets can only be counted once.

-All seniors will letter who are in good standing

-Freshmen may earn a letter in varsity track and field.

-The coach may recommend granting of a letter in case of injury or other extenuating circumstances.

## GOLF

-Athlete must complete the sport season.

-Athlete must attend all practices and contests unless excused by the coach.

-Athlete must comply with all school and athletic policies and training requirements.

-Must compete once as a varsity team member.

-The coach may recommend granting of a letter in case of injury or other extenuating circumstances.

## SOFTBALL

-Athlete must complete the sport season

-Athlete must attend all practices and contests unless excused by the coach.

-Athlete must comply with all school and athletic policies and training requirements.

-Must compete in 8 Varsity games.

-The coach may recommend granting of a letter in case of injury or other extenuating circumstances.

### INJURIES

In the event that an athlete becomes injured, the coach will administer emergency first aid as needed. The parents or guardians will be notified as soon as possible so they may transport the athlete for medical attention, or notified that the rescue squad was called to transport the athlete if a serious injury has occurred. It is recommended that each coach take with them emergency information for each athlete.

All injuries must be reported to the coach at once.

The coach will then take the necessary actions to ensure the safety of the athlete. The coach will need to fill out an accident report for the more serious and keep a log of all injuries during the season.

### INSURANCE

The Minden Public Schools provide NO insurance coverage. Students are required to be insured before they are allowed to compete in interscholastic athletics. This information is addressed on the parent signature form. Insurance forms are available in the office for students.

### CONTESTS ON SCHOOL DAYS

When teachers are to be absent from school due to competition or to attend school-sponsored events, coaches/sponsors needing substitutes must make a request at least one week in advance so arrangements can be made. A leave of absence form needs to be filled out online. **Detailed lesson plans are required for all classes the coach/sponsor will be missing including class- roster, class - procedure/times, lesson/unit objectives, activities towards reaching objectives and closure.**

### GAME DAY PREPARATIONS

Each coach should check with the Activities Director to be sure all final arrangements have been made for game day. Track coaches are expected to have the field ready for each track meet. Basketball, volleyball, and wrestling coaches are expected to help get the gym set up for their contests according to their needs. The Activities Director will oversee all preparations and will help whenever possible. Coaches are also reminded to check the absences to see if any athletes are missing from school.

### FIRST OF THE YEAR AND END OF YEAR REPORTS

All sponsors/coaches must submit reports to the athletic/activities director. The first of the year report includes program information, rosters, and eligibility reports. This information must be submitted at least 10 days prior to the first contest. Coaches and sponsors also need to update this list as rosters change throughout the season. The athletic director will complete and forward all eligibility forms to the Nebraska School Activities Association. Coaches and sponsors will also be responsible for turning in end of the year reports to the Activities Director on forms provided. This report will include the names of students completing the season, next year's proposed budget, names of letter winners and participants, schedules played and results, new records that were established, special honors received, summary of the season, suggestions for improvement, a complete and accurate inventory, and evaluation of assistant coaches.

### ELIGIBILITY REPORTS

Students' eligibility for all NSAA activities is governed by the Bylaws of the Nebraska School Activities Association and the Minden Public Schools athletic/activity eligibility guidelines.

### ACTIVITIES BUDGET PROCEDURE

Head coaches are responsible for preparing a budget for their respective activities, based on their equipment and supply needs for the upcoming year. Budget request forms will be handed out at the end of the season and will be returned to the Activities Director.

### PURCHASING EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

All purchases must have either a purchase order or requisition form. This includes items that will come out of your individual accounts. **Please do not order anything and charge it to the high school.**

### DONATIONS

Due to the sensitivity of donations, please refer all persons or entities to the Activities Director regarding donations.

### FUNDRAISERS

All Fundraisers must be approved by the Activities Director, High School Principal and Superintendent.

The Fundraiser forms will be provided by and submitted to the Activities Director. Make sure to plan, fill out the form and get those approved prior to doing a fundraiser. All fundraiser money will be deposited and handled through a Minden Public Schools account in the central office.

### DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

All coaches and sponsors are expected to work with the media in reporting results from activities. Following contests, each head coach/sponsor or assigned assistant should report scores and other necessary information. Phone numbers are listed in the front of this packet, or you may use the fax machine in the office.

### Reporting Scores/Statistics

Coaches are expected to report their game scores and statistics to local press including the Minden Courier in time for it to make the next day/week paper.

### ROSTERS AND GAME PROGRAMS

Coaches need to get a list of athletes to the Activities Director/Office as soon as possible when their season starts so we can get those students put on the NSAA Eligibility List for each individual activity. Coaches need to get updated rosters for all upcoming contests that require programs to the Activities Director. If there are changes that occur during the year, please inform the Activities Director so that these changes can be made before programs are printed.

### MEALS AND LODGING

Head coaches/sponsors who need meal or lodging arrangements will need to see the Activities Director. These arrangements need to be made one week in advance and the number that will be going. Upon return, all receipts and excess money is to be turned into the Activities Director.

### MEALS AND LODGING FOR STATE ACTIVITIES

The Activities Director will take care of lodging reservations for all qualifiers and coaches. Coaches may take their spouse. Only those athletes that qualify and their coaches will be considered an official member of the party. Coaches may submit a

request to include alternates, student managers and statisticians if the number of qualifiers would indicate the need. Meals will be provided at a per diem rate Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner for all official members of the party. Coaches must return unused funds to the A.D.

Exceptions to any of the above must be approved by the Activities Director and the Principal.

#### SCOUTING

The head coach may assign assistants to the scout. School vehicles, if available, should be used first, then if none are available, your own vehicle. When a coach is required to use his/her own vehicle, mileage will be paid at a rate determined annually. Please let the Activities Director know beforehand.

#### SUSPENSION

Any coach suspending an athlete should turn in a written report to the Activities Director explaining the circumstances for the suspension. **Any area involving this should be a part of the coach's rules explained to athletes prior to the beginning of the season.** This will keep the AD from being blindsided and give them information in case of a phone call. The Activities Director or Principal will make independent investigations of any violations which may result in suspension from activities.

#### OFF-SEASON PROGRAMS

Coaches are encouraged to conduct off-season programs to promote increased athletic skills, however these programs are not to interfere with programs which are currently in-season anyway.

All coaches should encourage athletes to participate in sports that are in season. All off-season programs must follow the NSAA athletic bylaws for out of season programs, conditioning and open gyms. These programs must be properly supervised at all times.

#### KEYS OR KEY FOBS

Keys are not to be loaned out to students for any reason. Any person who is coaching an activity in one of the schools, but is not teaching in the district, may check out keys from the Activities Director/Principals at the beginning of the season and are to return them at the end of the season unless special arrangements have been made.

#### EQUIPMENT STORAGE AND INVENTORY

Coaches and sponsors must keep equipment/uniforms and facilities picked up, organized and locked up at all times to allow for other groups to use the facilities and to prevent vandalism and theft. Each head coach is responsible for the distribution and collection of all uniforms and equipment. After the end of the season, the coach must submit a list of members who have not returned their equipment, along with a description of what is missing, and the value of each item. This list should be turned into the front office as soon as possible. It is very important to keep accurate records on your inventory.

All equipment and supplies must be properly stored. The Activities Director must be made aware of all storage areas for all equipment and given access to all storage areas. Be sure a list has been turned in.

#### NSAA RULES MEETINGS

Head coaches are reminded that they must attend one NSAA sponsored rules meetings for your particular sport or complete the online rules meeting provided by the NSAA. Head coaches are asked to relay information on to all of their assistants.

### NSAA DECEMBER MORATORIUM POLICY

The NSAA has adopted a 5 day moratorium in December. During these five days, the following rules are to be followed by all levels of activities:

- All high school facilities and/or any other facilities used by high schools for competitive or practice purposes are not to be used by high school students or coaches/sponsors for competitive or practice purposes.
- There shall be no staff members present for any interscholastic activity practice in activities under the jurisdiction of the NSAA.
- There shall be no group interscholastic activity practice or competition either on or outside school premises under the supervision of school employees or anyone who has been associated with the school team or group as a volunteer coach or coach's aid.

The school facility may be open for recreational programs provided the facility is leased or rented by the city or other recreational organization and these groups sponsor and supervise the activities.

Any questions on interpretation should be directed to the Activities Director.

### HIRING OFFICIALS

All head coaches are encouraged to submit a list of officials for the next contest year at the beginning of the current sport season so contacts can be made during the current season. The Activities Director will then hire those officials that are available whenever possible.

### INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENTS

The Activities Director will be assigned tournament director. The Activities Director will be assisted by the head coach of that sporting event.

### SCHEDULING OF GAMES

Schedules are made by the Activities Director in cooperation with the head coach. Coaches are not to schedule any event without first getting authorization from the Activities Director. Input and ideas will be welcomed before any decisions will be made.

### COACHING CLINICS

Coaches are encouraged to attend clinics for their particular sport or activity. Requests to attend clinics need to be made with the Principal/Activities Director well in advance of the clinic. Clinics that interfere with class time will be strongly discouraged. The Activities Director and Principal will have the final OK in deciding whether coaches may attend a particular clinic. Coaches attending clinics that will interfere with class time must request for substitutes with the Principal well in advance of the clinic. Head coaches who would like to attend national clinics should get that approved and budget for these items the previous year. Limited meals, room, transportation, and registration will be paid for head coaches only, and receipts must be turned in (see policy governing those trips).

All coaches will have the NCA clinic paid along with rooms at one site provided by the school for everyone. Coaches must keep detailed receipts for meals and turn those along with an expense reimbursement voucher to the Activities Director at the conclusion of the NCA Clinic. Coaches must pay for their NCA dues. Head Coaches may attend out-of-state clinics but the school will only pay for the clinic fee.

## EVALUATIONS

Evaluations for head coaches will be done by the Activities Director. This will be a season-long process and will include an evaluation of practices, games, dealing with student-athletes, working with the Activities Director, and dealing with the community. A written evaluation will be completed at the end of the season. The head coach, with input from the Activities Director, will complete evaluations for all assistant coaches. These forms will be included in the end of the year packets.

## COACH/ASSISTANT COACH/SPONSOR EVALUATION FORMS

See attachments

[Head Coach Evaluation Form](#)

[Assistant Coach Evaluation Form](#)

# MINDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Club/Activity Sponsor Performance Evaluation

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating Scale: 3 = Superior 2 = Satisfactory 1 = Needs Improvement NA = Not Applicable

### PROFESSIONALISM

- Works cooperatively with the Activities Director on all aspects of the program. 3 2 1 NA
- Follows procedures & policies set forth by the School, District, NSAA & State. 3 2 1 NA
- Does not let sponsorship duties interfere with classroom obligations. 3 2 1 NA
- Conducts themselves in a positive manner as a member of Minden Public Schools. 3 2 1 NA

### ADMINISTRATIVE & ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

- Provides effective supervision of participants. 3 2 1 NA
- Provides fair & consistent discipline (if needed). 3 2 1 NA
- Exercises fiscal responsibility in regards to budget management (if applicable). 3 2 1 NA
- Uses proactive planning & communication in regards to reports, rosters, registrations, inventories, banquets, etc... 3 2 1 NA

### MANAGEMENT & PERFORMANCE

- Maintains well-organized & effective meetings, events & activities for the participants. 3 2 1 NA
- Demonstrates knowledge, enthusiasm, dedication & commitment in regards to providing a positive experience for all participants. 3 2 1 NA
- Student involvement with the Club/Activity is productive & has a positive impact the atmosphere and climate of the Minden School District. 3 2 1 NA

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Activities Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*Signing this form indicates that the sponsor has reviewed the form & may write a written response regarding any information they feel is inaccurate in regards to the evaluation.