

Special Board of Education Meeting

Tuesday, July 23, 2024 12:00 PM

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



Minutes

1. **GPS Board of Education Information**

Absent: Tracy Wiese, **Present:** Brian Copsey, Josh Lacy, John Maser, B.J. Peters, Greg Trautman.

2. **Opening Procedures**

2.1. Call to Order

President, Brian Copsey, called this meeting to order at 11:00am.

2.2. Roll Call

2.3. Open Meetings Act

3. **Reports and Discussions**

4. **Public Comments: 204.12**

5. **Action Items**

5.1. Discuss, consider, and take action regarding the approval of the 2024-25 school year Substitute Handbook.

5.2. Discuss, consider, and take action regarding the approval of the 2024-25 school year Classified Handbook.

5.3. Discuss, consider, and take action regarding the approval of the 2024-25 school year LINKS Handbook.

5.4. Discuss, consider, and take action regarding the approval of the 24-25 school year contract between Gering Public Schools and Jamie Selzer, Occupational Therapist.

5.5. Discuss, consider, and take action regarding the approval of the 2024-25 school year, **Student Fees (Policy 504.19).**

President, Brian Copsey opened the public hearing about Student Fees at 11:10 am. There were patron comments, and the open hearing was closed at 11:11 am.

5.6. Discuss, consider, and take action regarding the approval of the 2024-25 school year meal prices.

6. **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 am.

2024-25



**Gering Public Schools
Substitute Teacher Handbook**



Substitute Teacher Handbook

GERING

BULLDOGS

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

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

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

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

Committed to you,

308-436-3125
308-633-4376 (direct)

(office)

Scheduling Substitute Assignments

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

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

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

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

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

Reporting For Duty

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

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

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

Dress Code

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

Identification Badges

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

Pay Rate

As per Board Policy# 411.01, the daily rate of pay for substitute teachers is set by the Board of Education. **Effective August 1, 2024**, the rates of pay are as follows:

Days of Service / School Year	LOCAL Substitute Permits & Certified Nurses	CERTIFIED Substitutes	Substitute Secretaries & Paraprofessionals
1-30	\$150 / day	\$150 / day	\$13.50 / hour
31-60	\$150 / day	\$160 / day	
61+	\$150 / day	\$175 / day	

Long-term (continuous assignment) certified substitute teachers who are temporarily employed to provide substitute teaching services for an anticipated, planned period of time to exceed 30 working days. Beginning the sixteenth (16th) consecutive day in the same classroom, the per diem rate of pay will be 1/189 of the beginning teacher base salary.

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

Substitute teachers do not have property rights to the position for which they are

providing a service. They may be considered as candidates for the position for which they are substituting if the contracted employee is unable to return. However, in this event, the substitute teacher must meet all other hiring criteria in comparison to the other candidates for the position and are subject to approval by the Board of Education.

Payroll Procedures for Substitutes

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

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

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

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

Early Release Pay

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



School Building Information

Geil Elementary 436-2545	7:55 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Early release on Wednesday at 2:15 p.m.
Lincoln Elementary 436-2350	7:55 a.m. to 3:23 p.m. Early release on Wednesday at 2:15 p.m.
Northfield Elementary 436-2545	7:55 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Early release on Wednesday at 2:15 p.m.
Junior High 436-3123	8:00 a.m. to 3:24 p.m. Early release on Wednesday at 2:18 p.m.
High School 436-3121	8:00 a.m. to 3:35 p.m. Early release on Wednesday at 2:15 p.m.
Preschool 632-8670	Full Day Programs follow building schedule
	7:55 a.m. to 11:25 a.m. 12:00 a.m. - 3:35 p.m. (Half Day Programs)

	Monday – Tuesday – Thursday – Friday No PreK on Wed for HALF DAY ONLY!
Central Office 436-3125	8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Monday – Thursday) 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Friday's)

Substitute Teaching Eligibility

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

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

certificate expires six (6) months from the date of issuance and cannot be renewed.

Newly Retired Teachers

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

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

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

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

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

See link below regarding FAQ's for LB147

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

Professional Responsibilities and Relationships

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

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

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

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

A dignified, businesslike, sensitive, warm, and respectful attitude toward students usually merits the respect a teacher deserves. If there are students who become major discipline problems and/or disrupt the teaching atmosphere to the extent you cannot carry on your duties, know the procedure to use in contacting the Building Principal to have the student removed. In all normal teaching situations, the substitute is expected to be able to handle the routine discipline problems and any other behavior exhibited by students.

When you leave the classroom at the end of the day, please see that it is in an orderly fashion, the windows are closed and locked, and the room is locked. You should make a brief written summary of each class session including any problems encountered, areas of study not adequately covered, assignments made – a general evaluation of what happened during that period.

Once your job assignment is completed, **check out with the school secretary**, letting her know anything that happened during the day that the principal should know.

These policies are general but very important, and they pertain to all Gering Public School buildings. Individual schools will also have more specific and detailed policies which you should know if you continue substituting.

- Substitute teachers are **NOT** to use school computers for personal reasons. Equipment is provided for official school business only. Accessing personal/home email accounts on school computers is classified as unauthorized use and could result in revocation of your Gering Public Schools substituting privileges.
- Substitutes are **NOT** to use personal cell phones (or any other personal communication devices) while supervising students. However, these devices may be used during lunch breaks, etc.
- Classroom materials and supplies should be used with discretion, properly cared for during the day, and left in an orderly fashion at the end of the day.
- All money collected in the classroom for any reason should be removed from the classroom as soon as possible and turned into the principal's office in accordance with building procedures.
- If a person not connected with the school wants information about a child or permission to take a child from the room, refer the person to the principal's office.

Under no circumstances should a child be released without permission of the principal.

- In the event of major discipline problems, call the principal/assistant principal immediately. At no time should you ever administer corporal punishment.
- Students are not to be kept after school by a substitute without the principal's approval.
- All cases of accident or illness are to be reported immediately to the school office.
- Information concerning students, such as health information, etc., which may be confidential in nature, should be kept confidential by the substitute. Additionally, this information is not to be left out where others can view it, but returned immediately to the sub folder.

Substitute Teacher Tips

- 1) **Put together a substitute teacher bag.** It's a good idea to always be prepared when substitute teaching. Here are some things you can pack to bring to your substitute teaching jobs.

- * Water Bottle
- * Snacks
- *Stickers
- *Stress ball to pass around for a game
- * Sweater or jacket
- * Book
- * Extra pencils or pens
- * Cell phone (on but on silent mode)
- * Flash drive with PDF lesson plans, music, and educational videos

- 2) **Arrive early.** Try to arrive early on your first day, especially when you're substituting at a new school. Arriving early allows you to become familiar with the school, introduce yourself to the teachers in the neighboring classrooms and review the lesson plans left by the teacher for which you're substituting.

By Arriving early, you can also give yourself extra time to meet with the school administrators who can direct you to the classroom, show you where the lesson plans are located and inform you of schedule changes and other

processes.

- 3) **Create a routine for the beginning of class.** You can create a routine that you can follow every time you enter a classroom. Make your plan fit your teaching style or subject and customize it for each teaching job if necessary. Here's a sample plan you can follow:

- *Introduce yourself and write your name on the board. You can use this time to share a bit about your personality by talking about your pets or telling a funny story.

- *Use and practice an attention-getter that you'll use throughout the class

- *Take attendance. Make sure to smile and make eye contact with each student.

- *Offer a game or activity at the end of the class to motivate students to behave.

- 4) **Be understanding.** Substitute teaching can be an enjoyable experience that allows you to interact with students and participate in various activities. However, some days may present more challenges than others, and remaining calm and making necessary adjustments can help the day run more smoothly. Practice an understanding of not just your own needs, but of the needs of your students. Keep in mind that having a substitute teacher is a change to the students' routines, too.

An effective method that many substitute teachers use to reduce the stress of changing routine is to share the day's schedule with their students. Preparing students for what's to come can make transitions between activities easier. You can also set aside time to speak with students individually should they need reassurance or assurance or assistance during this time.

- 5) **Use other teachers as a resource.** Getting to know the teachers in the neighboring classrooms can be helpful. Other teachers can answer questions about the schedule and school procedures and give you general advice on making your day successful. Some may suggest alternate activities or even loan you supplies.
- 6) **Maintain control of the classroom.** You may assume that students will behave the same way as they would with their regular teacher, but that won't always be the case. At the beginning of class, introduce yourself and learn each student's name. Set clear expectations for their behavior and work, and make sure they understand that your teaching methods and procedures may differ from those of their regular teacher. Here are some classroom management strategies you can use:

- *Explain your behavior management system. You can inform

them that you want to make your time together as positive and productive as possible and that their participation can play a role in that.

*Praise positive behavior. Depending on the grade level, you may reward good behavior with small prizes, stickers or treats.

*Use reward systems. Fun rewards like erasers and stickers or extra recess can be simple, yet motivating.

7) **Consider any special needs students.** Read the lesson plans that the regular teacher left for you and consider any students with special needs. These students may follow a modified schedule, which may include leaving the room to work with other teachers and the need for additional accommodations. Be flexible and know how to adapt to the unique needs of each student.

8) **Have a backup plan.** Come with an open mindset and be ready for any situation in the classroom. Most teachers leave detailed lesson plans for substitute teachers to follow, but there may be situations where you require your own backup plan. For example, the teacher you're substituting for may have had an emergency and didn't have the time to put together a lesson plan or you may have completed an activity early and have a few extra minutes to fill.

9) **Have fun.** Even though substitute teaching may present new and potentially challenging situations, it's important to remember to have fun. Understand that not everything will always go as planned, so try to maintain a sense of humor and look for opportunities to make the day enjoyable for everyone.

An effective substitute teacher finds ways to positively engage with their students by getting to know them, introducing fun activities and keeping the overall mood of the classroom light-hearted and pleasant.

Drug-Free Schools and Workplaces

Gering Public Schools is committed to providing an employment environment that is safe and provides appropriate motivation to ensure a creative and productive workforce. To this end, the district unequivocally endorses the philosophy that the workplace should be free from the detrimental effects of illicit drugs and alcohol. It is unlawful and, therefore, absolutely prohibited for any employee of the district to:

- ❑ Engage in the unlawful manufacturing, possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs.
- ❑ Possess, use, or distribute alcohol on school premises.
- ❑ Be under the influence of illicit drugs and/or alcohol while directly supervising student activities off school property or as a part of any of the school's activities held on school property.

Inappropriate conduct outside the school environment may result in the termination of current, and/or disqualification from future employment with Gering Public Schools.

Smoke-Free Environment

It is the intent of the Board of Education to maintain a smoke-free environment within the Gering Public Schools. Our employees are one of the most valuable resources and in recognition of that, we promote the health, safety, and well-being of each individual.

Employees, substitutes, and visitors are expected to honor the non-smoking designation. Visitors will be asked to quit smoking or leave. Employees/Substitutes who violate this policy on smoking will be subject to the same disciplinary actions that accompany infractions of other school rules, up to and including termination.

NO Weapons Allowed at Gering Public Schools

While the State Legislature has passed a concealed handgun law, we want to remind you weapons are **NOT** permitted to be possessed in any of our schools, on school grounds, in a school-owned vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event.

Legal Aspects of Substituting

Supervision of Students: The substitute has a duty to keep children safe and orderly by a standard of reasonable professional judgment.

Due Care and Caution: A teacher is required to exercise due care and caution for the safety of the students in his/her charge. This means acting reasonably and with safety in mind, being able to explain circumstances and your actions, and following school safety policies

and procedures.

Release of Children: Children should not be allowed to leave the building during the school day without expressed consent from the office.

Administering Medication: Medication should only be administered by the school nurse or other appropriate health personnel.

Confidentially: It is unprofessional and against the law to disclose confidential information about your students. Avoid comments about individual students that convey private information, i.e. grades, medical condition, learning or discipline problems, etc.

Anecdotal Records: Maintaining notes on particular incidents in the classroom can protect you from problematic situations. If you feel that a classroom occurrence might be questioned, note the date and time, the individuals involved, the choices for action considered, and actions taken.

Discipline Policies: The school district's policy is NO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT. When sending a student to the principal due to discipline matters, the substitute teacher maintains the duties of supervision and due care of both the individual child and the remainder of the class. Send a child to bring someone from the office to intervene, or have another teacher watch your class.

Dangerous Situations: A substitute teacher is responsible for making sure the learning environment is safe, such as the arrangement of desks so as not to block exits and proper supervision during the use of potentially dangerous classroom equipment. Planned activities in physical education, science, shop, or home economics class may be uncomfortable for the substitute teacher. In such cases, the substitute teacher may choose to do an alternative activity that they feel they can conduct safely. Notify the principal in advance if lesson plans are changed.

BLOODBORNE

PATHOGENS

Hepatitis B (HBV): In the United States, approximately 300,000 people are infected with HBV annually. Of these cases, a small percentage is fatal.

“Hepatitis” means “inflammation of the liver”, and, as its name implies, Hepatitis B is a virus that infects the liver. While there are several different types of hepatitis, HBV is transmitted primarily through “blood to blood” contact. HBV initially causes inflammation of the liver, but it can lead to more serious conditions such as cirrhosis and liver cancer.

There is no “cure” or specific treatment for HBV, but many people who contract the disease will develop antibodies that help them get over the infection and protect them from getting it again. It is important to note that infection with HBV will not stop someone from getting another type of hepatitis.

The hepatitis B virus is very durable and can survive in dried blood for up to seven days. For this reason, this virus is the primary concern for custodians. Knowledge of bloodborne pathogens is an important factor for the safety of Gering Public School employees and its students.

Symptoms of HBV:

The symptoms of HBV are very much like a mild “flu”. Initially, there is a sense of fatigue, possible stomach pain, loss of appetite, and even nausea. As the disease continues to develop, jaundice (a distinct yellowing of the skin and eyes) and darkened urine will occur. However, people who are infected with HBV will often show no symptoms for some time. After exposure, it can take one to nine months before symptoms become noticeable. Loss of appetite and stomach pain, for example, commonly appears within 1-3 months but can occur as soon as two weeks or as long as 6-9 months after infection.

Transmission

Infected blood can enter your system through open sores, cuts, abrasions, acne, and any sort of damage or broken skin such as sunburn or blisters. Bloodborne pathogens may also be transmitted through the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose, and mouth.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV):

AIDS, or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, is caused by a virus called the Human Immuno-deficiency Virus or HIV. Once a person has been infected with HIV, it may be many years before AIDS actually develops. HIV attacks the body’s immune system weakening it so that it cannot fight other deadly diseases. AIDS is a fatal disease and while treatment for it is improving, there is no known cure.

Gering Public Schools custodians and employees who clean restrooms or assist with toileting procedures must be aware of HBV and HIV modes of transmission.

HIV is very fragile and will not survive very long outside of the human body. It is primarily of concern to employees providing first aid or medical care in situations involving fresh blood or other potentially infectious materials. It is estimated that the chances of contracting HIV in a workplace environment are only 0.4%. However, because it is such a devastating disease, all precautions must be taken to avoid exposure.

HIV infection essentially occurs in three broad stages. The first stage happens when a person is actually infected with HIV. After the initial infection, a person may show few or no signs of illness for many years. Eventually, in the second stage, an individual may begin to suffer swollen lymph glands or other lesser diseases which begin to take advantage of the body's weakened immune system. The second stage is believed to eventually lead to AIDS, the third and final stage. In this stage, the body becomes completely unable to fight off life-threatening diseases and infections. Symptoms of HIV infection can vary, but often include weakness, fever, sore throat, nausea, headaches, diarrhea, a white coating on the tongue, weight loss, and swollen lymph glands.

Modes of Transmission

HBV and HIV can be transmitted through

- **Sexual contact**
- **Sharing of hypodermic needles**
- **From mothers to their babies at or before birth**
- **Accidental puncture from contaminated needles, broken glass, or other sharps**
- **Contact between mucous membranes and infected body fluids such as saliva (in dental procedures) and any body fluid that is visibly contaminated with blood**

Universal Precautions

Universal precautions are simple infection control measures that reduce the risk of transmission of bloodborne pathogens through exposure to blood or body fluids. Under the "universal precaution" principle, blood and body fluids from all persons should be considered as infected with HIV, regardless of the known or supposed status of a person. Infected blood can enter your system through open sores, cuts, abrasions, acne, and any sort of damage or broken skin such as sunburn or blisters. Bloodborne pathogens may also be transmitted through the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose, and mouth. Some infections that can be transmitted through contact with blood and body fluids include:

- HIV
- Strep Infections
- Syphilis
- Malaria
- Chicken Pox
- Herpes
- Blood infections
- Hepatitis A, B, C
- Pneumonia
- TB
- Measles
- Gastroenteritis-Salmonella and Shigella
- Urinary tract infections

Universal Precaution in School

For the most part, the use of universal precautions will consist of the use of gloves when handling blood or body secretions. Make sure that you have gloves, available to you, and they should be worn when there is potential for mucous membrane, hand or skin contact with blood, body fluids containing visible blood, other body fluids, other potentially infectious material or items, and surfaces contaminated with these materials.

Gloves should be worn any time a provider (that is you):



- ☐ Has an open lesion on the hands
- ☐ Handles contaminated disposable items such as tissues, diapers, clothing, etc.
- ☐ Has any hand contact with blood or body fluids
- ☐ Especially when providing clean-up of body fluid spills such as vomit, blood, feces, urine, etc. when rendering first aid and diapering assistance

Remember to remove your soiled gloves and wash your hands before touching any cabinets, doorknobs or items other people may come in contact with.

Avoid accidental injuries by sharp items. Puncture-resistant containers marked with the biohazard symbol should be used for the disposal of used needles, syringes, and other sharp items. Red trash bags must be used and disposed of properly for any items containing blood or other body fluids.

Begin by attending to the injured person:



- ☐ Whenever blood and body fluids are present, a barrier (latex rubber gloves, thick layer of paper towels or cloth) should be used to minimize exposure of the attending person while the injury is cleaned and/or dressed.

Wear face protection (face shield) during procedures that are likely to generate droplets of blood or body fluid to prevent exposure to mucous membranes of the mouth, nose, and eyes.

- ☐ Wear protective body clothing when there is a potential for the splashing of blood or body fluids.
- ☐ Soiled clothes of the injured person must be bagged to be sent home.
- ☐ Place waste in a plastic bag for disposal.
- ☐ Remove gloves, dispose and secure in a plastic bag.
- ☐ Change clothing if another person's blood or body fluid gets onto your clothes.
- ☐ Immediately apply soap.

- Thoroughly wash hands with soap by rubbing hands together (avoid scrubbing hands).
- Pay particular attention to fingertips, nails, and jewelry.
- Rinse with fingers pointing downward.
- If running water and soap are not immediately available, a waterless antiseptic cleaner or moist towelette may be used until hands can be thoroughly washed (use of antiseptic cleaner or towelette is NOT a substitute for hand washing). WASH HANDS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Clean and disinfect environmental surfaces:

- Whenever cleaning and disinfecting environmental surfaces in which blood and body fluids are present, a barrier (rubber utility gloves durable enough to withstand environmental cleaning and disinfecting, a thick layer of paper towels or cloth) should be placed between the blood and the attending person. Use disposable paper towels or other disposable materials to remove blood and body fluids.
- Disinfect the affected area(s) and cleaning tools with a commercial tuberculocidal disinfectant (mixed according to manufacturer's specifications) or bleach solution (approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of common household bleach per gallon of tap water, mixed fresh daily). The affected surface being disinfected should remain wet for several minutes.
- Secure all waste in a plastic bag for disposal.

Wash your hands:



- Before drinking or eating
- Before handling clean utensils, equipment, or food
- After going to the bathroom
- After contact with body secretions
- After handling any soiled diapers, garments, or equipment
- After caring for kids – especially those with any body secretion discharges

Protect Yourself from Contracting an Infectious Disease

- Avoid rubbing or touching your eyes.
- Refrain from kissing or being kissed.
- Use your own personal care items such as drinking glasses and utensils (unless shared items are properly cleaned).

- If you are working in an area where there is a reasonable likelihood of exposure, you should never eat, drink, smoke, apply cosmetics or lip balm or handle contact lenses.



Learners Today
LEADERS TOMORROW

Classified Staff Handbook

2024-25 School Year

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Notice of Nondiscrimination

(Board Policies 103, 402.1, 501)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Equal Employment Opportunity

(Board Policies 402.01, 406.02, 412.02)

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

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

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

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

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

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

Introduction

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

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

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

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

School Mission Statement

Educational Philosophy of Gering Public School

(Policy 102)

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

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

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

5. Integrated, planned curriculum that:

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

Board of Education

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

Name:	Board Committee:	Service Details:	Email:
B.J. Peters, <i>Vice President</i>	Curriculum & Personnel	Elected in 2004; current term expires in 2024.	bjpeters@geringschools.net
Brian Copsey, <i>President</i>	Facilities & Finance	Elected in 2015; current term expires in 2022.	bcopsey@geringschools.net
Josh Lacy	Facilities & Finance	Elected in 2017; current term expires in 2024.	jlacy@geringschools.net
Greg Trautman	Facilities & Finance	Elected in 2023; current term expires in 2027.	gtrautman@geringschools.net
Tracy Wiese	Curriculum & Personnel	Elected in 2021; current term expires in 2024.	twiese@geringschools.net
John Maser	Curriculum & Personnel	Elected in 2023; current term expires in 2027.	jmaser@geringschools.net

District Facilities

Building:	Address:	Phone Number:	Hours of Operation:
Central Office	1519 10th Street	(308) 436-3125	7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Geil Elementary	1600 D Street	(308) 436-2545	7:55 a.m. - 3:25 p.m.
Lincoln Elementary	1725 13th Street	(308) 436-2350	7:50 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.
Northfield Elementary	1900 Flatten Ave.	(308) 436-5555	7:55 a.m. - 3:25 p.m.
Gering Middle School	800 Q Street	(308) 436-3123	8:00 a.m.-3:24 p.m.
Gering High School	1500 U Street	(308) 436-3121	8:00 a.m.-3:35 p.m.

Administrative Staff

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

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

For other staff contacts, visit the district website at www.geringschools.net
School Calendars and Schedules

The school district calendar is found in Appendix A.

Staff work calendars are provided in Appendix B.

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

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

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

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

District Summer Hours: The district will open normal business hours during the summer month. Those hours are from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Weather-Related Closure or Impacts: A decision to close school is made when forecasts by the weather service and civil defense officials indicate that it would be unwise for students to go to school. If possible, a decision about the next school day will be made by 9 p.m. for announcement during the 10 p.m. news. An early decision is not always possible because of uncertain weather conditions. School officials will make periodic assessments of conditions during the night and will decide early in the morning (by 6 a.m. if possible) whether to have school or not.

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

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

Severe Weather During the School Day: The Superintendent of Schools is authorized by the Board of Education to close school in case of severe weather. Every attempt will be made to avoid closing school once classes are in session.

In some instances, closing school during the day is inevitable if children are to safely return home before the brunt of a major storm hits. In these cases, as much advance notice as possible will be given. If school is closed during the day, staff will be notified by Administrative Staff and families will be notified via media broadcast and Infinite Campus messenger when possible.

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

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

Chapter I: Records

Personnel Records

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

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

Chapter II: Orientation

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

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

EEO – Equal Employment Opportunities

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

Immigration Reform and Control Act (I-9)

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

Chapter III: Employee Classification, Recruitment, Hiring and Wages

Employee Classification

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

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

Recruitment and Selection

This district secures quality personnel through effective recruitment.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hiring

Recommendations

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

Release of Information

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

Credit for Past Employment

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

Transfer

Any classified employee wishing to transfer from one position to another shall submit an online internal application to the Superintendent or designee. All transfers will be considered by the building principal or supervisor but are not guaranteed. A meeting will be held between the appropriate staff to determine salary placement on the schedule.

Involuntary Transfers

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

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

Wages (Board Policy 412 & 413)

Salary Schedule: See Appendices (Salary Schedules Need added)

A salary schedule will be developed annually for all classified positions. The basic compensation of each employee shall be set forth in the salary schedule as approved by the Gering Public Schools Board of Education or be compensated at the discretion of the Superintendent/Business Manager. If the classified employee's annual performance evaluation is satisfactory, the employee will annually advance a step on the salary schedule. Please note that we consider wage and salary information to be CONFIDENTIAL.

Compensation and Related Benefits

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

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

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

Salary Checks and Deductions

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

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

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

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

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

Overtime Pay

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

Chapter IV: Laws

Nondiscrimination (Board Policy 402.1)

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

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

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

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

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

Facilities for Milk Expression (Board Policy 404.11)

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

Chapter V: Attendance, Absences

Attendance

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

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

Arrival to Duty Assignments

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

Leaving School

Employees are to be on duty at all times during their assigned work day. Employees may not leave

school or their assigned area during duty hours without approval of the principal. Employees who leave the school during their designated lunch period must check out at the principal's office or designated area. Employees who leave during the work hours for an approved absence must clock out and check out with the principal's office or their supervisor when leaving, and check back in and clock back in upon returning. Employees who need to leave during the school day for reasons of illness or emergency are to check out with the principal's office or their supervisor.

Chapter VI: Benefits

Medical/Health Insurance

Gering Public Schools offers Insurance benefits to employees who are deemed full time under the PPACA guidelines. The district pays ½ of a "single" premium for any qualifying employee. Classified staff who are not deemed full time under the PPACA guidelines have the opportunity to participate in the school district's health care program by assuming the obligation for their own monthly premium payments.

Flexible Benefit Plan (SelectFlex)

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

Worker's Compensation

All employees of the school district are covered by Worker's Compensation Insurance.

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

Long Term Disability

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

Retirement

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

All members of the Retirement System will contribute the required percentage of 9.78% established by NPERS. The school district will match that contribution 101%. A member who terminates employment with Gering Public Schools may:

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

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

Tax Sheltered Annuities

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

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

Life Insurance

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

COBRA

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Staff Passes

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

Leaves

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

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

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

Sick Leave (Board Policy 415.2)

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

- 9 month employees or those who work less than 40 hours per week -- Sick leave will be accumulated at a rate of 0.56 days per month worked.
- 10 and 12 month employees who work 40 hours per week -- Sick leave will be accumulated at a rate of 0.67 days per month worked.

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

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

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

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

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

Maternity Leave

1. All policies, rules, and regulations applicable to employees who are granted sick leave shall be applicable to employees applying for maternity leave.
2. Written notification for maternity leave shall be submitted to the building principal where the employee is assigned early enough so that arrangements can be made for a long term substitute. The employee will meet with the Payroll Office to complete any required paperwork.

3. Sick leave benefits for maternity shall begin when the doctor certifies that the employee is no longer able to perform her duties. The paid leave ends when the doctor certifies that the employee is fully recovered from disability resulting from delivery and recovery there from.
4. When the doctor certifies that the employee is fully recovered from the temporary disability, the employee is expected to return to employment, unless the employee requests to take unpaid leave entitled to them under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993. If the employee chooses to take FMLA leave, she will be entitled to unpaid leave for no more than a total of 12 weeks, accumulated between the above paid leave with unpaid leave.

Sick Leave Bank

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

Adoption leave

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

Personal Leave

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

Military Leave

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

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

military leave. A minimum of two weeks, either before or after, must separate ordinary vacation leave from military leave.

Family Military Leave Act (Board Policy 415.7)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Advance Notice and Medical Certification

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

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

Unlawful Acts by Employers:

FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:

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

Enforcement

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

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

Bereavement Leave

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

A total of up to five (5) consecutive days on full pay is allowed for each certified classified employee that is employed full-time for absence in case of a death in the immediate family. Immediate family is defined as wife, husband, father, father-in-law,

mother, mother-in-law, son, son-in-law, daughter, daughter-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, grandchildren, grandparent, or a person in the same home as part of the family, or someone for whom the employee is guardian or holds power of attorney. Staff members who suffer the death of a child, step-child or spouse will have five (5) bereavement days plus an additional five (5) bereavement days will be deducted from the employee's sick leave balance. This time may be extended by personal leave.

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

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

Legal and Civic Duties

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

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

Paid Holidays

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

9 & 10 Month (Para's & Secretaries)

Labor Day	Christmas Day
Thanksgiving Day	New Year's Day
Day after Thanksgiving Day	Good Friday

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

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

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

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

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

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

Religious Holidays

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

Professional Leave

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

Unexcused Absence and Lateness

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

Your attendance record can be a significant factor in evaluating you for raises, promotions and retention. It will also be one of the factors used to decide which employees will be laid off first should a reduction-in-force (RIF) become necessary.

Misuse of Leaves

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

Chapter VIII: Discipline and Termination/Resignation

Disciplinary Procedures

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

1. Discussion: This is a verbal discussion in which the building administrator or supervisor has a face-to-face conference with you to discuss your poor work performance or conduct and the need for correcting it.
2. Assessment: If there is little or no improvement after the discussion, the next step is a written assessment. The building administrator or supervisor completes a report. You have the right to read and discuss the report and comment in writing. The Superintendent may be present at the request of the building administrator, supervisor or you.
3. Discipline: After step two, if there is no marked improvement, the building administrator or supervisor will complete another written record of the second disciplinary action. The Superintendent may be present at the request of your building administrator or supervisor.

4. **Termination:** After step three, if there is no marked improvement, you may be terminated. The building administrator or supervisor, along with the Superintendent, will conduct a review. An employee conference will be held and a determination of action will be made. The action may range from the continued opportunity to improve or dismissal. Each situation will be reviewed on an individual basis.

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

Termination by Employer (Board Policy 414.4)

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

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

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

Resignation by Employee (Board Policy 414.1)

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

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

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

Right to Terminate at Will

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

Chapter IX: Grievance

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

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

1. The employee(s) shall present the grievance orally to the employee's immediate supervisor of record, with or without a representative of the employee's choice present.
2. If a satisfactory adjustment of such grievance is not reached within three (3) workdays, it may be presented in writing to the building principal or immediate supervisor, or supervisor of record. The principal or supervisor will present a decision in writing to the employee(s) within five (5) workdays.
3. If a satisfactory adjustment of such grievance is not reached, it may be presented in writing to the Superintendent of Schools, or his or her designated representative, who will, within five (5) days, present a decision in writing to the employee.
4. If a satisfactory adjustment of such grievance is not reached, it may be presented in writing to the Board of Education. The decision of the Board of Education will be rendered in writing within thirty (30) days.

Chapter X: Breaks, Uniforms and Employee Identification Badges

Lunch Breaks

Classified employees who work an entire day (five (5) hours or more) shall receive at least a thirty (30) minute lunch break per day. **Lunch breaks are mandatory and cannot be used at the end of a workday to leave for the remainder of the day.** Lunch breaks should be scheduled so as to not disrupt building or departmental functions. Lunch breaks are uncompensated time. They do not count towards the number of hours you are required to work each day, as the time clock will automatically deduct 30 minutes per day for lunch unless other arrangements are made with the Central Office. If you leave the building for your lunch break, you are required to clock out on the time clock during the time you are gone.

Rest Breaks

~~Rest breaks shall be fifteen (15) minutes in length each, for every four hours of work. Rest breaks cannot be used at the end of a workday to leave for the remainder of the day.~~

Leaving the Building

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

Employee Dress

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

Employee Identification Badges

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

Chapter XI: Expenses

Travel/Reimbursement (Board Policy 402.8)

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

Specific guidelines for travel reimbursement are as follows:

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

In-district Travel

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

1. Mileage to be reimbursed at a rate specified by Internal Revenue Service Guidelines. No mileage for commuting from home will be reimbursed.
2. Mileage will be reimbursed by a daily log. Any random travel which is required by the district should be logged daily and submitted monthly to the building principal.
3. Requests for reimbursement will be turned in at the end of each month and paid on a monthly basis. Reimbursement requests must be submitted to Central office no later than the 10th day of the following month. Failure to submit mileage on time will result in forfeiture of payment.

Compensation for Time Spent Traveling

Time spent traveling shall be considered hours worked if:

1. An employee is required to travel during regular working hours;
2. An employee is required to drive a vehicle or perform other work while traveling;

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

Chapter XII: Safety, Health and Asbestos

Workplace Safety

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

Employee Protection

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

Health Examinations

Any employee whose assigned responsibilities require by statute a health examination, or any employee whose condition of health is thought to be essential to the welfare of pupils or employees may be required at any time to submit to a health examination by a physician or surgeon to be determined whether the employee can perform the essential functions of the employee's position with or without reasonable accommodations.

Blood Borne Pathogens (Board Policy 404.04, 508.03)

For your own safety, you will be provided with information and training on Blood Borne Pathogens. This training will teach you how to take the necessary precautions against coming into contact with HIV or Hepatitis-B. Please protect yourself by learning these important steps. Remember, if circumstances place you in a situation where there is blood or other body fluid that

you could come in contact with, you should treat the blood or body fluids as if they are infected. Your training will instruct you as to what to do in this case.

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

Chronic Infectious Diseases – Not Commonly Transmitted by Casual Contact

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

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

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

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

Communicable/Infectious Diseases Commonly Transmitted by Casual Contact

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

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

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

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

Asbestos (Board Policy 905.05)

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

Chapter XIII: Staff Development

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

Chapter XIV: Evaluations and Conduct

Transfer/Reassignment

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

Duties

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

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

Evaluations

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

Conduct (Board Policy 401)

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

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

1. Treating all visitors and co-workers in a courteous manner
2. Refraining from behavior or conduct that is offensive or undesirable.
3. Reporting to administration suspicious, unethical or illegal conduct.
4. Reporting to administration any threatening or potentially violent behavior by co-workers.
5. Wearing clothing appropriate for the work being performed.
6. Performing assigned tasks efficiently and in accord with established quality standards.
7. Reporting to work punctually as scheduled and being at the proper work station, ready for work, at the assigned start time and throughout the work day.
8. Giving proper advance notice whenever unable to work and reporting absence according to established procedures.
9. Adhering to the district-wide no tobacco restriction.
10. Maintaining cleanliness and order in the workplace.

11. Following all district policies approved by the Board of Education.

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

Drug Free Schools/Workplace (Board Policy 404.07)

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

Definitions:

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

Tobacco-Free Workplace

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

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

are a tobacco-free environment. The school district will provide information to employees concerning tobacco use cessation programs.

Unlawful Acts by Employees

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

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

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

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

Preventing Harassment and Discrimination of Employees, Students and/or Volunteers (Board Policy 404.12)

Gering Public Schools is committed to complying with all state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination and to taking any necessary measures to assure compliance with such laws against any prohibited form of discrimination. Unlawful discrimination or harassment of any kind by employees of Gering Public Schools is prohibited. In addition, Gering Public Schools will try to protect employees, students and volunteers from discrimination or harassment by non-employees and others in the workplace.

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

- In general, ethnic or racial slurs or other verbal or physical conduct relating to a person's race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy, or other protected conditions constitute harassment when they unreasonably interfere with the person's work performance or create an intimidating work environment.

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

Complaint and Grievance Procedures to Respond to Harassment and Discrimination

- An employee who is affected by a violation of Gering Public Schools' anti-harassment and discrimination policy should initially report all instances of discrimination or harassment to the employee's immediate supervisor. However, if the employee is uncomfortable in presenting the problem to the immediate supervisor, or if the immediate supervisor is the problem, the employee is permitted and encouraged to go to the next level of supervision. The failure on your part to report the harassment may deprive you of certain legal rights.
- If the employee's complaint is not resolved to his or her satisfaction within five (5) to ten (10) working days, or if the discrimination or harassment continues, the employee should report the complaint to the Superintendent of Schools. If a satisfactory arrangement or resolution of the complaint or grievance cannot be obtained through the Superintendent, the complaint may be submitted to the Board of Education of Gering Public Schools.
- All persons to whom a complaint or grievance reported are to thoroughly investigate all complaints. These situations will be treated with the utmost confidence, consistent with resolution of the problem. Based on the results of the investigation, appropriate corrective action up to and including discharge of offending employees, etc. may be taken. Under no circumstance will any employer threaten or retaliate against an employee for alleging a violation of this policy.

Nepotism (Board Policy 402.04)

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

Employee Conflict of Interest (Board Policy 402.03)

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

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

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

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

It shall also be a conflict of interest for an employee to engage in any outside employment or activity that is in conflict with the employee's official duties and responsibilities. In determining whether outside employment or activity of an employee creates a conflict of interest, situations in which an unacceptable conflict of interest shall be deemed to exist shall include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

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

3. The outside employment or activity is subject to the official control, inspection, review, audit or enforcement authority of the employee during the performance of the employee's duties.

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

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

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

Use of Cell Phones

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

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

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

Procedures and Guidelines

The Superintendent shall develop and implement appropriate procedures to provide guidance for computer use and Internet access. Guidelines shall address teacher supervision of computer use, ethical use of electronic media, and the District's ownership and right of administrative review of

electronic files and communications. The term “electronic media” includes, but is not limited to, the Internet, e-mail and other technological resources.

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

Technology Protection Measure

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

Audit of Use

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

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

Staff Use

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

Disregard of Rules

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

Responsibility for Damages

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

Advertising and Promotion

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

Confidentiality

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

Professional Boundaries (Board Policy 403.9)

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

ability to be an effective employee. Employees are expected to behave at all times in a manner supportive of the best interests of students.

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

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

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

- Private meetings with students
 - Never remain alone with a student behind a closed door;
 - Never remain alone with a student in a classroom outside of the regular school day without informing the principal;
 - Do not permanently cover classroom windows in a way that restricts viewing from the outside. All school rooms in which staff and students interact should have unobstructed windows allowing clear views of the room;
 - Coaches should never meet alone with students behind closed doors – especially if the room lacks windows or has covered windows;
 - If you must have a difficult conversation with a student – and you are concerned that a student may misinterpret or misrepresent what occurred in your meeting – ask a fellow staff member to be present for the meeting.
- Guidelines for Staff Members, Coaches, and Extra-Curricular Program Managers
 - Staff members should avoid driving individual students to or from games, practices, or events unless there is some type of medical or weather emergency;
 - When traveling with a team, a coach or other adult school representative should never be alone in a room with a student;
- Fraternization with Students – In general, the role of the school staff member is that of an authority figure rather than that of a peer or friend.
 - Avoid counseling students in non-school matters;
 - Avoid meeting students away from school grounds unless part of a school-sponsored event;
 - Do not regularly transport students in your personal car or ride with them in their car;
 - Never allow students to have access to your personal vehicle;
 - Do not tell sexually-themed jokes, make sexual comments or provide students with access to sexually-oriented material;
 - Do not make comments about a student's body;
 - Do not have any discussions with students regarding romantic or sexual activities;

- Never invite students to your home unless it is a school sponsored activity and another adult staff member is present at all times; and
- Never touch a student in a manner that a reasonable person could interpret as inappropriate.
- The Growing Role of Personal Technology
 - Social Networking – remember that the role of school staff members is an adult authority figure to minors, not as a friend or social peer. Do not “friend” or “follow” students on social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.
 - Telephone, Texting, and Email – do not provide your home phone number or cell phone number to students. If you must communicate electronically with students, make conversations brief and limit the content to school matters only. Avoid corresponding with students via email or text, especially one-on-one. If students have your email or phone number, students (or the school provides a school email), limit communications to school matters only, and only communicate with groups and include other adults, like colleagues, administrators, and parents into the conversations.

Staff and District Social Media Use (Board Policy 403.10)

A. General Use and Conditions

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

Chapter XV: Other

Accidents and Safety

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

Collection of Meal Charges

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

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

Transportation Supervision

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

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

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

In the case of both female and male participants riding together to or home from an event, coaches/sponsors will designate the front of the transportation vehicle for one group and the back

for the other. Coaches/sponsors are expected to be seated between the two groups. On the return trip home from the event, coaches/sponsors may allow the groups to switch places.

Links Handbook

2024-2025



Link's Mission Statement

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

Eligibility Criteria

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

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

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

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

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

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

Option Students from other districts (of high school age)

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

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

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

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

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

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

Transition Students

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

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

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

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

Expulsion/Long Term Suspended

Expelled Students

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

Long-Term Suspended Students

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

Program Components

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

Program Costs

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

Connections to Graduation

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

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

Program Expectations

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

Graduation Requirements (Title 92; 003.05)

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

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

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

Graduation from Links

Graduates of Links will receive a **district diploma** certified through Gering Public Schools. Students who enter the Links program must meet all Links graduation requirements to graduate from Links with a district diploma. No student who enters the Links program can graduate ahead of their cohort class from which they entered their freshman year. Links students who have completed the credit requirements prior to the first school day of their cohort senior year will be required to attend the 1st semester of school year in one of the following ways: work based learning, additional Links coursework, college courses or an apprenticeship/internship. Students must meet attendance requirements set forth by the Links program. Links will hold graduations each quarter of the semester and throughout the summer.

State Testing

All Links students must take all required state testing prescribed to their individual cohorts.

Hours of Attendance

Links students are considered full time if they regularly attend a total of 20 hours per week, half time students are considered ½ time if they attend a total of 10 hours per week. Work/volunteer/internship opportunities will be counted as part of the full or half time school day. Work/volunteer/internship hours will be split at the discretion of the Links staff and may be set up in any combination of work and class room hours. Students who work on online learning courses at home may be given credit for hours worked towards their 10 or 20 hour school week as per Links administrative discretion.

Links Attendance Policy

- Attendance will be taken daily upon students arriving at the Links building.
- Students are expected to be punctual when reporting back from breaks; tardys will be reported for students who do not return on time.
- If students miss a class, need to arrive late, or depart early, s/he must inform a Links staff member in advance.

Links Non-Attendance Procedure

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

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

Individual Graduation Plan

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

Components of the IGP will include:

- Profile of current transcript and requirements to graduate
- List of student's career, educational and personal goals beyond high school
- List of learning goals that must be accomplished in order to earn diploma
- Description of learning activities which may include online learning courses and college credit opportunities
- Description of assessments
- Signatures of Links representative, student, and student's parent or legal guardian (if available)
- Anticipated date of graduation

Links Program Model

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

1. Using the online learning course system or other district approved on-line/paper pencil curricular opportunities for core high school credit (Ex. Algebra, Speech, Science, etc.)
2. Career Development or Link Experience component(s) to fulfill elective requirements (one or both is highly suggested).
3. Taking advantage of elective or core credit offerings offered by the Links program, offerings could include and are not limited to video discussion sessions, college prep programming, health and wellness course offerings and other elective or core course opportunities.

4. Core and elective courses can also be taken through credit and community education courses offered by Western Nebraska Community College. Students who want to fast track their educational goals and work on college credit while earning their diploma should consider this option.

Online Learning Curriculum

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

College Courses

Links students will be given the opportunity to take college courses through Western Nebraska Community College. A combination of college and high school credit can be used to meet graduation requirements in either core or elective areas of content. Students may also qualify for reduced tuition rates and grant opportunities to cover costs. Links staff will assist students with course selection options that fit their graduation plan. With approval, college course hours may be set up in any combination of college and high school attendance hours that total either a 2 hour or 4 hour school day.

Work Experience

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

Grading Policy

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

Special Education Services

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

Links Staff

Mario Chavez - Administrator

Karee Klassen - Teacher

Kaylee Pierce - Teacher

Contact Information

Phone - 308-633-LINK

Email - links@geringschools.net

1800 8th Street, Gering



Gering Public Schools
1519 10th St.
Gering, NE 69341
Phone: 308-436-3125

AGREEMENT FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICES

This agreement is made and entered into this 1st day of June 2024 by and between Jamie Selzer of Scottsbluff, NE, and the Gering Public Schools, Gering, NE, hereinafter called "GPS".

Preliminary Statements

Occupational Therapy

Jamie is a registered occupational therapist for the purpose of providing professional occupational therapy services. GPS has a need for the services of a licensed occupational therapist, to provide supervisory services in Gering, NE.

GPS wants to contract for such services from Jamie Selzer and Jamie has determined that it is feasible for her to provide occupational therapy services to GPS. Jamie Selzer and GPS have negotiated the terms and conditions for such arrangements and believe it to be in their best interests to reduce their agreement to writing.

NOW, THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the agreements and payments contained herein, and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, Jamie Selzer and GPS agree:

A: Jamie's Commitments; Jamie shall:

1. Provide supervisory occupational therapy services to GPS. Jamie agrees that such services will be performed at the school district. Jamie agrees that the occupational therapy services provided by Jamie, a licensed occupational therapist, will perform according to the generally accepted methods and procedures used by a competent licensed occupational therapist as necessary for the educational benefit. Tests and measurements, if needed, will be in compliance with standards established by GPS, the Department of Education, the State of Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and State of Nebraska Medicaid rules and regulations.
2. Jamie will keep and maintain at all times adequate professional liability insurance when providing therapy services to GPS under the terms of this agreement and agrees to save GPS by reason of any claim arising from negligent performance of services under this agreement.
3. Jamie shall be responsible to pay liability insurance, staff development training cost, travel expenses, and travel time. If the therapist is on leave, Jamie will make arrangements for continued uninterrupted coverage.
4. Jamie agrees to have occupational therapy personnel available to fulfill occupational therapy work expectations as outlined below.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY/REHAB SERVICES
AGREEMENT PAGE 2

Proposed expectations:

- Occupational therapist will be designated for GPS therapy as required in Gering.
- Provide documentation of current occupational therapist license, occupational therapist expectations and responsibilities;
- Complete screenings and evaluations if GPS OTA is unable to complete.
- Complete assessment reports if GPS OTA is unable to complete.
- Development of goals and objectives if GPS OTA is unable to complete.
- Attend IEP/IFSP meetings, annual reviews and IFSP 6 month reviews if GPS OTA is unable to complete.
- Provide appropriate therapy at an environment designated on IEP/IFSP if GPS OTA is unable to complete.
- Provide parent training for understanding of therapy and activities to be used at home in daily routine if GPS OTA is unable to complete.
- Staff with the IEP/IFSP team (at least once a month) if GPS OTA is unable to complete.
- Complete GPS paperwork if GPS OTA is unable to complete:
 - Complete IEP/IFSP documents
 - Complete records of therapy or cancellations
 - Complete attendance sheet for each area to GPS Central Office by 10th of each month.
- Attend training pertinent to job including early childhood information, Ne DD rules, regulations and paperwork if GPS OTA is unable to complete.
- Attend GPS staff orientations.
- Develop an understanding of GPS's programs and philosophy.

B: GPS Commitments; GPS shall;

1. Compensate Jamie for occupational therapy services rendered as outlined below:
 - GPS agrees to pay eighty-one dollars (\$81.00) per hour for occupational therapy. This time includes child care, documentation and meeting time.
 - GPS agrees to pay the approved state rate for mileage incurred from Jamie to site of delivery of services.

C: Mutual Agreements:

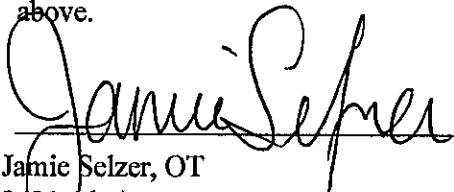
1. Relationship; Jamie and GPS agree that their relationship is that of independent contractors and not of employer and employee, or principal and agent.
2. The frequency and duration of the occupational therapy patients shall be determined by their IEP or IFSP.
3. The terms of this agreement shall be effective through July 31, 2025. Either party may terminate this agreement by written notice delivered to the other no less than thirty (30) days prior to the date upon which such termination is to become effective.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY/REHAB SERVICES
AGREEMENT PAGE 3

4. This agreement shall be governed and construed under the laws of the State of Nebraska. In the event of default by either party, the non-defaulting party shall not have any right of specific performance, but may proceed with any and all other remedies available at law or in equity for damages arising from such default.

THIS AGREEMENT shall be binding upon the parties, their successors and assigns.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have signed this agreement on this day and year first written above.



Jamie Selzer, OT
2421 4th Ave
Scottsbluff, NE 69361
Phone: 402-525-9638

Dr. Nicole Regan
Superintendent, Gering Public Schools
1519 10th Street
Gering, NE 69341
Phone 308-436-3125
FAX: 308-436-4301

POLICY 504.19
GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GERING, NE

STUDENT FEES

The board realizes some activities may require additional expenditures which are properly to be borne by students as a separate charge. Such charges may be waived as specified below depending upon the student's eligibility for the free and reduced-price lunch program. No fees, specialized or non-specialized attire or equipment shall be required of students outside this policy. This policy does not apply to tuition payments by nonresident students.

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

- Extracurricular activities means student activities or organizations which are supervised or administered by the school district, which do not count toward graduation or advancement between grades, and in which participation is not otherwise required by the school district;
- Postsecondary education costs means tuition and other fees associated with obtaining credit from a post-secondary educational institution.

The district may charge student fees or require students to provide specialized equipment or attire in the following areas:

- Participation in extracurricular activities, including extracurricular music courses;
- Admission fees and transportation charges for spectators attending extracurricular activities;
- Post-secondary education costs, limited to tuition and fees associated with obtaining credits from the post-secondary institution;
- Transportation fees for option students not qualifying for free lunches and nonresident students as allowed by state statute;
- Copies of student files or records as allowed by state statute;
- Reimbursement to the district for property lost or damaged by the student;
- Before-and-after-school or pre kindergarten services in accordance with state statute;
- Summer school or night school; and
- Breakfast and lunch programs.

The district may also require students to furnish musical instruments for participation in optional music courses that are not extracurricular activities. Students qualifying for free

or reduced-price lunches shall be provided with a musical instrument of the school's choice.

Waivers shall be provided to students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches for fees, specialized equipment and specialized attire required for participation in extracurricular activities.

The superintendent shall establish a Student Fee Fund and ensure that funds collected as fees for the following purposes are properly recorded and deposited to it:

- Participation in extracurricular activities;
- Post-secondary education costs; and
- Summer school or night school.

The superintendent shall promulgate regulations outlining the purposes for which fees in these three areas are collected and shall ensure such fees are spent for those purposes.

The superintendent shall promulgate regulations to be published annually in the student handbook authorizing and governing:

1. Any non-specialized clothing required for specified courses and activities;
2. Any personal or consumable items a student will be required to furnish for specified activities; and
3. Any specialized equipment or specialized attire which a student will be required to provide for any extracurricular activity, including extracurricular music courses.

The superintendent shall also promulgate regulations authorizing and governing the following areas:

- All fees to be collected within the nine numbered areas of the third paragraph of this policy;
- Any other types of specialized equipment or attire to be provided by all students in the nine numbered areas of the third paragraph of this policy;
- Procedures and forms for students or parent/guardians to apply for waivers under this policy;
- Deadlines for waivers for all types of fees;
- Procedures for the handling of fees for students receiving post-secondary education credits;
- Procedures for handling of fees related to summer school or night school; and

- Attendance requirements and procedures in connection with evening, weekend or summer use of facilities related to all extracurricular activities to avoid conflict with this policy.

The maximum dollar amount of each fee must be specified as part of this policy.

Public concerns or complaints regarding required fees, attire or equipment shall be addressed under Policy 1005.01, Public Complaints.

This policy will be reviewed and re-adopted annually by August 1 at a regular or special meeting of the board. This shall include a review of the amount of money collected under this policy and the use of waivers as provided by this policy. The policy shall be published in the student handbook provided at no cost to each household.

Legal Reference: Neb. Constitution, Art VII, Sect. 1
 Neb. Statute 79-215 (tuition)
 79-241 (option student busing)
 79-605 (nonresident busing)
 79-611 (transportation fees)
 79-734 (books, equipment and supplies)
 79-2,104 (student files)
 79-2,125 to 2,134 (student fees law)
 79-1104 (before-and-after-school services)
 79-1106 to 1108 (learners with high ability)

Cross Reference: 505.05 Fines for Lost or Damaged Items
 506 Student Activities
 507.01 Student Records Access
 801 Transportation
 802.05 Free or Reduced Cost Meals Eligibility
 1005.01 Public Complaints

Approved 07/19/2010 Reviewed 07/18/2016, 07/19/2017, 08/20/2018, 07/15/2019
Revised _____

POLICY 504.19R1
GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GERING, NE

STUDENT FEES

2023-24-2024-25

Gering High School

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

Gering Junior High School

	Fund	Waiver Eligible	Maximum Cost
Band T-Shirt	Activity	Yes	\$ 15.00
Band Black Slacks	Activity	Yes	\$ 25.00
Honor Band Audition	Activity	No	\$ 40.00
Class Projects	Activity	No	\$ 100.00
Club Dues	Fee	Yes	\$ 5.00
Activity Tickets	Activity	No	\$ 20.00

Business Office

Gering Public Schools

Memo

To: Dr. Nicole Regan and Board of Education
From: Stacy Rodriguez, Director of Finance
Date: July 23, 2024
Re: School Lunch Prices

As part of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-296), Section 205 addresses equity in school lunch pricing. Effective July 1, 2011, School Food Authorities (SFA) participating in the National School Lunch Program are required to provide the same level of support for their paid student lunches as they are for lunches served to students eligible for free and reduced priced meals.

With the ongoing requirements from USDA we must continue to include serving more fresh fruits and vegetables, serving more products with whole grains and not utilizing breaded meat food products, reduction in sodium and fat, all of which increase our costs. To help ensure we can address our costs and meet these compliance requirements, USDA provides a “Lunch Price Calculator” tool to establish meal prices. Based on the recommendation from the tool we propose the following with a 10 cent increase:

	2023-2024		2024-2025	
	Breakfast	Lunch	Breakfast	Lunch
Elementary	\$2.05	\$3.10	\$2.15	\$3.20
Secondary				
GHS	\$2.30	\$3.35	\$2.40	\$3.45
GJHS	\$2.30	\$3.35	\$2.40	\$3.45
Adult	\$3.90	\$4.65	\$4.00	\$4.75
Milk	\$0.65	\$0.65	\$0.65	\$0.65