

## WELCOME TO HASTINGS PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

*Assuring the essential. Expanding the possible.*

Alcott Elementary – 731 N. Baltimore Avenue	461-7580
Hawthorne Elementary – 2200 W. 9th Street	461-7540
Lincoln Elementary – 720 Franklin Avenue	461-7589
Longfellow Elementary – 828 N. Hastings Avenue	461-7584
Watson Elementary – 1720 N. Crane Avenue	461-7593
Administrative Offices – 1924 W. A Street	461-7500

### Mission

**“Our fundamental purpose is to assure all students acquire the knowledge, skills, and behaviors essential to be successful individuals and responsible citizens.”**

### Intent of Handbook

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

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

### Notice of Non-discrimination

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at:

[http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
- (2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider

### **Designation of Coordinators**

Any person having inquiries concerning this district's compliance with Title VI (discrimination or harassment), Title IX (gender equity), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disability Act, Homeless student laws, or Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities should contact the Hastings Public Schools Administrative Office.

### **Notice Concerning Staff Qualifications**

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) gives parents/guardians the right to get information about the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teachers. The Hastings Public Schools will provide parents with timely notice if your child is being taught by a teacher not meeting ESEA-NCLB requirements for four or more consecutive weeks.

We are in compliance with the requirement that states "Each teacher hired after the first day of the 2002-03 school year and teaching in a program supported with Title I, Part A funds must be 'highly qualified,' as defined by our State; By the end of the 2006-07 school year, all teachers hired on or before the first day of the 2002-03 school year in our district must be highly qualified; Prior to the beginning of the 2006-07 school year, all Title I paraprofessionals must have a high school diploma or equivalent and one of the following: two-years of higher education (48 semester hours or equivalent); an Associate's Degree; or a passing score on our State's paraprofessional assessment; Title I paraprofessionals may not perform classroom instruction unless supervised by a qualified teacher and may not perform more non-educational duties (like hall monitoring) than non-Title I paraprofessionals do."

### **School Hours 2:30 Dismissal every Wednesday**

#### Regular Schedule

Breakfast serving 7:40, First bell 8:05, Tardy bell 8:10, Dismissal 3:20

Playground supervision is not provided by the school district before or after school. Students should arrive no earlier than 8:00 a.m. unless they are eating breakfast at school, and go home immediately after dismissal in the afternoon.

### **School Closings**

School closing due to inclement weather will be announced on local radio and television stations before 8:00 a.m. It may become necessary to dismiss classes during the school day because of bad weather. In such an event, it is important that parents/guardians provide ahead of time to the school, the procedures the child should follow (i.e., go home with a specific friend, go to a relative's home, babysitter's, etc.)

Parents may decide to keep their children home during inclement weather. Students absent due to severe weather when school is in session will be marked absent. The absence will be treated like any other absence. Parents may pick up their children during inclement weather at any time during the school day.

### **Telephone Calls**

Parents are encouraged to call the school with questions, concerns and suggestions. While it is not always possible to visit a teacher or administrator at that time, your phone call will be returned as soon as possible or you may schedule an after school appointment.

If parents/guardians have an emergency message for their student, please call the school before 2:45 p.m. to allow adequate time for the message to be delivered before the end of the school day.

The school telephones are for school business only. Students may use the phone only in case of an emergency (this does not include calling parents for forgotten items) or to notify parents if

they must remain at school beyond the regular school day. Other plans or arrangements should be made at home by the student and parents/guardians prior to the school day.

### **School Visits**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit school. Please check with your child's teacher regarding the best time to visit. We request that parents not plan visits during the first two weeks or the last two weeks of school. All parents and visitors must enter and exit the building through the main doors during school hours. Before visiting a classroom, permission must be given through the school office. Visitors will receive an identification tag, which they are required to wear throughout their time in the school building. Children not attending the school may not visit unless accompanied by an adult and prior arrangements are made with the building principal.

### **Parent Involvement**

1005.03\*

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to become involved with school and to participate in school events and activities. Parents have access to all textbook, tests, curriculum materials, and any other instructional materials used by the school. Parents have the right to be informed and choose non-participation in any surveys of a sensitive nature in accordance with the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

## **HPS Title 1 Elementary School Parent Involvement Policy**

Parental involvement is particularly important in Schoolwide Title I Buildings. Research has demonstrated that parental involvement increases the effectiveness of Title I programs and makes a substantial contribution to the success of these programs. Parents must be encouraged and assisted in efforts to sustain or enhance their child's progress. Parents, who work with their child's teacher and reinforce the learning objectives in the home, can dramatically improve their child's emotional achievement.

1. The annual Title I Orientation meetings will be held by the end of the first quarter. Teachers will provide a brief overview of the School Improvement Plans, who is eligible to receive Title I services and other interventions, and what type of activities will be conducted throughout the year.
2. During the annual meeting the Parent Involvement Policy will be given to parents. Parents will be given the opportunity to give feedback regarding this policy. Suggestions will be noted and addressed at P/T Conferences, Open House, PTO meetings, or any other times parents meet with teachers. Changes will be made as necessary. Parents will sign a form stating that they have received the policy and are given opportunity for input.
3. Parents will be notified regarding the School Improvement Plans and evaluations of the program. Parents will be invited to become active participants in the decision making process and will be informed of the parental involvement requirements of Title I.
4. Parent/Teacher Compacts will be discussed and distributed. Parents, students, and teachers will be asked to sign compacts. The building jointly develops, with parents, a school-parent compact that outlines shared responsibility for improved student academic achievement.
5. Parental Involvement input surveys will be distributed annually. Information gathered from the survey will be used in planning activities, programs, or training for the same or following school year.
6. Parents are encouraged to attend Parent-Teacher conferences held in the fall and spring. They are encouraged to express areas of success and concern regarding their child's progress, and to make recommendations as needed. Throughout the year teachers will inform parents of their child's progress. An open line of communication should be maintained between parents and the school staff at all times. Staff will respond to parent requests in a timely manner.
7. To the extent practicable, the district and the school share provide opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and

- parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required in a format and in a language such parents can understand.
8. Staff will ensure that parents who lack literacy skills or whose native language is not English will be provided translators so that all parents may participate in the Title I parental involvement activities.
  9. Staff will provide materials and suggestions to parents to help parents assist their child in learning.
  10. All grade level teachers and support staff will schedule an educational activity for the students and their parents during the school year.
  11. Training or written information will be provided to parents during the school year to help promote a learning environment in the home and classroom. Parents may be trained or provide written information in a variety of areas including how to read with children or how to assist children with homework. Other training may include Four Blocks literacy model, Parenting with Love and Logic, Hands Are Not For Hitting, Math intervention programs, and Reading intervention programs.
  12. Staff will support efforts of parent to be involved in their child's education.
  13. Parents will be encouraged to participate in grade level activities, PTO meetings, and events throughout the school year.
  14. Parents will be notified of programs available to help students continue learning through the summer months, such as summer school and community reading programs.
  15. Parents and students will be represented and participate on the School Improvement Teams.

### **Written Communication**

School newsletters and additional notes/flyers are sent home or posted on websites on a regular basis to keep parents informed of monthly activities, calendar changes, and other school news.

### **Copyright and Fair Use**

Students are reminded that, when using school equipment and when completing course work, they also must follow the federal copyright laws. Copyrighted works are protected regardless of the medium in which they are created or reproduced.

The "fair use" doctrine allows limited reproduction of copyrighted works for educational and research purposes such as criticism, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), and scholarship. The following factors help determine whether a particular use of a copyrighted work is a permitted rather than an infringement of the copyright:

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

Students should seek assistance from a faculty member if there are any questions regarding what may be copied.

### **Entrance-Admissions**

502.03\*

Nebraska school law states that a child is of mandatory attendance age if the child will reach six years of age prior to January 1 of the current school year and will attend regularly each day the school is open and in session except when excused by school authorities. Children in the School District will be allowed to enroll in the District's regular education program in kindergarten beginning at age five if the child's fifth birthday is prior to July 31st of the current year.

## **Attendance**

503.01\*

Hastings Public Schools complies with State Law 79-209, Compulsory Attendance: According to policy 503.01, students who accumulate five (5) unexcused absences in a quarter shall be deemed to have "excessive absences." Such absences shall be determined on a per day basis for elementary students and on a per class basis for secondary students. When a student has excessive absences, school officials will have verbal or written communication with the person or persons who have legal or actual charge or control of any child.

When a student continues thereafter to have absences which are Not School Excused and the absences are of concern due to the effect of absences on the student's academics, the student's attendance history, the time of the school year, the reasons for the absences, or other circumstances, one or more meetings between the school (a School/Community Liaison or a school administrator or his or her designee), the child's parent or guardian, and the child, when appropriate, to address the barriers to attendance. The result of the meeting or meetings shall be to develop a collaborative plan to reduce barriers identified to improve regular attendance. The plan shall consider, but not be limited to:

Illness related to physical or behavioral health of the child; Educational counseling; Educational evaluation; Referral to community agencies for economic services; Family or individual counseling; and Assisting the family in working with other community services.

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

In addition, the student may be referred to the STARS (Strategic Targeted Attendance Reporting System) program. The STARS program is a school and family based initiative that provides intense intervention to stop excessive absences among students. This program is designed to assess the needs and risk associated with both the student and family to help re-engage them into the school system. The STARS program will work individually with both the student and family on improving attendance issues as well as identifying the causes behind the excessive absences.

## **Tardiness**

Students are considered tardy to school when they are not **in their classroom** when the tardy bell rings at 8:10 a.m. Minutes of tardiness accumulate and count toward the hourly equivalent of absences under **Attendance** above. If a student arrives at school before 9:30 a.m. he/she is counted as tardy. Students who exhibit excessive tardiness are subject to disciplinary action.

## **Absence Notification**

Parents/guardians must notify the school by note or telephone before 9:00 a.m. of a student's absence or tardiness. If the school is not notified, a call will be made to the parent/guardian to determine the child's whereabouts and safety. For parent convenience, an answering machine will take calls prior to 7:30 a.m.

## **Make-up Work**

Classroom work and assignments missed during an absence, regardless of the type of absence, **must** be made up unless special arrangements are made with the appropriate teacher(s). Students

are responsible for obtaining make-up work and parents and siblings may make arrangements to pick up assignments, books or other materials by contacting the school office.

### **Perfect Attendance**

To receive perfect attendance, a student must be present at school from 8:10 a.m. to 3:20 p.m. each school day. Students may have three (3) excused tardies (doctor, dentist, counselors, court appointments, etc.) for the year and still receive perfect attendance. Any tardy or absence of 90 minutes or more will be counted as an absence, and the student will not receive perfect attendance. The building principal has the ultimate responsibility in deciding absences and tardies.

### **Leaving School During the Day**

508.07\*

Students who must leave school for any reason during the school day must check out at the office. A sign-out sheet is available for this purpose. Students are only released to a parent or parent designee. When students return to school they are expected to sign back in. Students may be counted absent if they leave school early. **Minutes accumulated leaving school early will be counted toward absences and tardies.**

### **Custody and Parental Rights**

508.07\*

Disagreements between family members are not the responsibility of the School District. The School District will not take the “side” of one family member over another in a disagreement about custody or parental rights. Court orders that have been issued shall be followed by the School District. It shall be the responsibility of the person requesting an action by the school to inform and provide the school with a copy of the court order allowing such action. This policy does not prohibit an employee from listening to a student’s problems and concerns.

### **Family Vacations**

Parents/guardians should notify the school at least one week in advance of family vacations planned during the school year. Students are responsible for getting and completing all work missed during the vacation. **Absences due to vacations will count toward the absence limitations** specified under Student Attendance. Families are encouraged to use scheduled school breaks for vacations whenever possible.

### **Parties**

Three student parties are held throughout the school year at Halloween, Christmas, and Valentines. Parents and guardians are encouraged to celebrate their child’s birthday or special event at home, not at school. Please do not send “treats” to school unless first consulting with the classroom teacher or building administrator. Invitations to parties will not be handed out in school unless every student in the classroom receives an invitation.

### **Attendance Area**

502.04, 502.09\*

Students are required to attend the elementary school within their attendance area unless the **District has approved an in-district transfer**. Transfer requests are not automatically granted. Since transfers are valid for one school year only, parents interested in transferring their child to another elementary school must file a transfer request annually with the building principal by May 31. Conditions for transfer include, but are not limited to: class size at the sending and/or receiving school, attendance, behavior, availability of student services or the special needs of students, and consent by the sending and receiving principal. The superintendent has the final authorization over all transfers and will notify parents of approved and denied requests.

### **Homeless Children and Youth**

503.09\*

Homeless children and youth are provided a free and appropriate education. The Homeless Coordinator for the School District may be contacted at Hastings Public Schools Student Services Office located in the Administrative Office.

### **Homework**

Homework may be assigned to elementary students and is contingent upon factors such as the student absences, the need for additional practice, or the lack of student effort or attention during school hours.

### **Staying After School**

State law 79-257 states that school personnel may keep students after school for disciplinary reasons or to further school purposes. When it is necessary to keep students after school, we try not to keep students past 4:00 p.m. without attempting to call parents first.

### **Safe and Drug Free Schools**

Pursuant to the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act, if upon receipt of information regarding the content of safe and drug free school programs and activities *other than classroom instruction* a parent objects to the participation of their child in such programs and activities, the parent may notify the School District of such objection in writing. Upon the receipt of such notice the student will be withdrawn from the program or activity to which parental objection has been made.

### **Academic Progress**

Student academic progress is evaluated on a daily basis using curriculum guidelines and appropriate assessments. In addition, Nebraska academic standards and nationally normed tests are used to evaluate student achievement.

Student academic achievement, effort, and social development is communicated to parents in a variety of methods:

- Report cards are issued at the end of each quarter.
- Regularly scheduled Parent/Teacher conferences provide parents, teachers, and students with the opportunity to exchange information about student progress.
- Student portfolios, used to document individual progress and accomplishments, may be shared with parents.
- Informal communication with parents may include telephone calls, after-school meetings, weekly progress reports, and notes.

### **Retention**

502.11\*

The principal has the ultimate responsibility for retaining students. No student will be retained without input from the student, student's parent/guardian, and the student's teacher(s). Dissatisfaction with the decision may be referred to the Superintendent of Schools for review.

### **Permanent Records**

507.01\*

Parents/guardians have the right to examine their child's permanent records. The following records are maintained as permanent records of the student:

- The record of dates of attendance
- Highest grade level completed
- A transcript of classes taken with grades and credits received
- The records of inoculations and health examinations

Teachers, counselors, or school administrators shall have access to student records. Authorized representatives of the State or Federal government and state educational authorities connected

with the enforcement of requirements of certain educational programs as prescribed by law shall have access to student records within the limitations of state statutes. No one else shall have access to the records unless permission is granted by parents/guardians or the courts. This policy does not apply to student directory information.

### **Student Directory Information**

507.02\*

Student directory information may include the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, dates of attendance, and the most recent previous school attended by the student, and other similar information. Directory information may be supplied to outside agencies without prior parent approval. Parents have the right to deny their child's information be provided to other agencies. The school office must be notified if parents do not want their child included with directory information.

### **Publication of Student Pictures and Products**

507.02\*

Sometimes students are photographed for the newspaper, television, or Internet web pages. The news media may do stories on events occurring in school or other newsworthy events. Since pictures of students are personally identifiable information, you may have concerns about your student's picture appearing in the news media or on the Internet. If you do not wish to have your student's picture or works available to the media or displayed on the Internet, contact the school office. If we don't hear from you, we will assume that you agree to have your student's picture or works available to the media or on the internet should such occasion arise.

### **Student Services**

In accordance with Section 504 Rehabilitation Act of 1973 there is a continuum of services provided to qualifying students throughout the district: 1) Speech pathologists work with children individually or in small groups; 2) Homebound instruction may be provided to children, who, according to medical recommendation, are physically unable to attend school over a period of time; 3) Enrichment and remedial instruction is designed to meet the needs of children who need extra challenges as well as those who need remedial assistance; and 4) Special Education programs are available to students who have verified handicapping conditions. Questions regarding any of these services may be directed to the building principal. Guidance counselors, school psychologists, Crisis Team members, and Student Assistance Teams are also available to support and help students and their families.

### **Student Fees**

504.19\*

The Board of Education of the Hastings Public School District authorizes the charging of fees to students. Fees may be charged for certain student activities such as consumable/personal items (paper, scissors, pencils, crayons, tissue, etc.), field trips, or for participation in extra-curricular activities. Each building will determine those personal and consumable items necessary for the school year. A list of the fees or necessary school supplies will be provided to all students. Each building will provide information regarding field trips and parents will be notified in advance of the field trips and the charges. If students who qualify for free or reduced price lunches are unable to afford these items, please contact the building principal to request a Student Fee Waiver Form.

### **Immunizations**

508.01\*

According to state statute, the school governing authority shall assure that all school children are appropriately immunized prior to attending classes. Students must submit proof of immunization against measles, mumps, rubella (MMR); poliomyelitis (IPV); diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus (DTaP); Hepatitis B and Varicella as required by law.



Upon first time enrollment in the Hastings Public Schools, children must receive a physical examination, visual evaluation, and any needed immunizations or booster shots. A dental examination is encouraged as well. Parents may contact the school or their family physician for specific information.

Exemptions or temporary waivers from the immunization requirement in this policy will be allowed only for medical, military, or religious reasons recognized under the law.

### **Illness & Communicable Diseases**

508.01, 508.03\*

Children should come to school when well. If your child has any of these symptoms: above-normal temperature (100° F or more), vomiting, diarrhea, severe cough, unknown rash or skin eruptions, and/or pain or swelling, it is best to keep them home until consulting with your physician. Students may return to school when they are fever and symptom-free for 24 hours.

Children with head lice **must** remain home until treated with an approved shampoo and all nits have been removed.

A child suspected of having a communicable disease might be excluded from school. The child will be readmitted upon presentation of a physician's certificate or on completion of the period of exclusion required by the State Health Department.

As germs may be spread through saliva, spitting on school grounds, school property, or another person is strictly prohibited. Individuals violating this reasonable expectation will be disciplined under the appropriate provisions of the Student Code of Conduct that could include, but is not limited to, out-of-school suspension and expulsion.

### **Students habitually absent due to illness may be required to provide the school with a doctor's written excuse for each absence.**

Absences due to illness will count toward the absence limitations.

### **School Injury & Illness**

508.04\*

If a child becomes seriously ill or injured during school hours, every effort will be made to notify the parent/guardian or the person designated by the parent for emergency contact. No child will be sent home without this contact being made. If the illness or accident is of a serious nature and parents/guardians cannot be reached, the family physician will be contacted and their directions will be followed. In the event that none of these persons can be reached, reasonable judgment of school personnel regarding the interest of the child will be used.

If a child is well enough to come to school, the child is well enough to participate in the daily school program, (including recess and P.E.). A school official may grant short-term non-participation (one to two days) if requested by parents. Building principals' reserve the right to require a written excuse for non-participation at any time it appears warranted.

The school does not provide student insurance. Refer to **Student Insurance**.

### **Student Insurance**

508.06\*

Students shall have the opportunity to participate in the health and accident insurance plan selected by the School district. The cost of the program shall be borne by the student. Participation in the plan is not a contract with the School District, but rather a contract between the insurance company and the student. Hastings Public Schools does not assume financial responsibility for accidents or injuries to students engaged in school related activities.

## **School Health Services**

The following health services are provided to all students:

- Trained school personnel, health paraeducators or the school nurse, give first aid.
- All immunizations are referred to the parent. Parents will receive information from the school indicating which immunizations and booster shots are needed.
- Height, weight, vision, and hearing screenings are given annually to all students. Parents are notified through the mail if possible problems are identified.
- Blood pressure is checked on all 4<sup>th</sup> grade students.
- A yearly dental screening is provided by Central Community College's dental hygiene program to students in grades Kindergarten, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup>.

## **Medication**

508.02\*

All medicine must be dispensed through the school office. School district personnel may not dispense medication to students without prior written authorization from the physician and the parent/guardian. Prior authorization includes the original prescription container whose label includes: the child's name, physician's name, and directions for dispensing the medicine. Aspirin, Tylenol, and other over-the-counter medicines are treated the same as prescriptions. Whenever possible, ask your physician to write a prescription eliminating the need for dispensing medicine during school hours.

## **Abuse/Neglect**

504.17, 508.10\*

School employees and all adults are bound by Nebraska State Law LB 28-710 to report any suspected case of child abuse or neglect to authorities for investigation.

## **Harassment/Bullying**

504.18, 504.20

Any harassment or bullying of students, staff, or visitors by other students, staff, or volunteers will not be tolerated in the School District or while away from school property if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management, and welfare of the School District. The Board prohibits harassment, bullying, hazing, or any other victimization of students, based on any of the following actual or perceived traits or characteristics; race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability. Harassment and bullying mean any electronic, written, verbal, or physical action or conduct that is designed to embarrass, distress, agitate, disturb or trouble individuals. If, after investigation, a student is found to be in violation of this policy, the student shall be disciplined by appropriate measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. Retaliation against an individual because the individual has filed a harassment or bullying complaint or assisted or participated in a harassment or bullying investigation or proceeding is also prohibited. A student who is found to have retaliated against an individual in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including, suspension and expulsion.

## **Dating Violence**

504.19

The Hastings Public Schools will not tolerate dating violence among students while students are on school property or while away from school property if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management and welfare of a student, students, or the school district. Dating violence means a pattern of behavior where one person uses threats of, or actually uses, physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to control his or her dating partner, regardless of gender. If, after investigation, a student is found to be in violation of this policy, the student shall be disciplined by appropriate measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. Retaliation against an individual because the individual has filed a dating violence complaint or assisted or participated in a dating violence investigation or proceeding is also prohibited. A student who is

found to have retaliated against an individual in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including, suspension and expulsion.

### **Gifts to School Personnel**

509.01\*

Employees of the Board will not accept gifts from students except as such gifts represent tokens. Even token gift giving is to be discouraged. The Board considers as more welcome and more appropriate the writing of letters by students to staff members to express gratitude and appreciation.

### **Bicycles, Etc.**

Students may ride to and from school on bicycles. Parents are responsible for student safety and the determination of the appropriate age for riding a bicycle to and from school. Helmets should be worn to avoid injury. For the safety of all children, bike riders must dismount their bicycles while on school property. The use of skateboards, roller blades, roller skates, roller shoes, or wheeled scooters is prohibited in or on all Hastings Public School property. These items should be left at home. Hastings Public Schools does not assume responsibility for injuries or damages resulting from the use of any of the conveyances used on Hastings Public Schools Property. The school is not responsible for damage to, or the theft of, items brought to school.

### **Emergency Procedures**

Fire and tornado drills are held on a regular basis. In cooperation with the Hastings Police and Fire Departments, a district Crisis Plan has been established for each attendance area. In case of an emergency, teachers and students may be evacuated from the school and taken to an alternative site. In such an event, parents will be notified through radio and television broadcasts. Please do not come to the school or tie up the school's telephone lines with incoming calls during this time. Students will not be released from school during an emergency.

### **Meals**

A breakfast and hot lunch program are available at school. Children eating at school are expected to: 1) enter and leave the lunchroom in an orderly manner; 2) wash hands; 3) be considerate to others; 4) talk in a normal voice and use appropriate language; 5) use good manners while eating; 6) sit where assigned; and 7) abide by the district's Code of Conduct. Fast food from outside sources is discouraged. Lunchroom privileges can be denied if students do not follow these guidelines. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### **Breakfast/Lunch Prices**

Prices will be determined annually and communicated to students and parent/guardians by building principals. Money is collected throughout the school year for lunches. It is strongly encouraged that lunches be paid by the week or month whenever possible. Parents are notified when students deplete their lunch money. Applications for free/reduced price meals are available at the school's office. Names of students eligible for free/reduced price meals will be kept confidential. Any balance in the account at the end of the school year is automatically carried over to the next school year. The school does not have a means to reimburse a left over account balance; however, parents may request a refund from the District Office, 402-461-7500.

### **Care of School Property and Vandalism**

504.07, 505.05\*

Students shall treat School District property with care and respect. Students found to have destroyed, or otherwise harmed, School District property may be required to reimburse the School

District. Students may be assessed fines, charges, or fees for damage beyond normal wear to the materials needed in a course, for overdue school materials, or for misuse of school property. Students may be subject to discipline under Board policy and the School District rules, regulations, and student code of conduct. They may also be referred to local law enforcement authorities. State law 43-801 states that parents are ultimately liable for the willful and intentional destruction of property by their children.

### **Video Surveillance**

903.01\*

Video cameras may be used in locations deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or designee to insure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment. If a video surveillance recording captures a student, staff member, or other building user violating school policies or rules or local, state or federal laws, the recording may be used in disciplinary proceedings against the violator and may be provided to law enforcement agencies.

### **Personal Property**

504.12\*

Personal property such as games, toys, CD/tape players, radios, all phones, pagers, PDA's, electronic devices, etc. are not allowed at school without teacher permission. Electronic devices such as Kindles/Ipads used for school purposes will be allowed with the permission of the classroom teacher. Any devices that interfere with classroom instruction or management will not be allowed. Cell phones are to be off and placed out of sight during the school day. Such items may be confiscated by school personnel for improper use and will be returned to the student or their parent/guardian at the end of the school day or year. **Generally, if school personnel for school purposes do not request an item it should be left at home.** Students are encouraged to mark personal items (coats, caps, lunchboxes, etc.) with names or initials enabling "lost and found" items to be more easily returned to their rightful owners. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

### **Freedom of Expression**

504.08\*

Students will be allowed to express their viewpoints and opinions as long as the expression is responsible. The expression shall not, in the judgment of the administration, encourage the breaking of laws, defamation of persons, be obscene or indecent, or cause a material and substantial disruption to the educational program. Further, the expression must be done in a reasonable time, place, and manner that is not disruptive to the orderly and efficient operation of the School District.

### **Complaint/Grievance Procedures**

504.01, 504.02\*

Students have certain rights. Procedures are in place for students and parents/guardians to follow if they are not in agreement with school actions. It is important that students and parents/guardians visit first with the school person directly involved in the decision or incident. If the problem cannot be resolved at that level, it may be taken to a higher level of authority. Refer to Board Policy 504.01 and 504.02 for more specific instructions. Generally, the following procedures should be taken if students or parents/guardians are not in agreement with school actions:

1. Have a scheduled conference with the staff person involved in the complaint matter.
2. Appeal to the Principal if the matter is not resolved at Step 1.
3. Appeal to the Superintendent if the matter is still unresolved at Step 2.
4. Appeal to the Board of Education if the matter is still unresolved at Step 3. A written appeal should be made within fourteen (14) calendar days of the Superintendent's decision.

### **Due Process**

504.03, 505.03\*

Due process is provided to all students. Students must have prior knowledge of the conduct, which is required or prohibited, at school. Students will be made aware of the specific behavior or charge against him/her. Prior to disciplinary action, students will have the opportunity to present his/her rebuttal regarding the behavior or charge.

### **Questioning of Students by Outside Agencies**

504.17\*

Police officers (or other authorities) do not have the automatic right to question students in school (police officers do have access to directory information). If such questioning is desired, the principal or designee will attempt to contact parents for their permission and ask them to be present. In the event parents are not present during such questioning, the building principal or designee will sit in on the conference to protect the student's rights. Some situations (such as child abuse/neglect) are covered by special state statute and do not require parental permission for questioning. School officials will comply with court orders concerning the dealings of proper authorities with students. School officials will notify the proper legal authorities when a student engages in illegal activities.

### **Dress Code**

504.06\*

Students are expected to dress in a manner that is compatible with the requirements of a good learning environment and appropriate for the time, place, and occasion. The primary responsibility for appearance lies with the students and their parents. When in the judgment of a principal, a student's appearance, mode of dress, or accessories disrupts the educational process or constitutes a threat to health or safety; the student may be required to make modifications. Examples of inappropriate clothing include, but are not limited to: see through material, half tee shirts, and shirts containing messages that suggest drug/alcohol use, violence, gang relations, racial slurs or double meanings that suggest obscene topics or profanity, or reference to prohibited conduct. Shoes are to be worn in school at all times. Hats/caps are not to be worn other than when entering or exiting the building. **Appropriate athletic shoes are to be worn during physical education classes.**

### **Dangerous Items**

504.11, 504.15\*

Illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, firearms, weapons, ammunition, explosives, material that can be ignited, and look alike substances and objects are banned on school property or at school-sponsored events. Violence is expressly prohibited.

A student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school, or to have possessed a firearm at school, shall be expelled from school for a period of not less than one year. The Superintendent may modify such one-year expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis, provided that such modification is in writing. The term "to school" or "at school" means on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by a school being used for a school purpose or in a vehicle being driven for a school purpose by a school employee or by his or her designee, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event.

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

1. Prior written permission to bring the firearm or other dangerous weapon to school is obtained from the student's teacher, building administrator and parent.
2. The purpose of having the firearm or other dangerous weapon in school is for a legitimate educational function.

3. A plan for its transportation into and from the school, its storage while in the school building and how it will be displayed must be developed with the prior written approval by the teacher and building administrator. Such plan shall require that such item will be in the possession of an adult staff member at all times except for such limited time as is necessary to fulfill the educational function.
4. The firearm or other dangerous weapon shall be in an inoperable condition while it is on school grounds.

### **Search and Seizure**

504.16\*

The principal or his/her designee may search a student's personal property (book bag, purse, clothing, etc.) and school property (desk, locker, etc.) at anytime without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant if there is a reasonable basis to believe that the student is in possession of material in violation of school policy and/or state and federal laws, and may seize illegal, unauthorized, contraband materials, items, or nuisance items which have been or are reasonably expected to be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process.

### **Temperature Guidelines**

Normally all students stay outside before school or go outside for recess when the outside temperature is at or above zero degrees Fahrenheit, based either on the actual temperature or wind-chill temperature. Building administrators make the final decision as to whether students remain outside or in the building due to a variety of playground and weather conditions.

Parents may send a note to have a child remain inside at recess for one day if a child is returning from an illness or another related reason. A doctor's note is required for an extended (more than one day) indoor recess.

### **Playground Rules**

504.05\*

Students will be expected to:

1. Play in designated areas only, on the playground side of the trees, benches, and fence;
2. Play in a safe manner (no fighting, kicking, hitting, wrestling, pushing, grabbing, pulling, tripping, or throwing objects such as dirt, clods, rocks, sticks, snowballs, pinecones, and grass);
3. Play touch football only if playing football;
4. Play ball or catch in open areas toward west or south areas of the play fields;
5. Take turns on the equipment;
6. Stay in a swing until it stops moving; no standing in swings;
7. Have only two people sitting and facing inward on a teeter totter at a time;
8. Go across the rings in one direction from the ladder in;
9. Take turns and play on the jungle gym, not under it;
10. Go feet first down slides in a sitting position;
11. Stay out of mud, water, and snow;
12. On the primary side, use the bridge to walk over only, not to play or sit on;
13. Stay on the blacktop when the ground is covered with snow unless wearing snow boots or have a dry pair of socks and shoes to wear inside the building;
14. Leave the trees alone, don't climb in them;
15. Line up immediately when the whistle is blown for their class to return to the building;
16. Leave dangerous objects alone;
17. Stay on the playground unless there is an emergency or an adult supervisor has given permission to leave;
18. Candy, gum, and food are not allowed on the playground;
19. Help keep the playground free from litter;
20. Leave personal play equipment at home unless special permission is received from the principal; return school equipment to the basket;
21. Remember that every adult is in charge and follow their directions even if different from the last adult;

22. Go immediately to an adult inside of the building and get their attention if given a Red Card or Staff Name Badge;
23. Settle differences peacefully--Stop/Think/Plan/Talk;
24. Abide by the Code of Conduct.

### **Code of Conduct**

501, 504.03, 505.01, 505.03\*

The codes of conduct will include measures to prevent or discourage behavior which interferes with the educational program, behavior which disrupts the orderly and efficient operation of the school or the functioning of school activities, behavior which interferes with the maintenance of a learning environment, behavior that is violent or destructive, or behavior which interferes with the rights of other students to pursue their education. Procedures will be available to allow rights of due process for all students.

Administrative and teaching personnel may take actions regarding student behavior which are reasonably necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or prevent interference with the educational process when such activity occurs on School District property or on property within the jurisdiction of the School District; while on school-owned, operated, or chartered transportation; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management, and educational processes of the School District. Such actions may include, but need not be limited to, verbal reprimand, removal from the classroom, counseling of students, parent conferences, rearrangement of schedules, requirements that a student remain in school after regular hours to do additional work, restriction of extracurricular activity, or requirements that a student receive counseling, psychological evaluation, or psychiatric evaluation upon the written consent of a parent or guardian to such counseling or evaluation. The actions may also include in-school suspension during the day. When in-school suspension, after-school assignment, or other disciplinary measures are assigned, the student is responsible for complying with such disciplinary measures and a failure to serve such assigned discipline as directed will serve as grounds for further discipline, up to expulsion from school.

The principal or his/her designee may revoke an in-district transfer request, assign emergency exclusion from school, or assign short-term (five days or less) out-of-school suspension for student conduct constituting grounds for expulsion as set forth in “a through p” of this section or any other violation of rules and standards of behavior adopted under this policy. In addition, the Superintendent or his/her designee may assign long-term suspension (more than five days), mandatory reassignment, involuntary placement in an alternative educational program, and expulsion from school.

State law 43-801 states “parents shall be liable for the willful and intentional infliction of personal injury to any person or destruction of property occasioned by their children residing with them, or placed by them under the care of other persons.

Pursuant to the authority vested in it by the Student Discipline Act, the Board of Education hereby establishes and adopts the following rules and standards concerning student conduct which are reasonably necessary to carry out, or to prevent interference with carrying out, the educational function of the District. Failure to refrain from the following conduct shall constitute grounds for suspension, mandatory reassignment, or expulsion.

No person shall:

- a. Use violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes;
- b. Willfully cause, or attempt to cause, substantial damage to property; steal, or attempt to steal, property of substantial value; or engage in repeated damage or theft involving property;
- c. Cause or attempt to cause, personal injury to a school employee, to a school volunteer, or to any student (personal injury caused by accident, self-defense, or other action undertaken on the

- reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect some other person shall not constitute a violation of this rule);
- d. Threaten or intimidate any student for the purpose of, or with the intent of, obtaining money or anything of value from such student;
  - e. Knowingly possess, handle, or transmit any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon including any imitation or look-alike object or materials which can be reasonably considered, or mistaken for, a weapon or which is represented as a weapon and interferes with school purposes;
  - f. Engage in the unlawful possession, selling, dispensing, or use of a controlled substance or an imitation controlled substance as defined in Section 28-401; a substance represented to be a controlled substance; or alcoholic liquor, as defined in Section 53-103; or be under the influence of a controlled substance or alcoholic liquor;
  - g. Public indecency, as defined in Section 28-806, except that this subdivision shall apply to students at least twelve (12) years of age but less than nineteen (19) years of age;
  - h. Sexually assaulting, or attempting to sexually assault, any person if a complaint has been filed by a prosecutor in a court of competent jurisdiction alleging that the student has sexually assaulted, or attempted to sexually assault, any person, including sexual assaults or attempted sexual assaults which occur off school grounds not at an educational function or event. For purposes of this subdivision, sexual assault shall mean sexual assault in the first degree and sexual assault in the second degree, as defined in Sections 28-319 and 28-320, as such sections now provide or may hereafter from time to time be amended;
  - i. Engage in any other activity forbidden by the laws of the State of Nebraska, which activity constitutes a danger to other students or interferes with school purposes;
  - j. Distribute or display material printed or otherwise, on school property in violation of Rules 1320, 4116.21, 4216.21, 5145.3, or 6144.1 of the School District;
  - k. Smoke tobacco, gamble, or use obscene or profane speech;
  - l. Willfully fail to comply with the directions of teachers, student teachers, school aides, bus drivers, principals, or other authorized school personnel, including, without limitation, the refusal to show a student identification card when asked to do so;
  - m. Dress or groom in violation of Rule 5132 of the School District or in such a manner as to cause an interference with school work, to create a classroom or school disruption, or to present a clear and present danger to a student's health or safety;
  - n. Participate in any activity which substantially disrupts or materially interferes with, or is likely to disrupt or interfere with any school function, activity, or purpose;
  - o. Engage in any conduct where such conduct or the likelihood of engaging in such conduct poses a clear and present danger to the health, welfare, or safety of other students; employees of the District; or other persons on the school grounds;
  - p. Engage in any other conduct which may not be proscribed above, but which constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes, including without limitation, repeated violation of any rules or regulations governing student conduct as established and promulgated by the Superintendent of the District or the student's building principal.

### **Reasonable Physical Force**

505.06\*

Corporal punishment is the intentional physical punishment of a student and is prohibited. However, no employee is prohibited from: 1. Using reasonable and necessary force, not designed or intended to cause pain, in order to a) Quell a disturbance or prevent an act that threatens physical harm to any person; b) Obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object within a pupil's control; c) Defend one's self or defense of others; d) Protect school property; e) Remove a disruptive student from class or school premises or school-sponsored activity; f) Protect a student from the self-infliction of harm; g) Protect the safety of others. 2. Using incidental, minor, or reasonable physical contact to maintain order and control. Upon request, the student's parents shall be given an explanation of the reasons for physical force.

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

504.10\*



The use of electronic resources is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in cancellation of user privileges. Users are required to follow district policy and procedures and sign an acceptable use agreement with the school. Each school will present the Acceptable Use Policy to its students and parents and obtain signed acknowledgment of receipt by students and parents.

The supervising staff member will determine what is appropriate use in accordance with the “guidelines” listed below and may deny, revoke, or suspend access to electronic resources. In the case of willful or repeated violations of this policy, violations which affect the rights of others, or if the supervising staff member feels a more severe penalty for violating this policy is appropriate, violators will be referred to the building principal, or assistant principal and may result in emergency exclusion, short-term or long-term suspension, expulsion, mandatory reassignment, alternative educational placement or such other discipline as may be provided by law. Any such discipline shall be imposed in the manner provided by school policy and applicable law. Violations which constitute a violation of local, state, or federal law, rule or regulation will be referred to law enforcement officials.

The computer network and access to the Internet is the property of the Hastings Public Schools (District) and shall remain under the control, custody and supervision of the District at all times. The District reserves the right to monitor all computer and Internet activity by students. Students have no expectation of privacy in their use of District computers. Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and insure that users are using the system responsibly and are complying with this acceptable use policy.

The District reserves the right to censor the content of materials that students can access on the Internet based on legitimate pedagogical concerns.

### **Guidelines**

In addition to specific instructions from teachers or supervisors, the following guidelines shall be followed in connection with the use of the District’s computers, network and related facilities.

1. The use of student accounts and/or access must be consistent with the educational objectives of the Hastings Public Schools. Use of electronic resources for recreational games is prohibited.
2. To transmit or knowingly receive any materials in violation of any United States or state law, rule or regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, the following: copyrighted material; threatening, subversive, harassing, pornographic or obscene matter; or material protected by trade secret.
3. The use of the network for financial gain, political lobbying, product advertising, or any commercial or illegal activity is prohibited. Use for personal and private business is also disallowed. Attempts to harm or destroy data of another or data that resides anywhere on the Hastings Public Schools network or on the Internet is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to the uploading or creation of computer viruses.
4. Users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a. Users will log in and log out correctly using their own names and passwords.
  - b. Curricular use will take precedence over independent use.
  - c. Use appropriate language. Be polite. Do not be abusive in your messages to others. Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks and other antisocial behaviors are prohibited. Do not swear, use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language.
  - d. Do not reveal your full name, phone number, or home address, or those of other students.
  - e. Note that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. Network storage areas will be treated like school lockers, desks, and other school property. In the event of suspicious activities, teachers, administrators, and district personnel may review all files and messages. Material relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the authorities.

- f. The sending out of “chain letters” is considered a misuse of the system and may result in the loss of the user’s account.
  - g. Permission of the supervising staff member must be obtained before downloading files. Users assume all risks regarding the determination of whether a downloaded public domain program is permissible and should be distributed.
  - h. Users will not make unauthorized copies of software found on school computers, either by copying them onto their own diskettes or onto other computers through electronic mail, FTP or bulletin boards. Users will not give, lend, or sell copies of software to others unless the original software is clearly identified as shareware or in the public domain.
  - i. Users must be reasonable in the amount of time they use the system. Be considerate of other users. Time limits may be imposed.
5. Respect the integrity of the computing system. Do not intentionally develop or activate programs that harass other users, infiltrate a computer system or alter the software components of a computer or computer system. These include, but are not limited to: spreading viruses, forging e-mail, attempted “hacking” into restricted systems, and/or attempting to use administrative commands.
  6. Do not vandalize by harming or destroying the data or hardware on the Hastings Public Schools system or any other system.
  7. Security of any computer system is essential. Access to electronic resources is intended for the exclusive use of its authorized users. Any problems that arise from the use of an account are the responsibility of the account holder. Misuse may result in disciplinary action. Misuse may include, but is not limited to:
    - a. Trespassing in another’s work or files
    - b. Giving out your password or the password of others
    - c. Attempting to login to another user’s account
    - d. Failure to notify supervising staff of a security problem
  8. Users noticing a security or ethics issue must notify the supervisor/administrator immediately.
  9. Users will not waste or take supplies such as paper, printer cartridges, toner, and diskettes that are provided by Hastings Public Schools.
  10. The use of technology to improve or meet curriculum objectives is a privilege that requires users to exhibit responsible behavior.

Each school shall have the right to adopt such additional rules regarding electronic resources as may be appropriate for their individual circumstances. When such rules are distributed with or in the same manner as this policy they shall become a part hereof and a violation of such additional rules shall constitute a violation of this policy.