

# POLICY REFERENCE MANUAL

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## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This series of the board policy manual is devoted to the goals and objectives for the delivery of the education program as described by the mission statement of the district. The board's objective in the design, contents and the delivery of the education program is to provide an equal opportunity for students to pursue an education free of discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, marital status, religion or disability.

In providing the education program of the school district, the board shall strive to meet its overall goal of providing the students an opportunity to develop a healthy social, intellectual, emotional, and physical self-concept in a learning environment that provides guidance and encourages critical thinking in students.

In striving to meet this overall goal, the objectives of the education program are to provide students with an opportunity to:

- Acquire basic skills in obtaining information, solving problems, thinking critically and communicating effectively;
- Become effective and responsible contributors to the decision-making processes of the social and political institutions of the community, state and nation;
- Acquire entry-level job skills and knowledge necessary for further education;
- Acquire the capacities for a satisfying and responsible role as family members;
- Acquire knowledge, habits and attitudes that promote personal and public health, both physical and mental;
- Acquire an understanding of ethical principles and values and the ability to apply them to their own lives;
- Develop an understanding of their own worth, abilities, potential and limitations; and,
- Learn and enjoy the process of learning and acquire the skills necessary for a lifetime of continuous learning and adaptation to change.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar shall accommodate the education program of the school district. The school calendar shall accommodate instruction for a minimum of 1,080 hours for students in grades nine through twelve, 1,032 hours for students in grades one through eight, and 400 hours for students in kindergarten. The school calendar shall include, but need not be limited to, days for student instruction, staff development, in-service days and teacher conferences.

The academic school year for students is considered to include a minimum of one-hundred and eighty days in the school calendar.

Special education students may attend school on a school calendar different from that of the regular education program consistent with their Individualized Education Program.

The board, in its discretion, may excuse graduating seniors from up to five days of instruction after the school district requirements for graduation have been met. The board may also excuse graduating seniors from making up days missed due to inclement weather if the student has met the school district's graduation requirements.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to develop the school calendar for recommendation, approval, and adoption by the board annually.

The board may amend the official school calendar when the board considers the change to be in the best interests of the school district's education program.

Legal Reference:     Neb. Statute 79-211  
                          NDE Rule 10.004.01A2

Cross Reference:    503     Student Attendance  
                          604.03 Special Education

## SCHOOL DAY

The normal student school day for grades nine through twelve shall consist of a minimum of 6.5 hours, not including the lunch period, on Monday through Thursday and 5.3 hours on Friday. The normal student school day for grades five through eight shall consist of a minimum of 6 hours, not including lunch period, on Monday through Thursday and 5 hours on Friday. The school day consists of the schedule of class instruction and class activities as established and sponsored by the school district. Time during which school is dismissed for tournaments or contests, parent/teacher conferences, funerals, parades and school picnics may be counted as part of the student's instructional time. The minimum school day shall meet the requirements as established for the operation of accredited schools.

The kindergarten through grade four school day shall reflect the number of hours that are found in the building schedule with which it is associated (i.e. kindergarten through 1 is with the high school building, grades 2 through 4 are in the middle school building).

The district may occasionally schedule a school day for less than the standard minimum number of hours due to the scheduling of staff development opportunities, parent-teacher conferences or special events occupying a portion of the day. Schedule revisions and changes in time allotments will be made by the superintendent.

When the school is forced to close due to weather or other emergencies, that part of the day during which school was in session will constitute a school day.

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OPEN OR CLOSED CAMPUS

The campuses of the district are closed and students after arrival for morning classes will not, without permission of the principal, leave the campus for any purpose until they have completed their school requirements for the day.

Cross Reference:     503     Student Attendance  
                          504.01 Student Due Process Rights  
                          505     Student Discipline

## CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Curriculum development shall be an ongoing process in the school district. Each curriculum area shall be reviewed and revised when necessary according to the timelines set out by the superintendent. These timelines will provide for periodic review of each curriculum area.

The principal shall be responsible for curriculum development and for determining the most effective way of conducting research of the school district's curriculum needs and a long-range curriculum development program. In making recommendations to the board, the principal shall propose a curriculum that will:

- fulfill the philosophy of the school district;
- reflect the educational and operational needs assessment of the school district;
- articulate courses of study from kindergarten through grade twelve;
- identify minimum objectives for each course and, at the elementary level, for each grade;
- provide for the evaluation of the procedures and methods for attaining the objectives;
- provide for objective monitoring of a student's progress;
- provide for the needs of vocational and college bound students;
- include, if feasible, the course offerings requested by the students;
- meet the requirements of the Nebraska Department of Education.

It shall be the responsibility principal to keep the board apprised of necessary curriculum changes and revisions and to develop administrative regulations for curriculum development and recommendations to the board.

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. § 1232h (1994).  
34 C.F.R. Pt. 98 (1996).

Cross Reference: 102 Educational Philosophy of the District  
104 Educational and Operational Planning  
604 Instructional Curriculum  
606 Instructional Materials

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## CURRICULUM ADOPTION

Curriculum of the school district must be recommended by the superintendent and approved by the board.

The board may authorize the use of curriculum guides when it adopts the curriculum. Such guides will be used when, in the opinion of the superintendent, they will be of assistance to the instructional program and will provide a consistent approach in the instructional program.

Legal Reference:     20 U.S.C. § 1232h (1994).  
                          34 C.F.R. Pt. 98 (1996).

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**CURRICULUM GUIDES AND COURSE OUTLINES**

Curriculum guides and course outlines will be written for all courses offered in the district. L.E.A.R.N.S. (Leading Educational Achievement through Rigorous Nebraska Standards) as adopted by the State Board of Education will be included. Teachers are expected to adhere closely to the course of study adopted by the district. Information regarding course offerings will be made available to all students and interested district patrons, upon request.

## CURRICULUM EVALUATION

When deemed necessary by the superintendent, and whenever a new program is proposed, the board will review the curriculum to determine its strengths and weaknesses. The board may authorize the superintendent to appoint an ad hoc advisory committee to review the curriculum.

The board shall review the students' performance on standardized tests, courses, and other indicators of student achievement deemed relevant by the board as a guideline for the effectiveness of the curriculum. It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to provide the board with the test scores and grades along with the superintendent's comments about the school district's curriculum.

Legal Reference:     20 U.S.C. § 1232h (1994).  
                          34 C.F.R. Pt. 98 (1996).

Cross Reference:    101    Educational Philosophy of the District  
                          104    Educational and Operational Planning  
                          611    Academic Achievement  
                          604    Instructional Curriculum

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PILOT, EXPERIMENTAL OR INNOVATIVE PROJECTS

The board welcomes new ideas in curriculum. Proposals for pilot or experimental projects shall first be reviewed and analyzed by the superintendent. Projects recommended by the superintendent will be considered by the board. Pilot and experimental projects approved by the board, the Nebraska Department of Education, or the U. S. Department of Education may be utilized in the education program.

Students, who may be or are asked to participate in a research or experimental project or program, must have their parents' written consent on file prior to participating in the project or program. A research or experimental program or project requiring parents' prior written consent is a program or project designed to explore or develop new or unproven teaching methods or techniques. These programs or projects shall be designated as research or experimental projects or programs. The educational materials of a program or project designated as a research or experimental program or project may be inspected and reviewed by the parents of the students participating or being considered for participation in the program or project. The inspection and review by the parents shall be in accordance with board policy 606.02, "Instructional Materials Inspection."

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. § 1232h (1994).  
34 C.F.R. Pt. 98 (1996)..

Cross Reference: 604 Instructional Curriculum

BASIC INSTRUCTION PROGRAM

The basic instructional program shall include the courses required for each grade level by the Nebraska Department of Education.

The basic weekly instructional program of students enrolled in the elementary grades shall include reading and language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, health, physical education, art, and music. Writing skills shall be incorporated in all curricular areas. The district shall consider elementary grades to be all grades up to fourth grade.

The basic yearly instructional program of students enrolled in the middle grades shall include reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, health, art, music, and physical education. Writing skills shall be incorporated in all curricular areas. Exploratory experiences shall be offered in vocational education, foreign language, and technology education. The district shall consider middle grades to be all grades from fifth to eighth.

The basic instructional program of students enrolled in the high school grades shall consist of a minimum of 340 instructional units including language arts (60 units), social science (40 units), mathematics (40 units), science (40 units), foreign language (20 units), vocational education (80 units), personal health and physical fitness (20 units), and visual and performing arts (40 units). Writing skills shall be incorporated in all curricular areas. The instructional program shall include computer education. The district shall consider high school grades to be all grades of ninth and above.

Each instructional program shall be carefully planned for optimal benefit taking into consideration the financial condition of the school district and other factors deemed relevant by the board or superintendent. Each instructional program's plan should describe the program, its goals, the effective materials, the activities and the method for student evaluation.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations stating the required courses and optional courses for the elementary, middle and high school grade programs.

Legal Reference: NDE Rule 10.005 - 10.007  
20 U.S.C. § 1232h (1994)  
34 C.F.R. Pt. 98 (1996)

Cross Reference: 102 Educational Philosophy of the District  
103 Equal Educational Opportunity  
104 Educational and Operational Planning  
603 Curriculum Development  
611 Academic Achievement

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SUMMER SCHOOL INSTRUCTION

Generally, only Special Education Extended School Year services will be offered during summer school via the Educational Service Unit. However, the board, in its discretion, may offer summer school for one or more courses and student activities for students who need additional help and instruction or for enrichment in those areas. This decision shall be within the discretion of the board.

Upon receiving a request for summer school, the board shall weigh the benefit to the students and the school district as well as the school district's budget and availability of certificated employees to conduct summer school.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

Cross Reference:     411.02 Summer School Certificated Employees  
                          604     Instructional Curriculum  
                          801.07 Summer School Program Transportation Service

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The board recognizes some students have different educational needs than other students. The board shall provide an appropriate education program and related services to students identified in need of special education. The special education services will be provided from birth until the appropriate education is completed, age twenty-one or to maximum age allowable in accordance with the law. Students requiring special education shall attend regular education classes, participate in extracurricular activities and receive services in a regular education setting to the maximum extent possible. The appropriate education for each student shall be written in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Special education students shall be required to meet the requirements stated in board policy or in their IEPs for graduation. It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to provide or make provisions for appropriate special education and related services.

Children from birth through age 5 meeting the identification and verification procedures shall be provided special education services within the public education system. The school district shall work in conjunction with the appropriate education agencies to provide services, at the earliest appropriate time, to children with disabilities. This shall be done to ensure a smooth transition of children entitled to early childhood special education services.

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. §§1400 et seq. (1994).  
34 C.F.R. Pt. 300 et seq. (1996).  
Neb. Statute 79-1110 et seq.

Cross Reference: 505 Student Discipline  
507 Student Records  
508.02 Administration of Medication to Students  
508.08 Student Special Health Services  
602.01 School Calendar  
604 Instructional Curriculum  
611.07 Graduation Requirements

## MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Students shall have an equal opportunity for a quality education without discrimination, regardless of their race, religion, color, sex, marital status, national origin or disability.

The education program shall be free of discrimination and provide equal opportunity for the students. The education program shall foster knowledge of and respect and appreciation for the culture, history and contributions of diverse cultural groups including, but not limited to, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, and Asian Americans. It shall place special emphasis on human relations and sensitivity toward all races.

The board shall adopt a written plan for the implementation of multicultural education and shall evaluate this plan at least every five years. During the evaluation process, the board shall involve parents, students, employees and a diverse representation of the community members in assessing the effectiveness and appropriateness of the program. The plan shall establish district goals for the multicultural program and will include staff development to assist the district in pursuing these goals. The plan shall include a process for selecting appropriate materials and shall incorporate multicultural education into all subject areas of the core curriculum of grades kindergarten through twelve.

The superintendent will annually report the status of the multicultural education program to the board.

Legal Reference:           Neb. Statute 79-719 et seq.  
                                  NDE Rule 10.004.01A3  
                                  NDE Rule 16

Cross Reference:           103    Equal Educational Opportunity  
                                  600    Goals and Objectives of the Education Program

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## HEALTH EDUCATION

Students in grade levels one through twelve shall receive, as part of their health education, instruction about personal health; food and nutrition; environmental health; safety and survival skills; consumer health; family life; human growth and development; substance abuse and non-use, including the effects of alcohol, tobacco, drugs and poisons on the human body; human sexuality; self-esteem; stress management; interpersonal relationships; emotional and social health; health resources; prevention and control of disease; and communicable diseases, including acquired immune deficiency syndrome. The purpose of the health education program is to help each student protect, improve and maintain physical, emotional and social well-being.

The areas stated above shall be included in health education and the instruction shall be adapted at each grade level to aid understanding by the students.

Parents who object to health education instruction in human growth and development may file a written request that the student be excused from the instruction. The written request shall include a proposed alternate activity or study acceptable to the superintendent. The superintendent shall have the final authority to determine the alternate activity or study.

Cross Reference:     504    Student Rights and Responsibilities  
                          508    Student Health and Well-Being  
                          608    Instructional Services



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students in grades one through eight shall be required to participate in physical education courses unless they are excused by the principal of their attendance center.

Students in grades nine through twelve are required to participate in one year or 10 instructional units of physical education. Participation in health education courses may apply toward this requirement.

Students may be excused from physical education courses if the student presents a written statement from a doctor stating that such activities could be injurious to the health of the student or the student has been exempted because of a conflict with the student's religious beliefs.

Students who will not participate in physical education must have a written request or statement from their parents.

Cross Reference: 506 Student Activities

CAREER EDUCATION

Preparing students for careers is one goal of the education program. Career education will be written into the education program for grades kindergarten through twelve. This education shall include, but not be limited to, awareness of self in relation to others and the needs of society, exploration of employment opportunities, experiences in personal decision-making, and experiences of integrating work values and work skills into their lives.

It shall be the responsibility of the principal to assist certificated employees in finding ways to provide career education in the education program. Special attention should be given to offering courses of vocational education. The board, in its review of the curriculum, shall review the means in which career education is combined with other instructional programs.

DRIVER EDUCATION

If a traffic safety education program is provided by the district, the program will be made available to all eligible resident students. The district will charge a tuition rate as established by the board.

Eligible nonresident students may enroll in the district's traffic safety education program if resources are available. Nonresident students may be charged tuition at a higher rate than resident students.

No resident student shall be denied enrollment in the district's traffic safety education program based solely on the ability to pay tuition. The district will develop procedures for reducing or waiving tuition.

The district will develop procedures for establishing tuition rates and enrolling nonresident students.

## TEACHING ABOUT RELIGION

The school district is required to keep the practice of religion out of the school curriculum. The board recognizes the key role religion has played in the history of the world and authorizes the study of religious history and traditions as part of the curriculum. Preferential or derogatory treatment of a single religion shall not take place.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to ensure the study of religion in the schools in keeping with the following guidelines:

- the proposed activity must have a secular purpose;
- the primary objective of the activity must not be one that advances or inhibits religion; and
- the activity must not foster excessive governmental entanglement with religion.

Cross Reference:      605.5 Religious-Based Exclusion from a School Program  
                                 607.02 School Ceremonies and Observances

## ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The board believes students should have an opportunity to reach their own decisions and beliefs about conflicting points of view. Academic freedom is the opportunity of licensed employees and students to study, investigate, present, interpret, and discuss facts and ideas relevant to the subject matter of the classroom and appropriate to and in good taste with the maturity and intellectual and emotional capacities of the students.

It shall be the responsibility of the teacher to refrain from advocating partisan causes, sectarian religious views, or biased positions in the classroom or through teaching methods. Teachers are not discouraged from expressing personal opinions as long as students are aware it is a personal opinion and students are allowed to reach their own conclusions independently.

It shall be the responsibility of the principal to ensure academic freedom is allowed but not abused in the classroom.

Cross Reference:     504     Student Rights and Responsibilities  
                          1005.10 Distribution or Posting of Materials

CITIZENSHIP

Being a citizen of the United States, of Nebraska and of the school district community entitles students to special privileges and protections as well as requiring the students to assume civic, economic and social responsibilities and to participate in their country, state and school district community in a manner that entitles them to keep these rights and privileges.

As part of the education program, students shall have an opportunity to learn about their rights, privileges, and responsibilities as citizens of this country, state and school district community. As part of this learning opportunity students shall be instructed in the elements of good citizenship and the role quality citizens play in their country, state and school district community.

Cross Reference:     102   Educational Philosophy of the District  
                          504   Student Rights and Responsibilities  
                          505   Student Discipline

## GLOBAL EDUCATION

Because of our growing interdependence with other nations in the world, global education shall be incorporated into the education program for grades kindergarten through twelve so that students have the opportunity to acquire a perspective on world issues, problems, and prospects for an awareness of the relationship between an individual's self-interest and the concerns of people elsewhere in the world.

Cross Reference:     603   Curriculum Development  
                          604   Instructional Curriculum

INSTRUCTION AT A POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

**Eligibility**

Any 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade student who is under the age of 21 shall be eligible to apply to an institution of higher education for enrollment through the post-secondary options program (early entry/dual credit) if he or she:

- is deemed by the student and parent/guardian on the advice of the principal to be in need of course work at a higher academic level than that available at school
- is deemed by school personnel to show a high degree of maturity and responsibility, especially with regard to potential for completing post-secondary courses

**Academic Credit**

Unless denied credit by the post-secondary institution, students will receive academic credit granted for course work successfully completed by a student under this program and such credit shall count as high school credit toward graduation requirements. A student participating in this program shall still be considered as enrolled in the district and eligible for all high school activities. The program is not available for summer school.

**Payment of Tuition by Student**

The student or parent/guardian shall be responsible for paying the tuition associated with post-secondary courses taken by the student unless the student has been identified as a high-ability learner. If a student meets this criterion, the school district will pay tuition and books for the dual-credit courses. If, however, a student whose tuition and books have been paid for by the district does not earn credit for the class, the student or parent/guardian will reimburse the school district.

**Notice to Students and Parents/Guardians**

Information about the post-secondary options program, including the appeals procedure if high school credit is denied, shall be distributed annually to all students in grades eleven and twelve and to their parents/guardians. Notice shall be given to allow sufficient time for students and parents/guardians to consider this option.

Cross Reference: 611 Academic Achievement

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INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION

The board's primary responsibility in the management of the school district is the operation and delivery of the regular education program. Generally, students attending the school district shall receive the regular education program offered by the district. Only in exceptional circumstances will the board approve students receiving individualized instruction at the expense of the school district.

Recommendations from the superintendent for individualized instruction shall state the need for the instruction, the objectives and goals sought for the instruction, the employee requirements for the instruction, the implementation procedures for the instruction and the evaluation procedures and processes that will be used to assess the value of the instruction.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations for individualized instruction.

PROGRAM FOR TALENTED AND GIFTED STUDENTS

The district is committed to an educational program that recognizes, identifies and serves the unique needs of talented and gifted students. Talented and gifted students are those who have been identified as having high performance capability in such areas as intellectual, creative, or artistic capacity or in specific fields and who require accelerated or differentiated curriculum programs in order to develop those capabilities fully.

The board directs the principal to develop a written identification process for identifying talented and gifted students in grades K-12. The identification process shall include an appeals process for parents/guardians who wish to request reconsideration.

A written plan that identifies programs or services to be provided to address the assessed needs of identified students shall be similarly developed. The plan shall include:

- the district's philosophy on educational service to learners with high ability;
- the district's operational definition of a high ability learner;
- goals and objectives of the program;
- a description of the programming services, options and strategies to be provided under this plan;
- yearly evaluation procedures to allow for input from parents, educators, students, and community members;
- staff development training and support provided within the plan; and
- an outline of program management.

Legal Reference: Neb. Statute 79-1106 et seq.  
NDE Rule 3

Cross Reference: 102 Educational Philosophy of the District  
611 Academic Achievement

PROGRAM FOR AT-RISK STUDENTS

The board recognizes some students require additional assistance in order to graduate from the regular education program. The board shall provide a plan to encourage and provide an opportunity for at-risk students to achieve their potential and obtain their high school diploma.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to develop a plan for students at-risk which provides for identifying students, for program evaluation, and for the training of employees.

Cross Reference:     608.01 Student Guidance and Counseling Program  
                          611    Academic Achievement

RELIGIOUS-BASED EXCLUSION FROM A SCHOOL PROGRAM

Parents who wish to have their child excluded from a school program because of religious beliefs must inform the superintendent. The board authorizes the administration to allow the exclusion if it is not disruptive to the education program and it does not infringe on a compelling state or educational interest. Further, the exclusion must not interfere with other school district operations.

In notifying the superintendent, the parents shall abide by the following:

1. The notice shall be in writing;
2. The objection shall be based on religious beliefs;
3. The objection shall state which activities or studies violate their religious beliefs;
4. The objection shall state why these activities or studies violate their religious beliefs;  
and
5. The objection shall state a proposed alternate activity or study.

The superintendent shall have discretion to make this determination. The factors the superintendent shall consider when a student requests to be excluded from a program or activity because of religious beliefs include, but are not limited to, staff available to supervise a student who wishes to be excluded, space to house the student while the student is excluded, available superintendent-approved alternative course of study or activity while the student is excluded, number of students who wish to be excluded, whether allowing the exclusion places the school in a position of supporting a particular religion, and whether the program or activity is required for promotion to the next grade level or for graduation.

Students who are allowed to be excluded from a program or activity which violates their religious beliefs shall be required to do an alternate supervised activity or study.

Cross Reference:       604    Instructional Curriculum  
                              607.02 School Ceremonies and Observances

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

The School Board recognizes the need to provide equal educational opportunities for all students in the district. Therefore, if the inability to speak and understand the English language due to national origin or non-English speaking environments excludes a student from effective participation in the educational programs offered by the district, the district shall take appropriate action to rectify the English language deficiency in order to provide the student equal access to its programs. The board directs the administration to develop and implement procedures which:

- Appropriately identify and evaluate students with limited English proficiency (LEP). Limited English proficient students are those whose native/home language is a language other than English and whose English language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are not developed to a level at which they can achieve challenging performance standards in a regular classroom.
- Determine the appropriate instructional environment for LEP students.
- Monitor progress of students receiving English as a Second Language (ESL) or bilingual instruction in order to determine their readiness for the mainstream classroom environment.
- Establish professional standards for staff members who teach bilingual or English as a Second Language programs and provide development opportunities for staff members when needed.

Where feasible, the district may provide support for the student's use of the native language while developing English language skills.

Legal Reference: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964.  
20 U.S.C. §§ 1701 et seq.

Cross Reference: 103 Equal Educational Opportunity  
601 Goals and Objectives

## INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS SELECTION

The board has sole discretion to approve instructional materials for the school district. This authority is delegated to certificated employees to determine which instructional materials, other than textbooks, will be utilized by and purchased by the school district.

In reviewing current instructional materials for continued use and in selecting additional instructional materials, certificated employees shall consider the current and future needs of the school district as well as the changes and the trends in education and society. It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to report to the board the action taken by certificated employees.

In making its recommendations to the superintendent, the certificated employees will select materials which:

- support the educational philosophy, goals and objectives of the school district;
- consider the needs, age, and maturity of students;
- are within the school district's budget;
- foster respect and appreciation for cultural diversity and difference of opinion;
- stimulate growth in factual knowledge and literary appreciation;
- encourage students to become decision-makers, to exercise freedom of thought and to make independent judgment through the examination and evaluation of relevant information, evidence and differing viewpoints;
- portray the variety of careers, roles, and lifestyles open to persons of both sexes; and,
- increase an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each member of a multicultural society.

In the case of textbooks, the board shall make the final decision after receiving a recommendation from the superintendent. The criteria stated above for selection of other instructional materials shall apply to the selection of textbooks. The superintendent may develop another means for the selection of textbooks. Textbooks shall be reviewed as needed and at least every 5 years.

Education materials given to the school district must meet the criteria established above. The gift must be received in compliance with board policy.

Cross Reference:     203.07 Advisory Board Committees  
                          603     Curriculum Development  
                          611     Academic Achievement

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

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS INSPECTION

Parents and other members of the school district community may view the instructional materials used by the students. All instructional materials, including teacher's manuals, films, tapes or other supplementary material which will be used in connection with any survey, analysis, or evaluation as part of any federally funded programs must be available for inspection by parents.

The instructional materials must be viewed on school district premises. Copies may be obtained according to board policy.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations regarding the inspection of instructional materials.

Cross Reference:     603    Curriculum Development  
                          1003   Public Examination of District Records

OBJECTION TO INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Members of the school district community may object to the instructional materials utilized in the school district and ask for their use to be reconsidered.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the principals, to develop administrative regulations for reconsideration of instructional materials.

Cross Reference:     202.12 Public Participation in Board Meetings  
                          403.05 Public Complaints About Employees  
                          603     Curriculum Development



TECHNOLOGY AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The board supports the use of innovative methods and the use of technology in the delivery of the education program. The board encourages employees to investigate economic ways to utilize instructional television, audiovisual materials, computers, and other technological advances as a part of the curriculum.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to develop a plan for the use of technology in the curriculum and to evaluate it annually. The superintendent shall report the results of the evaluation and make a recommendation to the board annually regarding the use of technology in the curriculum.

Cross Reference: 603 Curriculum Development

MEDIA CENTERS

The school district shall maintain a media center at each campus for use by students and employees during the school day to expand the opportunity for learning, contribute to literacy, support the local curriculum, and enhance and enrich learning experiences for all students.

Materials for the centers will be acquired according to Board Policy 606.01, "Instructional Materials Selection" and will meet the minimum requirements of the Nebraska Department of Education.

It shall be the responsibility of the principal of the building in which the media center is located to oversee the use of materials in the media center.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to develop procedures for the selection and replacement of both library and instructional materials, for the acceptance of gifts, for the removal of obsolete library and instructional materials, and for the handling of challenges to library materials.

Legal Reference: NDE Rule 10.004.04

Cross Reference: 603 Curriculum Development

## ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS, TECHNOLOGY AND THE INTERNET

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.

The guidelines shall prohibit utilization of networks for inappropriate or illegal activities, the intentional spreading of imbedded messages (viruses) or the use of other programs with the potential of damaging or destroying programs, data or equipment. The 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.

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.

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



- 401 Guiding Principles for Employees
- 504 Student Rights and Responsibilities
- 507 Student Records
- 603 Curriculum Development
- 604 Instructional Curriculum
- 606.5 Media Centers
- 1006 Use of District Facilities and Equipment

## DISTRICT WEB SITE

The board supports and encourages the publication of a district web site to improve community relations, to foster creativity and to demonstrate student learning. It is a means of providing information to the community about school events and classroom activities, and provides an effective line of communication between the community, staff and students.

The superintendent is directed to develop written web site regulations that pursue the benefits of maintaining a web site while protecting the school and community from its potential misuse. The superintendent will designate a staff member (herein called the Computer Coordinator) to implement the web site regulations and to review all materials published on the web site. All web pages on the web site will conform to this policy and the corresponding regulations.

### **Staff Web Pages**

Staff may create web pages to use in class activities or to provide a resource for other staff members. Staff web pages must reflect the educational goals and objectives of the district. District employees, board members or guests may not establish personal web pages using district resources.

### **School or Class Web Pages**

Schools or classes may establish web pages that present information about the school or class activities. The Building Principal will designate an individual to be responsible for managing the school web site under the supervision of the computer coordinator. Teachers will be responsible for maintaining their class pages.

### **Extracurricular Organization Web Pages**

Extracurricular organizations may establish web pages with the approval of the organization sponsor and the computer coordinator. Material presented on the organization web page must relate specifically to organization activities and will include only student-produced material.

### **Student Web Pages**

Students may establish personal web pages with staff sponsorship and approval by the computer coordinator. Material presented in the student's web pages must be related to the student's educational and career preparation activities.

### **Other Web Pages**

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

The district may allow other organizations such as parent-teacher groups, booster clubs, school foundations, etc. to publish web pages providing they conform to this policy and the corresponding administrative regulations.

### **Written Permission**

Written permission from both the parent/guardian and the student must be obtained prior to placing any student photographs, artwork, writing or other projects on the web site. No personal contact information about the child, such as home address, phone number, or e-mail address will be given. The work will appear with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission. In the event that anyone requests such permission, those requests will be forwarded to the parent or guardian. All such work may be removed from the web site at the end of the current school year.

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. sec. 1232g (1988) (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)  
47 U.S.C. 201 et seq. (Communications Decency Act of 1995)  
Neb. Statute 79-2104

Cross Reference: 504 Student Rights and Responsibilities  
507 Student Records  
603 Curriculum Development  
604 Instructional Curriculum  
606.05 Media Centers  
1006 Use of District Facilities and Equipment

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

CLASS SIZE - CLASS GROUPING

It shall be within the sole discretion of the board to determine the size of classes and to determine whether class grouping shall take place. The board shall review the class sizes annually.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to make a recommendation to the board on class size based upon the financial condition of the school district, the qualifications of and number of certificated employees, and other factors deemed relevant to the board.

Cross Reference: 502.02 Nonresident Students



SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

The school district will continue school ceremonies and observances which have become a tradition and a custom of the education program. These include, but are not limited to, reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and observance of holidays, such as Christmas, Halloween and Easter, by programs and performances. Such ceremonies or observances shall have a secular purpose and shall not advocate or sponsor a particular religion.

Students who do not wish to participate in these activities may be silent during the ceremony or observance or receive permission from the principal to be excused from the ceremony for religious reasons in compliance with board policy.

ANIMALS IN THE CLASSROOM

Live animals will not be allowed in school district facilities except under special circumstances and only for an educational purpose. Permission from the principal will be required of anyone wishing to bring an animal into school district facilities. Appropriate supervision of animals is required when animals are brought into the school district facilities.

The person bringing the animal must furnish transportation for the animal brought to school. Animals will not be allowed to travel to and from the student's attendance center on the school bus without prior approval from the principal.

It shall be the responsibility of the principal to determine appropriate supervision of animals in the classroom.

Cross Reference:     508     Student Health and Well-Being

STUDENT PRODUCTION OF MATERIALS AND SERVICES

Materials and services produced by students at the expense of the school district are the property of the school district. Materials and services produced by students at the student's expense, except for incidental expense to the school district, are the property of the student.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to determine incidental expense.

Cross Reference:      409.04 Certificated Employee Publication or Creation of Materials  
                                 504.19 Student Fees

## STUDENT FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

The principal may authorize field trips and excursions when such events contribute to the achievement of education goals of the school district. The school district will provide transportation for field trips and excursions. Excursions are defined as brief educational trips beyond the boundaries of the school grounds beginning and ending in a single class period.

In authorizing field trips and excursions, the principal shall consider the financial condition of the school district, the educational benefit of the activity, the inherent risks or dangers of the activity, and other factors deemed relevant by the superintendent. Written parental permission will be required prior to the student's participation in field trips. The superintendent's approval will be required for field trips outside the state. Board approval will be required for field trips which involve unusual length or expense.

Field trips and excursions are to be arranged with the principal well in advance. A detailed schedule and budget must be submitted by the employee. The school district will be responsible for obtaining a substitute teacher if one is needed. Following field trips and excursions, the teacher may be required to submit a written summary of the event.

Cross Reference:     504.03 Student Conduct  
                          506.01 Student Activity Eligibility  
                          604    Instructional Curriculum  
                          801    Transportation

### COLLECTION OF MONEY BY TEACHERS

Teachers in grades K-8 will not be required to collect money from students for activities other than the following: field trip lunches.

Teacher sponsors of student government, productions, dances, athletic events, or other grade level or school-wide activities may be required to handle funds associated with these activities. Teachers will be aware of, and comply with, provisions of the district's policy on student fees.

Cross Reference:     504.19 Student Fees  
                          506     Student Activities

## PLANNING AND RECORD-KEEPING BY TEACHERS

Quality lesson planning is necessary to help ensure the teacher that key elements of an effective lesson are presented. Lesson plans aid the principal, supervisor and substitute teachers in understanding the regular classroom teacher's plan for teaching the course of study as adopted by the School Board. Lesson plans should also be prepared by teachers whose assignment may vary from regular classroom work in order that their scheduled activities may be observed with understanding or replicated by a substitute teacher. Generally, teachers will prepare lesson plans on a weekly basis although they are expected to have general plans which cover the length of the course. Plans will be kept by the classroom teacher in a place known to and accessible to the building administrators. The principal may further require teachers to provide copies of lesson plans to the school office at reasonable times and intervals as determined by the principal.

The lesson plan should be of sufficient length and substance to allow a substitute teacher to carry on the course of study and to provide a means by which principals and supervisors may monitor instruction to assure that the educational program in a particular class or activity is related to the district-approved course of study.

Although the district will provide lesson plan books, principals may request another system or format for the presentation of lesson plans provided it meets the purpose of planning. Principals may also require more detail or specific plans to assist individual teachers, or they may minimize the use of lesson plans when such action will not compromise the stated purpose of lesson planning.

It is recognized that provision for flexibility is essential within the lesson plan to allow for unexpected changes and varying learning rates.

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

## SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

Citizens who voluntarily contribute their time and talents to the improvement and enrichment of the public schools' instructional and other programs are valuable assets. The board encourages constructive participation of groups and individuals in the school to perform appropriate tasks during and after school hours under the direction and supervision of professional personnel.

The administration is responsible for the recruitment, use, coordination and training of volunteers. These assignments will be carried out as directed or delegated by the superintendent. Every effort should be made to use volunteer resources in a manner which will ensure maximum contribution to the welfare and educational growth of students.

STUDENT GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAM

The board shall provide a student guidance and counseling program. The guidance counselor shall be certified with the Nebraska Department of Education in guidance and counseling and hold any additional qualifications required by the board. The guidance and counseling program will serve grades K - 12. The program will assist students with their personal, educational, social and career development. It will provide assistance to students in academic planning and placement. The program shall be coordinated with the education program and involve certificated employees.

Cross Reference:     507     Student Records  
                          604     Instructional Curriculum  
                          605     Alternative Programs



### STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

Health services shall be coordinated with the health education and physical education curriculum. The program shall be designed to help each student protect, improve and maintain physical, emotional and social well-being. Areas to be considered include, but are not limited to:

- Environmental health and safety;
- Emergency health procedures and responsibilities;
- Health promotion;
- Communicable disease prevention and control;
- Staffing for the school health program;
- Administering of prescription medication;
- Acute or chronic health problems;
- Health assessment and screening;
- Record keeping; and
- Program evaluation.

Nurses and other medical employees employed by or requested to conduct services for the board shall hold and maintain a current Nebraska license and meet the requirements of the Nebraska Department of Education if required by the school district. In addition to the health services provided in the curriculum, the school district will provide the following district-wide health services:

- Annual vision screening tests;
- Annual audiometer screening tests;
- Annual spinal screening;
- Annual height and weight measurement; and
- Monitor student records for evidence of immunization as required by state statute.

The services listed above will be provided in conjunction with state public health officials and local hospitals.

The superintendent shall provide a written report on the role of health services in the education program to the board annually.

Cross Reference:     502.03 Entrance - Admissions  
                          508    Student Health and Well-Being

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

EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

The board supports building level school improvement processes and projects for the purpose of attaining higher educational achievement levels for the district's students. An important part of school improvement is the on-going evaluation of the curriculum and instructional program of the district. Programs will be evaluated with respect to both their effectiveness and efficiency as means of delivering student education.

The superintendent shall develop guidelines by which the instructional staff will evaluate the instructional program on a periodic basis.

Legal Reference: NDE Rule 10.004.07A

TEST OR ASSESSMENT SELECTION

A comprehensive testing program shall be established and maintained to evaluate the education program of the school district and to assist in providing guidance or counseling services to students and their families.

No student shall be required, as part of a program funded by the United States Department of Education, to submit, without prior written consent from the student's parent, to surveys, analysis or evaluation which reveals information concerning:

- political affiliations;
- mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or the student's family;
- sex behavior and attitudes;
- illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
- critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students have close family relationships;
- legally recognized, privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians and ministers; or
- income, but not including income required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the principal, to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

It shall be the responsibility of the board to review and approve the evaluation and testing program.

Legal Reference:       Goals 2000: Educate America Act, Pub. L. No. 103-227, 108 Stat. 125 (1994).  
                              20 U.S.C. § 1232h (1994).

Cross Reference:     507    Student Records  
                              608.02 Student Health Services  
                              611    Academic Achievement

TEST OR ASSESSMENT ADMINISTRATION

The district shall assess the progress of students through a district-wide assessment system to provide for a fair and adequate measurement of each student's progress and accomplishments. Administrators and staff shall select a valid and reliable system of assessments aligned with the curriculum and essential learner outcomes.

The superintendent, in directing the assessment system, shall hold administrators and staff accountable to:

1. follow appropriate security procedures;
2. use the assessments identified within applicable curriculum guides;
3. use assessment data to monitor student learning;
4. use assessment data to differentiate instruction where appropriate;
5. provide students and parents with information about student progress;
6. use assessment data for school improvement planning; and
7. use assessment data to adjust, improve, or terminate ineffective teaching practices.

Cross Reference:      611      Academic Achievement  
                                 1005.02    Parent Relations Goals

## STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS

Students shall receive a progress report at the end of each nine-week grading period. Students, who are doing poorly, and their parents, shall be notified prior to the end of the semester in order to have an opportunity to improve their grade. The board encourages the notification of students who have made marked improvement prior to the end of the semester.

Cross Reference:     507     Student Records

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

STUDENT PROMOTION, RETENTION OR ACCELERATION

Students will be promoted to the next grade level at the end of each school year based on the student's achievement, age, maturity, emotional stability, and social adjustment.

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the teachers and the principal, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the students involved. Exceptions will always be made after prior notification and explanation to the student's parents, but the final decision will rest with school authorities.

Legal Reference: Nebraska Statute 79-526

STUDENT HONORS AND AWARDS

The school district shall provide a program that establishes honors and awards including, but not limited to, academic letters, scholarships and good citizenship awards for students to assist them in setting goals. Students shall be made aware of honors and awards and the action necessary on the part of the student to achieve them. Students who have not attended the school district for their entire high school education or have not attended an accredited public or private school will not be eligible for some honors and awards.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to develop the administrative regulations regarding this policy.

Cross Reference:     506    Student Activities  
                          611    Academic Achievement

## PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences will be held each semester at the elementary and middle school to keep the parents informed. The conferences at the high school are not individually scheduled. Parent-teacher conferences are held during the first and third quarters of the school year.

Parents, teachers, or principals may request a conference for students in grades kindergarten through twelve in addition to the scheduled conference time. Parents and students are encouraged to discuss the student's progress or other matters with the student's teacher.

Cross Reference:     507     Student Records



GRADING GUIDELINES

The superintendent shall develop and implement student grading guidelines. The objectives of grading guidelines shall be to quantify, report and record the academic progress of each student. Grades should fairly reflect the level of student achievement in the knowledge and skills specified by grade level or course objectives and outcomes.

Legal Reference: Falvo v. Owasso Independent School District No. I-001

Cross Reference: 507.01 Student Records Access  
1003 Public Examination of District Records

CLASS RANKINGS AND GRADE POINT AVERAGE

The official grade point average (GPA) of graduating students is based on a minimum of 8 semesters of studies in order to allow students sufficient opportunity for demonstrating achievement. Temporary GPA's will be sent to colleges and universities who request information for admission.

The official GPA will be furnished to post-secondary institutions upon request.

Legal Reference:      Neb. Statute 79-526

Cross Reference:      507      Student Records

### GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Students must successfully complete the courses required by the board and Nebraska Department of Education in order to graduate.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to ensure that students complete grades one through twelve and that high school students complete 230 credits prior to graduation. The following credits will be required:

Language Arts	<u>40</u>	credit hours
Science	<u>20</u>	credit hours
Mathematics	<u>30</u>	credit hours
Social Studies	<u>30</u>	credit hours
Physical Education	<u>10</u>	credit hours
Fine Arts	<u>20</u>	credit hours
Vocational Education	<u>10</u>	credit hours
Computers	<u>10</u>	credit hours
Total Required Hours	<u>170</u>	credit hours
Total Elective Hours	<u>50</u>	credit hours
Total Required Hours for Graduation	<u>230</u>	credit hours

The required courses of study will be reviewed by the board annually.

Graduation requirements for special education students will be in accordance with the prescribed course of study as described in their Individualized Education Program (IEP). Each student's IEP will include a statement of the projected date of graduation at least 18 months in advance of the projected date and the criteria to be used in determining whether graduation will occur. Prior to the special education student's graduation, the IEP team shall determine whether the graduation criteria have been met.

Cross Reference:     604.3 Special Education  
                          611 Academic Achievement

## EARLY GRADUATION

A student who wishes to graduate from high school in less time than the ordinary eight (8) semester, grade 9-12 sequence, may request permission to complete graduation requirements on an alternate schedule.

The student and parents/guardians will consult with high school guidance personnel to develop a graduation plan. The student's intention to accomplish this shall be stated in writing to the principal. The student's parent or legal guardian must submit a letter in support of the student's request for early graduation, and such letter is to accompany the student's written request. The request letters to the principal are to be submitted no later than six months prior to the anticipated completion of the required high school program.

A student who graduates early must complete all graduation requirements established by the board. The student who chooses early graduation will be allowed to participate in the spring graduation ceremonies. In all other school activities the early-out graduate will be treated as a graduated student.

It is recommended that when a student graduates early, the student either gets the diploma or a notice from the school district that the student has graduated. The board should determine in policy how an early graduate will be treated after the student graduates. The board should determine whether the early graduate will be allowed to participate in activities and, if so, which activities.

## COMMENCEMENT

Students who have met the requirements for graduation will be allowed to participate in the commencement proceedings provided they abide by the proceedings organized by the school district. It shall be the responsibility of the principal to solicit input from each graduating class regarding the proceedings for their commencement.

Failure of a student to participate in commencement will not be a reason for withholding the student's final progress report or diploma certifying the student's completion of high school.