

# SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SEWARD



## STAFF HANDBOOK

2025-2026

## **THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SEWARD STAFF HANDBOOK**

This handbook is intended to provide information to staff related to the duties as a teacher and classified staff in the Seward Public School District. Please familiarize yourself with the information in it and refer to this handbook to answer any questions before contacting any office or administrative personnel. However, the information in the handbook is not intended to cover every possible condition, but is a guide to many of the district procedures and expectations for certificated staff. References in the handbook to “teachers” are intended to apply to all certificated staff. This includes administrators to the extent the handbook deals with professional expectations and conduct.

The guidelines in this book are in effect for the year on the cover of this document. However, these are administrative guidelines, and may therefore be changed at will by the administration if deemed appropriate and necessary for the benefit of staff, students, or the school district, with the change being in effect immediately. The administration will be responsible for interpreting the rules contained in the handbook and shall have the right to make decisions. Should a situation or circumstance arise that is not specifically covered in this handbook, the administration will make a decisions based upon available district policies, state and federal statutes and regulations, and the best interests of the district. Also, teachers may be asked to insert additional information as the year progresses.

Each staff member is responsible for becoming familiar with the handbook and knowing the information contained in it. Although the information in the 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. This handbook is intended to supplement other documents that deal with your employment, including your employment contract. Staff should also be familiar with district-wide board policies not included in this manual, as well as the negotiated agreement between the School District of Seward and the Seward Education Association. In reading this handbook, please understand that where a direct conflict exists, state or federal law, the negotiated agreement, and Board policies and regulations will control.

This Staff Handbook and forms are on the district website for access. Staff may also receive updates during the school year.

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## **NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Seward Public School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, or age or in admission or access to, or treatment of employment or educational programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the School District's non-discrimination policies: Superintendent, Josh Fields, who may be contacted in writing at 410 South St., Seward, Nebraska, at [josh.fields@sewardschools.org](mailto:josh.fields@sewardschools.org) by e-mail or by telephone at (402) 643-2941. Any person may also contact the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, by email at [OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov); by telephone at (816) 268-0550; or by fax at (816) 268-0599, regarding compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, or any other applicable laws.

### **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

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**Dr. Matt Dominy, Curriculum and Staff Development Director**  
**Mrs. Jessica Dominy, Elementary Principal**  
**Mr. Kirk Gottschalk, Middle School Principal**  
**Mr. Scott Axt, High School Principal**  
**Mr. Rich Eber, High School Assistant Principal**  
**Mr. Scott Curry, High School Athletic Director**

### **OTHER DISTRICT STAFF**

**Mrs. Heidi Covert, Business Manager**  
**Ms. Christine Towle, Central Office Secretary**  
**Mr. Marty Telecky, Transportation Coordinator**  
**Mr. Adam Dowling, Maintenance Director**  
**Mr. Craig Williams, Technology Coordinator**  
**Ms. Christine Towle, NSSRS**

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## **A. GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **A1. School District of Seward**

Welcome to the Seward Public School District. We hope your staff experience in our district is an enjoyable and professional one. We appreciate your efforts to help in the education and growth of our students -- and on behalf of the children, district patrons, administration, and school board, we thank you.

Should a question or a complaint regarding work arise, please present them to the administration. We want to work with our staff to best meet the needs of our students and school. All complaints and concerns should be addressed with the appropriate administrator, as this is the only place where any change can be made. Please do not practice sharing complaints or concerns with other faculty members, students, parents, or citizens of the community.

### **A2. Motto and Mission Statement of the District**

Our Motto: "Every Student, Every Day, a Success."

Our Mission:

Seward Public Schools - a district rooted in excellence - in cooperation with family and community members is committed to the development of the whole student and affirms that all students will have the skills to become productive, resilient, and contributing members of their community.

### **A3. Weapons**

The District prohibits any person from being in possession of a weapon at a school attendance facility, on school property, at a school-supervised activity, or at a school sponsored function. Any teacher found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. State law makes it a crime to carry a handgun in schools and a staff member who violates this will be reported to law enforcement.

A teacher may possess an item which may be considered a weapon where such item is used for instructional purposes and the teacher has received the approval of the administration, provided it is used in the manner approved and is maintained in such a manner as the administration has directed. The phrase "possession of a weapon" includes, without limitation, a weapon in a teacher's personal possession, as well as in a teacher's motor vehicle, desk, locker, briefcase, backpack, or purse.

### **A4. Smoking**

Smoking and the use of tobacco products, including the use of vapor products, alternative nicotine products, or any other such look-alike product are prohibited in Seward Public School District buildings, grounds and property, and in school transportation. There shall be no designated smoking areas within any of the Seward Public School District buildings. Smoking and the use of tobacco products shall also be prohibited in the stands and bleachers at the football field and near the entry of school buildings. All staff members in the school building share the responsibility of adhering to and enforcing the non-smoking policy.

### **A5. Activity Calendar**

The school master calendar is located in the high school assistant principal's office. All faculty in any building and activity sponsors must schedule events on this calendar. Schedule any and all activities through his/her office far enough in advance that adequate planning can be done. Please check with your building principal about the event and the principal will approve and direct that the event be placed on the calendar. No faculty members are to directly place, or request that a secretary place, any events on the master calendar. All activity requests involving students must be made through the assistant principal.

#### A6. Mail & Bulletins

Each teacher will have a mailbox. Please check your mail on arrival and departure from school. Mailboxes should be cleared daily. Mail is picked up at approximately 1:00 p.m. each day and delivered at approximately 2:30 p.m. to the other buildings. The common practice in school procedure of informing teachers of school routine and information will be done through memos via email, bulletins from the principal's office, or via the intercom. Please make it a daily practice to check your email. 'Checking' e-mail messages should be done at appropriate times of the day so as not to take away from valuable instructional time.

#### A7. Newspaper Coverage/Media Contact

Teachers in charge of organizations and activities will be responsible for getting the news to the editor of the Seward Independent. The school district administration shall provide information or contact the news media in cases of crisis, emergency, or other issues of interest other than activities, social, and special programs or events. All news media should be directed to the Superintendent's Office. The superintendent or his/her designee shall issue press releases and arrange interviews. All staff members are expected to be helpful and courteous at all times to the news media, but must refer all questions to the superintendent or his/her designee.

#### A8. Daily Record Books/PowerSchool

Grade reports are to be turned in at the close of the school year. Each teacher must keep daily attendance, tardiness, grades, and achievement of every student in a grade book/PowerSchool as directed by their building administrator. Teachers are expected to maintain the information required for Power School in a timely manner. These records must be kept current and include the minimum information in a readily understandable format:

- Names and assigned student numbers for all students enrolled in class at the beginning of the semester. The name and date of entry for each student who enrolls after the semester opens. The date of withdrawal for each student who withdraws prior to the close of the semester.
- A complete record of the attendance of each student enrolled showing: days on which the student was tardy, days on which the student was absent, with a differentiation between excused and unexcused absences.
- A complete report of all grades for each student.

Information relating to students should not be allowed to be seen by other students, parents, or others not authorized to have access.

#### A9. Reporting of Child Abuse

Refer to Board Policy 4050--Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect

Because of their daily contact with school-age children, educators and other school employees are in a unique position to identify abused and/or neglected children. Nebraska law defines child abuse or neglect as knowingly, intentionally, or negligently causing or permitting a minor child to be (1) placed in a situation that endangers his or her life or physical or mental health; (2) cruelly confined or cruelly punished; (3) deprived of necessary food, clothing, shelter or care; (4) left unattended in a motor vehicle, if such child is six years of age or younger; (5) sexually abused; or (6) sexually exploited by allowing, encouraging, or forcing such person to solicit for or engage in prostitution, debauchery, public indecency, or obscene or pornographic photography, films, or depictions.

**Reporting Procedure.** School employees who have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to child abuse or neglect or observe a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which reasonably would result in child abuse or neglect will report the suspected abuse or neglect according to the following procedure.



1. Any school employee who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected shall report the suspicion to the building principal immediately. Employees shall also personally report or cause a report to be made to local law enforcement or to the Department of Health and Human Services.
2. When the principal makes a report of suspected child abuse or neglect, he/she shall inform the employee(s) who made the initial report.
3. Nothing in the paragraph above shall hinder a school employee from fulfilling his/her/their obligation to report suspected abuse or neglect if he, she or they have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected.
4. Any doubt or question in reporting such cases shall be resolved in the favor of reporting the suspected abuse or neglect. Consultation between the administrator and school employee is encouraged, keeping in mind that prompt reporting is essential.

**Contents of the Report.** The report to authorities shall contain the following information to the extent it is available: (1) name and position of reporting person; (2) name, address, and age of abused or neglected person; (3) address of the person or persons having custody of the abused or neglected person; (4) the nature and extent of the abuse or neglect, or the conditions and circumstances which would reasonably result in such abuse or neglect; and (5) any other information that may be useful in establishing the identity of the persons involved and cause of the abuse or neglect.

**Legal Immunity.** Nebraska statutes give legal immunity from any civil or criminal liability to any person who makes a good faith report of child abuse or neglect or participates in a judicial proceeding resulting from such a report.

#### A10. Activity Passes and ID Badges

ID badges will be provided. Faculty are required to have their ID badges visible around their neck on a lanyard or clipped to their shirts and employees are to show their card at all events they attend.

Staff spouses may earn an activity pass if they sign up, and take tickets (admission) at one home athletic event. This ID badge admits the bearer only to admission for home athletic events – not other family members. As per conference rule, this ID badge serves as the conference pass but will admit the bearer only. This pass is non-transferable.

#### A11. Lesson Plans

Teachers are expected to prepare lesson plans, which cover at least three days of advance instruction. Each building principal will explain the expected process at their first faculty meeting of the year. Appropriate lesson plans and substitute materials (class rosters, etc.) should always be in place in case of leave absence from work or illness. These lesson plans should enable the substitute teacher to implement the instructional objectives and continue with classroom activities and progress.

#### A12. Fund Raising

Many school and school-related groups and organizations desire to raise funds to support their organizations. There can be an overwhelming amount of requests for a community to support. The administration tries to balance the requests and be as fair as possible to the various associations. Before any class, school organization, or outside school-related group may conduct a fund-raising project, they must receive approval from the administration. All fund raising requests will be made in writing to the building principal and superintendent for approval, approval of which will also be given in writing. At the completion of the fund-raiser, a financial summary must be submitted to the building principal (See Appendix for forms).

#### A13. Inclement Weather/Emergency Conditions

The first concern of the administration during bad weather is the safety of the students and staff. If school is cancelled or delayed, the announcement will be made via Bluejay Alerts, radio and TV stations. When a delay is announced, please continue to listen for any changes that may occur if the weather worsens. All teachers shall register with the Bluejay Alerts notification system to receive weather related announcements.

On days when school is cancelled due to bad weather, teachers are not expected to be in school unless they choose to be; although when a duty day is cancelled due to weather conditions, such days will not be credited as a contract day. Make up days have been built into the yearly calendar that will allow all certificated staff to perform the total contract days. However, when school has been delayed one or two hours, teachers should plan to keep regular school hours if safe travel allows them to do so. If school is closed during the day, teachers will be responsible for remaining with students until all students have safely left school or the administration has made arrangements for remaining students.

If school is being held and parents/guardians feel strongly that they do not want their child/children to attend school, they are asked to keep them home. These students will be counted absent, but will be allowed to make up any school work without penalty within a reasonable time frame allowed for any legitimate absence.

Emergency Conditions: Seward school buildings have signals which, when activated, include the necessity to either evacuate the school building or move to safer areas of the building. All regular drills are held as required by law through the school year. **School officials are not permitted to release students from the school building during a tornado warning.** In the event of a tornado warning, implement the school's established safety procedures.

#### A14. Library and Computer Lab Use

Teachers are encouraged to access the library and computer labs with their students. However, teachers are to be present and are to monitor students for appropriate use of these areas. When library assignments are made by teachers, make sure the media specialists knows in advance what students are expected to do. Teachers are not to send a group of students or a whole class to the media center without first clearing it with the media specialist. Teachers who make arrangements for classes to go to the media center are to accompany those classes and remain in the media center to supervise them while they are there.

#### A15. Room Appearance & Care of Room

Nails or tacks are not to be driven into walls or woodwork for hanging pictures, etc., and use of materials that will remove paint or damage walls is prohibited. Use only bulletin boards on which to fasten items. If an item needs to be fastened on the wall, please file a maintenance request. Before leaving each day, and especially at night or on weekends:

- 1) Close any windows in your room.
- 2) Turn out the lights.
- 3) Lock your doors.
- 4) Teachers leaving the building after evening custodial hours will observe to see that entrance doors are closed and locked. The teacher is responsible for turning of lights and checking any entrance doors that students may have used. Report any discrepancies to the office, or night custodian.

All orders from teachers in regard to maintenance or cleaning shall be made through the building principals. Teachers are responsible for school-owned equipment that they use, or keep in their rooms. Maintenance or repair needs of audio-visual equipment should be reported to the library. Other needs should be reported to the principal.

\*\*\*\*Note: Burning of candles is not allowed in school buildings, per order of the fire marshal.

#### A16. School Assemblies

All teachers are expected to attend assemblies when classes have been dismissed for such a purpose, and to sit with and supervise the class or students they accompany to the assembly.

#### A17. Visitors & Salespersons in the Buildings

All visitors are to report to the office when entering the building and obtain a visitor badge. Teachers are directed to request any individuals noted in the building without a pass to report to the office, including students who are not currently enrolled in that building. Please confront them and refer them to the office, escort them out of the building, or alert an administrator for assistance.

Salespersons will not be permitted to solicit students or teachers during their instructional time during school hours. All such people are to report to the office and receive a visitor pass. Athletic and fund-raising salespersons may contact teachers during a teacher's planning time.

#### A18. Church Night & Sunday

It is board policy that every Wednesday, during the school year, will be left free for church activities. School activities will be scheduled only in cases beyond our control (such as NSAA scheduled activities), and this will be cleared through the office. There will be no meetings, activities, practices, etc., scheduled on Sunday, including summer activities, unless the superintendent gives approval. (See Appendix for forms).

#### A19. Textbooks

Teachers will document checkout and condition of textbooks to students, documenting an assigned number. This should be compared with the condition of the text when students turn in books at the end of the year. Teachers should inform students that they will be assessed fines for lost or damaged textbooks, and teachers are responsible for turning in that information to the office.

#### A20. Testing

The guidance department maintains a regular testing schedule for all students in the school district. These tests sometimes require interruption of classes. When this is necessary, the counselor will provide adequate notice to the teaching staff. He/she may also request assistance from the teachers in administering the tests.

#### A21. Health Services/Injuries

Teachers are not allowed to give medication to students unless they have been trained per statute regarding the Medication Aid Act. Students who are taking medication during the school day will need to have a signed parental/guardian release form in the office. Teachers will be made aware as needed of students who may have medical self-management plans.

Long-term prescriptions: Prior to the administration of any medicine which is to be taken by child for a period longer than two weeks, written permission of both the parent/guardian and the child's physician must be on file in the office.

Short-term prescriptions: Prior to the administration of any medicine which is to be taken by a child for a period of time less than two weeks, the written permission of the parent/guardian must be obtained. Short-term medication will usually include medicine such as antibiotics, eye drops, etc.

##### Safeguards for storage:

1. Medicines, which are administered under the supervision of the school, will be stored in the school office.
2. Except for emergency situations, only the school principal or his designate (office personnel) will administer or supervise the administration of medicine.
3. The medicine will be brought to school in a container with a pharmaceutical label, which must state the student's name, prescription, dosage and manner of administration.
4. Medical procedures are not to be administered in the classroom, except in accordance with the District's Emergency Protocol Plans.

The activities of the health program are implemented by school district nursing staff who are part of the education team in the identification, evaluation, and the provision for the individual health needs of all students. School health services are intended to support, not substitute for, the health care, which should be provided by the parents/guardians. Communications between parents/guardians and the school regarding a student's health is very important and beneficial. Please inform the office of any new health related problems that occur during the school year.

### REPORTING INJURIES/ACCIDENTS

Every accident that results in a personal injury must be reported to the principal immediately. The nurse or principal has a form that may be used to report accidents, and the teacher must file a written report. This information is needed in completing insurance forms and in case of a lawsuit.

In the course of the school year, it is very possible that one of our students will require the rescue squad. Please use discretion when referring students to this service. If such an emergency arises, these are the procedures:

1. Notify the office immediately, (By intercom if one is available or by messenger if you are outside.) In order for the school nurse to respond, the name of the student and nature of the injury must be received with your call.
2. The teacher should render what aid possible, commensurate with the situation, i.e., severe bleeding, seizures, etc. DO NOT move student.
3. The rescue squad number is 911. Be sure to give the location of the student.

### STUDENT INJURIES

The primary responsibility for medical treatment of the student rests with his/her parent or guardian. Emergency treatment of the student may be required while in attendance at school or school functions.

Except for such emergency situations, no student shall be referred by a member of the professional staff to a specific physician, para-medic, physician's assistant, therapist, athletic trainer, or other medical personnel outside the school system. In those situations where physical or emotional dysfunctions appear to exist, the professional staff member may suggest to the parent or guardian that medical attention be considered. The ultimate decision to seek medical attention, and choice of physician or medical personnel, is the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

When a student's physical or emotional condition appears to interfere with the student's ability to participate in athletic or other school activities, a professional staff member may refuse such participation until the matter is brought to the attention of the student's parent/guardian. Prior to participating in school functions suitable assurance shall be provided by the parent/guardian or the student's doctor that the student is medically capable.

The parent/guardian shall have the final approval on a student's ability to return to school activities and athletic events following an illness or injuries. The student shall not be encouraged to participate in school activities following an injury or illness over the objection of parent/guardian.

### A22. Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessionals provide valuable assistance in the educational process and allow teachers to carry out their responsibilities in a more efficient and effective manner. A paraprofessional, however, must not assume teaching responsibilities. Paras may assist the teacher by assisting with instructional activities under the direction of the teacher. Teaching responsibilities must be met by a teacher and cannot be delegated to a para. The teacher must function in a leadership role and the para in a supportive role.

In academic situations a para must operate under the continuous supervision of a teacher. The teacher must control the classroom environment. A para may not operate an instructional station alone, except for brief periods of time. In nonacademic situations, paras may be assigned to supervise non-teaching activities. Nonacademic activities would include supervision of playgrounds, bus loading stations,

cafeterias and study halls.

Paraprofessionals whose assistance is needed to help supervise students will attend assemblies. This generally is limited to helping supervise preschool, kindergarten and certain special education students. The teacher in charge of these students will make the decision regarding whether or not a paraprofessional's assistance is needed. All other assignments to attend an assembly will be made by the principal. In the event a paraprofessional wishes to attend an assembly on her own time, she may do so with prior administrative approval. Paras are to work only on their assigned workdays and within their assigned workday -- they will work only on days when students attend school unless special permission is granted. Teachers are directly responsible for formal evaluation of paraprofessional staff.

#### A23. Student Aides

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

#### A24. Managing Student Conduct

Discipline is everyone's responsibility. It begins with the student being responsible for his/her own behavior and understanding the consequences it may cause. The teacher is responsible for articulating classroom expectations at the beginning of the school year, implementing the classroom expectations consistently, posting the expectations, teaching the expected behaviors, and being familiar with the student handbook and the behavioral expectations and plan for the building(s) in which they teach.

All staff are responsible for all students in the hallways, in the restrooms, at assemblies, pep rallies, and during lunch and on the school grounds.

#### A25. Copyright

It is the school's policy to follow federal copyright law. The federal copyright law governs the reproduction of works of authorship.

#### A26. Safety & Crisis Plans

The District has established a Safety and Security Management Plan that includes safety and security plans and procedures to address emergency and crisis situations. Teachers are expected to be familiar with and to comply with the Safety and Security Plan and place their copies in the classroom as directed. A Crisis Response Team has been organized for the Seward Public Schools. A crisis will be defined as: a) the death of a student and/or staff member, and b) catastrophic event involving students or staff. The objective of the crisis response team will be as follows:

1. To provide an organized procedure to use, should such an event occur involving a student or member of the staff.
2. To maintain a safe environment for students and staff.
3. To provide support for those directly involved.
4. To meet the special needs of individual students by working with parents/guardians, school staff, and specialists.
5. To identify students at risk, and in case of suicide, attempt to prevent imitation of suicide by others.
6. To communicate with staff, students, parents/guardians, and the public through the most effective practical methods.
7. To prevent escalation of rumors.

8. To continue effective instruction and to carry out established routines, rules, and regulations within school buildings.

#### A27. School Transportation/Use of Personal Vehicles

Staff who need school transportation should complete a transportation request and give it to the principal for approval. The principal will then contact the district office. The principal must sign the request form before it is sent to the district office. Fuel for the vehicles is to be obtained at the bus barn.

None of these vehicles may be used for any purpose other than school business, and all must be reserved ahead of time through the principal. Staff cannot be reimbursed for mileage on their own car if a school vehicle was available for use. If a vehicle is not available, teachers will be reimbursed at a rate of \$ .50 per mile.

Teachers who drive school vehicles are responsible for following safe driving practices, including the use of seat belts by all occupants, and are responsible for any injury or accident. Teachers should refrain from using cell phones while driving a school vehicle or transporting students.

#### A28. Lines of Communication

Staff should follow the "lines of communication" or "chain of command," particularly in regard to concerns, complaints, and grievances. Please be aware that in filing a grievance, one must proceed through proper channels. In the case of faculty members, any grievance is presented first to your building principal. It is imperative that the above procedure be followed. See the negotiated agreement for a detailed explanation of the formal grievance process. A chart delineating the lines of communication is available at the end of this handbook.

#### A 29. Faculty Meetings

Faculty meetings will be held periodically throughout the year. Agendas may be distributed prior to the faculty meetings. Some of the meetings will be used for curriculum and school improvement discussions. Please visit with the principal if there is something that needs to be discussed. Attendance is required.

#### A30. Field Trips

Teachers are asked to complete a field trip request form each time students are taken from classes to visit in-district or out-of-district situations. No field trips should be scheduled the first two weeks of school or the last two weeks of school. This does not include NSAA trips.

#### A31. Selling at Games

Teachers and volunteers will be selling tickets at games with signup sheets made available at the beginning of the year. If it should occur that someone is needed to sell tickets at games, a teacher may be assigned to sell. Tickets will be sold until after half-time (or the equivalent) of varsity contests. Gate receipts are then turned over to the high school or middle school principal for deposit. Clock Operators, Ticket Sellers, Monitors and Scorekeepers will be paid .0009 of the base salary, per activity. The rate will be rounded down to the nearest \$5.00 increment.

#### A32. Seward Foundation

Teachers and administrators are encouraged to submit applications to the Seward Foundation. The Foundation has application deadlines each year – April 1 and October 1.

To avoid unnecessary grant proposal paperwork on the part of those wishing to make application for funds, the Board of Education along with the school administrators, will screen potential proposals prior to April 1 and October 1.

All potential proposals should be submitted to the respective building administrator by December 1 or July 1. This first proposal should be in written form. It should briefly outline the nature of the proposed activity

and its total cost. It will be reviewed by the Board of Education at their February or August meeting. At that time the Board of Education will give their approval to the grant(s) that they would like to see proposed to the Foundation Committee. Following the Board meeting the Foundation application forms will be given to the person wishing to make application for funds.

#### A33. Teacher Requests to Civic Groups

Teachers wishing to approach a civic group to request materials or equipment needed for their classrooms should first clear this request with the principal. This not only makes the principal aware of the request, but provides the opportunity for questions concerning the nature of the request. You are encouraged to give presentations about your programs to civic clubs using student presenters.

#### A34. Grants

Teachers are encouraged to write grants to help finance their curriculum and program needs (with approval from their building principal and the district office). Teachers are asked to request and complete a Grant Application form whenever they do apply for grant dollars from the business manager. This helps the Business Manager organize the different funds.

#### A35. Student Teachers/Student Assistants

If teachers are interested in having a student teacher, please see the building principal. Any student assigned must be approved by the teacher and the building principal. The teacher is to have only one student teacher during the year.

If the teacher desires a student assistant (mostly from Concordia University), there will be forms available to request such an assistant. If a teacher is asked to take an assistant and does not desire to do so, this is the teacher's own decision. However, should the teacher accept an assistant, he/she must be sure that he/she defines clearly and distinctly the expectations of the assistant.

Assistant request forms may be picked up in the office. Return the form to the office to be forwarded to Concordia University.

#### A36. Board Meeting Agenda

A teacher may request that an item be placed on a school board meeting agenda. The teacher will need to complete the form and obtain the principal's signature and send it to the superintendent's office by the Wednesday prior to the Monday board meeting. Forms are located in the Appendices Section.

#### A37. School Security

The Seward School District uses electronic surveillance equipment to monitor the premises for the purposes of: employee and student safety and security; prevention and detection of crime; and the apprehension and prosecution of offenders.

#### A38. Videos

Movies/Videos shown in class should be related to the class curriculum. Any teacher showing a movie with a motion picture rating other than "G" should have prior approval from the building principal.

#### A39. Covering Class During Prep Time

Teachers who are asked to cover another teacher's class during his or her prep time, may submit a time card requesting pay for time at substitute teacher pay rates (time cards shall not be submitted unless the amount of prep time spent covering class exceeds 30 minutes).

#### A40. Classroom Displays

Teachers should only use good discretion when displaying items on their classroom walls, hallways, etc. Displays with inappropriate language or pictures of partially clothed people should not be displayed. As a general rule, if students are not allowed to wear something due to language or because it is too distracting, then teachers should not display anything similar in their classrooms or hallways.

At no time should displays or decorations be hung from, or placed on, the hallway or classroom ceilings as they block the flow of the fire suppression sprinklers if there is a fire.

## **STAFF GUIDELINES**

### **B1. Professionalism**

Seward Public School District employees are expected to adhere to the professional ethics standards established by the Nebraska Department of Education.

We consider our staff to be true “professionals” who have dedicated their careers to helping young people. Though it may be human nature to dwell on the negative things that occur in life and to complain about work, please try to be positive and keep a positive attitude about work and school.

It is important for teachers to maintain an effective working relationship with the administration and all co-workers, including other teachers and support staff. Teachers are also to maintain appropriate relationships with students. Appropriate relationships are established by extending social courtesies, following through on commitments and promises, complying with administrative directives and Board policies, being honest and consistent, and not intruding on personal matters outside the scope of duties or gossiping and spreading rumors about others.

We should be mindful of not making critical comments concerning students, parents/guardians, patrons, or other employees as it reflects poorly on all of us, and typically finds its way back to those in question and can create hurt and/or hard feelings. If a concern or conflict does arise, let's try to address them in a professional manner.

Employees are expected to maintain a high degree of professionalism, as their actions and conduct reflect upon the district and the public views them as role models. It is important for staff to project a professional image to students, parents/guardian, district patrons, and co-workers. There is a strong feeling that there is a relationship between respect for educators from students and the public and being dressed and groomed in a professional manner. Blue jeans, tennis shoes, t-shirts, flip flops and other casual attire are not generally appropriate for school. The building principal may designate some “dress down” or “Bluejay” days within their building.

No Surprises – If our staff anticipates a problem that could involve any of the administrators, or one that may make it to their office, inform them. It is easier to provide support when administrators are aware of the situation. Administrators will do their best to make that a two-way street.

### **B2. Public Relations**

As an educator, you are a representative of the school at all times. The public forms its opinion of the school system through you. All educators should strive to conduct themselves as to cast a favorable reflection upon the school and our staff and students. The school is extremely important to our community. The administration will work to keep its employees as informed on all school matters as possible. However, topics that are solely of school business should be kept this way and not discussed with others outside of the school. Remember, your comments about the school system also reflect upon you.

Teachers are reminded to make visitors and substitutes feel welcome. Do all that is possible to give help and directions in a friendly manner. Using community resource people from our district is a very positive public relations tool. Teachers are encouraged to bring people into their classrooms as much as possible. Teachers are a very important element in our public relation efforts in our school district.



Positive and professional relationships with all elements in our district help build a trusting and important image for Seward Public Schools.

### B3. Responsibilities of School Employees

Nebraska State Laws do not allow school districts to accept responsibility for damage to property or injuries to individuals. Responsibility therefore, falls on the teacher or employees of the school district. This makes it absolutely essential that any school sponsored activity or use of school property is properly supervised.

These responsibilities include following the educational plans and guidelines of the district, including implementing IEP's and 504 plans. Students should be treated consistently and fairly, regardless of race, religion, gender, national or ethnic origin, or disability.

Important laws regarding your obligation to maintain confidentiality of student information and student records should be followed. FERPA requires the District to protect the privacy of students. Information about students should be shared only with other school staff when they need that information to perform their duties in relation to that student. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) gives parents/guardians and students over 18 years of age rights of access and confidentiality with respect to education records.

All teachers are to respect the privacy of students, certified staff, and non-certified staff. Staff members will be held responsible for releasing information deemed a property right to unauthorized people. It is inappropriate to discuss student problems or situations out in the general public with anyone other than the appropriate parent or legal guardian.

**You may not share information with anyone other than the student, parent/legal guardian, certain government officials like counselors, police officers, county attorney, etc. Non-Custodial Parents do have rights unless we have a court order taking those rights away.**

**When in doubt about FERPA issues, gather information and tell those requesting the information that you need to get clearance from your principal.**

**P/T Conferences – Be careful what you show and who you talk to. If the legal guardian or parent is at the P/T Conference and they have a grandma or grandpa with them, that would indicate permission by the parent (since they are in attendance); however, if a relative would show up on their own for P/T Conferences you should direct them to the building principal as FERPA prevents you from sharing information about students with them.**

### IDENTIFYING INFORMATION - WARDS OF COURT

4-009.28D19 Release of Photographs and Identifying Information Regarding Wards:

No photographs or slides of a Department ward or other identifying information regarding a Department ward may be released for use on posters, in presentations, press releases, newsletters, etc., without the written consent of the youth's worker and supervisory approval. In deciding whether consent will be given, the worker shall consider:

1. Legal status (if parental rights are intact, written parental consent must be obtained.);
2. the ward's opinion and wishes; and
3. use of material (for example, if child is identifiable, will it be detrimental to the child or his/her family.) If a situation is questionable, the worker shall not give consent.

### B4. Use of School Property and Equipment

The personal use of school district property is not to be considered a benefit of employment. During the school year, teachers may access the facilities outside of the school day, providing such access is for

work-related reasons. School facilities should not be accessed by employees for personal use. School equipment, materials, and supplies should not be used or taken from the school buildings for personal use. Employees shall use the school phones, postage, and fax machines for business use only, and each employee will be issued a personal code number that must be used to access long distance service. All long distance calls must pertain to school business. Employees should be as economical as possible when using the phone. Personal calls should be made with an employee's own calling card or phone credit card. Phone service to the school is taxpayer supported and is provided tax-free to tax exempt organizations such as the school district, and as such is intended for school business.

School equipment and materials will not be used for commercial purposes of individual employees. No employee shall use his position to solicit business from students or parents nor should any employee conduct personal business during school time. Teachers shall not perform duties unrelated to their employment with the district during school time, nor engage in outside employment which conflicts with school responsibilities.

The district would like to allow access for employees to Internet use and email, as personal use does not place any additional cost on the district and can be a "fringe" benefit to employees. Please follow the district guidelines for use of the Internet. However, employees should take care to use common sense and limit the use of personal email or Internet access during business hours. Remember, anything that you forward will have your address and name on it and there are statutes on the improper use of state government property. You can create a problem for yourself if inappropriate material or use is being forwarded through the use of school property (computers & service). Again, employees are not allowed to use school email or Internet access for commercial purposes or gain. Use of school technology equipment will be allowed only with approval of the building principal and must be for school related activities.

Teachers must not lose their keys and are not to loan their school keys to students or anyone else to retrieve articles or run errands, or access the building or classrooms at any time. It is the duty of all teachers to see that the furniture and equipment belonging to the district is given the best of care. Anyone abusing school property in any way should be dealt with immediately and also reported to the building administrator.

The District reserves the right to access or search school property and places where items are stored that are used by employees. Teachers should keep personal items separate. The District is not responsible for personal property that teachers bring to school and it is recommended that teachers do not bring sizeable amounts of money or valuables to school.

Property and facilities of the Seward Public Schools may be used by the public for educational purposes provided that administrative approval has been granted.

#### B5. Supervision of Students

Teachers are responsible for all students under their direction and should at all times be with them. All students must be under the direct supervision (i.e. within sight and sound) of the teacher or sponsor during class time, at recess, study hall, in the locker rooms, weight rooms, gyms, or any after school activity. Students in classrooms should not be left unattended, nor should students at practice or during any other activity be left unattended. If a necessity arises, call the office or find a replacement to cover for you while you are gone. Students are not to be sent by teachers on school directed errands away from the buildings. Any exception to this must be approved by the building principal or his/her designee.

Appropriate supervision includes supervising students while they are being transported to an activity on school transportation. Teachers are expected to enforce the bus regulations, maintain order, and are responsible for student behavior. Ensure that athletes treat opponent facilities and locker rooms appropriately. Class sponsors are responsible for their group any time they have meetings. When classes hold meetings, teachers are to meet with the class they sponsor.

#### SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SEWARD SPONSOR RESPONSIBILITIES ON ACTIVITY AND FIELD TRIPS

1. The sponsor of Activity trips/Field trips should submit a bus request at least three working

days before the trip. If at all possible bus requests for activity trips may be submitted to the Transportation Supervisor for the entire season at the beginning of the activity.

2. The sponsor shall enforce the established bus trip rules while his assigned group is riding the bus.

- (a) Stay seated while bus is in motion
- (b) Keep bus clean
- (c) Observe same conduct as in the classroom
- (d) Do not block aisle of the bus
- (e) Cooperate with the driver
- (f) Be courteous, use no profane language

3. When necessary, the sponsor should sit in the back or the middle of the bus to control unruly passengers.

4. The sponsor should alert his group when stopping at railroad crossings by calling out TRACKS and insist upon silence.

5. After the passengers leave the vehicle on returning to school, a coach or sponsor should check the vehicle for remaining equipment and possible damage. The vehicle should be cleaned.

6. Transportation of Unsafe Items: School transportation vehicles shall not transport any items, materials or equipment which in any way would endanger the lives, health, or safety of the passengers and driver. In addition, any item or items which would break or could produce injury if tossed about the inside of the school transportation vehicle should be properly secured. (State Law) Items should be carefully stored out of the aisle and in the overhead luggage rack.

7. Students may not eat or drink on activity trips or field trips unless the driver gives permission. Bottles will not be tolerated because of glass breakage. All trash must be picked up and brought to the front of the bus and deposited in the trash container. Sponsors should see that this is done.

8. Any damage received to a vehicle will be assessed to either an individual or to the organization.

9. In the event of bad weather, the sponsor, bus driver, and/or coaches should determine whether or not to continue to an activity or to return.

10. After reaching the destination vehicles will be locked. If students need to come back to the vehicle for any reason after the vehicle has reached its destination, contact must be made with the driver. The driver will stay in the area of the activity. If the driver needs to leave the area, he/she will inform the coaches and/or sponsor where he/she can be reached.

11. The activity trip/field trip should be made using the shortest and safest route. The bus driver shall always be notified of any deviation from the requested trip.

12. Communication is the key word for an efficient activity trip/field trip. The sponsor should communicate a departure time and approximate return time.

13. If a bus or van becomes unsafe because of faulty equipment, the safety of the passengers is of utmost importance. Other schools will always cooperate in times of emergencies and vehicles should not be driven if the situation is unsafe.

14. Capacity for all vans is 10, plus the driver. (Effective August 1998)

Students should be provided with proper instruction when undertaking activities that could result in an injury. Note in lesson plans when safety issues are addressed with students and bring students who are absent during that phase of instruction up-to-date upon their return. If you are supervising when an accident occurs, be certain that you notify the principal of the accident and fill out an accident report.

Alert the office if any safety hazards come to your attention. Contact the office for assistance if a situation warrants it, especially if there is a chance of injury or danger to students; such as a health emergency, fighting, or the presence of weapons or other illegal items.

If school is dismissed early due to inclement weather, teachers are expected to remain with students until arrangements have been made for all students to safely leave or be transported from school.

Corporal punishment is prohibited by State Law and by the Seward Public School District.

B6. Teaching Certificates

All teachers must have their teaching certificate registered with the Superintendent of Schools. All new teachers and first year teachers must have their certificate on file before they may begin work or receive a paycheck.

#### B7. Payroll

All paychecks for certificated staff will be direct deposited on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, with the first check of the contract year issued on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September. If the 15<sup>th</sup> falls on a holiday or weekend, the deposit will be made on the business day before. All classified staff will be paid every two weeks and payday is every other Thursday. Seward Public Schools will pay the same amount for ticket taking, keeping books, line judging, and scoreboard to classified staff members as certified staff members according to the teacher-negotiated agreement. Classified staff hourly rate for the 25-26 school year will not exceed the teacher-negotiated agreement of \$30 per event. Each event is roughly an hour and a half to two hours. Please put the number of hours on your time card per event. For example, if you do line judging for volleyball for three events your hours would roughly be four and a half hours for the evening and you would receive \$90 for the three events. Please let Heidi know if you have any questions.

Certificated Staff Salary and benefits are paid according to the employee's contract and the negotiated agreement. Payroll deductions will be made as per the negotiated agreement and in accordance with the law. Classified Staff pay is determined by years of experience and the classified staff salary schedule.

According to Nebraska law, all staff between the ages of 21 and 65 must participate in the state retirement program if you work four or more hours a day. Please submit your retirement number to the business manager of the district. Teachers must also participate in the social security program. Please notify the business manager of your social security number and number of exemptions.

#### B8. Assignment & Transfer

Each employee of the district shall be assigned to a specific position at the direction of the Superintendent of Schools and may be transferred to any other position as the superintendent may direct. This applies to extra duty assignments, as well. The extra-curricular program of the school district is an integral part of the overall educational program of the school district. As such, a teacher shall not reasonably refuse to accept such extra-duty assignments. Performance in an extra duty appointment is part of the performance evaluation in the District.

Transfers may be made at the initiative of the superintendent or at the request of the employee and for the purpose that, in the judgment of the superintendent, is for the welfare of the employee or the school.

#### B9. Communications

Communication between members of our staff is essential. It is important that we support and encourage each other on a daily basis. It is also important that we keep each other informed about upcoming events, student issues, etc. In all matters of communication between members of the staff, short emails with the dates, times, and topics are advisable. Never assume that a verbal message was delivered accurately; and, never assume that another individual will remember a message that was briefly shared while passing in the hallway. Verbal transfers are often inaccurate, misinterpreted, and/or forgotten. "Don't say it...write it!"

When a concern with another staff member arises, it is important to remember the proper steps for solution. Go directly to the other staff member to discuss the concern and possible solutions. Inappropriate discussions or negative topics should not be discussed in the lounge as this can only make things worse. It is important to remember the need to maintain effective and appropriate working relationships with other staff and administrators. We are here to provide a solid educational foundation for all of our students. We are here to support each other professionally and personally.

#### B10. Committee Appointments

Faculty committees will be appointed as the need arises by the building principal or superintendent.

#### B11. Duty Hours

Regular, dependable attendance at work is an essential function of a teacher's employment position. The Board of Education recognizes that teachers' responsibilities to their students and their profession generally involve the commitment of time beyond the normal working day, but also recognizes that teachers and other educational professionals are entitled to regular time and work schedules on which they can rely in the ordinary course of events and which will be fairly and evenly maintained to the extent possible throughout the school system. A typical workday is from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Teachers may be able to leave earlier on Friday. Supervision of activities typically requires hours outside of the scheduled workday. Each certificated staff member shall be expected to be on duty before and after regular school hours to plan and carry out his/her individual professional responsibilities, including meeting with parents/guardians, students, administrators, and faculty as needed.

The school day of the Seward Public School District shall be arranged, scheduled and maintained by the administration within the limitations of state statute. Teachers are to be in their classrooms or at assigned hallway supervision by 8:00 a.m. and whenever students are present in their classroom. This supervision schedule may vary slightly (a few minutes either way) by building, to meet the particular needs of that building. Variations to these procedures are at the discretion of the building principal.

Classified staff hours are dependent upon the job and the hours set by their supervisor

#### B12. Absence from Work

Teacher availability to students is a high priority in our school district, therefore teachers may not be absent from the building during contract hours, except by permission of a building administrator. If an occasion arises when a teacher must leave the building, he/she must sign out/in on the form in the school office and sign in upon return. The purpose of this is that it will not be necessary to call or search the building for you if you have a visitor or phone call during the time you are out. Any time a teacher is gone more than 15 minutes, a leave request form must be filled out and given to the assistant principal. Coaches and sponsors should let the office know when you are leaving early for a scheduled event. Any staff members wishing to attend a school related activity may do so after the regular student dismissal time, by first receiving permission from their building principal. Professional development days and other school related meetings take precedence over this procedure. Any variation to this procedure is at the discretion of the building principal.

Teachers are provided with leave per the negotiated agreement. Leave requests shall be submitted using the online Google Forms and timelines should be followed for leave requests. Leave provided by the District should be used for the purpose intended. Abuse of leave affects students, other staff, and the entire District and will not be allowed. In an emergency, if you need to arrive late or leave early, please notify the principal; or, if the principal is not available, please inform the office staff.

All Staff will submit leave requests using the online SmartFind Express or in some cases report directly to their supervisor if going to be absent.

For medical situations that provide time for notice of leave, staff should submit those requests as soon as possible.

In case of illness, a teacher is to follow the guidelines for when and who to notify that are established by each building principal. Teachers may be asked to cover a class for another teacher that needs to be absent. A substitute is expected to assume all responsibilities and duties of the teacher. When the teacher returns, a summary report of what has been done by the substitute should be in the sub packet. Substitute packets are to be assembled by the second week of school and should contain the following:

1. A list of all students enrolled in each class
2. Seating charts
3. Title of textbooks used in each class and where located
4. Where lesson plan book is located

5. Class procedure sheet
6. Where attendance sheets are located
7. Home phone number
8. List of rules and regulations of each class
9. Additional items as specified by building principals

Unless the teacher has indicated that he/she will be absent for a specific length of time, keep the office advised from day to day. Teachers who are called to jury duty will notify their building administrator immediately.

#### B13. Payroll Deductions for Absence in Excess of Paid Leave

Refer to the negotiated agreement.

#### B14. Family and Medical Leave Act

The Family and Medical Leave Act Policy (FMLA) provides for 12 weeks of job-protected unpaid leave in a 12-month period to eligible employees in specified circumstances. Specifics are available on the school website under the school board link and Board Policy 4011

#### B15. Requisitions, Purchases & Central Supply

Every purchase will need a purchase order from the office. Only items that are necessary for the everyday function of a classroom will be ordered during the school year. All requisitions must be filled out on a purchase order forms from the office and approved by the building principal with their signature, and then forwarded to the superintendent's office. Any other items purchased without this authorization will be the responsibility of the employee placing the order and not the school district. Telephone orders and "charging" are not allowed and orders for preview material should follow the same procedure as that of a regular purchase. This is required in order for us to keep an accurate accounting of spending and it will be strictly enforced.

In February, staff will receive direction from the building principals to make requisitions for the following school year. Requests for new textbooks should be discussed with the building principal before being placed in the requisition folder.

Orders for supplies stored in the district office are to be processed on the supply request form available in the building offices. These should be submitted to the principal for approval before being sent to the district office.

#### B16. Inventory

All personnel will maintain current inventories and condition analysis for classroom materials and extra-curricular activities equipment used in an electronic folder. An up-to-date hard copy will be provided to the building principal within three weeks from the end of the activity, and (for classrooms) at the end of the school year upon checkout. This will include a key inventory.

#### B17. Parent/Guardian Communications

Most parents/guardians are concerned about how their children are doing in school, both academically and socially. In some cases, parent/guardian-teacher conferences may be too late to inform parents/guardians of a concern. Please make an effort to contact parents about a concern as soon as possible and whenever appropriate throughout the school year. The first time a parent/guardian hears from the teacher regarding student progress should never be when the child is already failing. Parents/guardians should be notified either by phone or with a progress report any time a student is failing or doing near failing work. Inform your building principal about these contacts so that they may be prepared if contacted by the parent or guardian.

#### B18. Accidents (On The Job)

Employees who are injured during the course of their workday must complete the prescribed accident form. If the injury is such that immediate medical attention is required, the employee or designee should notify the office at once. Worker's Compensation: Teachers are required to immediately report any work-related injury and/or work-related medical condition to their supervisor and the teacher is required to complete all appropriate paperwork.

#### B19. Personnel File

Access to an employee's personal file will be in accordance with all state and federal regulations. The request to review an employee's file should be in writing and given to an employee's supervisor. Examination of the file shall be made at a specific time, in the central office, and in the presence of the building administrator or superintendent. Contents of the file may not be removed from the premises, destroyed, or defaced except as by law. However, a written response to any item in such file may be attached and become a part of the file record.

#### B20. Professional Growth

Employees shall give evidence of professional growth every six years.

Evidence of professional growth may be demonstrated by the attendance at Professional Development Programs developed by the School District of Seward Staff Development Committee.

#### B21. Outside Employment

Employment by the Seward School District is considered the primary and predominant occupation for certified teachers, administrators, and full-time classified employees. Certified staff shall not perform duties unrelated to District employment during duty hours. In addition, teachers shall not engage in employment which conflicts with their school duties.

This does not mean, however, that employees may not engage in other occupational, business, political, community, or social activities, provided: that such activities do not interfere with the complete and successful discharge of the duties of school district employment, according to the terms of the employee's contract and as determined by the superintendent.

#### B22. Salary Schedule Advancement

Complete official transcripts of all graduate hours earned which are pertinent to the teaching placement on the salary schedule should be on file in the superintendent's office. Teachers should document their intentions of summer school hours in May prior to the beginning of classes. Failure to document hours may result in the non-approval of such hours. Copies of transcripts demonstrating completion of hours for movement must be in the superintendent's office by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the year in order to be paid for movement on the schedule.

A single form is used to both request approval of classes for advancement and for approval of movement on the salary schedule. Use the top part of the form to receive approval for classes – if approved the signed form will be sent back to you. When classes are completed, submit the same form with the bottom part filled out requesting schedule movement. Forms are located in the Appendices on this website.

#### B23. Employment

A teacher is employed by the Seward Public School District when the teacher signs the Teacher Contract and the Board of Education approves such contract of employment. The teacher's employment continues absent action by the administration and the Board of Education to non-renew, terminate, amend, or cancel the teacher's employment contract with the school district, or action by the Board of Education to accept a resignation of employment.

If by March 15 of each school year, a teacher has not received written notice of non-renewal, termination, amendment, or cancellation of a contract, then he/she is considered contracted for the following school year according to continuing contract provisions in state law.

Should a teacher wish to resign from employment, the teacher should give written notice of resignation to the Superintendent. The request to resign will be acted upon by the Board of Education. Mid-year resignations and resignations given late in the spring for the following school year can present significant planning problems for the District. If a mid-year resignation is submitted, or a resignation for the following school year is submitted after March 15 or after the teacher has signified acceptance of employment for the next school year, the Board of Education may act to not accept the resignation. The District will enforce the continuing contract of teachers accepting employment for the next school year under the provisions of Nebraska Revised Statute 79-820

#### B24. Jury Duty

A teacher who is summoned for jury service shall promptly notify the principal of such summons. The teacher's salary will continue during the time spent in jury service, and no deduction of leave time shall occur, except that the District may reduce the pay by an amount equal to any compensation, other than expenses, paid by the court for jury duty. Teachers are to notify the business manager of the amount received for such jury duty. If a teacher, upon reporting for jury duty in the morning is dismissed from jury duty for the remainder of the day, the teacher is to report for duty and resume duties for the balance of the day. When a teacher is entirely dismissed from jury duty, the teacher is directed to report for duty and the substitute will be dismissed.

Teachers are expected to promptly notify the principal of any other form of legal summons which may require an absence from duty. In the event the summons involves a school-related matter, the matter shall be treated similar to a jury duty absence. In the event the summons involves a personal matter, the teacher will be required to use available leave days.

#### B25. Contract Days

Teachers are contracted for 186 days, otherwise known as the "contract year." With the exception of unforeseen circumstances, the contract year will typically include:

- a. Each school building will have a specified number of student contact days.
- b. The remaining contract days will be used for professional development, planning, and parent teacher conferences.
- c. Only in rare instances will teachers be allowed to take personal leave during schedule professional development activities, elementary planning days and/or parent teacher conferences.

#### B26. Activity Accounts/Fund Raising

Guidelines for activity accounts, coaching clinics and camps, and fund raising are found in the Appendices.

#### B27. Professional Development

Guidelines for Staff Development Funding procedures and request for funds found in the Appendices.

#### B28. Safety Plans

All teachers must review the Seward Public Schools Safety Plan regularly and be prepared to implement and follow procedures within that plan at all times.



## **C. SIGNIFICANT POLICY & OTHER HELPFUL INFORMATION**

**4012**

### **Staff Internet and Computer Use**

Internet access is an important tool for communicating, keeping up-to-date with current developments in education, and for conducting research to enhance management, teaching and learning skills. The following procedures and guidelines are intended to ensure appropriate use of the Internet at the school by the district's faculty and staff. Staff should also refer to the district's policy on Staff and District Social Media Use.

#### **I. Staff Expectations in Use of the Internet**

##### **A. Acceptable Use While on Duty or on School Property**

- 1. Staff shall be restricted to use the Internet to conduct research for instructional purposes.**
- 2. Staff may use the Internet for school-related e-mail communication with fellow educators, students, parents, and patrons.**
- 3. Staff may use the Internet in any other way which serves a legitimate educational purpose and that is consistent with district policy and good professional judgment.**
- 4. Teachers should integrate the use of electronic resources into the classroom. As the quality and integrity of content on the Internet is not guaranteed, teachers must examine the source of the information and provide guidance to students on evaluating the quality of information they may encounter on the Internet.**

##### **B. Unacceptable Use While on Duty or on School Property**

- 1. Staff shall not access obscene or pornographic material.**
- 2. Staff shall not engage in any illegal activities on school computers, including the downloading and reproduction of copyrighted materials.**
- 3. Staff shall not use school computers or district internet access to use peer-to-peer sharing systems such as BitTorrent, or participate in any activity which interferes with the staff member's ability to perform their assigned duties.**
- 4. The only political advocacy allowed by staff on school computers or district internet access is that which is permitted by the Political Accountability and Disclosure Act and complies with district policy.**
- 5. Staff shall not share their passwords with anyone, including students, volunteers or fellow employees.**

#### **II. School Affiliated Websites**

Staff must obtain the permission of the administration prior to creating or publishing any school-affiliated web page which represents itself to be school-related, or which could be reasonably understood to be school-related. This includes any website which identifies the school district by name or which uses the school's mascot name or image.

Staff must provide administrators with the username and password for all school-affiliated web pages and must only publish content appropriate for the school setting. Staff must also comply

with all board policies in their school-affiliated websites and must comply with the board's policy on professional boundaries between staff and students at all times and in all contexts.

Publication of student work or personality-identifiable student information on the Internet may violate the Federal Education Records Privacy Act. Staff must obtain the consent of their building principal or the superintendent prior to posting any student-related information on the Internet.

### **III.Enforcement**

#### **A.Methods of Enforcement**

The district owns the computer system and monitors e-mail and Internet communications, Internet usage, and patterns of Internet usage. Staff members have no right of privacy in any electronic communications or files, which are stored or accessed on or using school property and these are subject to search and inspection at any time.

1.The district uses a technology protection measure that blocks access to some sites that are not in accordance with the district's policy. Standard use of the Internet utilizes a proxy server-based filter that screens for non-curriculum related pages.

2.Due to the nature of technology, the filter may sometimes block pages that are appropriate for staff research. The system administrator may override the technology protection measures that blocks or filters Internet access for staff access to a site with legitimate educational value that is wrongly blocked.

3.The district will monitor staff use of the Internet by monitoring Internet use history to ensure enforcement of this policy.

**B.Any violation of school policy and rules may result in that staff member facing:**

1.Discharge from employment or such other discipline as the administration and/or the board deem appropriate;

2.The filing of a complaint with the Commissioner of Education alleging unprofessional conduct by a certified staff member;

3.When appropriate, the involvement of law enforcement agencies in investigating and prosecuting wrongdoing.

#### **IV. Off-Duty Personal Use**

School employees may use the internet, school computers, and other school technology while not on duty for personal use as long as such use is (1) consistent with other district policies, (2) consistent with the provisions of Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 27 (Nebraska Department of Education "Rule 27"), and (3) is reported as compensation in accordance with the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and taxes, if any, are paid. All of the provisions of Rule 27 will apply to non-certificated staff for the purposes of this policy. In addition, employees may not use the school's internet, computers, or other technology to access obscene or pornographic material, sext, or engage in any illegal activities.

### **ADMINISTRATORS, FACULTY AND STAFF AGREEMENT**

In order to make sure that all members of the School District of Seward community understand and agree to these rules of conduct for use of the e-mail and Internet systems of the school district, the School District of Seward asks that you, as an administrator, faculty member, or staff member user, sign the following statement:

I have access to, and have read, the "Terms and Conditions for e-mail and Internet Access" adopted by the School District of Seward, and I understand and will abide by those district guidelines and conditions for the use of the facilities of the School District of Seward and access to the Internet. I further understand that any violation of the district guidelines is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges will be revoked. School disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action will be taken.

I agree not to hold the School District of Seward nor any of its employees nor any of the institutions for networks providing access to the School District of Seward responsible for the performance of the system or the content of any material accessed through it.

Employee's Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Employee's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_, NE

Home Phone No. (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

This form will be retained on file by authorized  
faculty designee for duration of applicable  
computer/network/Internet use.

## **C2. SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

It is the policy of the school district to provide an environment free of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct or communication constituting sexual harassment. Sexual harassment by and of employees and students is unequivocally prohibited. Sexual harassment is misconduct that interferes with work productivity and wrongfully deprives employees of the opportunity to work and students of the opportunity to study and be in an environment free from unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtones. Sexual harassment includes all unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other such verbal or physical misconduct. Sexual harassment is a prohibited practice and is a violation of the law.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has issued guidelines interpreting Section 703 of Title VII as prohibiting sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined in those guidelines as follows:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical misconduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when:

- (1) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment,
- (2) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or
- (3) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

A person who feels harassed is encouraged to inform the person engaging in sexually harassing conduct or communication directly that the conduct or communication is offensive and must stop. If the person who feels harassed does not wish to communicate directly with the person whose conduct or communication is offensive, or if direct communication with the offending person has been ineffective, the person who feels harassed should report the conduct or communication to a supervisor, principal, the superintendent of schools, or a board of education member with whom he or she feels comfortable in reporting the issue.

Regardless of the means selected for resolving the problem, the good faith initiation of a complaint of sexual harassment will not affect the complainant's employment, compensation or work assignments as an employee, or status as a student.

Sexual harassment of one student by another student or students is addressed in a separate policy.

### **C3. Drug-Free Workplace (Board Policy 4002)**

It is vitally important to have a healthy workforce that is free from the effects of illegal drugs. The use or possession of unlawful drugs in the workplace has a very detrimental effect upon safety and morale of the affected employee, coworkers, and the public at large; and on productivity and the quality of work.

Federal law requires this school district, as a recipient of federal funds, to maintain a drug-free workplace. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance in the district's workplace is prohibited. The term "workplace" includes every location where district employees may be found during their working hours or while they are on duty, regardless of whether the location is within the geographic boundaries of the district. Any employee who violates this policy will be disciplined with measures up to and including discharge. The district may, in its sole discretion, require or allow an employee who violates this policy to participate in and satisfactorily complete a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

The district shall provide every current employee with a copy of this policy, and shall provide each newly hired employee with a copy upon hiring. Every employee shall be required to signify receipt of a copy of the policy in writing. All district employees must abide by this policy, including those who are not directly engaged in the performance of work pursuant to a federal grant.

Within five days after a conviction, an employee must notify the head of the department in which he or she is assigned of any conviction of a criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace. The failure to report such a conviction will result in dismissal. If the employee convicted of such an offense is engaged in the performance of work pursuant to the provisions of a federal grant, the district shall notify the grant agency within 10 days of receiving notice of a conviction from the affected employee or of receiving actual notice of such a conviction.

An employee who is convicted of violating any criminal drug statute for conduct that occurred in the workplace will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to suspension or discharge. The district may, in its sole discretion, require the employee to participate in and satisfactorily complete a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the School District's Drug-Free Workplace policy. I understand that I am required to abide by the terms of the policy as a condition of my employment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

#### **C4. EFFECTIVE PARENT/GUARDIAN TEACHER CONFERENCES & COMMUNICATION**

It is very important to keep parents/guardians informed on a student's progress. When a problem arises, arrange a conference with the parent or guardian. If the problem is not discussed with the parent/guardian, the parent or guardian will most likely be discussing the problem with others, which only magnifies the problem.

The first indication that a child is having difficulty should not be the arrival of the report card or progress report. Keep the parents/guardians informed of your concerns.

##### **Parent/Guardian Conferences**

Conferences are a critical opportunity for teachers to dialogue with parents (or guardians) of students regarding student achievement and learning. Teacher attendance at these scheduled conferences is mandatory.

##### **Checklist For A Good Conference:**

1. Make careful preparation – inform students about what papers and comments will be shared.
2. Have an informal setting – but insure privacy.
3. Set a time limit.
4. Establish rapport. Listen attentively.
5. Begin on a positive note and present more strengths than areas on which to work.
6. Encourage the other person to talk and encourage suggestions from the other person
7. Develop an attitude of mutual cooperation (what can we do to solve??).
8. Delay making numerous definite suggestions yourself (three is plenty).
9. Use their practical suggestions as a springboard for action.
10. Summarize points covered.
11. Make plans together for future progress.
12. End on a note of continuing cooperation.
13. Make notes after they leave\_(include date and time).

##### **Note:**

- Do not preach about why students may not be doing well. Do not make excuses by blaming parents/guardians, the environment, the number of students in class, the time of day, the building and facilities, or the materials provided.
- Do not waste conference time by telling jokes or talking with the parents/guardians about other issues not pertaining to the conference.
- Do not give parents/guardians the impression that you are not competent by stating that you are inexperienced or otherwise unprepared.
- Do show a genuine interest in the student and the parent/guardian.
- Do try to indicate that there is unity within the school – that policies and curriculum are for the benefit of all.
- Do encourage the parents/guardians to bring the teacher any problem that they may think is hindering the child's progress.
- Do be patient when listening to a problem and give concrete suggestions as to what steps the parents/guardians and school can take together to help solve the problem.
- Do give encouragement and appreciation for the efforts of the parents,/guardians even the ones who are not being successful.
- Do not do or say anything that puts the parent/guardian on the defensive. No one likes to be put on the defensive, parent/guardian or teacher.
- Realize that it takes a great deal of courage for parents/guardians to come to school and discuss a problem concerning their child.
- Explain that grades are a report of progress, NOT a reward or punishment.

## Conference Checklist:

### A. Pre-Conference

1. Notify:
  - a. purpose, place, time, length of time allotted
2. Prepare:
  - a. review child's folder
  - b. gather examples of work
  - c. prepare materials
3. Plan Agenda
4. Arrange environment:
  - a. comfortable seating
  - b. eliminate distractions

### B. Conference

1. Welcome
  - a. establish rapport
2. State
  - a. purpose
  - b. time limitations
  - c. note taking
  - d. options for follow-up
3. Encourage
  - a. information sharing
  - b. comments
  - c. questions
4. Listen
  - a. pause once in awhile!
  - b. look for verbal and nonverbal cues
  - c. to questions
5. Summarize
  - a. end on a positive note

### C. Post-Conference

1. Review conference with child, if appropriate
2. Share information with other school personnel, if appropriate
3. Mark calendar for planned follow-up

**C5. Investigations and Arrests by Police or Other Law Enforcement Officers  
(Board Policy 5022)**

Police or other law enforcement officers may be called to the school at the request of school administration, or may initiate contact with the school in connection with a criminal investigation. The school district shall not allow law enforcement officers access to students to conduct an investigation during school hours unless the officers are investigating charges that the student has been the victim of abuse or neglect. Contact between the school and law enforcement authorities on matters involving students shall be made through the office of the superintendent or principal and the law enforcement officer.

Law enforcement officers may talk to a student away from the school before or after school hours, and they should be encouraged to do so. Law enforcement officers shall be allowed to conduct an interview at the school only when the interview is conducted at the request of the school or when they can show that special circumstances exist. This determination should be made by the appropriate building principal or superintendent. Law enforcement officers should be permitted to interview students on school grounds only after providing the superintendent or appropriate building principal with a statement that the law enforcement officer has reason to believe and does believe that the student is the victim of child abuse or neglect perpetrated by the child's parent(s) or some other member of the child's immediate family, and that the law enforcement official wishes to interview the student regarding such abuse or neglect.

Throughout this process, all attempts should be made to avoid embarrassing the student before his or her teachers and peers, and to avoid disrupting the student's and school's education program.

1. Law enforcement officers should be permitted to take custody of a student if they possess an arrest warrant or if they otherwise assert a lawful basis for doing so. Whenever possible, the arrest or release of the student should be conducted in the building principal's office and out of the view of other students. When a principal or other school official releases a minor student to a law enforcement officer for the purpose of removing the minor from the school premises, he or she shall take immediate steps to notify the parent, guardian, or other responsible adult regarding the release of the minor to the officer and the place to which the minor is reportedly being taken, except when a minor has been taken into custody as a victim of suspected child abuse. If the law enforcement officer indicates that the child is being taken into custody because the child is the victim of suspected child abuse, the principal or other school official shall, as a condition of releasing the student to the law enforcement officer, require the officer to sign the statement appended hereto certifying that the child is being removed from school premises because he or she is believed to be the victim of child abuse and that the officer understands and will comply with the legal requirements of NEB. REV. STAT. § 79-294.
2. Law enforcement personnel shall not be allowed to roam about the school until the student is found, and shall remain in the administration office while school personnel seek the student.
3. If possible, the education program of the student should not be disrupted to allow for police questioning of the student during class time.
4. Any questioning by law enforcement officers that is permitted should be conducted in a private room or area where confidentiality can be maintained. This should be an area removed from observation by or contact with other pupils and school personnel.
5. If law enforcement officers are to be allowed to question a student, the principal or school official shall make a reasonable attempt to notify the child's parents before questioning begins, except in cases of suspected child abuse or child neglect involving the parent or other family member. The parents should be given the opportunity to come to the school prior to the questioning.
6. If the parents are notified and are able to attend, they should be allowed to be present at the interview. The principal or designee should be present at the interview, but should not take part in any questioning. The principal or designee should remain a neutral observer at all times.



**STATEMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER RELATING  
TO REMOVAL OF CHILD FROM SCHOOL PREMISES WHO  
IS BELIEVED TO BE THE VICTIM OF CHILD ABUSE**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (printed name of law enforcement officer) certify that I am a law enforcement officer employed by \_\_\_\_\_ (printed name of law enforcement agency). I certify that I am removing \_\_\_\_\_ (printed name of child being removed from school premises) because the child is believed to be the victim of child abuse. I acknowledge that I have been provided with the address and telephone number of the child's parent or guardian by school officials. I also acknowledge that I am familiar with and will comply with the obligations imposed on me by NEB. REV. STAT. § 79-294, which is set forth below:

When a principal or other school official releases a minor student to a peace officer as defined in section 49-801 for the purpose of removing the minor from the school premises, the principal or other school official shall take immediate steps to notify the parent, guardian, or responsible relative of the minor regarding the release of the minor to the officer and regarding the place to which the minor is reportedly being taken, except when a minor has been taken into custody as a victim of suspected child abuse, in which case the principal or other school official shall provide the peace officer with the address and telephone number of the minor's parent or guardian. The peace officer shall take immediate steps to notify the parent, guardian, or responsible relative of the minor that the minor is in custody and the place where he or she is being held. If the peace officer has a reasonable belief that the minor would be endangered by a disclosure of the place where the minor is being held or that the disclosure would cause the custody of the minor to be disturbed, the peace officer may refuse to disclose the place where the minor is being held for a period not to exceed twenty-four hours. The peace officer shall, however, inform the parent, guardian, or responsible relative whether the child requires and is receiving medical or other treatment. The juvenile court shall review any decision not to disclose the place where the minor is being held at any subsequent detention hearing.

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

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Law Enforcement Officer

## **C6. News Media Information**

Quick and accurate information to the community will continue to be a key element in the success of programs in the Seward Public Schools. The news media policy developed by the superintendent and news media managers and editors will be continued. The policy, which will apply to schools throughout the year, will be in the best interest of the School District of Seward, the community and the news media.

The following procedures are in effect:

1. School will be open to members of the news media for scheduled interviews, photographs, filming and taping.
2. The principal will openly and truthfully answer questions regarding situations or incidents that have or are occurring in that building. All news is not good news, but the fear of inaccurate information is worse than bad news to most citizens.
3. If principals are actively involved in a situation, they will not be called upon to answer reporters' questions at that time. Reporters may be asked to leave the immediate scene, perhaps to a room in the school or other designated areas where they may wait until information is available. All editors acknowledge their responsibility in such an instance.
4. News people often hear inaccurate stories from parents whose children might have carried home such stories. The problem of discerning what is fact and what is rumor must be distinguished in order to prevent the spread of inaccurate information. The duty of the principal will be to help, when questioned, by reporting what information is available. Both positive and negative information falls in the realm of public information. If it can be said truthfully "Everyone is okay," the answer will be a relief to the community.
5. Most reporters use identification cards. Each newsperson must report to the principal's office and show identification.
6. News briefings will be scheduled as needed.
7. In the case of a crisis or tragedy no school person should talk to a reporter without contacting the Principal, who will in turn contact the Superintendent of Schools, so staff members are aware of the fact. This is imperative.
8. If the police department is called upon to handle a situation that gets out of hand, the news media will abide by police jurisdiction. Contact the superintendent's office immediately.
9. State law prohibits the photographing of foster children in schools without specific written consent.
10. Special Education students may only be photographed if parent/guardian written consent is provided.

## **C7. Teacher Evaluation Information**

Evaluations of teachers will be conducted in accordance with the District's evaluation policy. Supervisors reserve the right to observe, appraise, or evaluate teachers more frequently than required by policy on an as needed basis. Teachers are expected to participate constructively and positively in the evaluation process and to accept and implement constructive suggestions and improvement strategies developed by the administration

The teacher evaluation process and forms are located in the Appendices.

## **C8. Policy 3057 Title IX Policy**

It is the policy of the school district that no person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any of the school district's programs or activities. The district is required by Title IX (20 U.S.C. § 1681) and 34 C.F.R. part 106 to not discriminate in such a manner. More details can be found on the district website under our policies. The school district's Title IX Coordinator may be contacted at Title IX Coordinator, Dr. Matt Dominy at 2401 Karol Kay Blvd. Seward NE 68434, [matt.dominy@sewardschools.org](mailto:matt.dominy@sewardschools.org), 402-643-2986. The school district's nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures are included in this policy, or can be accessed at: <https://www.sewardpublicschools.org/>. To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please contact the Title IX Coordinator.

## **C9. Threat Assessment Team**

### **Threat Assessment and Response Team Concept**

The board of education is committed to providing a safe environment for members of the school community. Students, staff and patrons are urged to immediately report any statements or behavior that makes the observer fearful or uncomfortable about the safety of the school environment.

#### **1. Definitions**

a. A threat is an expression of a willful intent to physically or sexually harm someone or to damage property in a way that indicates that an individual poses a danger to the safety of school staff, students or other members of the school community. The threat may be expressed/communicated behaviorally, orally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through any other means. A transient threat is an expression of anger or frustration that can be quickly or easily resolved. A substantive threat is an expression of serious intent to harm others which includes, but is not limited to, any threat which involves a detailed plan and means.

b. A threat assessment is a fact-based process emphasizing an appraisal of observed (or reasonably-observable) behaviors to identify potentially dangerous or violent situations, to assess them and to manage/address them. Threat assessment is the process of identifying and responding to serious threats in a systematic, data-informed way. The threat assessment process is distinct from student disciplinary procedures. The mere fact that the district is conducting a threat assessment does not by itself necessitate suspension, expulsion or emergency exclusion without complying with state law and board policy related governing those actions. The threat assessment process is distinct from specialized instruction which a student with a disability may receive from the school district. The school district will not change a student's educational placement as that term is used in the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act solely as part of a threat assessment.

2. **Obligation to Report Threatening Statements or Behaviors.** All staff and students must report substantive threats to a member of the administration immediately and comply with any other mandatory reporting obligations. Staff and students who are unsure whether a threat is substantive or transient should report the situation. Staff and students must make such report regardless of the nature of the relationship between the individual who initiated the threat or threatening behavior and the person(s) who were threatened or who were the focus of the threatening behavior. Staff and students must also make such reports regardless of where or when the threat was made or the threatening behavior occurred. **THREATS OR ASSAULTS WHICH REQUIRE IMMEDIATE INTERVENTION SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE POLICE AT 911.**

#### **3. Threat Assessment Team**

The threat assessment team (team) shall consist of administration of each building, counselors, and selected teachers and police when needed.

4. **Threat Assessment Investigation and Response** When a threat is reported, the school administrator shall initiate an initial inquiry/triage and, in consultation with members of the threat assessment team, make a determination of the seriousness of the threat as expeditiously as possible. The school administrator must contact law enforcement if the administrator believes that an individual poses a clear and immediate threat of serious violence.

If there is no reasonably apparent imminent threat present or once such an imminent threat is contained, the threat assessment team will meet to evaluate and respond to the threatening behavior. The team may, but is not required to, review the following types of information:

- Review of the threatening behavior and/or communication;
- Interviews with the individuals involved including students, staff members, and family members as necessary and/or appropriate;
- Review of school and other records for any prior history or interventions with the students involved;
- Any other investigatory methods that the team determines to be reasonable and useful. At the conclusion of the investigation, the team will determine what, if any, response to the threat is appropriate. The team is authorized to disclose the results of its investigation to law enforcement and to the target(s) of any threatened acts. The team may refer the individual of concern to the appropriate school administrator for consequences under the school's student discipline policy or, if appropriate, report the results of its investigation to the student's individualized education plan team. Regardless of threat assessment activities, disciplinary action and referral to law enforcement will occur consistent with board policy and Nebraska law.

5. Communication with the Public about Reported Threats The team will keep members of the school community appropriately informed about substantive threats and about the team’s response to those threats. This communication may include oral announcements, written communication sent home with students, or communication through print or broadcast media. However, the team will not reveal the identity of the individual of concern or of any target(s) of threatened violence unless permitted by law.

6. Coordination with the Crisis Team After Resolution of Threat The threat assessment team will confer with the district’s crisis team after a threat has been investigated to provide the crisis team with information that the crisis team may use in assessing or revising the district’s All-Hazard School Safety Plan.

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## D. SEWARD HIGH SCHOOL HANDBOOK

### D1. Absence Reporting

**Attendance must be taken within the first 15 minutes of each class period, including Access Time.** Attendance may be modified at any time during class. Daily attendance records will be kept in the office. Each teacher should keep all daily absences on the computer.

### D2. Academic Excellence Policy

Any student having academic difficulty in a course shall have a counseling session with the guidance counselor or administration and the teacher. The parent/guardian will be notified of the academic difficulty and encouraged to visit with the staff involved.

Activities may be modified or restricted until progress in the course is improved. This decision shall be made in consultation with the student, teacher, guidance counselor, and building principal. Should extra study time be required it shall be made available for the student. To be eligible to participate in school activities, a student cannot be failing one (1) class.

The following procedure will be used with ineligible students:

1. Parents/guardians will be notified by mail from the principal that their son/daughter is ineligible to participate in extra-curricular activities.
2. There will be counseling sessions with the student on the lack of passing academic performance.
3. Students will not be allowed to participate in inter-school or intramural competition for the first week of ineligibility. (e.g. Tuesday to Monday).
4. The daily bulletin will be read during 1<sup>st</sup> period. Since important information is given to students through the bulletin, please require your student to listen. Items to be included in the bulletin must be in the office prior to the start of the school day.
5. After the first week of ineligibility, students may not participate until satisfactory academic progress in classes is made. Satisfactory academic progress is determined by the classroom teacher and administration based on grade accumulation for the semester.
6. Incomplete grades are considered failing grades until the incompletes are replaced by passing grades. However, the student is ineligible for inter-school participation until the incompletes become passing grades.
7. At the end of each semester, a student's eligibility to participate in extra-curricular activities will be based on current Nebraska School Activity Association guidelines. The current guidelines are that a student cannot participate in extra-curricular activities unless he/she has passed a minimum of 20 credit hours the previous semester.

### D3. Activities List

An activities list is a list of students who will be absent from school for school-approved activities. **Head coaches and sponsors must turn in their activity list(s) no later than 12:00 noon on the Thursday prior to the week of the activities.**

The office will make up an activities list every Thursday afternoon for **ALL** events that occur the following week. Students and teachers should check this list and make sure that the names are accurate.

Teachers will be able to add or drop students the day of the event through the daily bulletin. Groups that are not on the list will not be allowed to leave school before 3:00 p.m. Students going to activities must hand in their work in advance of the activity or make special arrangements with the instructor in advance. Students who do not follow this procedure will receive a grade of "0" for the day. **Any teacher may refuse to allow a student to miss class to participate in an activity based on academic achievement in the class.**

#### D4. Activities Schedule

Activities are an essential part of the total education package and many students are involved in multiple activities. To avoid conflicts in the scheduling of activities, these procedures will be followed:

1. All parties, practice sessions, and work schedules must be approved by the activities director and the sponsor of the activity.
2. The sponsor of an activity will be responsible for contacting the activities director to place any activity on the calendar.
3. No activity or practice will be scheduled after **6:00 p.m.** on Wednesday night. (School Board Policy)
4. All scheduled events during the week shall terminate at 10:00 p.m. except for Friday and Saturday. Those events will terminate by 12:00 a.m.
5. No activities or practices shall be scheduled on Sunday without superintendent approval.

When a student has more than one activity occurring at the same time, the sponsors of the activities will communicate with each other to settle the conflict. Students are not to be put in the middle of the conflict.

Activity sponsors and coaches are responsible for student behavior and supervision on school transportation. This includes following guidelines for safety, bringing food or drink on the bus, etc. Please be familiar with those expectations.

**Students must be in attendance in their regular classes the day of an activity or they may not participate in the game or event. *Prior arrangements must be made with a building principal* if a student must miss part of the school day for an appointment that cannot be made outside of the school day.**

#### D5. Class Hours

The bell schedule for Seward High School is as follows:

Period 1 8:15-9:45  
Period 2 9:50-11:17  
Period 3 11:17-1:17  
Period 4 1:22-2:49  
Period 5 2:54-3:37

Lunch schedules are arranged so that an equal number of students are assigned each lunch period. On rare occasions, teachers may need to trade lunch assignments with other classes. **Please let the office and kitchen know in advance which lunch assignments are affected.**

#### D6. Concessions

Activity sponsors will draw for concessions with the activities director before the fall season and again before the winter season.

1. Sponsors, when your group has concessions, you are responsible for the following:
  - a. Seeing to it that students know when they report to work and what they are to do.
  - b. Request change from the secretary in the morning.
  - c. Pop is stored in the concession stand. Make sure the machine is on early enough to adequately cool the pop.

- c. **SUPERVISE** the concession area and your workers.
- d. **Clean up afterwards.**

#### D7. Daily Bulletin

The daily bulletin will be read during the 1<sup>st</sup> period. Since important information is given to students through the bulletin, please require your students to listen. Items to be included in the bulletin must be in the office prior to the start of the school day.

#### D8. Detention/Discipline

It is expected that each teacher will handle his/her classroom problems at the time they occur in the classroom. Decisions to exclude students from class for more than one period will be made only by the principal or assistant principal. Consult with the principal or assistant principal about discipline problems before the situation becomes critical.

During passing times, teachers should be on the look out for misbehavior by students outside the classroom. Flagrant breaches of discipline should be referred immediately to the assistant principal's office.

Again, teachers are reminded that they are to handle their classroom problems. Students who must stay after school for make-up work or for failure to do assigned work are the responsibility of the classroom teacher. A teacher assigning make-up time for misconduct in the classroom will have the student report to their room. The length of penalty time is to be determined by the teacher, although this time, if it exceeds one hour, cannot be made up by the student in one evening.

Referral of discipline problems to the assistant principal or the principal should be done by logging the occurrence on PowerSchool. Enter the date and nature of each incident.

#### D9. Fines and Course Fees

Teachers are held accountable for the textbooks used in their classrooms. It is the teacher's job to check out books, by their number, to students in their classes as well as checking them back in. Students must turn in the same book as assigned to them. Teachers are expected to collect fines for such things as misplaced or damaged books, material consumed in class, etc. At the end of the quarter, the names of students with fines outstanding should be turned into the office.

Students making projects costing more than \$20 will need to pay 50% of the material cost before he/she starts the project. The remainder of the bill will be paid before the project is taken home.

#### D10. Health Services

If a student becomes ill during class time, he/she should be sent to the office and not to the restroom. Students must consult with the office, and a parent/guardian or their designee, must be contacted before the student may leave school, and students are required to sign out when they leave. Please document any accident that occurs in your classroom on the form provided by the office and return it to the office for record keeping.

#### D11. Honor Roll

The honor roll is announced at the end of each term. Students receiving 93 percent or higher, no grade lower than a B, and a minimum of 10 credit hours that term, and with a grade of "O" or "S" in citizenship, will be included on the honor roll.

#### D12. Mid-Term Graduation (Board Policy #6006)

The School District of Seward supports the concept of early completion as a means of accelerating students toward the achievement of lifetime plans. The following guidelines have been established for students to be eligible for early completion:

1. Students must meet all completion requirements established by the Board of Education in order to be eligible for early graduation as well as the credit hour requirements in each specific subject matter area.
2. A student who decides to opt for early graduation or completion is not eligible to participate in school sponsored activities following the last day he/she attends classes. The effective date for participation will end with the last day that the student is enrolled in classes. The only school activities that the applicant is eligible for will be the regularly scheduled graduation ceremony and the jr/sr prom.
3. This policy shall be evaluated annually by the high school principal and appropriate revisions shall be recommended to the Board for its consideration.

#### D13. Office Passes

The administrators and/or guidance counselors will sometimes send an office assistant or use the intercom to get a student. Attempts will be made to provide the least class disruption possible.

#### D14. Organization Sponsorship

Teachers are assigned as sponsors of the classes and organizations. Sponsors are responsible of the proper conduct and record keeping of the organization and must attend all meetings and functions. Sponsors are to work closely with the principal and activities director in matters of policy, finances, and schedules. Monetary compensation is provided for sponsors of some organizations. School bus supervision is the responsibility of the activity sponsor – not the driver.

**Each class sponsor is required to participate in each class activity.** Sponsors are expected to **supervise** the activities of students; they do not have to do the actual work involved. **If a sponsor cannot attend an activity, it is his/her responsibility to report this to the principal and to obtain a replacement sponsor.**

Class activities include:

Freshmen	-	Homecoming Concessions
Sophomores	-	Homecoming Concessions
Juniors	-	Fund Raising as needed Homecoming Prom Concessions
Seniors	-	Homecoming Graduation ceremonies Concessions Prom

#### D15. Recruiter Visitation Procedures (Including but not limited to: College Admissions, Military Recruiters, College Coaches, etc.)

1. Visiting dates and times must be cleared through the guidance counselors.
2. Visitation dates and times may be placed in the student bulletin in advance.
3. Recruiters may set up a table and visit with students during lunch only. No students will be allowed to miss class to visit with a recruiter.
4. Recruiters who arrive without advance notification will not be allowed to visit with students during the school day.

#### D16. Schedule Changes



Students must take the classes for which they register. Students will not be able to reschedule their classes prior to the start of each term. A student's schedule will change only at the discretion of the counselor and the principal. The administration will work with the teachers when there are other reasons necessitating a need for a schedule change.

#### D17. Signing Out of School (Students)

1. Students who need to leave school for an appointment (doctor, dentist, etc.) must have a note or phone call from his/her parent/guardian before they will be allowed to sign out.
2. Students who are ill at school are to go to the office to receive permission to go home.
3. Students who leave the school building without signing out will be unexcused and will be considered truant.
4. **No teacher may sign a pass requesting that a student be excused from another teacher's class.**

#### D18. Student Passes

Students must have a written pass or classroom lanyard pass for movement out of the classroom. Students must also sign in/out on the classroom teachers' sign in/out sheet when they leave/enter the room. This includes the ACCESS period. DO NOT issue passes for students to leave your class unless it is an emergency. Do not let students write their own passes for you to sign. Teachers, pay particular attention to the number of students you write passes for.

Computer lab passes are available from computer teachers only and must be obtained by the student in advance.

#### D19. Teacher Grade Reporting

All criteria used to determine the student's grade must be recorded in the grade book or via computer with a backup within the software. Final grades must be submitted to the office via Power School. If grades other than percentages are used, or if grades are weighted, an adequate explanation must be included so that others may interpret your records.

#### D20. Teacher Workroom

All copy materials, machines, etc. are located in the office. Each teacher will be assigned their own code and should use the school machines and supplies for school purposes only. Students are not allowed to use copy machines.

#### D21. Traffic Regulations

Safety and regard for the lives and property of others are of prime importance, both to insure protection for our own students as well as the elementary students who board and disembark buses on the west side of the building. Serious violations of traffic regulations observed by a faculty member will be reported to the police and the school will file a complaint. Specifically, the following are violations, which can and will be prosecuted:

1. Racing. No person shall drive any vehicle in any race, speed competition, or contest, drag race or acceleration contest, test of physical endurance, exhibition of speed or acceleration, or for the purpose of making a speed record, and no person shall in any manner participate in any such race, competition, contest, test or exhibition.
2. Negligent Driving. It shall be unlawful for any person to operate a motor vehicle in such a manner as to cause unnecessary noise, spinning or squealing of tires, skids, slides, abrupt turns or sways or in any other manner as to indicate a want of ordinary care and caution that a person of ordinary prudence would use under like circumstances.

3. Reckless Driving. Any person who drives any motor vehicle in such a manner as to indicate an indifferent or wanton disregard of the safety of persons or property shall be deemed to be guilty of reckless driving.

All vehicles driven to school MUST be parked upon arrival at school and are to remain parked during the day. The parking lot is off limits to students during the school day unless the student has permission from the office. The parking lots will be monitored and students who park improperly may have their cars towed at the owner's expense. Even though the lots are school property, all persons using those areas are expected to obey state and local traffic regulations. The Seward Police Department routinely monitors parking lots and tickets will be issued for violations, especially violation of handicapped parking.

#### D22. Substitute Teachers

If you are unable to be at school, please call Nathan Buss (641-8905) between 6:30 and 6:45 a.m. If you call after 6:45 a.m. it is difficult to find a substitute. Please give him any additional information needed for your classes that day. Lesson plans should be detailed enough so that a substitute could come in and follow your plans without the aid of too much additional information. If you are unable to reach Mr. Buss for some reason, the building principal should be called.

By 3:00 p.m. on the day missed due to illness, teachers should call the school to indicate whether or not they will be present the following day. Absences other than illness must be arranged in advance with the principal. If a problem occurs with a substitute, notify the building principal immediately so the issue can be addressed.

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## **E. SEWARD MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK**

### **E1. Academic Detentions**

Students who fail to complete assignments, fail to hand in papers, have incompletes, hand in late assignments or need special attention should stay after school with the teacher who assigned the detention. Staff members must make sure the student has contacted a parent/guardian to make appropriate after school arrangements.

### **E2. Activities**

The middle school has an Activities Coordinator. All contracts and hiring of officials will be handled through this person. All events should be scheduled through him or her (and his/her secretary) to avoid scheduling problems. This person will be responsible for getting items on the master calendar for the school district working with the high school activities director. All events or activities should first be approved by the building principal.

1. The sponsor of an activity will be responsible for contacting the activities coordinator to place any activity on the calendar.
2. No activity or practice will be schedule after 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday night (School Board Policy).
3. No activities or practices shall be scheduled on Sunday without the superintendent's approval.

### **E3. After School Meetings**

Custodians must be notified of all after school meetings. The custodians will make sure the outside doors are open before the meetings and locked when the meeting is finished. This cannot happen if they are not notified.

### **E4. Availability to Students**

Teachers must be available to students during their planning period and before and after school. Students needing assistance take precedence over any other meeting or activity.

### **E5. Behavior Detentions**

Students may be assigned a behavior detention by the office or any member of the faculty. This is for those students with undesirable patterns of attendance, tardiness, or conduct as well as other disciplinary problems.

Behavior detentions are served at lunchtime. The assigned employee monitors the detentions in the 4R Room. Behavior detentions are just that, a consequence for inappropriate behavior in school. The following procedures must be followed:

1. The student must be notified by the staff member assigning the detention. This is not a surprise discipline procedure.
2. Staff members assigning the detention must notify the office of the detention.
3. The student will serve the amount of time necessary to correct the behavior and a phone call will be made to parents.
4. The 4R Teacher will keep a record of the referral.

### **E6. Discipline**

All staff members should have high expectations for every student, both academically and behaviorally. These expectations need to be realistic for the students.

Classroom discipline is primarily the responsibility of the classroom teacher. You have the responsibility of supervision at all times, regardless of where you are in the building. Discipline should protect and nurture the physical, social, mental and emotional growth of students. Rules and processes are made,

first to protect all individuals and second, to protect the right to participate in every facet of the educational program. Our discipline practices should always reflect an understanding of adolescent characteristics and limit the opportunity of any individual to interrupt another student's educational growth, including their own.

Discipline is one more aspect of teaching. We know that students come to us at varying levels of well-developed self-discipline in regard to themselves and their interactions in society. In this way our behavioral guidelines in different settings are similar to our curriculum guides or frameworks. It is then our role to differentiate our methods of external discipline based on the level of self-discipline that a child displays. As teachers, what we are trying to do is to help students develop more effective self-discipline in various situations. This includes character development, which is a necessary life skill for success. Character Counts needs to be incorporated all day.

It is much more likely that middle school students will comply with a request quickly and with respect if they feel you are "working" with them. Yelling at a student is not acceptable and will be addressed with staff members. Administration or supervisors do not yell at you, why should you yell at a child?

An office referral or 4R Room referral should be the last resort. Teachers should have attempted various methods of discipline with the student prior to this. A parent/guardian contact is also important. All situations are different and professional discretion is important.

#### E7. Student Bulletins

Student and faculty bulletins will be prepared everyday. Student and faculty bulletins will be sent out around 8:00 a.m. It is essential that you have your class quiet while you are reading the announcements to the class. The announcements are for the students and are designed to help the school run more efficiently. It causes a great deal of hardship and confusion if the students do not hear the bulletin.

Teachers should use this time to teach students the importance of our student planners and teach the students how to use these for recording important announcements.

The intercom system will be used for special announcements or for emergency announcements. We will attempt not to have any more special bulletins that disrupt class than are absolutely necessary.

#### E8. Building Committees

This is a partial list of committees and purposes. Assignments will be made at the start of the year.

1. Courtesy Committee
2. SCIP Team
3. Crisis Response Team
4. Emergency Response Team
5. Scheduling Committee
6. Team Leaders

#### E9. Faculty Meetings

Faculty meetings will be held periodically throughout the year. Agendas may be given to you prior to the faculty meetings. Some of the meetings will be used for curriculum discussions. Please visit with the principal if there is something you think needs to be discussed.

#### E10. Faculty Workroom

The faculty workroom will contain supplies needed for duplication of materials. If you have difficulty with one of the machines, please see the paraprofessional assigned to operate this equipment before operating them. Copy machines are not for personal use. Personal copies are 10 cents each.

Student office helpers are the only students that should be in the workroom. These students have been shown how to use the machines. Teachers need to watch what is discussed in the presence of the students.

#### E11. Fax Machine

The FAX machine is located in the office. Only office personnel are to operate the FAX machine. No purchase orders are to be faxed.

#### E12. 4R Room

The Rights, Responsibility, Respect and Redirection Room is available for students who are unable to work in the regular classroom.

The following general rules will be followed, but may change during the school year as needed:

1. Notify the office, by intercom, when you are sending a student to the office for the purpose of being sent to the 4 R Room. An office staff member will take the student to the 4R Room. Inform the office as to the length of the stay and the reason that the student is being sent.
2. Students may be assigned for a partial period, all period, part of a day, or all day. The staff member sending the student, the 4R Room instructor and the building principal will make this decision.
3. Assignments should be sent to the 4R Room for each student. Assignments are the responsibility of the classroom teacher.
4. Teachers may also assign detentions (Academic or Behavior) to students sent to the 4R Room.
5. There will be parent/guardian notification of any student sent to the 4R Room.

#### E13. Health Services

The school nurse is responsible for coordinating student medication. Students taking prescription or non-prescription medication during school hours must be sent to the school nurse to make sure proper state regulations are being met.

If a student is sick or hurt and can't make it through the day, permission from the teacher must be obtained to go to the nurse's office. He/She **must** have a pass to go to the nurse's office. He/She **can't** go during passing periods. Before a student may leave to go home because of illness or injury, he/she must consult with the nurse. Parent /guardian permission will be obtained by the nurse, and the student must sign out in the school office.

#### E14. Homework Policy for Suspended Students

Students suspended from school will be given an opportunity to make up all work missed and will be given full credit according to the following criteria:

1. It is the student's responsibility to ask the teacher for missed assignments.
2. Students will be given one day for each day suspended from school (up to a maximum of five days) to return completed assignments and take make up tests.
3. Students will receive a failing grade for any work not made up within the time limits.

To the extent possible, students placed in in-school suspension will work on class assignments while in the in-school suspension room. Any work not completed will be governed by the policy on make up work for suspended students.

#### E15. Indoor/Outdoor Supervision

Supervision by teachers is necessary by 7:45 a.m. Teachers will be assigned morning supervision and must be in assigned area by 7:45 a.m. Students will be assigned designated areas to wait prior to school.

#### E16. Make Up Work

Students who are absent will be required to make up missed work. This work should take approximately the same time as the time missed from class. Students will be given one day for each day absent from school to return completed assignments and take make up tests. Grades will be withheld if make up work is not turned in, and may lead to failure if the situation is not remedied immediately.

It is the student's responsibility to obtain all make up work from his/her teachers upon return to school. Failure to obtain make up work is no excuse for not doing work missed. Only by special permission of the principal can make up work be turned in after the grading period.

#### E17. Passes

Any time a student is out of his/her classroom or late from a previous class (excused) he/she should have a signed pass. You must provide a student with a pass if you send them out of your room! The office will provide staff with passes for students who need to leave a class early. If a student shows you a note, send the student to the office for the proper pass.

#### E18. Progress Reports

Anytime that a teacher feels a student is doing poorly academically or is having special problems in his/her class, the teacher needs to notify that student's parents/guardians. This contact needs to be made by phone. A written report can be made if you are unable to reach the parents/guardians by phone after several attempts.

Prior to the parent/guardian contact, teachers need to inform the student why he/she is receiving a progress report. Teachers must document any contacts they have with parents/guardians and students. The school counselor will assist the student in correcting the problem, but the teachers must inform the counselor when there is a problem. No student can fail a class without receiving a written progress report or documented personal contact.

Core teams and "peelings" members need to communicate concerns about students. Please develop a plan that works for your teams. Quarterly progress reports will be made around the midpoint of the quarter.

#### E19. Report Cards

In many cases the only communication home to parents/guardians each nine weeks will be the report card. PLEASE BE NEAT AND ACCURATE! Please choose the appropriate comment from the list provided. The grading system for this year is as follows:

A+	100%	C+	85%
A	94-99%	C	79-84%
A-	93%	C-	78%
B+	92%	D+	77%
B	87-91%	D	71-76%
B-	86%	D-	70%
		F	0-69

Zeros should not be accepted. A zero does not teach a middle school child responsibility.

## E20. Retention

Students who do not perform to their capabilities may be retained. The issue of retention at Seward Middle School is primarily an issue of accountability. Teachers will inform parents/guardians and student of chronic missing/incomplete work and poor quiz or test scores. Parent/guardian conferences will be held and academic detentions will be used. Communication is the key for retention. The school cannot decide during the last few weeks of school that a student is going to be retained. We need a yearlong communication trail.

## E21. Student Absences

BE ACCURATE IN RECORDING STUDENT ATTENDANCE. Students who are reported absent by their parents/guardians will be placed on the daily absence list. Each morning the office will post on Power School which students we know are absent. Each period during the day, you will need to indicate only any additional student(s) who is absent. You will not need to indicate students who are on the daily absence list. Most should be marked "OK". Be sure that for any student who arrives late to class you change, you change the marking on the computer so that it is accurate. If this occurs, you may need to change the student from absent to tardy on Power School. If a student is marked absent on Power School by the office and is present in your room, send the student to the office.

## E22. Student Cumulative Folders

Student cumulative folders are kept in the school counselor's office. The School Counselor is available to discuss the information contained in any student's file. Teachers are encouraged to review the files of all pupils in his/her class/team and to make use of materials in these files to better serve the needs of the students. Teachers may check out these folders at any time.

Because of the Right-to-Privacy Act, all files must be signed out and in. Parents/guardians may look at their student's file upon written request.

## E23. Students Signing Out of School

1. Students who need to leave school for an appointment (doctor, dentist, etc.) must bring a note or have their parent/guardian call the office before they will be allowed to sign out.
2. Students who become ill at school are to go to the school nurse to receive permission to go home.
3. Students who leave the school building without signing out will be unexcused and detention time will be assigned.

## E24. Substitute Teachers

If you are unable to be at school, please call Nathan Buss (641-8905) between 6:30 and 6:45 a.m. If you call after 6:45 a.m. it is difficult to find a substitute. Please give him any additional information needed for your classes that day. Lesson plans should be detailed enough so that a substitute could come in and follow your plans without the aid of too much additional information. If you are unable to reach Mr. Buss for some reason, the building principal should be called.

By 3:00 p.m. on the day missed due to illness, teachers should call the school to indicate whether or not they will be present the following day. Absences other than illness must be arranged in advance with the principal. If a problem occurs with a substitute, notify the building principal immediately so the issue can be addressed.

## E25. Tardiness to Class

If a student arrives late to school, 5<sup>th</sup> graders report to their regular classroom, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students report to their Toptime. Students are to go to the office if 1<sup>st</sup> period has started. The time



between classes is three minutes. During the school day if a student is detained by the office or a teacher and is late to class he/she will need a pink pass from the person who detained him/her before going to the next class. The office will keep a record of all unexcused tardies. After four (4) unexcused tardies in a semester, each student will be informed and a letter will be sent home making the parents/guardians aware of the problem. All other unexcused tardies per semester will result in noon detentions.

It is essential that all staff members adhere to a consistent policy. The whole system “breaks down” unless the entire staff follows the same policy.

#### E26. Use of Building Forms

A Building Use Form must be completed for any activity scheduled for the building. This form, available in the office, must be returned to the office at least one week in advance of the activity or no custodial services will be provided.

For regularly scheduled events such as basketball games, a list of things to be ready and cleaned up after the event should be given to the maintenance director at the beginning of the season. It will not be necessary for a Building Use Form to be used for each individual game. However, if you have an event that is not normally scheduled, a Building Use Form should be filled out and the above procedure followed.

#### E27. Weekly Calendar of Events

Events included on the calendar of events will take precedence over other events. The office secretary is in charge of the master calendar.

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## **F. SEWARD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK**

### **F1. Total School Responsibility**

Teachers are responsible for informing their students of rules pertinent to the classroom, halls, playground and lunchroom. Students will need to be taught what are appropriate and inappropriate behaviors and the consequences accompanying misbehavior. Teaching classroom and building rules clearly communicates the expectations we have of students while at school. In addition, it is imperative that teachers and paras be consistent in their expectation of conformity to the rules. It is assumed that teachers will not ask paras to deviate from these rules. If you feel that certain rules are inappropriate, report this to the principal for further study.

At 8:05 a.m. the students will proceed to their classrooms. Therefore, all classroom teachers need to be near their classrooms at that time. This will allow for supervision of the hall area and coatroom near their room. Please develop and maintain a 'beginning of the day' routine for your students.

Teachers are to accompany their children to and from all specials (P.E., music, library, guidance), the lunchroom and to the playground. Make arrangements with your neighbor teacher so that one of you will be able to accompany bus children out of the building and the other remains in the classroom or hall and then accompanies town children to the school entrance door for dismissal. If you ask students to stay in at noon or recess be sure you or another teacher is there to supervise. Teachers not on duty should supervise students needing to stay inside. Students should not be sent to the office.

The first week or so, teachers should accompany their own classes to the playground at recess and noon until the children have learned the playground rules and use of equipment. After that teachers may alternate playground duty as long as there is sufficient supervision for the group (at least one teacher for every two classrooms).

All classroom teachers should have some activities planned for the days that children have to remain in the classroom during noontime. On inclement weather days teachers may need to help with some supervision. Students should not be left in the classroom, halls or other areas unsupervised.

Special area teachers will assist with supervision as assigned by the principal.

### **F2. Seward Elementary Discipline Plan**

Seward Elementary utilizes the BIST (Behavior Intervention Support Team) behavior program. BIST is a school-wide program that builds an environment where students, staff members, and parents work together to improve student behavior. A BIST Action Team, consisting of faculty members and the principal, meets monthly to discuss our school's Common Expectations and BIST program.

### **F3. Laminating**

All materials laminated with school district film become the property of the school district. Teachers desiring to laminate personal materials need to indicate this on the pink request form and they will be charged accordingly. Other items to be laminated can be done by each teacher's para or the teacher himself/herself.

### **F4. School Equipment/Furniture**

School equipment and/or furniture are assigned to classrooms by the principal. In the event a teacher no longer has use for certain pieces of equipment and/or furniture, the principal should be notified. Requests for furniture must be directed to the principal.

#### F5. Maintenance of Student Cumulative Folders

Permanent record folders are maintained for each child enrolled in school. These folders are kept on file in the office. Teachers may check the folders out as needed, but they are not to be removed from the school premises. The information in these files is open to parents/guardians upon request. Parental or guardian permission is necessary for any non-school personnel to have access to the information in the student permanent folders.

At the end of each semester, classroom teachers should record grades and attendance information on the cumulative folder. The grades recorded must be recorded as they appear on the report card. Special education teachers are responsible for filing current IEP information in the student folders. At the end of each school year, achievement test labels should be affixed to the cumulative folder. Forms such as field trip permission forms, should not be kept in the permanent folder. In no event, should child abuse/neglect forms be filed in a student's cumulative folder.

#### F6. Responsibility of Teachers Regarding Cumulative File Information

At the beginning of each school year, classroom and special area teachers shall review the cumulative folders of their students. Teachers need to be aware of the following types of information: parental/guardian custody, health or physical limitations of the student, special education, gifted or 504 educational plans, testing information, etc.

Cumulative folder information that is received from transferring school districts will be checked out to and placed in the classroom teacher's mailbox. After review, it will be the responsibility of the classroom teacher to sign in and file this information in the student's cumulative folder in the office.

#### F7. Student Transfers

If it is known in advance that a student will be moving, the teacher should fill out a Transfer Sheet and send it with the student on the final day of attendance. The Transfer Sheets are available in the office. Immediately after the student has left, the cumulative file should be updated with grades and attendance information.

#### F8. Programs for Parents/Guardians

Teachers are asked to notify the office and principal of special events in their classrooms. If possible, the principal will be in attendance for the programs. Please inform the custodial workers well in advance if chairs or other changes are needed for a special meeting or performance.

#### F9. Daily Schedule

Each teacher's daily schedule should be on the wall outside the classroom door. A daily schedule should be sent to the office by the middle of September (4 copies). The schedule should include the entire day.

Grades K-4 should ordinarily not schedule a recess on the same half-day as P.E. class is taught. Deviation from this policy should be discussed with the principal. A written request for an extra recess must be submitted to the principal by the end of the first full week of school.

#### F10. Retention

In cases where consideration is being given to retaining a student at a particular grade level, refer to the procedure in the Student/Parent Handbook. Forms are available in the office that need to be signed by the parent/guardian once a decision is made to recommend retention.

#### F11. Class Parties

Class parties should be limited to one hour in duration. It is suggested that parties be held at the end of the day. These parties should be included in your lesson plans. School parties are limited to three per year. (The end of the year picnic is considered one of the three parties per year.)

#### F12. Classroom Treats (\*Please discourage lollipops being given as a birthday treat.)

If children bring treats for their birthday, they should be distributed at the following appropriate times:

- 1) before lunch to be an added item (homemade items or packaged items such as Twinkies, Rice Krispie treats, etc.) or 2) at the end of the school day. The student bringing the items should be asked or advised for appropriate distribution. Teachers must help to ensure students who have food allergies do not consume treats that may contain an allergen.

#### F13. Teacher Absence

If you are unable to be at school, please call Mr. Nathan Buss (641-8905) at home before 7:00 a.m. If you call after 7:00 a.m. it is difficult to find a substitute. Please share any additional information needed for your classroom that day. Lesson plans should be detailed enough so that a substitute could come in and follow your plans without the aid of additional information. If you are unable to reach Mr. Buss, please call Mrs. Dominy at (928) 660-1623, or Tina Ratkovec (913)-660-5385

By 3:00 p.m. on the day missed due to illness, teachers should call the school to indicate whether or not they will be present the following day. Absences other than illness must be arranged in advance with the principal.

If a problem occurs with a substitute teacher, Mrs. Dominy should be notified immediately so that the issue can be addressed.

#### F14. Head Lice

Please note the following procedures to be used when a child is suspected of having head lice:

- Send the child to the nurse. He/she will determine if the child should be sent home.
- If head lice are found to be present, the nurse will initiate a check of siblings for possible infestation.
- The nurse will call the parent/guardian or designated contact person to pick up the child.
- The child will remain with the nurse until the parent/guardian arrives.
- In the event a parent/guardian/contact person can't be reached, the child will remain in a designated area for the remainder of the day.
- Parents/guardians are required to accompany students to the nurse at the time of reentry to verify treatment.
- Students must be nit-free before readmission will be granted.
- In the event a student is found to have lice, the school nurse will send notes to parents/guardians of students in that classroom that a case of head lice exists.

#### F15. Release of Students **CHILDREN MUST NEVER BE RELEASED WITHOUT A PARENT'S/GUARDIAN'S SPECIFIC REQUEST AND THEIR KNOWLEDGE.**

Never excuse children before dismissal time without request from parent or guardian. In the event a police officer or social service worker wishes to speak with a student, refer to Board Policy for proper guidance.

#### F16. Student Attendance

Students in attendance for more than four hours are counted present all day. Less than four hours but more than two, is counted as 1/2 day present. If the attendance changes during the day, notify the office as soon as possible. At the end of each quarter, the office will prepare an attendance report with data for the report cards.

#### F17. Parent/Guardian Newsletter

The monthly newsletter will be sent home with the oldest or only child of each family. Articles of information from each grade level or special area about their classrooms will be included. This is a request of the building principal.

#### F18. Elementary Library/Media Center Procedures

##### Library Classes/Material Checkout

Each second through fourth grade classroom has a scheduled forty-five minute library class on the six-day-rotating specialist block schedule. The media specialist and kindergarten and first grade teachers will cooperatively develop a schedule for their library class times. The various class levels will have instruction from the Library/Media Curriculum with emphasis on author/illustrator appreciation, media resources, research techniques; time will be allowed for browsing and material checkout. Students may checkout two materials and they must be returned before others may be borrowed. (Children may have more materials for special classroom projects.) The checkout period is two weeks. Students are welcome to checkout materials at any time during the school day.

Overdue notices are given to students at each library class and an overdue list is sent to the classroom teacher. Elementary students are not charged overdue fines; material replacement fines are assessed and parents/guardians are notified of the amount due.

##### Staff Library/Media Center Information

Materials may be held by staff for four weeks; quarterly lists will be sent showing all materials out. A one-week notice is needed for video and laser disc requests through the ESU and other media sources. Media material purchase requests are encouraged and welcomed along with the ordering information.

##### Computer Hardware/A-V Equipment

The LMC handles the repair of hardware and a-v equipment. Include your name, room number, and description of the problem on a note with the equipment. Each staff member should have listed on their annual classroom inventory all hardware and equipment with district number.

#### F19. Insurance

School insurance is offered for the students. Completed applications should be turned into the office by the 10th day of school.

#### F20. Faculty Meetings

Faculty meetings will be scheduled as needed. Attendance is mandatory.

#### F21. Field Trips

All field trips must be completed prior to the last two weeks of school. Parent/guardian transportation for field trips in lieu of school bus transportation shall be prohibited.

Keep the students' signed "RELEASE FORM" for the year in your desk. Parents/guardians and the office must be notified in advance of all field trips that make use of bus transportation. A "Field Trip Request" and "Bus Request" need to be completed and sent to the principal's office at least two weeks in advance of the field trip. These forms are available in the elementary office.

In order to economize on district transportation costs, out-of-district field trips will be limited to Grade 4, unless the superintendent approves a trip due to special circumstances. In-district field trips are open to all grade levels but require principal approval. School district transportation will be provided for supervisors using the following adult to student ratios (excluding special education supervisors who may be assigned to one student):

Kindergarten - 1:3  
Grades One and Two - 1:4  
Grades Three and Four - 1:5

Classrooms will be combined as follows:

Kindergarten - Two classrooms per field trip or 1 per classroom.  
Grade One - Two classrooms per field trip  
Grade Two - Two classrooms per field trip  
Grade Three - Two classrooms per field trip  
Grade Four - Two classrooms per field trip

#### F22. Homework

A District wide Homework Policy has been developed. Grades 2-4 teachers should share with parents/guardians information regarding homework expectations during the grade level parent/guardian meetings. Grades K-1 teachers should share homework information with parents/guardians during the fall parent-teacher conferences.

#### F23. Room Parents/Guardians and Volunteers

Teachers are encouraged to use room mothers (fathers) with class parties, field trips, etc. Volunteers as classroom paras are another excellent way to involve parents/guardians. If interested, contact the principal for help and information.

#### F24. Student Referrals

If you have a student that you feel should have an individual educational evaluation, contact the principal for forms requesting this service. Once the referral has been filed with the principal, the SAT/MTSS process will begin. This, of course, includes the classroom teacher. Meetings are an essential element to the SAT/MTSS process. Occasionally, these meetings will extend beyond the 4:00 duty time. The SAT/MTSS team will do its very best to keep the length of meetings reasonable. However, as the classroom teacher, the importance of the MTSS process must never be questioned. As professional educators, it is our responsibility to fulfill all necessary steps for the educational interests of our students. Teachers should refer students in need of counseling to the Elementary Guidance Counselor.

#### F25. Report Cards

##### General Information:

A grade should be assigned for every area on the Report Card as well as the cumulative folder. The teacher in the form of a Power School grade book, portfolio contents, rubrics, etc should keep documentation relative to assigned grades. Semester grades are to be recorded on the cumulative folder for all areas at the end of each semester.

Grading scales for grades K-4 will be the following:

- 4: Exceeds Learning Goals
- 3: Meets Learning Goals Independently
- 2: Meets Learning Goals with Support
- 1: Does Not Meet Learning Goals

F26. Health Services

The school nurse is responsible for coordinating student medication. Students taking prescription or non-prescription medication during school hours must be sent to the school nurse to make sure proper state regulations are being met. When sending a student to the nurse's office, it is helpful to jot a note to the nurse explaining the health concern of the student. The nurse will determine whether or not the student needs to go home based on her 'health checks' and observation.

F27. Winter Weather Guideline

Teachers are expected to follow the safety guidelines regarding having students go outdoors during cold weather, located in the Appendices.