

CONESTOGA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2024-2025 Jr/Sr High School

Student-Parent Handbook



8404 42nd Street PO Box 40
Murray, Nebraska 68409
402-235-2271 fax: 402-235-2421
<http://www.conestogacougars.org>

Mr. Michael Apple	<i>Superintendent</i>
Mr. Rob Geise	<i>Jr / Sr High School Principal</i>
Mrs. Molly Stieren	<i>Assistant Principal / Activities Director</i>
Mr. Nick Krause	<i>Director of Student Services</i>
Mrs. Lisa Bergmeyer	<i>Director of Curriculum & Instruction</i>
Mrs. Laurel Kreifels	<i>School Counselor</i>

Conestoga Public Schools is Rule 10 Nebraska Department of Education Accredited

First Student Bus Company: 402-235-2206
Don & Nancy Schultz

Donald.Schultz@firstgroup.com, Nancy.Schultz@firstgroup.com

School Colors: Burgundy and Gold

School Victory: "Cougar Victory"

Let's hear a battle cry, let the banner fly

Fight, fight, fight for Cougar victory

Fairness all the while

To our team we always will be true

We will never lose our faith in you

Spirit never dies at Cougar High!

C-O-U-G-A-R-S!

Go, Cougars, Go

This handbook is meant to be a guide and overview for parents and students.
School Board policy and Nebraska State Law are the basis for the
day-to-day procedures at Conestoga Jr. - Sr. High School.
Approved by the School Board: July 9, 2024

Table of Contents

4 Welcome / Handbook Intent	21 Enrollment and Entry of Students	33 Student Illness
5 Mission	21 Evacuations / Emergency Drills	33 Student Government
5 Notice of Nondiscrimination	22 Eye Exams	34 Student Records
5 School Board Meetings / Policies	22 Food Service Program	35 Student Schedule Changes
Section 1 - Basic Rules and General Practices	23 Field Trips and Field Experiences	35 Telephone Calls
6 Attendance / Absences / Tardiness	23 First-Aid	35 Threat Assessment
9 Pregnant and Parenting Students	23 Food, Candy, Gum and Beverages	37 Transportation Services
9 Backpacks, Bags, Fanny Packs and Purses	23 Hallway Passes	37 Video Surveillance and Photographs
9 Band	24 Head Lice	38 Teacher and Staff Restricted Areas
9 Bills	24 Headphones, Earbuds and Speakers	38 Textbooks and Other Materials
9 Books and Supplies	24 Health Problems limiting Activities	38 Withdrawal from School
9 Breastfeeding and Lactation	24 Homebound Instruction	38 Work Permits
9 Building Access / Sign-In and Sign-Out Procedures	24 Homeless Children and Youth	Section Two - Academic Info
9 Bulletin Boards	24 Illness or Injury at School	39 Academic and Extra Curricular Eligibility
10 Bullying	25 Immunizations	39 Academic Honor Roll
10 Cafeteria Rules	25 Initiations and Hazing	39 Academic Letter Awards
11 Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices	25 Lockers and Other School Property	39 Artificial Intelligence
11 Cheating, Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty	25 Lost and Found	40 Class Rank
12 Child Abuse and Neglect	25 Media Center	40 Credit for Non-Academic Work
12 Class Dismissal	26 Medications	40 Cougar Academic Program (CAP)
12 Classroom Behavior	26 Memorials	41 Dual Credit and Early Entry College Classes
12 Closed Campus	26 Parent Involvement	41 Grades/Grading Policy
12 Communicable Diseases	27 Personal Items	41 Graduation Awards
12 Communicating with Parents	27 Physical Education	42 Graduation Requirements
12 Complaint Procedure	27 Pictures	42 Class Size Limitations
15 Computer Network Use by Students	27 Police Questioning and Apprehension	42 Homework
17 Class Load and Schedule	27 Protection of Student Rights	43 Makeup Work
17 Class Pranks	28 Public Displays of Affection	43 Mid-Term Graduation
17 College Visits by Seniors and Juniors	28 Reasonable Suspicion Testing	43 Promotion and Retention
18 Conferences	28 Release - Work-Based Learning And Seniors	43 Protective Safety Devices
18 Copyright and Fair Use	28 Rights of Custodial and Non-Custodial Parents	43 Report Cards/Progress Reports
18 Damage to School Property	28 Safety and Searches	43 Standardized Tests
18 Dances Sponsored by the School	29 School Closing	43 Student Materials
18 Dating Violence	29 School Day	Section Three - Student Discipline
19 Discrimination and Harassment	29 School Visitors	44 Discipline- Philosophy, Definitions, Info & Expectations
19 Dress Code	29 Secret Organizations	Section Four - Title IX
19 Driving and Parking Personal Vehicles	29 Self-Management of Diabetes or Asthma/Anaphylaxis	52 Title IX Policy and Information
20 Drug Free Schools	29 Smoking and Tobacco	Section Five – Wellness
20 Drugs, Tobacco and Alcohol	29 Sneak / Skip Days	58 Wellness Policy
21 Emergency Contact Information	30 Sniffer (Drug) Dogs	61 District Calendar
	30 Student Assistance	62. Good Standing Policy
	30 Student Fees	63 Acknowledgement of Receipt

Welcome / Handbook Intent

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians:

On behalf of the faculty, administration, and board of education, we welcome you to another school year. We are looking forward to helping your children reach their learning potential and achieve their educational goals in the upcoming year.

Please read this handbook carefully. Students and their parents are responsible for knowing the rules, regulations, and procedures covered in this handbook. The student handbook is an extension of school policies and has the force and effect of board policy when approved by the board of education.

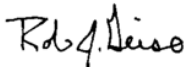
Failure to return the Acknowledgement of Receipt at the end of this handbook signifies you have read and understand the contents of the Student-Parent/Guardian Handbook.

This handbook contains information of value to every student and parent. It contains explanations of school regulations and procedures necessary for our school to run smoothly and efficiently. If you are ever in doubt about what is the right thing to do, ask a classroom teacher, speak with the building superintendent, or contact my office.

It is important that students and their parents become familiar with the handbook, and that parents use it as a resource and assist their children in following the rules contained in it. In addition, the use of the word “parents” refers to any adult who has the responsibility for making education-related decisions about a child, including, but not limited to biological parents, adoptive parents, legal guardians, and adults acting in loco parentis.

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

Sincerely,



Mr. Rob Geise
Jr/Sr High Principal
Conestoga Public Schools

CONESTOGA PUBLIC SCHOOL'S MISSION:

"Conestoga inspires and prepares students for life."

Governing Values and Beliefs:

The mission of the Conestoga Public Schools is based upon the following values and beliefs:

- All students can learn and have special gifts
- Learning is best achieved in an atmosphere of mutual respect, caring, trust, and resiliency
- Learning is a cooperative responsibility among the home, school, community, and the learner
- Teaching and learning are both a skill and a passion
- Learning is a personalized experience

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The school district prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity in any education program or activity that it operates.

Students who believe that they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their disability, or that have other related concerns or questions, should contact the following Section 504 Coordinator: Nick Krause at 402-235-2271 (phone number), nkrause@conestogacougars.org (e-mail address) or in person at school.

Students who believe that they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their sex, or that have other related concerns or questions, should contact the following Title IX Coordinator: Nick Krause at 402-235-2271 (phone number), nkrause@conestogacougars.org (e-mail address) or in person at school.

Students who believe that they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their race, color, or national origin, or that have other related concerns or questions, should contact Mr. Mike Apple, Superintendent of Schools at 402-235-2992 (phone number), mapple@conestogacougars.org (e-mail address) or in person at school.

Students who believe that they have been the subject of any other unlawful discrimination or harassment should contact Mr. Michael Apple, Superintendent of Schools at 402-235-2992 (phone number), mapple@conestogacougars.org (e-mail address) or in person at school. Students may report discrimination or harassment to any staff member who will then forward it on to the appropriate coordinator or administrator. The staff member will follow school district policies to respond to the report.

For additional prohibited discrimination and related information, please review school district Policy 4001 – Nondiscrimination.

SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

The Conestoga Public School Board meets monthly at the high school on the second Tuesday of each month at 5:00 P.M.

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES & HANDBOOKS

Board of Education policies and all student/parent handbooks may be found on school websites and/or the Conestoga School District website www.conestogacougars.org

SECTION ONE
BASIC SCHOOL RULES AND GENERAL PRACTICES

Attendance / Absences

Required Attendance

Every person residing in the school district who has legal or actual charge or control of any child who is of mandatory attendance age shall cause that child to attend a public or private school regularly unless the child has graduated from high school or has been allowed to disenroll pursuant to this policy.

Mandatory Attendance Age

All children who are or will turn six years old before January 1 of the current school year are of mandatory attendance age. Children who have not turned eighteen years of age are of mandatory attendance age.

A child who will not reach age 7 before January 1 of the current school year may be excused from mandatory attendance if the child's parent or guardian completes an affidavit affirming that alternative educational arrangements have been made for the child. A copy of the required affidavit is attached to this policy.

Discontinuing Enrollment – 5 Year Old Students

The person seeking to discontinue the enrollment of a student who will not reach six years of age prior to January 1 of the current school year shall submit a signed, written request and to the superintendent using the form which is attached to this policy. The school district may request written verification or documentation that the person signing the form has legal or actual charge or control of the student. The school district shall discontinue the enrollment of any student who satisfies these requirements. Any student whose enrollment is discontinued under this subsection shall not be eligible to reenroll in this school district until the beginning of the following school year unless otherwise required by law.

Discontinuing Enrollment – 16 and 17 Year Old Students

Only children who are at least 16 years of age may be disenrolled from the district. The person seeking to discontinue the child's enrollment shall submit a signed, written request that demonstrates that the student meets the district's legal criteria allowing for disenrollment to the superintendent using the applicable district form. The district will follow the procedures outlined on the attached form in considering requests to disenroll.

Only children disenrolling to attend an exempt school may be exempt from this policy. The person with legal or actual charge or control of the child must provide the superintendent with a copy of the signed request submitted to the State Department of Education for attending an exempt school. The superintendent may confirm the validity of the submission with the State Department of Education.

Attendance Officer

Each building principal is designated as an attendance officer for the district. Each building principal, at his or her discretion, may delegate these responsibilities to any other qualified individual. The attendance officer is responsible for enforcing the provisions of state law relating to compulsory attendance. This responsibility includes but is not limited to filing a report with the county attorney of the county in which a student resides. Compensation for the duties of attendance officer is included in the salary for the superintendent or designee.

Expectations for Regular Attendance:

1. Students are expected to attend every class, every day.
2. The only "excused" absences shall be:
 - a.) absences when a licensed health care provider has confirmed in writing that, in his/her professional medical opinion and within his/her scope of practice, the student or a child whom the student is parenting is so physically or mentally ill that attendance of the student is impracticable or impossible;
 - Doctor notes must be specific. Time of appointment and duration excused from school will be expected. A note stating "the student was seen" will not constitute an excusable absence for an entire day.

- b.) absences when severe weather conditions have made the roads impassable, so that the student's attendance is impracticable or impossible;
 - c.) student attendance at a school-sponsored activity;
 - d.) student has been suspended or expelled from school by the school district;
 - e.) absences required by law enforcement, child protective services, or a court of competent jurisdiction, confirmed in writing to the school district.
3. All other absences, including family vacations and skip days are simply "absences."
 4. Upon return from every absence or partial-day absence, students may remain after school for 30 minutes to meet with teachers, work on missed assignments, or simply to study. The location and supervision of the student will be determined by the building principal in consultation with the student's classroom teacher(s).
 5. Students must not be absent from any class more than seven days, in any given semester, in order to earn academic credit for that course for that semester. Credit, or partial credit, may be lost for that class.

Attendance Incentives

Building administration will establish attendance incentives for students.

- Special recognition of students who have 95% or greater attendance each quarter.
- Special rewards, at the discretion of administration, will be given for students who have 95% or greater attendance.

At the conclusion of each quarter building principals report to the superintendent what incentives were implemented and the effectiveness of the incentive in improving student attendance and engagement.

When students are absent from school, district staff will respond as follows:

First Stage Response to Absences

1. A member of district staff will contact a parent via telephone for every absence if the parent has not contacted the school in advance.
2. After a student's third absence in any given quarter, the school's attendance officer will contact the student's parents or guardians. At this time, they will be notified of upcoming procedures if absences continue to be a problem.
3. All parental contact regarding student absences will be documented.

Second Stage Response to Absences

1. A letter regarding absences will be mailed home at 5 absences, 10 absences and 15 absences.
2. At 15 days the Cass County Attorney will be notified and a Reasonable Efforts letter will be mailed. If a student reaches 20 days of absences, a truancy report will be filed with the Cass County Attorney for action under NEB. REV. STAT. § 43-247(3)(a) and (b).). If student absences accumulate quickly, this process will begin at 10 absences.
3. When a student receives 7 unexcused absences or the hourly equivalent in any semester, a meeting will be set-up with the parents/guardians, student, assistant principal and principal. A plan will be developed to help alleviate future absences as well as make up missed time for that class or classes. The student shall be required to make up those absences through attendance in Saturday school, Monday school or by making up time outside of school hours. Absences shall be made up at a rate determined by the attendance officer.

Tardiness

Promptness to class is necessary to enhance the effectiveness of the day-to-day operations of the school. When a student is late to class, it not only inhibits their own learning, but possibly delays the beginning of the class which wastes valuable instructional time for other students in the class. If a student is not in attendance after 20 minutes of the start of the class period, it will be considered an absence and will count towards a student's absence total.

Students will be given 2 tardies per semester. If a student shows a continuous pattern of tardiness, he or she may be subject to the following consequences: lunch detention, before or after school detention, Saturday school, Monday school, required parent meeting with the creation of a tardy/attendance plan, in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension.

Illness or Injury at School

Students who become ill at school must come to the office. If it is necessary to leave the school due to illness or injury, students must sign out in the office **after parent notification by the office is obtained.**

Planned absences

Parents who know in advance that a student will be absent must call the school or send a written note at the earliest possible date. Students who will be absent for reasons that can be anticipated, such as routine medical appointments and school activities, must complete any work required by the teacher before the absence. Parents should make every attempt to schedule medical and other appointments when school is not in session or after school hours.

Students are obligated to:

- 1) Complete all class work in advance for any absence that can be anticipated.
- 2) Attend school a full day before attending practice or participating in a scheduled student activity except in cases of family emergencies or prearranged absences.
- 3) Check out of school at the office if leaving school during the school day.
- 4) Make up any and all work that is assigned by teachers as make-up work for the instructional time that has been missed.

Parents are obligated to:

- 1) Call the appropriate building office to inform the school of the reason for each absence.
- 2) Submit a doctor's statement, if requested, for each period of absence due to illness that exceeds five days.

Attendance and Activities

Students who are not in school due to illness or any unexcused absence, are not eligible for activities, practices or competitions on that day, per school policy regarding eligibility. To be eligible to practice for an extracurricular activity or to attend school activities, a student must be in attendance at least the **last four (4) full periods** of that school day.

To be eligible to compete in an event, game or competition, a student must be in attendance a **FULL DAY**. The building principal retains the right to grant participation should exceptional circumstances prevail.

Attendance Procedure:

1. All Jr/Sr High school teachers will take attendance the first 5 minutes of all periods.
2. Students will report to the office if tardy first period.
3. When a student will be absent or not in regular attendance, the parent/guardian should call or contact the school. Attempts will be made to contact parents/guardian by telephone and/or by the school's automated calling system.

Absences for Events on School Property When Student is NOT Part of the Event

When events take place during the school day and students are NOT part of the event, non-participating students are encouraged to remain in class. If students are not in good academic standing (missing work, failing classes), they will not be allowed to attend the event.

Parents requesting the release of students during the event will provide the request for absence in writing to the Office or via Phone. Email is also acceptable.

Once the student is released, they may not return to the school building, and the school is not responsible for the supervision of the student. School policy applies to all students attending a school event, whether they are participating or as a spectator.

Pregnant and Parenting Students

The District will not discriminate in its education program or activity against any student based on the student's current, potential, or past pregnancy. Students who are pregnant or parenting are encouraged to continue participating in the district's educational and extracurricular programs. Students who anticipate deviations from their regular school experience or accrue absences due to pregnancy or parenting should notify their building principal as early as possible to discuss their educational programming in collaboration with the Title IX Coordinator.

Backpacks/Bags/Fanny Packs/Purses

Students will not be allowed to carry their backpacks, bags, fanny packs and/or purses past their locker. They will not be allowed in classrooms or the Commons area. Only school issued bags for school electronics are allowed. Exceptions will be made for students on crutches or in a wheelchair.

Band

Instruments will be provided by students or the school as provided by school policy. Fees may be charged as allowed or provided in the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act and the school's student fee policy or other applicable policy.

Bills

Students should pay bills for supplies, fines, shop materials, clothing orders, etc. in the district or building level office. Any check for these payments should be made out to Conestoga Public Schools unless otherwise instructed. Pursuant to board policy, the district will assess an additional penalty of \$30 for any check returned from the bank for insufficient funds. After the second occurrence, the family will be allowed to pay with cash only.

Books and Supplies

Students must take care of books and other supplies provided by the district. The school will assess fines for damage to books and school property.

Students must supply their own consumable items such as pens, pencils, tablets, notebooks, erasers, and crayons. Each classroom teacher will prepare a supply list for students at the beginning of the school year.

Breastfeeding and Lactation

In order to accommodate lactating and breastfeeding students, the district will provide reasonable opportunities to express breast milk or breastfeed in a place, other than a bathroom, which is shielded from view and free from intrusion from district students, employees, and the public. The district will also provide a location for students to store expressed breast milk in or near the location designated for students to express milk to create the least amount of disruption to the student's participation in class or activities.

Students who wish or need to express breast milk on a regular schedule must work with school administrators to create a schedule that accommodates the student's needs while facilitating education to the maximum extent possible.

In order to prevent interference with the educational process, no student shall express breast milk within school classrooms or buses. Nothing in this policy limits the authority of the administration to impose consequences consistent with the Student Discipline Act and other state and federal law.

Building Access / Sign In and Sign Out Procedures

The main entrance front doors to the Jr./Sr. High School will be open by 7:00AM daily. Students arriving before that time for practices or events will be admitted by their sponsor. Students who are not involved in activities or who are not working with teachers after school should leave the building. Doors should never be propped open by students or staff.

Bulletin Boards

Bulletin boards may be used to communicate general information in the school.

Bulletin board or electronic publishing space may be provided for the use of students and student organizations for notices relating to matters of general interest to students. The following general limitations apply to all posting or publishing:

1. All postings must be approved by the appropriate building principal or designee. Students may not post any material containing any statement or expression that is libelous, obscene, or vulgar; that would violate board of education policies, including the student code of conduct; or that is otherwise inappropriate for the school environment.
2. All postings must identify the student or the student organization posting or publishing the notice.
3. Material shall be removed after a reasonable time to assure full access to the bulletin boards or electronic publishing media.

Bullying

Students are prohibited from engaging in any form of bullying. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines bullying as “any unwanted aggressive behavior(s) by another youth or group of youths who are not siblings or current dating partners that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated.” Nebraska statute defines bullying as “an ongoing pattern of physical, verbal or electronic abuse.” The District’s administrators are authorized to use both of these definitions to determine whether any specific situation constitutes bullying. Both of these definitions include both in-person and cyberbullying behaviors.

The disciplinary consequences for bullying will depend on the severity, frequency, duration, and effect of the behavior and may result in sanctions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Students who believe they are being bullied should immediately inform a teacher or the building principal.

Reporting Bullying

Students who experience or observe bullying behavior must immediately report what happened to a teacher or administrator. Students may always confer with their parents or guardians about bullying they experience or witness, but the students must also ultimately report the situation to a teacher or administrator.

Bullying Investigations

School district staff will investigate allegations of bullying using the same practices and procedures that the district observes for student disciplinary matters. In no circumstance will school district staff be deliberately indifferent to allegations of bullying.

Cafeteria Rules

1. All food must be consumed in the areas designated by the school.
2. After students have eaten, they must return trays to the kitchen. All straws, papers, milk cartons should be deposited in the trash cans. All leftover food should be scraped off the tray on to the correct container. Forks and spoons should be placed in the pan with water and not thrown away.
3. Students are to use proper manners including eating quietly.
4. Students may not throw food or other items.
5. Students should clean up after themselves if a mess is made.
6. Second servings are available to those who have made an effort to clean their trays and have requisite funds as required by board policy.
7. Students should remain at their tables until they are dismissed.
8. Parents who wish their child to eat lunch away from school must provide a written authorization to the student’s building principal.
9. Students must treat lunch personnel with respect.
10. Students who violate the above rules will be disciplined.

As a reminder, parents may bring food for their own child, but for no other student. In addition, students should not bring food to school for others. If this takes place in the form of a “class event” for academic purposes, pre-approval from building administration should occur in advance.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Cell phone usage in school is a privilege and should be treated as such. Students may not use cell phones or other electronic devices while at school, except as permitted in this handbook.

Students may use cell phones or other electronic devices before school, during passing periods, during lunch and after school, so long as they do not create a distraction or a disruption. Phones will at the discretion of classroom teachers and administration (RED time and GREEN time). When entering a classroom, cell phones should immediately be put away and be out of sight (RED time). Thereafter, only at the discretion of the teacher will it be GREEN time (cell phones can be used and out). Students must comply with each teacher's classroom rules that go above and beyond basic expectations. Violations will result in the device being confiscated and held in the office for the remainder of the day. In some cases, students will be required to check their phone in each day for an extended period of time or be asked to leave their phone at home. Students who violate this policy may, at the discretion of the school's administration, be subject to additional discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Students may not use cell phones or other electronic devices while they are in locker rooms or restrooms. In addition, cell phones are not allowed in the hallway during a class period. Students may not use cell phones or other electronic devices while riding in a school vehicle unless they have express permission to do so from the vehicle's driver.

Students are personally and solely responsible for the security of their cell phones and other electronic devices. The school district is not responsible for theft, loss, or damage of a cell phone or any calls made on a cell phone.

The taking of pictures of any individual without their permission is strictly prohibited. In addition, the taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or otherwise may constitute a crime under state and/or federal law. Any person engaged in these activities while on school grounds, in a school vehicle or at a school activity will be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the student code of conduct. Any student found to be in possession of obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs will be promptly referred to law enforcement and/or other state or federal agencies, which may result in arrest, criminal prosecution, and possible inclusion on sex offender registries.

Cell phone usage at school can be permanently revoked for all students per administrative discretion.

Cheating, Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

Students may not cheat, plagiarize, or otherwise participate in any academic dishonesty in any form. Prohibited behavior includes:

- Obtaining, attempting to obtain, or aiding another person to obtain credit for work by any dishonest or deceptive means.
- Lying.
- Copying another person's work or answers.
- Discussing the answers or questions on a test or assignment unless specifically authorized by the teacher.
- Taking or receiving copies of a test without the permission of the teacher.
- Using or displaying notes, "cheat sheets," or other sources of unauthorized information.
- Using the ideas or work of another person as if they were your own without giving proper credit to the source.
- Submitting work or any portion of work completed by another person.
- Failing to give credit for ideas, statements, facts, or conclusions which rightfully belong to others.
- Failing to use quotation marks or other appropriate means of attribution when quoting directly from another person or source.

A student who cheats, plagiarizes, or otherwise participates in any academic dishonesty is subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion.

Child Abuse and Neglect

School employees will report suspected abuse or neglect of a child as required by state law and school policy. Nebraska law defines abuse or neglect as knowingly, intentionally, or negligently causing or permitting a minor child or an incompetent or disabled person 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; (6) placed in a situation to be sexually exploited through sex trafficking of a minor as defined in state law or by allowing, encouraging, or forcing such person to engage in debauchery, public indecency, or obscene or pornographic photography, films, or depictions; or (7) placed in a situation to be a trafficking victim as defined in state law.

Class Dismissal

Classes are in session from the ringing of the tardy bell until the teacher dismisses the class. The bell at the end of the period is not a dismissal bell, and students may not leave their classrooms until they have been excused by their classroom teacher.

Classroom Behavior

Student behavior and attitude in the classroom must be respectful, cooperative and serious. All students must:

- arrive to class on time;
- prepare for class with all necessary materials;
- be considerate and respectful as distractions to the learning environment will not be tolerated;
- respond promptly to all directions of the teacher; and
- take care of school property and the property of others.

Teachers will establish classroom conduct rules that students must follow.

Closed Campus

All students will remain in the school building during school hours unless they are part of a class activity outside and are supervised by a teacher. Students may not leave the building without permission from parents and administration and should sign in when returning during the school day.

Communicable Diseases

Any student who has contracted a contagious disease may be restricted from attendance at school until the student is no longer contagious. The school district uses the Title 173- Nebraska Health and Human Services/Control of Communicable Disease, Chapter 3 of the Nebraska Administrative Code as a “best practice” guideline for contagious and infectious diseases. If there are questions regarding the communicability of your child’s health condition or if you know your child has contracted a contagious or communicable disease or condition not otherwise specified in board policy or this handbook, please call the District Nurse.

Communicating with Parents

Parents shall be kept informed of student progress, grades, and attendance through the school grading platform, progress reports, and parent/teacher conferences. The school district will notify parents if their students are failing or close to failing. The school district will endeavor to notify parents of failing students prior to entry of the failing grade on the student’s report card. Parents will also be notified of their student’s possible failure to meet graduation requirements. Other pertinent information will be communicated to parents by mail or by personal contact. Official transcripts of student progress, grades, and attendance will be sent to other school systems upon the student’s transfer when the district receives a written request signed by the student’s parent or guardian or upon being notified that the student has enrolled in another school.

Complaint Procedure

Good communication helps to resolve many misunderstandings and disagreements. This complaint procedure applies to complaints unless the complaint is subject to a different procedure required by law, policy or contract. Individuals who have a complaint should discuss their concerns with appropriate school personnel in an effort to resolve problems

at the lowest level of the chain of command. When those efforts do not resolve matters satisfactorily, including matters involving discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, or age, a complainant should follow the procedures set forth in any specific policy addressing those areas or the procedures set forth below. Allegations of sex discrimination covered by Title IX will be addressed through the board's Title IX policy.

References to "coordinator" in this policy refer to the board-designated coordinator for the applicable area, such as the Section 504 Coordinator for allegations of disability-based discrimination.

A preponderance of the evidence will be required to discipline a party accused of misconduct. This means that the investigator must conclude that it is more likely than not that misconduct occurred.

Complaint and Appeal Process

1. The first step is for the complainant to speak directly to the person(s) with whom the complainant has a concern. For example, a parent who is unhappy with a classroom teacher should initially discuss the matter with the teacher. However, the complainant should skip the first step if complainant reasonably believes speaking directly to the person would subject complainant or complainant's student to discrimination or harassment.
2. The second step is for the complainant to speak to the building principal, coordinator, superintendent of schools, or president of the board of education, as set forth below. Anyone with questions about the appropriate person to speak with may request clarification from the superintendent.
 - a) Complaints about the operation, decisions, or personnel within a building should be submitted to the principal of the building.
 - b) Complaints about the operations of the school district or a building principal should be submitted in writing to the superintendent of schools.
 - c) Complaints about the superintendent of schools should be submitted in writing to the president of the board of education.
 - d) Complaints involving discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, or age may also be submitted at any time during the complaint procedure to the applicable coordinator. Complaints involving discrimination or harassment may also be submitted at any time to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education: by email at OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov; by telephone at (816) 268-0550; or by fax at (816) 268-0599.
3. When a complainant submits a complaint to an administrator or coordinator, the administrator or coordinator shall first determine whether another applicable procedure is required by policy or law and if so, direct the complaint to the appropriate person to follow that procedure. If not, the administrator or coordinator will promptly and thoroughly investigate the complaint, and shall:
 - a) Determine whether the complainant has discussed the matter with the respondent.
 - 1) If the complainant has not, urge the complainant to discuss the matter directly with the respondent, if appropriate.
 - 2) If the complainant refuses to discuss the matter with the respondent, the administrator or coordinator shall, in his or her sole discretion, determine whether the complaint should or must be pursued further.
 - b) Strongly encourage the complainant to reduce his or her concerns to writing.
 - c) Interview the complainant and, if necessary, the respondent against whom the complaint is filed, to determine:
 - 1) All relevant details of the complaint;
 - 2) All witnesses and documents which the complainant believes support the complaint;
 - 3) The action or solution which the complainant seeks.
 - d) Respond to the complainant. If the complaint involves discrimination or harassment, the response shall be in writing and shall be submitted within 180 calendar days after the administrator or coordinator receives the complaint.
4. If either the complainant or the respondent is not satisfied with the decision, he or she may appeal the decision to the superintendent. The superintendent may assign a qualified designee to hear any appeal. This provision

applies to appeals under the board's policies governing complaints of discrimination or harassment, including Title IX and any other policy with a separate grievance or complaint procedure, unless that other procedure includes its own appeal process. All requirements for appeals within any other policy apply, and in addition to those requirements, the following also apply.

- a) The appeal must be in writing.
 - b) This appeal must be received by the superintendent no later than three (3) calendar days from the date of the decision.
 - c) For complaints addressed through other applicable procedures that do not include a separate investigatory process, the superintendent will investigate as he or she deems appropriate.
 - d) The superintendent will prepare a written decision and provide it to the complainant and any other person entitled by law to receive the appeal decision. For complaints involving discrimination or harassment, the superintendent shall submit the decision within 180 calendar days after the superintendent received complainant's written appeal. Appeals to the superintendent from complaints involving discrimination or harassment are final once the superintendent delivers the written decision, as are all other appeals/complaints to the superintendent unless the complaint can be appealed on the limited grounds to appeal to the board below.
5. The board's role is to set policy, establish and implement a budget, and evaluate the superintendent. The board does not manage the daily operations of the school district entrusted to its administration unless required by law or policy. Because of the board's statutory roles, it does not hear complaints or appeals that may involve oversight or discipline of students, staff, or others, unless those involve the superintendent as discussed below. The board does not hear complaints or appeals based on allegations of discrimination or harassment unless otherwise required by law. The board will hear appeals only in the following circumstances:
- a) When the complaint is about a board policy, not implementation of the policy;
 - b) When the complaint involves the budget or school expenditures that have been or must be approved by the board; or
 - c) When the board is required by law, policy, or contract to hear a complaint or appeal.
6. If a complaint involves those limited grounds and a party is not satisfied with the superintendent's decision regarding the complaint or appeal, he or she may appeal the decision to the board.
- a) This appeal must be in writing.
 - b) This appeal must be received by the board president no later than ten (10) calendar days from the date the superintendent communicated his/her decision to the complainant.
 - c) This policy allows, but does not require the board to receive statements from interested parties and witnesses relevant to the complaint appeal. However, all matters involving discrimination or harassment allegations against the superintendent shall be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the board president or a designee.
 - d) The board president will notify the complainant and any other person legally required to receive the decision in writing of its decision. If the complaint involves discrimination or harassment allegations against the Superintendent, the board president shall submit the decision within 180 calendar days after receiving the written appeal.
 - e) There is no appeal from any decision of the board unless authorized by law.
7. Formal complaints about the superintendent shall be filed with the president of the board. However, complaints about the superintendent do not include disagreement with the superintendent's decision on appeal based on a complaint of discrimination, harassment, or action of any other employee who is not the superintendent. Upon receipt of a complaint, the board president or his or her designee shall promptly and thoroughly investigate the complaint, and shall:
- a) Coordinate with school district staff, other than the superintendent, to determine if another procedure in policy or law requires the complaint against the superintendent to follow another procedure. If so, the board president will coordinate handling the complaint through that procedure. If another procedure applies, such as in the case of allegations of sex discrimination against the superintendent, the board president or, at his or her discretion, the full board will serve only to hear any appeal by a party to the complaint.
 - b) Determine whether the complainant has discussed the matter with the superintendent.

- 1) If the complainant has not, the board president or designee will urge or require the complainant to discuss the matter directly with the superintendent, if appropriate or required.
- 2) If the complainant refuses to discuss the matter with the superintendent, the board president shall, in his or her sole discretion, determine whether the complaint should or must be pursued further.
- c) Determine, in his or her sole discretion, whether to place the matter on the board agenda for consideration at a regular or special meeting by the full board.
- d) Respond to the complainant or appeal. If the complaint or appeal involves discrimination or harassment, the response shall be in writing and shall be submitted within 180 calendar days after the president received the complaint.
- e) Appoint or contract with other individuals qualified to assist the board through this process or any other applicable procedure used to address allegations against the superintendent.

No Retaliation. The school district prohibits retaliation against any person for filing a complaint or for participating in the complaint procedure in good faith.

Special Rules Regarding Educational Services and Related Services to Students with Disabilities. Students with disabilities and their families have specific rights outlined in state and federal law, including administrative processes by which they may challenge the educational services being provided by the school district. Therefore, the appeal process contained in this policy may not be used to challenge decisions made by a student's individualized education plan (IEP) team or 504 team.

Complaints about the educational services provided a student with a disability, including but not limited to services provided to a student with an IEP, access to curricular and extracurricular activities, and educational placement must be submitted to the school district's Director of Special Education. The Director of Special Education will address the complaint in a manner that he/she deems appropriate and will provide the complainant with a copy of the Notice of IDEA Parental Rights promulgated by the Nebraska Department of Education.

Complaints about the educational services provided a student with a disability pursuant to a Section 504 plan must be submitted to the school district's 504 Coordinator. The 504 Coordinator will address the complaint in a manner that he/she deems appropriate and will provide the complainant with a copy of the Notice of Section 504 Parental Rights adopted by the board of education.

Complaints about the educational services provided to a student who is suspected of having a disability must be submitted in writing to the school district's Director of Special Education or to the district's 504 Coordinator. The Director of Special Education or 504 Coordinator will either refer the student for possible verification as a student with a disability or will provide prior written notice of the district's refusal to do so.

Bad Faith or Serial Filings. The purpose of the complaint procedure is to resolve complaints at the lowest level possible within the chain of command. Individuals who file complaints (a) without a good faith intention to attempt to resolve the issues raised; (b) for the purpose of adding administrative burden; (c) at a volume unreasonable to expect satisfactory resolution; or (c) for purposes inconsistent with the efficient operations of the district may be dismissed by the superintendent without providing final resolution other than noting the dismissal. There is no appeal from dismissals made pursuant to this section.

Computer Network Use by Students

Students are expected to use computers and the Internet as an educational resource. The following procedures and guidelines govern the use of computers and the Internet at school.

I. Student Expectations in the Use of the Internet

A. Acceptable Use

1. Students may use the Internet to conduct research assigned by teachers.
2. Students may use the Internet to conduct research for classroom projects.

3. Students may use the Internet to gain access to information about current events.
4. Students may use the Internet to conduct research for school-related activities.
5. Students may use the Internet for appropriate educational purposes.

B. Unacceptable Use

1. Students shall not use school computers to gain access to material that is obscene, pornographic, harmful to minors, or otherwise inappropriate for educational uses.
2. Students shall not engage in any illegal or inappropriate activities on school computers, including the downloading and copying of copyrighted material.
3. Students shall not use e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, or other forms of direct electronic communications on school computers for any unauthorized or unlawful purpose or in violation of any school policy or directive.
4. Students shall not use school computers to participate in on-line auctions, on-line gaming or mp3 sharing systems including, but not limited to Aimster or Freenet and the like.
5. Students shall not disclose personal information, such as their names, school, addresses, or telephone numbers outside the school network.
6. Students shall not use school computers for commercial advertising or political advocacy of any kind without the express written permission of the system administrator.
7. Students shall not publish web pages that purport to represent the school district or the work of students at the school district without the express written permission of the system administrator.
8. Students shall not erase, rename, or make unusable anyone else's computer files, programs or disks.
9. Students shall not share their passwords with fellow students, school volunteers or any other individuals, and shall not use, or try to discover, another user's password.
10. Students shall not copy, change or transfer any software or documentation provided by the school district, teachers or another student without permission from the system administrator.
11. Students shall not write, produce, generate, copy, propagate, or attempt to introduce any computer code designed to self-replicate, damage, or otherwise hinder the performance of any computer's memory, file system, or software. Such software is often called, but is not limited to, a bug, virus, worm, or Trojan Horse.
12. Students shall not configure or troubleshoot computers, networks, printers or other associated equipment, except as directed by a teacher or the system administrator.
13. Students shall not take home technology equipment (hardware or software) without permission of the system administrator.
14. Students shall not falsify electronic mail messages or web pages.

Additional and special guidance related to computers provided to students as part of a 1:1 computer initiative may be outlined in other documents.

II. Enforcement

A. Methods of Enforcement

1. The district monitors all Internet communications, Internet usage, and patterns of Internet usage. Students have no right of privacy to any Internet communications or other electronic files. The computer system is owned by the school district. As with any school property, any electronic files on the system are subject to search and inspection at any time.
2. The school district uses a technology protection measure that blocks access to some Internet sites that are not in accordance with the policy of the school district. Standard use of the Internet utilizes a proxy server-based filter that screens for non-curriculum related pages.
3. Due to the nature of filtering technology, the filter may at times filter pages that are appropriate for student research. The system administrator may override the technology protection measure for the student to access a site with legitimate educational value that is wrongly blocked.
4. The school district staff will monitor students' use of the Internet through direct supervision and

by monitoring Internet use history to ensure enforcement of the policy.

B. Consequences for Violation of this Policy

1. Access to the school's computer system and to the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Any violation of school policy and rules may result in:
 - a. Loss of computer privileges;
 - b. Short-term suspension;
 - c. Long-term suspension or expulsion in accordance with the Nebraska Student Discipline Act; and
 - d. Other discipline as school administration and the school board deem appropriate.
2. Students who use school computer systems without permission and for non-school purposes may be guilty of a criminal violation and will be prosecuted.

III. Protection of Students

A. Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)

1. The school will not allow companies to collect personal information from children under 13 for commercial purposes. The school will make reasonable efforts to disable advertising in educational computer applications.
2. This policy allows the school to act as an agent for parents in the collection of information within the school context. The school's use of student information is solely for education purposes.

B. Education About Appropriate On-Line Behavior

1. School district staff will educate students about appropriate online behavior, both in specific computer usage units and in the general curriculum.
2. Staff will specifically educate students on
 - a. Appropriate interactions with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms.
 - b. Cyberbullying awareness and response.
3. The School District's technology coordinator shall inform staff of this educational obligation and shall keep records of the instruction which occurs in compliance with this policy.

Class Load and Schedule

High school students are registered for classes every period of the day for a total of eight classes. Junior high school students are registered for classes every period of the day. Students are scheduled for classes that allow them to make progress toward graduation, and the classes are taken in a sequence which builds academic knowledge and skill. Changes in class schedule after the first week of the semester will require the approval of the principal and the school counselor, and may require the permission of parents. Some changes may not be possible until the end of the quarter or semester.

With the exception of summer school, extreme scheduling conflicts and credit recovery, Conestoga does not offer on-line high school classes. On-line high school classes must be completed at school during regular school hours.

Class Pranks

Class pranks are not approved by the school. Individuals engaged in pranks will be charged a minimum of \$200 per hour per person for cleanup. Additional charges will be assessed if extra cleaning or specialized equipment is needed. Additional consequences will be issued.

College Visits by Seniors and Juniors

Conestoga students are allowed two (2) days of college visits during their Senior year which will be counted as "school activity" and not be reflected as personal absences. To qualify for these days, students and parents will submit the form available from the School Counselor and in the Office at least two (2) days in advance for approval and return the form to the Office with the verification of the college visit the day they return to school. Students who do not submit this form prior to the absence or upon returning will be counted unexcused absent for the day missed. Excused college visits for Junior students will be at the discretion of the Principal and will not count towards the two visits their Senior year. Additional days for either juniors or seniors are at the discretion of the building principal.

Conferences

Students' academic success has been closely linked to parental involvement in school. The school district has formal parent-teacher conferences during the first and second semesters.

In addition to formal conferences, classroom teachers will communicate with parents as necessary. Parents are encouraged to communicate with their student's teacher or the building principal to discuss parental concerns, student needs or any other issue.

Copyright and Fair Use

The school district complies with federal copyright laws. Students must comply with copyright laws when using school equipment or working on school projects and assignments. Federal law prohibits the unauthorized reproduction of works of authorship, regardless of the medium in which they were created.

The "fair use" doctrine allows limited reproduction of copyrighted works for educational and research purposes. "Fair use" of a copyrighted work includes reproduction for purposes such as criticism, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research. Students who are unsure whether their proposed reproduction of copyrighted material constitutes "fair use" should consult with their teacher or building principal, review the school district's copyright compliance policy, and review *Copyright for Students* found at <https://www.whoishostingthis.com/resources/student-copyright/>. You can find more information on copyright compliance requirements and permitted uses from the U.S. Copyright Office and the Library of Congress at the following site: <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/copyright.html>.

Damage to School Property

Students who damage school property either intentionally or unintentionally may be required to pay to replace or restore the property, at the discretion of the administration.

Dances Sponsored by the School

Junior high dances are for grades 7-8. Only Conestoga students who are in the junior high school (grades 7 & 8) may attend these dances. No outside guests are allowed at junior high dances.

High school dances are for students in grades 9-12. For high school dances, guests from outside the area may attend as cleared in advance by school policy and practice. Students in grades 7-8 and adults over 20 years cannot attend as guests of school students. Students may bring only one (1) guest to dances.

School-sponsored dances are held under the policy and rules of Conestoga Public Schools. The behavior of guests is the responsibility of the Conestoga student, who will be subject to disciplinary action if there is violation of the Conestoga behavior standards. All dances are "closed" events, meaning tickets to the event will be sold in advance (no tickets will be available at the door) and if participants leave the dance, they may not return. There may be collaboration with law enforcement to insure a safe environment for these student activities.

Students in violation of Conestoga's Good Standing Policy will not be allowed to attend.

Dating Violence

Dating violence, as that term is defined by Nebraska law, will not be tolerated by the school district. Students who engage in dating violence on school grounds, in a school vehicle or at a school activity or that otherwise violates the Nebraska Student Discipline Act will receive consequences consistent with the Act and the district's student discipline policies.

The school district shall provide dating violence training to staff deemed appropriate by administration and in accordance with Nebraska law. (Board Policy 5030)

Discrimination and Harassment

Students who believe that they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their disability should contact the following Section 504 Coordinator: Mr. Nick Krause at 402-235-2271 (phone number), nkrause@conestogacougars.org (e-mail address) or in person at school. Students who believe that they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their sex should contact the following Title IX Coordinator: Mr. Nick Krause at 402-235-2271 (phone number), nkrause@conestogacougars.org (e-mail address) or in person at school. Students who believe that they have been the subject of any other unlawful discrimination or harassment should contact Mr. Mike Apple, Superintendent of Schools at 402-235-2992 (phone number), mapple@conestogacougars.org (e-mail address) or in person at school. Students may report discrimination or harassment to any staff member who will then forward it on to the appropriate coordinator or administrator. The staff member will follow school district policies to respond to the report.

Dress Code

Students must come to school dressed in clean, neat, and appropriate clothing to conform to educational standards. Students are prohibited from wearing the following attire:

1. Clothing displaying indecent, suggestive or profane writing, pictures, slogans or indecent material (Slang, forms or abbreviated forms of improper language or material are not allowed)
2. Clothing that verbalizes, advertises or displays alcohol, tobacco, vaping or any illegal substance
3. Head coverings during the school day (Including, but not limited to caps, hats, visors, hoods and bandanas)
4. Bare feet (some type of footwear must be worn)
5. Short-Shorts
6. Hairstyles which distract from the learning process or the health and safety for either the student or others
7. Any clothing or jewelry that could cause damage to others or school property For example, chains hanging or attached to pants or shorts are not allowed.
8. Clothing that is excessively torn, ripped or cut
9. Shirts, blouses, or other clothing worn unbuttoned, unzipped, or otherwise purposely unfastened
10. "Grubby clothes," those which are purposely torn or bedraggled or threadbare, dirty or disheveled
11. Costumes and/or those clothes intended only for leisure, entertaining or special occasions
12. "Midriff" (belly button) styles, see-through and low-cut blouses, halters and thin-strapped tops (spaghetti straps)
13. Tank tops that are less than 2" wide at the shoulder. Cut-Off t-shirts are not allowed.
14. Pants and shorts worn below the waist so as to expose undergarments or skin
15. Pants that drag on the floor
16. Chains hanging or attached to pants or shorts
17. Long Coats during school hours unless the student has permission from administration
18. Clothing with excessive tears or holes that expose underclothes
19. Sunglasses (except those allowed as part of special dress-up days)
20. Undergarments showing (bras, BVD's, briefs, boxers)
21. Abdomen (standing or sitting) or lower portion of the back showing
22. Tools. For example, pliers or any other tool that could cause damage to others or school property.
23. Blankets should not be utilized as cover-ups during the regular school day.

Students who violate dress code guidelines will be required to correct the violation by changing into something appropriate at school or returning home to change. A detention or suspension may be given to make up the time away from school. Students will also receive zeros for any class time they miss while correcting the violation. Repeated dress code violations may result in more severe consequences. School personnel and administration have final discretion regarding dress code violations.

Driving and Parking Personal Vehicles

Students who drive to school should park their cars southwest of the school building, either in the lot between the school and the football practice field, or in the lot by the football stadium. Parking in front (south) of the building is restricted to handicapped drivers and visitors. In addition, parking in the gravel area by the Cougar Den or behind the school is not allowed. Students are not to drive or sit in their vehicles during the school day. Students should not leave the building to

go to vehicles during the day without permission from the office. Visitors to school will observe parking restrictions, leaving areas designated as “Fire Zones” open and school vehicle parking areas clear.

Students should drive safely while entering the school, while exiting the school and while on school grounds. By driving personal vehicles to school and parking on school grounds, students consent to having that vehicle searched by school officials when they have reasonable suspicion that such a search will reveal a violation of school rules. Abuse of the parking lot in any way may result in not being able to park on school grounds.

Drug Free Schools

The board of education has adopted policies to comply with the Federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act. Students are prohibited from using, possessing, or selling any drug, alcohol, or tobacco while on school grounds, at a school activity or in a school vehicle. In addition, students who participate in the school’s activities program should refer to the Activities Handbook which prohibits the use or possession of alcohol, controlled substances and tobacco at all times.

Any student who violates any school policy regarding drug, alcohol, and tobacco use will be disciplined, up to and including short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion from school and/or referral to appropriate authorities for criminal prosecution. If a student arrives to school or a school event under the influence, authorities will be called and the student will be disciplined accordingly.

Drugs, Tobacco and Alcohol

Tobacco

Based on the general Guidelines for Discipline, possession and/or use of tobacco is prohibited on school grounds or at a school activity. Students found to be illegally in possession of tobacco, or found to have used tobacco products on school grounds will be subject to student discipline. As vaping products can be used to consume illegal drugs other than tobacco, possession of a vaping device will be treated as possession of illegal drug paraphernalia under this policy.

1. For the first offense of tobacco possession or use on school grounds or at a school activity, a student will receive a short-term suspension.
2. For the second offense of tobacco possession or use on school grounds or at a school activity, a student will receive a long-term suspension.
3. For the third offense of tobacco possession or use on school grounds or at a school activity, a student may be expelled from attending school and school events.

Detectors in the building will notify appropriate personnel of prohibited activity. Notification will result in the search of the student. **Refusal to be searched will be an admission of guilt and the student will be disciplined accordingly.**

Alcohol

Possession and/or consumption of alcohol is prohibited on school grounds or at a school activity. Students found to be in possession of alcohol, or found to have consumed alcohol on school grounds or at a school activity will be subject to student discipline.

1. For the first offense of alcohol possession or consumption on school grounds or at a school activity, a student will receive a short-term suspension.
2. For the second offense of alcohol possession or consumption on school grounds or at a school activity, a student will receive a long-term suspension.
3. For the third offense of alcohol possession or consumption on school grounds, a student will be expelled from attending school and school events.

Drugs

Possession and/or use of illegal drugs is prohibited on school grounds or at a school activity. Illegal drugs include

medications that are in a student's possession without a prescription. Any form of a vaping device and vaping substances are included in the drug category. Students who possess medication with a prescription, and who have provided that medication to other students will be disciplined according to this policy.

1. For the first offense of drug possession or use on school grounds or at a school activity, a student will receive a long-term suspension.
2. For the second offense of drug possession or use on school grounds or at a school activity, a student will be expelled from attending school and school events.
3. Any attempt to sell/share prescribed medication or any drug to/with other students will result in expulsion.

Detectors in the building will notify appropriate personnel of prohibited activity. Notification will result in the search of the student. **Refusal to be searched will be an admission of guilt and the student will be disciplined accordingly.**

Combination of Tobacco, Alcohol, & Drug Violations

When multiple combinations of the various categories are violated within each school year, the accrued violations will be enforced at the second or third violation penalty category that is the latest. The violation of tobacco, alcohol, and drug categories of this portion of the policy will be enforced from the first day of school (or first activity practice) through the last day of school for each school year.

The use of any product mimicking the use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco and chewing tobacco, is prohibited on school property or in school vehicles at any time.

The drawing or display of words, images or references to tobacco, alcohol or drugs on school property or school-related materials is prohibited, except in the context of educational instruction (health-related studies).

Because it is impossible to immediately verify the contents of any "vape", Juul, e-cigarette or any other device used to inhale vapor, these devices and "juice" are not classified as tobacco products. These devices and substances are considered drugs and/or look-alike drugs, and are subject to disciplinary action described in Board Policy 5035.

Emergency Contact Information

Parents must provide emergency information for each child enrolled in the district. This should list the family physician's name, where parents or a responsible adult can be located, and any necessary emergency instructions. Parents must promptly inform the school if this contact information changes during the school year.

Enrollment and Entry of Students

All school policies and state mandates must be followed when a student is enrolled and prior to entry. This pertains to needed documents as well as immunizations.

Junior and senior high school students who enroll in school after the second week of a quarter may be placed in an Alternative Education program for concentrated study in the core subjects of Math, English, History and Science until the beginning of the next quarter.

Students will be enrolled in classes every period of the day, unless procedures have been followed for release periods as a senior. Those procedures are outlined in this handbook.

Evacuations / Emergency Drills

The school district will hold routine evacuation drills throughout the school year. Classroom teachers will provide students with detailed instructions on building evacuations. Students and staff at Conestoga Jr/Sr High School will follow State law in the practice of emergency drills. Students will participate in all emergency drills. Falsely reporting an emergency, setting

off fire extinguishers when no fire exists, tampering with fire detection devices, or setting off fire alarms when there is no emergency will result in a mandatory suspension. Doors of the school which have emergency alarm mechanisms are only to be used in case of a school emergency.

Eye Exams

All students enrolling in kindergarten or transferring into the school district from out of state must undergo a visual examination by a physician, a physician assistant, an advanced practice registered nurse, or an optometrist, which consists of testing for amblyopia, strabismus, and internal and external eye health, with testing sufficient to determine visual acuity, except that no such physical examination or visual evaluation shall be required of any child whose parent or guardian objects in writing. They must provide evidence of the vision examination within six months prior to entrance. The cost of such physical examination and visual evaluation shall be borne by the parent or guardian of each child who is examined.

Food Service Program

Conestoga Public Schools participate in the National School Lunch and Breakfast program. Free and Reduced meal applications are available at any school office throughout the school year if you feel your household is eligible. Benefits begin after the application is approved. Families are responsible for any charges incurred before the application is approved. Extra, AlaCarte and second entrees are not included in the free and reduced program. Families are responsible for purchase of extras.

A new application for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program must be completed each year. Conestoga Public School provides a breakfast and lunch program for all students. During meals, students are expected to conduct themselves in a safe and orderly manner. Students should remain in the eating area until the meal is finished. Food should not be taken out of the lunch room and put into lockers. The “competitive foods” regulations of the Nebraska Department of Education limits the type and extent of food that may be sold in the school during breakfast and lunch hours. Generally, parents may bring food for their own child, but for no other student. The delivery of food from outside vendors is prohibited. Contact the District food service manager for more information regarding this regulation. Violation of school rules during mealtime may result in the loss of school meal privileges. In addition, snacks may be provided as part of the school day and after-school programs. Option enrollment families that qualify for the National School Lunch Program (free lunch only) are entitled to transportation reimbursement. Contact the District Superintendent’s Office for details.

2024-2025 BREAKFAST & LUNCH PRICES

BREAKFAST PRICES		BREAKFAST ALA CARTE		LUNCH PRICES		LUNCH ALA CARTE	
STUDENT	\$2.35	Main Dish	\$2.10	Elementary Student	\$3.20	Main Dish	\$2.60
ADULT	\$2.85	Juice	\$0.80	High School Student	\$3.45	Vegetable	\$1.00
		Milk	\$0.60	Adult	\$3.95	Fruit	\$0.85

*** Only ala carte items that are consistently offered are listed above. Other items will be offered at different times throughout the year. Pricing for those items will not change during the year. ***

School Meal Program and Meal Charges (3012)

Meal Program. The school district will make a school meal program available to students. The cost of the program will be determined by the board of education, so as to make the program as nearly self-supporting as possible. With board approval, the district may contract with a private company or corporation for the management and/or provision of the program.

The district will notify the families with children attending school of the current guidelines for free or reduced-price school meals. A copy of the complete regulations and procedures regarding reduced-price and free meals shall be available in the office of the superintendent.

Meal Charge Policy. The district will notify students and their families of the policy for **Charged Meals**, meaning meals received by a student when the student does not have money in hand or in his or her food account. This policy applies to students who receive meals at the free, reduced, or full rates.

Notice of this policy must be provided in writing to all households at the start of each school year and to households that transfer to the school during the school year. Notice may be provided through the student handbook, student registration materials, online portal used to access student accounts, direct mailing or e-mail, newsletter, the district website, and/or any other appropriate means. Notice of this policy will also be provided to include all school staff responsible for the enforcement of it, including food service professionals responsible for collecting payment for meals at the point of service, staff involved in notifying families of low or negative balances, and other staff involved in enforcing any aspect of this policy.

The district’s policy on charged meals is:

If a student has no funds available to pay for a meal, the student will be permitted to charge up to five meals.

Thereafter, if a student has no funds available to pay for a meal, a peanut butter & jelly sandwich, fruit and milk will be provided and charged.

Students who qualify for free meals will not be denied a reimbursable meal, even if they have accrued a negative balance from other food purchases. School staff may prohibit any students from charging a la carte or extra items if they do not have cash in hand or their account has a negative balance.

If a student repeatedly lacks funds to purchase a meal, has not brought a meal from home, and has not applied for meal benefits, the district will use its resources and contacts to protect the health and safety of the student.

Collection of Delinquent Meal Charge Debt

The school district is required to make reasonable efforts to collect unpaid meal charges. The building principal or his or her designee will contact households about unpaid meal charges and notify them again of the availability of the free and reduced meal program and/or establish payment plans and due dates by telephone, e-mail, or other written or oral communication. If these collection efforts are unsuccessful, the school district may pursue any other methods to collect delinquent debt as allowed by law. Collection efforts may continue into a new school year.

Notice of Non-discrimination

In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

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

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

Field Trips and Field Experiences

Classes occasionally take field trips off school property for educational enrichment. A student's parent, or "caregiver" as that term is defined in the Nebraska Strengthening Families Act, must authorize a student to participate in a field trip by signing a permission slip and providing it to the school before the field trip. Students who have not completed classroom work on time may not be allowed to attend field trips. Students must comply with the student code of conduct, any applicable extracurricular conduct codes, and all directives by trip chaperones.

First-Aid

First-aid items may only be used by school staff. Students who need first aid should ask for assistance from their classroom teacher or the nearest staff member.

Food, Candy, Gum and Beverages

Food and beverages that meet Federal standards for sale during the school day are available from machines. (See Board Policy 5052.) Liquids should not be placed or consumed near computers or other equipment. Only beverages in a container with a lid are allowed in school. Food, Candy, Gum and Beverages in the classroom are teacher discretion. The nurse and administration may authorize other beverages for medical purposes.

Hallway Passes

When student movement during classes is limited, increased learning and increased safety are the result. "No pass outs" is the goal for teachers and students to maximize instruction and minimize supervision concerns. Teachers who are sending students from one classroom to another will communicate with the other faculty member prior to doing so.

Head Lice

Students found to have live head lice or louse eggs will not be permitted at school and will be sent home. Upon discovering the presence of any indication of lice or louse eggs, the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified, and if appropriate will be asked to pick up the student from school immediately.

Students will not be permitted to return to school until the district finds that no live lice or eggs can be detected. The parent(s) or guardian(s) will be required to treat the student and accompany the student to school to be examined.

The student cannot ride the school bus until the district has cleared the student to return to school.

Headphones, Earbuds and Speakers

Headphones and/or earbuds during individual work time in class will be by request and by permission only. All expectations and guidelines in the classroom will be teacher discretion. Teacher expectations must be followed or the privilege will be lost. External speakers, unless used by a teacher or sponsor, are not allowed. Headphones and/or earbuds must be off and out of site during passing periods. These privileges are subject to change if abused.

Health Problems Limiting Activities

Parents who do not want their children to play outdoors or participate in physical education for health reasons must send a written request to school. If a student persistently requests to be excused from these activities, the building principal or classroom teacher may require a doctor's verification.

Parents should notify the district nurse, principal and/or superintendent if their student has any special health problems such as diabetes, asthma, or the like.

Homebound Instruction

The school district may provide a student with instruction in his or her home and under parental supervision if the student is physically or mentally ill or injured and unable to attend regular classes for an extended period of time. Homebound instruction shall be provided when the student's physical and mental condition are such that the student can benefit from instruction and no other provision will meet the student's educational needs. If you believe that homebound instruction is appropriate for your child, please contact the building principal to initiate the appropriate process to determine eligibility.

Homeless Children and Youth

Homeless students generally include children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, as further defined by applicable state and federal law.

It is the school's policy not to stigmatize or segregate homeless students on the basis of their status of being homeless. Transportation for homeless students who enroll in the district shall be furnished by the district under the same guidelines applying to other students or if such transportation is necessary for compliance with federal law.

Each homeless child shall be provided services for which the child is eligible comparable to services provided to other students in the school selected regardless of residency. Homeless children shall be provided access to education and other services that such children need to ensure that they have an opportunity to meet the same student performance standards to which all students are held.

If a homeless child registered to attend school in the district is receiving family reconciliation services pursuant to state law, the district will work in cooperation with any county or department of social services in the district to jointly develop an educational program for the child.

Illness or Injury at School

Students who feel ill or are hurt while at school should seek immediate assistance from their classroom teacher or the nearest staff member. The school will contact parents to pick students up from school whenever necessary. When school officials determine that a student needs immediate medical attention but the parents cannot be reached by phone,

emergency services will be summoned or the student will be taken directly to the doctor and/or hospital. Parents must submit emergency information to the office.

Immunizations

All students must furnish one of the following to school officials:

- proof of adequate immunizations for mumps, measles, rubella; diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus; polio; and hepatitis B series; or
- a signed parental statement of refusal to provide the immunization history. Homeless students who are in need of immunizations will be referred to the homeless coordinator, who shall assist in obtaining necessary immunizations or medical records.

Provisional Enrollment. Students who meet the statutory requirements for provisional enrollment shall be allowed to attend school for sixty days without the necessary immunizations.

- Students who are excepted from the immunization requirement may be excluded from school in the event of an outbreak of any contagious disease in the school population.

Initiations and Hazing

Initiations and hazing by members of classes, clubs, athletic teams, or any other organization affiliated with the district are prohibited except as otherwise permitted by this policy. Any student engaging in hazing or non-approved initiations is subject to discipline as permitted by policy and law.

Initiations are defined as any ritualistic expectations, requirements, or activities placed upon new members of a school organization for the purpose of admission into the organization, even if those activities do not rise to the level of “hazing” as defined below. Initiations are prohibited except by permission of the superintendent.

Hazing is defined as any activity by which a person intentionally or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health or safety of an individual for the purpose of initiation into, admission into, affiliation with, or continued membership in any school organization. Hazing activities include, but are not limited to, whipping, beating, branding, an act of sexual penetration, an exposure of the genitals of the body done with the intent to affront or alarm any person, a lewd fondling or caressing of the body of another person, forced and prolonged calisthenics, prolonged exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or harmful substance not generally intended for human consumption, prolonged sleep deprivation, or any brutal treatment or the performance of any unlawful act that endangers the physical or mental health or safety of any person.

Lockers and Other School Property

The school district owns and exercises exclusive control over student lockers, desks, computer equipment, and other such property. Students should not expect privacy regarding usage of or items placed in or on school property, because school property is subject to search at any time by school officials. Periodic, random searches of lockers, desks, computers, and other such property may be conducted at the discretion of the administration. The assignment of a locker is on a temporary basis and may be revoked at any time. School officials may inspect student lockers without any particularized suspicion or reasonable cause.

In accordance with Board Policy 5036, lockers are the property of the school district and students are permitted to use them without charge.

Lost and Found

All lost and found articles are to be taken to the office. Students may claim lost articles in the commons where the lost and found is located. Unclaimed articles will be donated to a local charity or otherwise disposed of at the conclusion of each quarter.

Media Center

Students must check out materials from the librarian on duty. Each borrower is responsible for all books checked out in his/her name. Each student is responsible for any fine that accumulated on a book charged to him/her. If a book is lost

and not found by the end of the semester, the student must pay for it. Students must also pay for any damage they cause to library or school owned books.

Medications

Whenever possible, parents should arrange medication schedules to eliminate the need for giving medication during school hours. When it is necessary for school personnel to administer medication to students, the school district will comply with the Nebraska Medication Aide Act, the requirements of Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 59, (promulgated by the Nebraska Department of Education and entitled *Methods of Competency Assessment of School Staff Who Administer Medication*), and all state and federal regulations. Parents and guardians who wish to have their child receive medication from school personnel must comply with the following procedures:

Prescription medication. (1) Parents/guardians must provide a physician's written authorization for the administration of the medication. (2) Parents/guardians must provide their own written permission for the administration of the medication. (3) The medication must be brought to school in the prescription container and must be properly labeled with the student's name, the physician's name, and directions for administering the medication. (4) Unused medication or discontinued medication must be picked up by a legal guardian and will not be sent home with the student.

Non-prescription medication. (1) Parents/guardians must provide written permission for the administration of the medication. (2) The medication must be brought to the school in the manufacturer's container. (3) The container must be labeled with the child's name and with directions for provision or administration of the medication.

The district reserves the right to review and decline requests to administer or provide medications that are not consistent with standard pharmacological references, are prescribed in doses that exceed those recommended in standard pharmacological references, or that could be taken in a manner that would eliminate the need for giving them during school hours. The district may request parental authorization to consult with the student's physician regarding any medication prescribed by such physician. Medication administration forms are available in the Health Office.

Memorials

Memorials or plaques honoring deceased students are not allowed in or on the school grounds unless authorized by board policy. Dedications to students will not be allowed.

Scholarships in the deceased person's name will not be set up by the school. Scholarships set up by outside organizations or individuals, such as a foundation, will be allowed.

Parental Involvement

The school district recognizes the unique needs of students who are being served in its Title I program, and the importance of parent and family engagement in the Title I program. Parent and family engagement in the Title I Program shall include, but is not limited to:

1. An annual meeting to which all parents of participating children will be invited to inform parents of their school's participation under this part, to explain the requirements of this part, and the right of the parents to be involved. Invitations may take the form of notes sent with students or announcements in the school newsletter. Additional meetings may be scheduled, based upon need and interest for such meetings.
2. An explanation of the details for the child's and parents' participation, including but not limited to: curriculum objectives, forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress and the achievement levels of the challenging State academic standards, type and extent of participation, parental input in educational decisions, coordination, and integration with other Federal, State, and district programs, and evaluations of progress.
3. Opportunities for participation in parent involvement activities, such as training to help parents work with their children to improve achievement. A goal of these parent activities is to provide parents with opportunities to participate in decisions relating to the education of their students, where appropriate.
4. The district will, to the extent practicable, provide parents of limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, parents with limited literacy, are economically disadvantaged, are of a racial or minority background or parents

of migratory children with opportunities for involvement in the Title I Program. Communication to parents about student progress and the district's other Title I Program communications will be provided in the language used in the home to the extent practicable. Responses to parent concerns will be provided in a timely manner.

5. Opportunities for parent-teacher conferences, in addition to those regularly scheduled by the school district, if requested by the parents or as deemed necessary by school district staff.
6. The district will coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with other programs in the community. These may include cooperation with other community programs such as Head Start and preschools and other community services such as the public library.
7. The district will educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, with the assistance of parents in the value and utility of contributions of parents, how to reach out to, communicate with and work with parents as equal partners.

Personal Items

The school provides the necessary equipment for classroom and school day activities. **Students should not bring personal items to school unless they have permission of their classroom teacher or a school administrator. The school is not responsible for damaged or lost personal items or equipment.**

Physical Education

The school district requires students to receive physical education to assist them in developing gross and fine motor skills. Students are not required to wear P.E. uniforms, but are encouraged to wear tennis shoes for P.E.

Physical Exam

Each student entering school for the first time, all seventh grade students, and all out of state transfer students must present proof of a physical examination done within 6 months of enrollment upon enrollment. All students entering school for the first time and all out of state transfer students must present proof of a vision examination upon enrollment.

Pictures

The school district arranges for a photographer to be present at school in the fall to take class pictures. Parents will be notified of the date. Included in the individual packet is a class composite. Parents who want pictures of their students or of their student's class composite may purchase them directly from the photographer.

Police Questioning and Apprehension

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 inform parents when law enforcement officers seek access to their student prior to the student being questioned unless the officers are investigating charges that the student has been the victim of abuse or neglect. Members of the school district staff will comply with board policy regarding police questioning of students.

Protection of Student Rights

The Board of Education respects the rights of parents and their children and has adopted a Protection of Pupil Rights policy in consultation with parents to comply with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA). The policy is available on the district's website or upon request from the district's administrative office. Parents may opt their child out of participation in activities identified by the Protection of Pupil Rights policy by submitting a written request to the superintendent. Parents may have access to any survey or other material described in the Protection of Pupil Rights policy by submitting a written request to the superintendent.

ACT Exam

Students taking the ACT Exam will be prompted to complete a short, optional questionnaire addressing a number of topics. If you wish to review this questionnaire prior to the administration of the exam, please submit a written request to the superintendent.

Public Displays of Affection

Students may not engage in public displays of affection that are disruptive to the school environment or distracting to others. Prohibited conduct includes hugging, kissing, touching, holding hands or any other display of affection that a staff member or administrator deems to be inappropriate.

Reasonable Suspicion Testing

Students may be required to submit to drug or alcohol testing if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Release (Work Based Learning and Senior Release)

“Release” and “Work-based Learning” periods for Seniors will be granted through permission and approval agreements signed by the student, parent, counselor and principal. Students must meet all expectations regarding release stated under the release periods / late start section of this handbook.

In order to qualify for work release, the following criteria must be met per semester:

1. Students must be in attendance for four (4) consecutive periods and on track for graduation.
 - a. All Four periods must be in credit courses for a minimum of 20 credit hours.
2. Students must fill out an application for release and follow all guidelines listed in the application.
3. Students must stay in good academic and behavior standing at school.
4. If student tardiness and/or attendance becomes a problem, they may lose the privilege.

Rights of Custodial and Non-Custodial Parents

The school district will honor the parental rights of natural and adoptive parents unless those rights have been altered by a court. The term “custodial parent” refers to a biological or adoptive parent to whom a court has given primary physical and legal custody of a child, and a person such as a caseworker or foster parent to whom a court has given legal custody of a child.

The district will not restrict the access of custodial and non-custodial parents to their students and their students’ records, unless the district has been provided a copy of a court order that limits those rights. If the district is provided such a court order, school officials will follow the directives set forth in the order.

The district will provide the custodial parent with routine information about his or her child, including notification of conferences. The district will not provide the non-custodial parent with such information on a routine basis, but will provide it upon the non-custodial parent’s request unless it has been denied by the courts. A non-custodial parent who wishes to attend conferences regarding his or her child will be provided information about conference times so both parents may attend a single conference. The district is not required to schedule separate conferences if both parents have been previously informed of scheduled conference times.

If either or both parents’ behavior is disruptive, staff members may terminate a conference and reschedule it with appropriate modifications or expectations.

Safety and Searches

Conestoga Public School seeks to provide students with a safe and orderly educational environment. Students should bring to school only those things that will help getting classroom work done. School officials have the right to conduct searches of students and their property as well as school property in order to maintain a safe and orderly environment. Hallway and athletic lockers are the property of the school and may be examined at any time.

If school authorities believe a student may be wearing or in possession of a weapon, object or substance in violation of school policy, students will be asked to give the item to the administration. Student searches will be made by administrators only, and in the presence of two adults.

A video surveillance system is in use at Conestoga Public School and the images from the system may be used in the discipline and prosecution of individuals violating school discipline policy or State and Federal law. The use of other measures to detect the presence of illegal or dangerous objects or substances, including the use of police dogs, shall follow established school board and/or law enforcement policies.

Efforts will be made to establish and utilize cooperation between school officials, parents and law enforcement in all matters of student safety.

School Closing

School closings, delayed starting time or early dismissal will be announced via social media, television stations and School Messenger.

Parents should assume that school is open and a regular schedule is being followed if there is no announcement concerning the school district. Please do not call the school or individual staff members to find out whether school is being canceled. Parents who do not believe it is safe to transport their students to school may keep their student's home after contacting the district office.

If schools are closed due to severe weather conditions, all after-school activities will be canceled.

School Day

Grades 7-12 7:50 AM – 4:00 PM

Students who are not involved in school activities should leave the building at the end of the day. School staff will provide supervision for students on school grounds 20 minutes before the school day begins and 30 minutes after the school day ends. **There will be no supervision provided by the school before or after these times.** Parents must arrange for their children to leave school promptly at the end of the day.

School Visitors

Anyone seeking information or wishing to visit school personnel or students **must** enter through the main doors and report to the front office. All visitors will check in at the office and receive a visitor's badge to be displayed at all times. Office personnel will either summon students or staff to the office, or provide a pass for visitors to enter the instructional areas of the school. Students are not permitted to bring friends or other students to school with them as visitors during the school day because of legal liability and responsibility. With permission from the administration, relatives may eat lunch with students. There will be a designated area in the building for this to occur.

Secret Organizations

Secret organizations are prohibited. School officials shall not allow any person or representative of any such organization to enter upon school grounds or school buildings for the purpose of rushing or soliciting students to participate in any secret fraternity, society, or association.

Self-Management of Diabetes or Asthma/Anaphylaxis

Subject to school policy, the school district will work with the parent or guardian in consultation with appropriate medical professionals to develop a medical management plan for a student with diabetes, asthma, or anaphylaxis. Parents desiring to develop such a plan should contact the District Nurse.

Smoking and Tobacco

The use or possession of any tobacco product, including cigarettes, cigars, or other tobacco or tobacco derivative products; vapor products or electronic nicotine delivery systems; alternative nicotine products; or any other such look-alike or imitation product, is not permitted on school property at any time.

Sneak / Skip Days

Sneak days (days taken off by classes or groups of students) are not approved by the school. Missing work may result in lost credit, but can be regained if the student makes up their missed class time outside of the regular school day. Senior sneak days will be made up at the end of the school year.

Sniffer (Drug) Dogs

The administration is authorized to use sniffer dogs to minimize the presence of illicit items on school grounds.

Students and staff are specifically notified of the following:

1. Lockers may be sniffed by sniffer dogs at any time.
2. Vehicles parked on school property may be sniffed by sniffer dogs at any time.
3. Classrooms and other common areas may be sniffed by sniffer dogs at any time students and staff are not present.
4. If contraband of any kind is found, the student or staff member shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Student Assistance

Parents who believe their students have any learning, behavior, or emotional needs that they believe are not being addressed by the school district should contact the student's teacher. If appropriate, the teacher may convene the Student Assistance Team (SAT). The SAT can explore possibilities and strategies that will best meet the educational needs of the student.

Student Fees (5045)

The school district shall provide free instruction in accordance with the Nebraska State Constitution and the Nebraska statutes. The district also provides activities, programs, and services that extend beyond the minimum level of constitutionally required free instruction. Under the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act, the district is permitted to charge students fees for these activities or to require students to provide specialized equipment and attire for certain purposes. This policy is subject to further interpretation or guidance by administrative or board regulations. Students are encouraged to contact their building administration, their teachers or their coaches, and sponsors for further specifics.

A. Definitions.

1. "Students" means students, their parents, guardians, or other legal representatives.
2. "Extracurricular activities" means student activities or organizations that (1) are supervised or administered by the district; (2) do not count toward graduation or advancement between grades; and (3) are not otherwise required by the district.
3. "Post-secondary education costs" means tuition and other fees associated with obtaining credit from a post-secondary educational institution.

B. Listing of Fees Charged by this District.

1. Guidelines for Clothing Required for Specified Courses and Activities.

Students are responsible for complying with the district's grooming and attire guidelines and for furnishing all clothing required for any special programs, courses, or activities in which they participate. The teacher, coach, or sponsor of the activity will provide students with written guidelines that detail any special clothing requirements and explain why the special clothing is required for the specific program, course, or activity.

2. Safety Equipment and Attire.

The district will provide students with all safety equipment and attire that is required by law. Building administrators will assure that (a) such equipment is available in the appropriate classes and areas of the school buildings, (b) teachers are directed to instruct students in the use of such devices, and (c) students use the devices as required. Students are responsible for using the devices safely and as instructed.

3. Personal or Consumable Items.

The district does not provide students with personal or consumable items for participation in courses and activities including, but not limited to, pencils, paper, pens, erasers and notebooks. Students who wish to supply their own personal or consumable items may do so, as long as those items comply with the requirements of the district. The district will provide students with facilities, equipment, materials and supplies, including books. Students are responsible for the careful and appropriate use of such property. Students will be charged for damage to school property caused by the student and will be held responsible for the reasonable replacement cost of any school property that they lose.

4. Materials Required for Course Projects.

The district does not provide students with the materials necessary to complete all curricular projects. In courses where students produce a project that requires more than minimal cost for materials, the finished product will remain the property of the district unless the students either furnish or pay for the reasonable cost of materials required for the course project. The maximum dollar amount charged by the district for course materials shall be:

Course Projects

Industrial Technology Classes	Actual cost of parent-approved project in upper level courses.
Art Classes	Actual cost of parent-approved projects in Independent Art

5. Technological Devices

The district will provide students with the technological devices necessary to complete all basic curricular projects. To the extent that a student is not required by the district's curriculum to utilize a device off district property, the district may charge students a convenience fee to take the device off district property. The maximum dollar amount of this convenience fee charged by the district will be \$50.

As with all school property, students may be charged for damage to such devices. To protect against such potential losses, students and parents may, but are not required, to purchase insurance coverage for the devices. The maximum dollar amount of this insurance coverage facilitated by the district will be \$50. (as part of the convenience fee) The district will charge the student/family the cost of repairs on a device after the one-time repair of a device. The parents will be responsible for replace/repair costs on a second-time repair of the device.

6. Extracurricular Activities.

The district may charge students a fee to participate in extracurricular activities to cover the district's reasonable costs in offering such activities. The district may require students to furnish specialized equipment and clothing that is required for participation in extracurricular activities, or may charge a reasonable fee for the use of district-owned equipment or attire. Attached to this policy is a list of the fees charged for particular activities. The coach or sponsor will provide students with additional written guidelines detailing the fees charged, the equipment and/or clothing required, or the usage fee charged. The guidelines will explain the reasons that fees, equipment and/or clothing are required for the activity.

The following list details the maximum dollar amount of all extracurricular activities' fees and the specifications for any equipment or attire required for participation in extracurricular activities.

Extracurricular Activities' Fees	
Student Participation Fee	
<i>The student participation fee includes a student activity card which covers admission into all extracurricular events.</i>	
<i>The student participation fee is required of all students who participate in athletics and/or extracurricular activities. (Maximum \$200 per family)</i>	
Future Business Leaders of America	\$30.00 Dues
National Honor Society	\$30.00 Dues
Cheerleading	\$2,000.00
Cougarettes Dance	\$2,000.00
<i>Students must purchase uniforms and shoes selected by the sponsor and/or student group. The maximum dollar amount charged by the school district for these items are listed above.</i>	
Football	Students must provide their own football shoes, undergarments and mouth guards.
Soccer	Students must provide their own shoes, undergarments and shin-guards.
Basketball	Students must provide their own shoes and undergarments.
Softball	Students must provide their own shoes, gloves and undergarments.
Track, Volleyball, Wrestling	Students must provide their own shoes and undergarments.
FFA	Student must purchase their own Official jacket (\$110.00) and pay dues of \$30.00.

7. Student Activity Card

Student Activity Card <i>Covers admission into all extracurricular events.</i> ***Recommended for all students <u>not</u> involved in activities.	\$30.00 (K-8) \$50.00 (9-12)
---	---

8. Post-Secondary Education Costs.

Some students enroll in postsecondary courses while still enrolled in the district's high school. As a general rule, students must pay all costs associated with such post-secondary courses. However, for a course in which students receive high school credit or a course being taken as part of an approved accelerated or differentiated curriculum program, the district shall offer the course without charge for tuition, transportation, books, or other fees. Students who chose to apply for post-secondary education credit for these courses must pay tuition and all other fees associated with obtaining credits from a post-secondary educational institution. **The costs of these items will naturally vary, but the maximum dollar amount of the fee is anticipated to be \$100 per credit.**

9. Transportation Costs.

The district will charge students reasonable fees for transportation services provided by the district to the extent permitted by federal and state statutes and regulations.

10. Copies of Student Files or Records.

The district will charge a fee for making copies of a student's files or records for the parents or guardians of such student. The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee shall establish a schedule of student record fees. Parents of students have the right to inspect and review the students' files or records without the payment of a fee, and the district shall not charge a fee to search for or retrieve any student's files or records. The district will charge a fee of \$.25 cents per page for reproduction of student records.

11. Participation in Before-and-After-School or Pre-Kindergarten Services.

The district will charge reasonable fees for participation in before-and-after school or pre-kindergarten services offered by the district pursuant to statute. The maximum dollar amount charged by the district for these services shall be \$130.00 per month.

12. Participation in Summer School or Night School.

The district will charge reasonable fees for participation in summer school or night school and may charge reasonable fees for correspondence courses.

13. Charges for Food Consumed by Students.

The district will charge for items that students purchase from the district's breakfast and lunch programs. The fees charged for these items will be set according to applicable federal and state statutes and regulations. The district will charge students for the cost of food, beverages, and the like that students purchase from a school store, vending machine, booster club or from similar sources. Students may be required to bring money or food for field trip lunches and similar activities. The maximum dollar amount charged by the district for the breakfast and lunch programs is as follows:

Breakfast & Lunch Programs	
Breakfast Program – Grades K-8	
Regular Price	\$2.35
Reduced Price	\$.30
Breakfast Program – Grades 9-12	
Regular Price	\$2.45
Reduced Price	\$.30
Lunch Program – Grades K-6	
Regular Price	\$3.20
Reduced Price	\$.40
Lunch Program – Grades 7-12	
Regular Price	\$3.45
Reduced Price	\$.40

14. Charges for Musical Extracurricular Activities.

Students who qualify for fee waivers under this policy will be provided, at no charge, the use of a musical instrument in optional music courses that are not extracurricular activities. For musical extracurricular activities, the school district will require students to provide the following equipment and/or attire:

Musical Activities	
Band	Students must provide their own instruments and marching band shoes, which must be black, rubber-soled sneakers
Choir	Students must purchase outfits and shoes selected by the sponsor and/or student group. The maximum dollar amount charged by the district for these materials will be the actual cost of the outfit.

15. Charges for FFA.

FFA	
FFA	Students must provide their own black shoes, black pants / skirt and white shirt.

16. Contributions for Junior and Senior Class Extracurricular Activities.

Students are eligible to participate in a number of unique extracurricular activities during their last two years in high school, including prom, various senior recognitions, and graduation. In order to fund these extracurricular activities, the school district will ask each student to contribute to their class's fund. This contribution is completely voluntary. Students who choose not to contribute to the class fund are still eligible to participate in the extra activities. The suggested donation to the class fund will be \$20.

C. Waiver Policy.

Students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches under United States Department of Agriculture child nutrition programs shall be provided a fee waiver or be provided the necessary materials or equipment without charge for (1) participation in extracurricular activities, (2) materials for course projects, and (3) the use of a musical instrument in optional music courses that are not extracurricular activities. Actual participation in the free or reduced-price lunch program is not required to qualify for the waivers provided in this section. The district is not obligated to provide any particular type or quality of equipment or other material to eligible students. Students who wish to be considered for waiver of a particular fee must submit a completed fee waiver application to their building principal.

D. Distribution of Policy.

This policy will be published in the Student Handbook or its equivalent that will be provided to students at no cost.

E. Voluntary Contributions to Defray Costs.

The district will, when appropriate, request donations of money, materials, equipment or attire from parents, guardians and other members of the community to defray the costs of providing certain services and activities to students. These requests are not requirements and staff members of the district are directed to clearly communicate that fact to students, parents and patrons.

F. Fund-Raising Activities

Students may be permitted or required to engage in fund-raising activities to support various curricular and extracurricular activities in which they participate. Students who decline to participate in fund-raising activities are not eligible under this policy for waiver of the costs or fees which the fund-raising activity was meant to defray.

G. Student Fee Fund.

The school board hereby establishes a Student Fee Fund. The Student Fee Fund shall be a separate school district fund that will not be funded by tax revenue, and that will serve a depository for all monies collected from students for (1) participation in extracurricular activities, (2) post-secondary education costs, and (3) summer school or night school courses. Monies in the Student Fee Fund shall be expended only for the purposes for which they were collected from students.

Student Illness

Students who suffer from a significant illness which has an actual or expected duration of six months or more may be eligible for accommodations and supports under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act. The school will provide accommodations to students who are returning to school after a prolonged absence due to illness, including pediatric cancer, through a 504 plan or an IEP, as appropriate. The student's plan will include informal or formal accommodations, modifications of curriculum and monitoring by medical or academic staff as determined by the student's IEP team or 504 committee. Parents and staff will engage in ongoing communication about the needs of a student who is facing these circumstances.

Students who become ill at school will be sent to the building office where the school nurse or other school employee will determine the appropriate response. When a child is too ill to remain at school, a school employee will contact the child's parent(s) and arrange for the child to be picked up or sent home. If an illness or injury requires immediate medical attention, school officials shall attempt to contact the child's parent(s) regarding treatment for the child. If the parents cannot be contacted, school officials may have the child treated by an available physician. Students who show symptoms of a contagious disease may be sent home, and the district may require a physician's statement before allowing such students to return to school.

Student Government

Students are encouraged to formulate and participate in elective and representative student government activities. The organization, operation, and scope of the student government shall be administered by the superintendent or designee.

Student Records

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") provides parents certain rights with respect to their student's education records. These rights include the right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the date the school receives a request for access; and the right to request the amendment of the student's education records that you believe to be inaccurate.

If parents believe one of their student's records is inaccurate, they should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why they believe it is inaccurate. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested, it will notify the parents of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment.

Directory Information: FERPA and the Nebraska Public Records Law authorize school districts to make "directory information" available for review at the request of non-school individuals. These laws also give parents and guardians a voice in the decision-making process regarding the disclosure of directory information regarding their children. The school district has designated the following as directory information:

name and grade, name of parent and/or guardian, address, telephone number, including the student's cell phone number, e-mail address, date and place of birth, dates of attendance, the image or likeness of students in pictures, videotape, film or other medium, major field of study, participation in activities and sports, degrees and awards received, social media usernames and handles, weight and height of members of athletic teams, most recent previous school attended, certain class work which may be published onto the Internet, classroom assignment and/or home room teacher, student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used by the student for purposes of accessing or communicating in electronic systems (but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a personal identification number (PIN), password, or other factor known or possessed only the authorized user). Directory information does not include a student's social security number.

Directory information about students may be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that market or manufacture class rings, sell student photographs or publish student yearbooks.

Federal law requires school districts to provide military recruiters and institutions of higher education with the names, addresses, and telephone listings of high school students unless parents have notified the school district in writing that they do not want this information disclosed without prior written parental consent. Military recruiters will be granted the same access to a student in a high school grade as is provided to postsecondary educational institutions or to prospective employers of such students.

Parents who **OBJECT** to the disclosure of any directory information about their student should write a letter to the principal. This letter should specify the particular categories of directory information that the parents do not wish to have released about their child or the particular types of outside organizations to which they do not wish directory information to be released. This letter must be received by the school district no later than September 1 of the upcoming school year.

Non-Directory Information: All of the other personally identifiable information about students that is maintained in the school district's education records will generally not be disclosed to anyone outside the school system except under one of two circumstances: (1) in accordance with the provisions of the FERPA statutes and related administrative regulations, or (2) in accordance with the parent's written instructions.

One FERPA exception permits disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests without consent. A school official includes, but is not necessarily limited to, a teacher or other educator, administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); school board member; volunteer; contractor or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under

the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, representative of the district's insurance providers, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or a third party website operator who has contracted with the school district or its agent to offer online programs for the benefit of students and/or the district; members of law enforcement acting on behalf of the school district; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a "legitimate educational interest" if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill a school related professional, contractual, statutory, or regulatory responsibility.

The district will share information with the Department of Education necessary to comply with the requirement of state law that all third- year high school students take a college entrance exam. Any redisclosure of information related to the administration of this exam shall be governed by the agreement between the Nebraska Department of Education and the third-party testing company.

Transfer of Records Upon Student Enrollment

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. The school is not obligated to inform parents when it makes a disclosure under this provision.

Complaints

Individuals who wish to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA may contact the Office that administers FERPA:

Family Policy Compliance Office (U.S. Department of Education)
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605

Student Schedule Changes

Student schedule changes may be made without penalty during the first three days of each semester. Drop and Add slips are to be obtained from the office of the Guidance Counselor and must be signed by the guidance counselor and building principal before they are presented to the teacher of the class that is to be added or dropped.

After the first week of the semester, students who insist on dropping a class, except for instances of an extended illness, will receive a "0" on their permanent records, and that grade will be averaged into the student's cumulative grade point average. If an extended illness makes it impossible or impracticable for a student to successfully complete a class or classes, the student may be allowed to withdraw from a class or classes as (WP)-Withdraw Passing or (WF)-Withdraw Failing. If permission to withdraw as WP or WF is given by the building principal and guidance counselor, the grade(s) will not be averaged into the cumulative grade point average of the student. Before students are allowed to withdraw from a class as WP or WF, the student, the parents of the student, the guidance counselor, and the building principal must meet and review the circumstances of the situation. All available means that could be utilized to allow the student to successfully complete the course(s) must be reviewed before permission to withdraw as WP or WF is given by the building principal and guidance counselor.

Telephone Calls

The school's telephone may be used only with permission of staff.

Threat Assessment

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 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.

- i. The threat may be expressed/communicated behaviorally, orally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through any other means.
 - ii. A **transient threat** is an expression of anger or frustration that can be quickly or easily resolved.
 - iii. 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 distinguishing “transient” threats from serious ones in a systematic, data-informed way.
 - i. 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.
 - ii. 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 any threatening statements or behavior to a member of the administration. 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 the Superintendent and the building principal involved. The team is responsible for investigating all reported threats to school safety, evaluating the significance of each threat, and devising an appropriated response. The threat assessment team shall work closely with the crisis team in planning for crisis situations. The threat assessment team shall be familiar with mental health resources available to students, staff and patrons and shall collaborate with local mental health service providers as appropriate.

4. Threat Assessment Investigation and Response

All reports of violent, threatening, stalking or other behavior or statements which could be interpreted as posing a threat to school safety will immediately be forwarded to the superintendent. Upon receipt of an initial report of any threat, the superintendent will take steps to verify the information, make an initial assessment, and document any decision involving further action. This investigation may include interviews with the person who made the statement(s) or engaged in the behavior of concern, interviews with teachers and other staff members who may have information about the individual of concern, interviews with the target(s) of the threatening statements or behavior, interviews of family members, physical searches of the individual of concern’s person, possessions, and home (as allowed by law and in cooperation with law enforcement), and any other investigatory methods that the superintendent determines to be reasonable and useful. The superintendent may confer with at least one member of the school’s guidance counseling staff as part of his/her investigation.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the superintendent will determine what, if any, response to the threat is appropriate. The superintendent is authorized to disclose the results of his/her investigation to law enforcement and to the target(s) of any threatened acts. The superintendent 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 his/her investigation to the student’s individualized education plan team.

5. Communication with the Public about Reported Threats

To the extent possible, the team will keep members of the school community informed about possible threats and about the team’s response to those threats. This communication may include oral announcements, written communication

sent home with students, and 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 if that individual is a minor.

6. Coordination with the Crisis Team After Resolution of Threat

The superintendent may confer with the district's safety team after a threat has been investigated to provide the safety team with information that the safety team may use in assessing or revising the district's All-Hazard School's Safety Plan.

Transportation Services

Buses and Transportation

Students living in the district will be provided daily transportation to and from school, as authorized by State Law. By State Law, the school does not provide transportation for students who live outside the school district boundaries (option enrollment students).

Every precaution is taken by First Student Bus Company to see that every child arrives at their destination safely. Therefore, safety on busses is paramount. It is absolutely necessary that the students conduct themselves in a respectful manner. The bus company is contracted by Conestoga Public Schools and is responsible for discipline guidelines while the students are being transported. Students are expected to follow all guidelines set by the company. First Student Bus Company has the right to restrict transportation of any student not following safety guidelines.

Parents should notify the First Student Bus Company and the Office in advance if students are to be dropped off at a site other than their assigned drop-off. Parents should also notify the school in writing of any other changes in the transportation process (riding home with another student, etc.).

For students to "ride home" with another student, permission from parents of both students must be provided to the school Office by 1:00pm the day the students wish to ride. This confirms to the school that both sets of parents are informed and consent to the "ride home". Contact information can be found at the front of this handbook.

Abuse may result in loss of transportation privileges. The school has no obligation to transport students for personal reasons (school materials left at home, court or medical appointments).

Daily route buses will begin at a time which brings students to school at or near 7:45 AM. Typically, the routes will begin the route before 7:00 AM from the school (See Board Policy.) The afternoon buses will begin routes at 4:05 PM and should complete those routes by 5:00 PM.

Due to increasing fuel costs and the importance of attendance on student achievement, the school will not respond to transportation requests following the morning route. Families are expected to have students ready to be transported during the scheduled van/bus route. The school will not transport students home during the day except for medical emergencies as determined by school personnel.

Option enrollment families that qualify for the National School Lunch Program (free lunch only) are entitled to transportation reimbursement. For details of the program, contact the Superintendent's Office.

Transportation to Activities

The school district provides transportation to students who are participating in school-sponsored events and they must ride to those events in a school vehicle. Students who wish to take private transportation home from a school event must submit a release form to the sponsor that has been signed by that student's parent.

Video Surveillance and Photographs

The Board of Education has authorized the use of video cameras on school district property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students and visitors, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment. Video cameras may be used in locations deemed appropriate by the Superintendent. If a video surveillance recording captures a student or other building user violating school policies or rules or local, state, or federal laws, it may be used in

appropriate disciplinary proceedings against the student or other building user and may also be provided to law enforcement agencies.

Recordings Made by Parents/Guardians and Patrons. Parents/guardians and patrons may make recordings intended to be public of school activities in a non-disruptive manner including things like athletic contests and school board meetings to the extent permitted by law unless otherwise lawfully restricted by the administration. Parents/guardians or patrons may not make recordings if they are volunteering or visiting school during the school day without permission of the administration or supervising staff member and subject to this policy, such as recording their child's classroom activities or recess. Parents may not record meetings with administrators or staff, including meetings related to a student's IEP or 504 Plan. Violation of this policy will result in immediate termination of any meeting that is being recorded and may be grounds for exclusion from school property, loss of volunteer privileges, or other restrictions deemed appropriate by the administration.

Recordings Made by Students. This policy applies to students during the school day on school grounds; when being transported to and from school activities or programs in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by a school being used for a school purpose by a school employee or by his or her designee; or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event. Students may make recordings of school activities in a non-disruptive manner including things like athletic contests and other extracurricular performances to the extent permitted by law. Students generally are not permitted to record classroom instruction or members of the school community during the school day without the express consent of a staff member or as required by the student's education plan. Student use of assistive technology that has the capacity to record and/or transmit recordings (e.g. AngelSense) must be approved by the student's education team or administration. Students remain subject to all other district policies and rules. In no event shall recordings be taken or made in restrooms, locker rooms, or other areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy. Students who violate this policy may be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion.

Teacher and Staff Restricted Areas

Certain instructional and support areas are not to be entered or used by students. Examples of these areas are teacher work areas, the teacher mail room, school storage areas and coaches offices. Within the classroom, the teacher's desk and area surrounding it are considered to be private areas not to be accessed or used by students. This protects the privacy of the teacher's personal property as well as information of a private nature which is related to student achievement.

Teachers should not allow students to work at their desk, use the teacher's computer or have access to any instructional materials at the teacher desk. Teachers may also specify other areas of their classroom which are "off limits" because of privacy, safety or security concerns.

Textbooks and Other Materials

All textbooks are loaned to students for their use during the school year. Textbooks are to be kept clean and handled carefully. Students should not make excessive marks on books or school materials. Students will be held financially responsible for lost or damaged textbooks, materials and supplies. (See Board Policy 5045.)

Withdrawal From School

Please contact the Office about procedures for withdrawing from school. Students transferring to other schools must complete all procedures and fulfill all financial obligations before school records will be released.

Work Permits

The building principal or other authorized school official shall be responsible for the issuance of work permits for children in accordance with state law.

SECTION TWO ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Academic / Extra Curricular Eligibility

To be eligible for activities, students must be passing all classes. Student eligibility will be established weekly and available to all teachers, coaches and sponsors, who will inform students of their eligibility. Students who are ineligible must meet all standards to become eligible. The activities director or principal will verify the student has regained eligibility and notify coaches and sponsors. The list will be run Thursday and eligibility for that list will run Tuesday – Monday of the following week. Holidays and circumstances affecting the length of the school week may affect the duration of the list.

If a student ends the day in suspension (in-school or out-of-school), they will not be able to participate in an activity game, event, practice or contest that day. This includes attending events. In addition, to participate in school activities, students must meet all eligibility requirements set forth by the Nebraska School Activities Association as well as Conestoga Public Schools. Eligibility requirements are outlined in the Activities Handbook.

Activities affected by the eligibility rule are:

1. All NSAA and Conference interscholastic contests. This includes athletics and fine arts.
2. All Conestoga supported and sponsored clubs and activity groups.
3. Cheer and Dance
4. Music competition/performances (except Fall, Winter, Spring concerts) and clinics.
5. Other activities deemed appropriate by the administration

Violations to Conestoga's Good Standing Policy may also impact the above activities / events.

Academic Honor Roll

Honor students will be recognized at the end of each semester.

1. Any student who receives a Grade Point Average of 94 or above for that grading period will be on the Honor Roll.
2. High school students must be enrolled in at least 25 credit hours in a semester to be eligible for the Honor Roll.

Academic Letter Awards

A special Academic Certificate (High Honors) can be earned once each year by meeting the following criteria.

1. Have a Grade Point Average of 94 or above for each of the three grading periods used in determining the award.
2. The student must be enrolled in a minimum of six (6) classes each semester.

Artificial Intelligence (6038)

As used in this policy, artificial intelligence tools ("AI Tools") mean machine-based resources that use computer science, algorithms, large language models, and/or machine learning to perform tasks, answer questions, collect information, and respond to human-directed tasks, queries, and objectives. AI Tools include, but are not necessarily limited to, commercially-available resources like ChaptGPT, Google Bard, and other chatbots.

The board recognizes that among other resources, when properly used, AI Tools may provide valuable source information to students and teachers in relation to the district's academic curriculum and assignments. Student use of AI Tools should focus on using such tools as a resource and for background material, rather than using the AI Tools to complete the assignment. Therefore, AI Tools may only be used by students in accordance with the following requirements:

1. Unless an individual teacher affirmatively communicates to students that AI Tools may be used for a specific assignment, then AI Tools may not be used. Individual teachers will decide for each individual assignment the extent to which students may use AI Tools for such assignment. Teachers are encouraged to make such a decision in advance of students being given the individual assignment in question.

2. Teachers will communicate to all students responsible for completing an assignment the extent to which such students may use AI Tools in connection with such assignment. Teachers will endeavor to include in such communications examples of permissible and impermissible uses of AI Tools.
3. If a student uses any AI Tools in connection with a school assignment, the student must comply with the following
 - a. The student must explicitly disclose to the teacher in writing that the student used an AI Tool and the specific AI Tool used.
 - b. In any student work (whether hard copy, electronic, digital, or otherwise), the student shall give proper attribution to the AI Tool(s) used to the same extent that students are expected to give proper attribution to other sources of information such as books, texts, encyclopedias, secondary sources, and other traditional media. Such attribution may include, but is not necessarily limited to, accurate quotations, citations, footnotes, endnotes, and/or bibliography entries.
 - c. In no instance may the output from one or more AI Tools be copied and placed within a student's work as if the student wrote such section himself or herself. For example and not limitation, students may not outsource the organization or the writing of any written work to any AI Tool.
4. A student's failure to meet the requirements stated in this policy will constitute a violation of the district's prohibitions against cheating plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty, including but not necessarily limited to such prohibitions stated in the Student Handbook, which violation will subject the student to discipline up to and including expulsion.
5. The student requirements stated above are the minimum requirements for any student assignment. An individual teacher may impose more stringent requirements for any specific academic assignment or coursework.

Class Rank

Student class rank shall be determined by using a numeric grade point average derived from all classes graded on a numeric basis. To be included in the class ranking, a student must have received a numeric grade for each core curriculum class in which he/she was enrolled. For the purposes of this policy, core curriculum shall include all courses in the areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Students who transfer into the school district will be eligible to be included in class ranking after two semesters of attendance.

Students who transfer into the school district in middle of their senior year will be eligible to be included in class ranking, although a mid-year transfer will not displace the ranking of a student who has not transferred mid-year. In those circumstances there will be two students holding the relevant class ranking. Mid-year transfer students will not be eligible to receive senior awards such as valedictorian and salutatorian unless the student has been enrolled in the district's high school for the last two semesters.

Credit for Non-Academic Work

Credit is not awarded for participation in extracurricular activities such as sports, speech, drama, etc. However, all such activities in which the student participates, as well as honors earned, are noted on the student's permanent record.

Cougar Academic Program (CAP)

The Cougar Academic Program, when offered at Conestoga Public School, serves five distinct functions:

1. Degree completion: finishing credits needed to graduate
 2. Schedule flexibility: working on classes not available in the regular schedule
 3. Assistive instruction: smaller classes, limited movement of students in the school day
 4. Instructional programming offered for those students suspended or expelled
 5. Special Education considerations: students whose educational needs are not met through traditional means
- State and Federal educational entities monitor the achievement of schools using a variety of measurements, and schools that do not meet established levels of performance are subject to sanctions including loss of funding, restrictions and staffing changes. Because graduation rate (completing in four years, regardless of circumstances) is one of these measures, students who fail core courses and/or fall behind may be assigned to an alternative program to recover the credit needed to graduate in four years.

Dual Credit and Early Entry College Classes While in High School

Early entry/college online courses mean high school students can earn college credit prior to graduation, but these courses are not allowed for high school credit.

Dual-credit means students receive college credit and high school credit for the same coursework prior to graduation from high school. However, the provisions of Nebraska Rule 10 (the regulation addressing the accreditation of schools by the Nebraska Department of Education) **prohibits** the awarding of high school credit unless the college instructor holds a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate (Rule 10-003.01, State Statute 79-802). Because college instructors are not required to hold a Nebraska Teaching Certificate, there is no guarantee any course taught or taken as part of an early-entry program can be counted for high school credit. Unless Conestoga High School has a copy of the instructor's Nebraska Certificate on file, no course can count toward graduation requirements.

In addition, it is the practice of Conestoga Public Schools to count any dual-credit course (college and high school credit simultaneously) toward ELECTIVE credit only, unless that course is taught by Conestoga staff members. It cannot supplant (replace) the required credits in any core area subject (English, Math, Social Science, Science) or any specified courses required for graduation. Credit earned through dual-credit can only be applied toward elective credit required for graduation. Students are advised that the stipulations for dual credit must be met as described above for students to have credit count toward graduation requirements. Students and parents should seek the guidance of the school principal and guidance counselor prior to enrolling in any college course while a student is in high school so that any credit implications can be evaluated and approved. Students may only use two periods of the school day for college credit classes without special permission from the principal

Grades / Grading Policy

The following grading scale will be followed at Conestoga:

A = 94 – 100	D = 70 – 76
B = 86 – 93	F = Below 70 (failing or inadequate work)
C = 77 – 85	P = Passing
	I = Incomplete

Credit is awarded on a semester basis. Successfully completing a semester earns 5 credits toward graduation. In the case of extenuating circumstances such as extended illness or excused absence, incompletes may be assigned with the permission of the School Counselor and principal. No credit is awarded for incomplete work.

Some 7&8th grade courses are taught using curriculum that is the same as high school courses. High school credit may be awarded to students who complete these courses with a semester average of 86% and above, accordance with Rule 10 of the Nebraska Department of Education and School Board Policy 6005A.

Graduation Awards

Graduating seniors will be awarded for their academic achievements during the annual commencement activities. The winners of these awards will be determined on the basis of student academic achievement in the core curriculum: English, mathematics, science, social studies, business education, foreign language, and computer science.

The valedictorian and salutatorian of the graduating class shall be the students with the highest and second highest cumulative percentage grade point averages respectively in core curriculum course work completed in grades nine through twelve. These students will receive their awards during commencement exercises.

Those students receiving academic all-conference as well as those in the top 10% academically will be recognized.

Graduation Requirements

Graduation from Conestoga High School requires the accumulation of 270 hours of credit. All credits must be fully earned before the time of graduation.

English.....	40	Health.....	5
Mathematics.....	40	Personal Finance	5
Fine Arts.....	10	Leadership/Life & Career Readiness ...	5
Science.....	40	Speech.....	5
Social Studies.....	40	Physical Education.....	10
Electives.....	70	Foreign Lang/ Voc. Ed.....	20
- *Fine Arts	10	Total.....	270

- *Foreign Language 10
- *CTE 10
- *Student Selected 40

(Each Semester Class = 5 Credits)

* Minimum Requirement

College bound students should refer to college admission requirements when choosing courses of study.

High school students in specific grade levels are required to register for and successfully complete the minimum requirements in the following courses: math, social studies, science, physical education/health, careers and language-arts.

9 th	English 1, Math, Biology, Health , PE, Geography, Personal Finance
10 th	English 2, Math, Integrated Science, World History, Speech, Life & Career Readiness
11 th	English 3, Math, Science, American History
12 th	English, American Government, Math, Science ** Graduation progress can be reviewed on a student-by-student basis and adjusted with administrative approval.

The results of standardized tests will be used to identify the proficiency and areas of need for students. Placement in classes may be determined by the scores attained by students.

State and Federal educational entities monitor the achievement of schools using a variety of measurements, and schools that do not meet established levels of performance are subject to sanctions including loss of funding, restrictions and staffing changes. Students may need to take summer school or enroll in a credit recovery program if behind on their graduation status.

Class Size Limitations

All classes will be limited to 18 Conestoga students with the exception of:

Music:

Vocal and Instrumental Music: Unlimited

Guitar: 15 due to guitar availability

CTE:

Welding: 10

Small Engines & Auto Mechanics: 12

Engineering & Problem Solving & Drafting: 12

- 7th & 8th Grade STS: 16

- Woods and Construction: 12

- Technology Related Courses & Journalism: 18 (depending on computer availability)

Homework

Classroom teachers will often assign homework. Parents who have questions about homework or concerns about class work should contact the teacher. Questions not resolved by the teacher should be referred to the administration.

Each student is expected to spend some time preparing for studies outside of school hours. The amount of time that is needed will depend upon each student. Normally, at least an hour a day should be spent in preparing for an average assignment.

Students who struggle to complete assignments or who must spend an inordinate amount of time completing an assignment should seek the help and advice of their teachers and consult with the principal and/or the guidance counselor.

Makeup Work

Students who are absent are expected to make up their school work. It is the students' responsibility to contact their teachers for the purpose of getting assignments. If a student is gone for an extended time, the office should be contacted and assignments will be gathered for that student.

The following make-up schedule will serve as a guideline for absences.

1. For one (1) day absence, two (2) days will be allowed to make up and turn in assignments.
2. For 2-4 day absences, three days' total will be allowed to make up and turn in assignments.
3. For five or more days absent, the student and teacher will create a reasonable schedule for the completion of missed work. The principal and School Counselor may be included in this agreement.
4. All other work (tests, quizzes, speeches) should be completed in a reasonable time-frame.

Mid-Term Graduation.

Students are generally required to attend four years of high school (minimum of seven semesters) to be eligible to receive a diploma from the school district.

The Board of Education, upon receiving administrative recommendation, may grant mid-term exit from high school to students who have completed the requirements for graduation. To be considered for mid-term exit from high school, the student and his/her parents or guardian should plan accordingly to ensure all credits can be earned by mid-term of their senior year. Official application will occur first quarter of the student's senior year. The Board of Education will act on all requests. Any student who is granted mid-term exit from high school forfeits all privileges of high school enrollment, except the right to participate in commencement exercises. (Policy 5066)

Promotion and Retention

A student should show proficiency and earn a passing grade in order to earn credit for a class. Retention, retaking of a class and credit recovery options will be examined.

Protective and Safety Devices

Students participating in classes requiring them to wear protective equipment must comply or risk suspension of participation in that course.

Report Cards / Progress Reports

Progress reports will be run and distributed at Parent Teacher Conferences. Semester report cards will be mailed per request. Weekly eligibility reports will be mailed home to those who are having difficulty in an academic subject.

Standardized Tests

The use of yearly standardized tests (MAPs) and assessments required by the Nebraska Department of Education (NSCAS) and Federal education laws (No Child Left Behind) are valuable measurements of student progress and educational effectiveness. All students will participate in the testing procedures as a requirement of educational progress and graduation. See Board Policy 5012. The results of standardized tests will be used to identify the proficiency and areas of need for students. Placement in classes may be determined by the scores attained by students. Grades may be assigned for performance on standardized tests.

Student Materials

Students should bring basic supplies to school such as pencils, pens and notebooks as part of being prepared for class.

SECTION THREE STUDENT DISCIPLINE

General Discipline Philosophy

The school district has the authority to discipline students who behave inappropriately on the way to school, at school, during lunch, on the way home, and at all school activities (home and away or any time while on school or district property).

The school district's discipline is guided by the following principles:

1. The school district's discipline policy is intended to ensure that students take responsibility for their behavior.
2. Behavior expectations and the consequences for failing to meet those expectations will be clearly communicated to all students and their parents.
3. The severity of consequences for violating behavior expectations will generally be progressive in nature. That is, sanctions will increase with each instance of misconduct; however, each instance will be assessed on its own facts, and sanctions will be imposed based on the severity of the misconduct.
4. Parents play a vital role in supporting and reinforcing the school district's expectations of their students.
5. Behavior expectations apply to all students; consequences are enforced consistently without regard to a student's academic record or achievement.

Extracurricular activities including athletics, cheerleading, band, chorus, and club activities, are governed by the Student Activity Handbook. Students who are involved in extracurricular activities may face consequences related to the activity in addition to the consequences discussed in this handbook.

The school district reserves the right to refer to the appropriate non-school agency any act or conduct of its students which may constitute a crime under federal, state, county, or local law. The administration will cooperate with these agencies in their investigations.

Immediate Disciplinary Referrals to Administration

Student behavior which poses a threat toward the safety of others (students or teachers) or causes a disruption to the learning environment will be referred to the appropriate school administrator immediately.

Chronic Discipline Problems

Students who are frequently referred to the office or develop a pattern of discipline problems will be considered to need special attention. In addition, school discipline may be more severe. Examples include detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, expulsion and alternative placement. Parental contact will be continuous and on-going.

Severe Discipline Problems:

1. A student found with a weapon, an object used as a weapon, or a firearm will be suspended from school.
 - a. During the suspension, the principal will review the incident and take disciplinary action.
 - b. If the principal determines a student brought a gun to school, or used an object as a weapon to harm a person, that student will be expelled from school for one calendar year.
2. Any student caught fighting will be suspended. In addition, Authorities will be called. During the suspension, the principal will review the incident and take disciplinary action.
3. Students displaying aggressive behavior toward teachers or students will be suspended, either with in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension. Possible actions may include:
 - Expulsion for the remainder of the semester
 - In-school suspension
 - Other discipline deemed appropriate by the principal.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS FOR ALL STUDENTS

These behaviors are not appropriate and disciplinary action in accordance with school board policy will result. This list is not all-inclusive and may be added to by the administration or teachers in individual classrooms. In all disciplinary situations not covered by these rules, School Board policy and State Law will provide guidance for action.

- A. Disrespect toward others
- B. Bullying and/or harassment

- C. Abusive language or swearing
- D. Leaving class without permission (walkouts)
- E. Tardiness or wandering the halls avoiding class
- F. Fighting or assault
- G. Defacing or destroying school property
- H. Closed campus violation (leaving grounds without permission)
- I. Possession of weapons, including, but not limited to, any knife, firearm, air gun, screwdriver, home-made weapon, fireworks, throwing instrument, firearm ammunition, or any other device which may produce bodily harm/death
- J. Possession of matches, lighters, explosives or flammable materials
- K. Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, other drugs or look-alike substances
- L. Possession of drug paraphernalia or “look-alike” drugs, including vapes, jules, e-cigarettes, etc.
- M. Possession of items that disrupt the educational process
- N. Climbing on the outside of the building or other school structures
- O. Horseplay, mischief or inappropriate behavior which is dangerous or interferes with the educational environment of the school
- P. Behavior—planned or accidental—which results in damage to school property
- Q. Threatening behavior or language toward others, including obscene gestures or signs
- R. Abusive language or language that denigrates the racial, gender, ethnic or religious rights and views of others
- S. Setting off fire alarms, tampering with fire detection devices or fire extinguishers, or falsely reporting emergencies
- T. Throwing objects at other people, school buses or school property (including snow ball fights and water balloons), “pea shooters” or rubber bands
- U. Inappropriate dress or attire
- V. Behavior on buses or vans which endangers the safety of other riders or drivers or causes damage to the vehicle
- W. Failure to complete disciplinary action or abide by behavioral agreements
- X. Abuse of computers, either by physical or electronic means (tampering with security measures, changing programs or access codes, etc.)
- Y. Use of teachers’ computers or telephones
- Z. Being in unauthorized areas of a classroom, including teacher desks, files or storage areas
- AA. The unauthorized use of electronic and musical devices during school hours
- BB. Unsafe or reckless driving on school property
- CC. Bringing toys and other nuisance items to school.
- DD. Damage or theft of the school’s or individual’s property
- EE. Inappropriate displays of public affection
- FF. Trespassing on school property. (Trespassing means being on school grounds when school-related activities are not being held and/or engaging in acts of mischief, and/or behavior resulting in property damage, and/or using school facilities or equipment when not specifically authorized. Use of the school track for fitness activities that does not damage property is not trespassing.)
- GG. Engaging in food fights or other actions that disrupt the school food program.
- HH. Engaging in lewd or obscene acts.
- II. Photographing or videoing others in any area without their permission and/or using video or digital images to harass, embarrass, bully or intimidate others, including the posting of videos to social media.
- JJ. Acts of initiation or hazing, as described in Board Policy 5028.

Forms of School Discipline

Administrative and teaching personnel may take actions regarding student behavior that are reasonably necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or prevent interference with the educational process. Such actions may include, but need not be limited to, counseling of students, parent conferences, referral to restorative justice practices or services, rearrangement of schedules, requirements that a student remain in school after regular hours to do additional work, restriction of extracurricular activity, or requirements that a student receive counseling, psychological evaluation, or psychiatric evaluation upon the written consent of a parent or guardian to such counseling or evaluation. The actions may

also include in-school suspensions during the day or mandatory attendance at Saturday school. When in-school suspensions, after-school assignments, Saturday School, or other disciplinary measures are assigned, the student is responsible for complying with such disciplinary measures; a failure to serve such assigned discipline as directed will serve as grounds for further discipline, up to expulsion from school. District administrators may develop building-specific protocols for the imposition of student discipline.

In this section, references to "Principal" shall include building principals, the principal's designee, or other appropriate school district administrators.

Any statement, notice, recommendation, determination, or similar action specified in this section shall be effectively given at the time written evidence thereof is delivered personally to or upon receipt of certified or registered mail or upon actual knowledge by a student or his or her parent or guardian.

Any student who is suspended or expelled from school pursuant to this section may not participate in any school activity during the duration of that exclusion including adjacent school holidays and weekends. The student activity eligibility of a student who is mandatorily reassigned shall be determined on a case-by-case basis by the principal of the building to which the student is reassigned.

Detentions

Detention is a temporary assignment to a restrictive learning classroom before, during or after the school day where students are re-taught appropriate school behaviors and provided time to complete academic assignments. Detentions may be assigned by individual teachers or the principal. Failure to serve detentions will result in other disciplinary action which may include the loss of privileges, parent conference, in-school suspension or suspension.

Students who ride the bus home from school will be given a 24-hour after-school time or a detention so that the parents may make plans to pick up the student the following day.

- A student who fails to attend a detention may be given additional disciplinary consequences. A student who has a conflict with an after-school session is responsible for working it out with the teacher.

Saturday or Monday School

The building administrator may require a student to attend Saturday or Monday School. Students follow strict rules and must work on assignments the entire time, except for short breaks. Students who do not follow Saturday or Monday School rules will be removed from the classroom and will face further disciplinary action.

In-School Suspension

The building administrator may require a student to serve in-school suspension. Students may be required to attend up to six hours per day of school-sponsored suspension a day at a designated location where they will study and participate in campus clean up. There will be zero tolerance for behavior problems from students placed in in-school suspension. Students not completing their In-School Suspension will face further disciplinary action.

Emergency Exclusion

Students may be emergency excluded from school pursuant to the board's separate policy on emergency exclusion or state law.

Short-Term Suspension

The Principal may exclude students from school or any school function for a period of up to five school days (short-term suspension) on the following grounds:

1. Conduct constituting grounds for expulsion as hereinafter set forth; or,
2. Other violations of rules and standards of behavior adopted by the Board of Education or the administrative or teaching staff of the school, that occur on or off school grounds, if such conduct interferes with school purposes or there is a connection between such conduct and school.

The following process applies to short-term suspension:

1. The Principal shall make a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances. Short-term suspension shall be imposed only after a determination that the suspension is necessary to help any student, to further school purposes, or to prevent an interference with school purposes.
2. Prior to commencement of the short-term suspension, the student will be given oral or written notice of the charges against the student. The student will be advised of what he or she is accused of having done, be given an explanation of the evidence the authorities have, and be given an opportunity to explain the student's version of the facts.
3. Within 24 hours or such additional time as is reasonably necessary following the suspension, the Principal will send a written statement to the student, and the student's parent or guardian, describing the student's conduct, misconduct or violation of the rule or standard, and the reasons for the action taken. An opportunity will be given to the student, and the student's parent or guardian, to have a conference with the Principal ordering the short-term suspension before or at the time the student returns to school. The Principal shall determine who, in addition to the parent or guardian, is to attend the conference.
4. Students who are short-term suspended will be given the opportunity to complete class work including but not limited to examinations, under the following conditions:

Firearms. No student may bring, possess, handle or transmit a firearm on school grounds, in a school owned vehicle, or at a school activity or event off school grounds, except as permitted by this policy.

Definition of Firearm. The term "firearm, as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921, means any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, any firearm muffler or firearm silencer, or any destructive device (excluding an antique firearm).

Exceptions Regarding Firearms. The only exceptions for a student to bring or possess a weapon, including a firearm, are as follows:

1. The issuance of firearms to or possession of firearms by members of the Reserve Officers Training Corps when training or
2. Firearms which may lawfully be possessed by the person receiving instruction under the immediate supervision of an adult instructor who may lawfully possess firearms.

Consequences - Firearm. Any student who brings a firearm, as that term is defined in 18 United States Code 921, to school will be expelled from school for one calendar year. The superintendent of schools and the board of education shall have the authority to modify the expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

Long-Term Suspension

Students may be excluded by the Principal from school or any school function for a period of more than five school days but less than twenty school days (long-term suspension) for any conduct constituting grounds for expulsion as hereinafter set forth. The process for long-term suspension is set forth below.

Expulsion

1. **Meaning of Expulsion.** Expulsion means exclusion from attendance in all schools, grounds and activities of or within the system for a period not to exceed the remainder of the semester in which it took effect unless the misconduct occurred (a) within ten school days prior to the end of the first semester, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect through the second semester, or (b) within ten school days prior to the end of the second semester, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect for summer school and the first semester of the following school year, or (c) unless the expulsion is for conduct specified in these rules or in law as permitting or requiring a longer removal, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect for the period specified therein. Such action may be modified or terminated by the school district at any time during the expulsion period.
2. **Summer Review.** Any expulsion that will remain in effect during the first semester of the following school year will be automatically scheduled for review before the beginning of the school year. The review will be conducted by the hearing officer who conducted the initial expulsion hearing, or a hearing officer appointed by the Superintendent in the event no hearing was previously held or the initial hearing officer is no longer available or willing to serve, after the hearing officer has given notice of the review to the student and the student's parent or guardian. This review

shall be limited to newly discovered evidence or evidence of changes in the student's circumstances occurring since the original hearing. This review may lead to a recommendation by the hearing officer that the student be readmitted for the upcoming school year. If the school board or board of education or a committee of such board took the final action to expel the student, the student may be readmitted only by action of the board. Otherwise, the student may be readmitted by action of the Superintendent.

3. **Suspension of Enforcement of an Expulsion:** Enforcement of an expulsion action may be suspended (i.e., "stayed") for a period of not more than one full semester in addition to the balance of the semester in which the expulsion takes effect, and as a condition of such suspended action, the student may be assigned to a school, class, or program/plan and to such other consequences which the school district deems appropriate.
4. **Alternative School or Pre-expulsion Procedures.** The school shall provide either an alternative school, class or educational program for expelled students or shall follow the pre-expulsion procedures outlined in Neb. Rev. Stat. 79-266.

Grounds for Long-Term Suspension, Expulsion, or Mandatory Reassignment:

The following conduct constitutes grounds for long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment, subject to the procedural provisions of the Student Discipline Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-254 through 79-296, when such activity occurs on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by a school being used for a school purpose or in a vehicle being driven for a school purpose by a school employee or by his or her designee, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event:

1. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes. The board has determined that the use of synthetic media such as deepfakes may constitute "similar conduct";
2. Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property of substantial value, or repeated damage or theft involving property;
3. Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to a school employee, to a school volunteer, or to any student. Personal injury caused by accident, self-defense, or other action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect some other person shall not constitute a violation of this subdivision;
4. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of or with the intent of obtaining money or anything of value from such student;
5. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon (*see also board policy on weapons and firearms*);
6. Engaging in the unlawful possession, selling, dispensing, or use of a controlled substance or an imitation controlled substance, as defined in section 28-401, a substance represented to be a controlled substance, or alcoholic liquor as defined in section 53-103.02 or being under the influence of a controlled substance or alcoholic liquor (*note: the term "under the influence" for school purposes has a less strict meaning than it does under criminal law; for school purposes, the term means any level of impairment and includes even the odor of alcohol on the breath or person of a student; also, it includes being impaired by reason of the abuse of any material used as a stimulant*);
7. Public indecency as defined in section 28-806, except that this prohibition shall apply only to students at least twelve years of age but less than nineteen years of age;
8. Engaging in bullying as defined in section 79-2,137 and in these policies;
9. Sexually assaulting or attempting to sexually assault any person if a complaint has been filed by a prosecutor in a court of competent jurisdiction alleging that the student has sexually assaulted or attempted to sexually assault any person, including sexual assaults or attempted sexual assaults that occur off school grounds not at a school function, activity, or event. For purposes of this subdivision, sexual assault means sexual assault in the first degree as defined in section 28-319, sexual assault in the second degree as defined in section 28-320, sexual assault of a child in the second or third degree as defined in section 28-320.01, or sexual assault of a child in the first degree as defined in section 28-319.01, as such sections now provide or may hereafter from time to time be amended;
10. Engaging in any other activity forbidden by the laws of the State of Nebraska which activity constitutes a danger to other students or interferes with school purposes; or
11. A repeated violation of any of the following rules, or a single violation if the conduct amounts to a criminal act, if such violations constitute a substantial interference with school purposes:

- a. The use of language, written or oral, or conduct, including gestures, which is profane or abusive to students or staff members. Profane or abusive language or conduct includes, but is not limited to, that which is commonly understood and intended to be derogatory toward a group or individual based upon race, sex, national origin, or religion;
- b. Dressing or grooming in a manner which violates the school district's dress code and/or is dangerous to the student's health and safety, a danger to the health and safety of others, or which is disruptive, distracting or indecent to the extent that it interferes with the learning and educational process;
- c. Violating school bus rules as set by the school district or district staff;
- d. Possessing, using, selling, or dispensing tobacco, drug paraphernalia, an electronic nicotine delivery system, or a tobacco imitation substance or packaging, regardless of form, including cigars, cigarettes, chewing tobacco, and any other form of tobacco, tobacco derivative product or imitation, or electronic cigarettes, vapor pens, etc.;
- e. Possessing, using, selling, or dispensing any drug paraphernalia or imitation of a controlled substance regardless of whether the actual substance possessed is a controlled substance by Nebraska law;
- f. Possession of pornography, including creation, possession, dissemination, accessing, sale, or any other use of synthetic media, such as deepfakes;
- g. Sexting or the possession of sexting images (a combination of sex and texting - the act of sending sexually explicit messages or photos electronically), including creation, possession, dissemination, accessing, sale, or any other use of synthetic media, such as deepfakes;
- h. Engaging in initiations, defined as any ritualistic expectations, requirements, or activities placed upon new members of a school organization for the purpose of admission into the organization, even if those activities do not rise to the level of "hazing" as defined below. Initiations are prohibited except by permission of the superintendent;
- i. Engaging in hazing as defined by state law and this policy. Hazing is defined as any activity by which a person intentionally or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health or safety of an individual for the purpose of initiation into, admission into, affiliation with, or continued membership in any school organization. Under state criminal law, hazing activities include, but are not limited to, whipping, beating, branding, an act of sexual penetration, an exposure of the genitals of the body done with the intent to affront or alarm any person, a lewd fondling or caressing of the body of another person, forced and prolonged calisthenics, prolonged exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or harmful substance not generally intended for human consumption, prolonged sleep deprivation, or any brutal treatment or the performance of any unlawful act that endangers the physical or mental health or safety of any person. For purposes of school rules, hazing also includes any activity expected of someone joining a group, team, or activity that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate; personal servitude; restrictions on personal hygiene; yelling, swearing and insulting new members/rookies; being forced to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire in public; consumption of vile substances or smearing of such on one's skin; binge drinking and drinking games; sexual simulation and sexual assault;
- j. Bullying which shall include cyber-bullying, defined as the use of the internet, including but not limited to social networking sites such as Facebook, cell phones or other devices to send, post or text message images and material intended to hurt or embarrass another person. This may include, but is not limited to; continuing to send e-mail to someone who has said they want no further contact with the sender; sending or posting threats, sexual remarks or pejorative labels (i.e., hate speech); ganging up on victims by making them the subject of ridicule in forums, and posting false statements as fact intended to humiliate the victim; disclosure of personal data, such as the victim's real name, address, or school at websites or forums; posing as the identity of the victim for the purpose of publishing material in their name that defames or ridicules them; sending threatening and harassing text, instant messages or emails to the victims; and posting or sending rumors or gossip to instigate others to dislike and gang up on the target;
- k. Violation of the district's computer acceptable computer use policy are subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion;

- l. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a simulated or “look-a-like” weapon;
- m. Using any object to simulate possession of a weapon;
- n. Knowingly making a false statement or knowingly submitting false information during the Title IX grievance process or any other school investigation or making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a Title IX grievance proceeding or any other school investigation; and
- o. Any other violation of a rule or regulation established by a school district staff member pursuant to authority delegated by the board.

The length of any suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment shall be as provided or allowed by law.

Reporting Requirement to Law Enforcement

Violations of this section will result in a report to law enforcement if:

- 1. The violation includes possession of a firearm;
- 2. The violation results in child abuse;
- 3. It is a violation of the Nebraska Criminal Code that the administration believes cannot be adequately addressed by discipline from the school district;
- 4. It is a violation of the Nebraska Criminal Code that endangers the health and welfare of staff or students; or
- 5. It is a violation of the Nebraska Criminal Code that interferes with school purposes.

Due Process Afforded to Students Facing Long-term Suspension or Expulsion

The following procedures shall be followed regarding any long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment:

- 1. The decision to recommend discipline shall be made within two school days after learning of the alleged student misconduct. On the date of the decision to discipline, the Principal shall file with the Superintendent a written charge and a summary of the evidence supporting such charge.
- 2. The Principal shall serve the student and the student's parents or guardian with a written notice by registered or certified mail or personal service within two school days of the date of the decision to recommend long-term suspension or expulsion. The notice shall include the following:
 - a. The rule or standard of conduct allegedly violated and the acts of the student alleged to constitute a cause for long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment, including a summary of the evidence to be presented against the student;
 - b. The penalty, if any, which the principal has recommended in the charge and any other penalty to which the student may be subject;
 - c. A statement that, before long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment can be invoked, the student has a right to a hearing, upon request, and that if the student is suspended pending the outcome of the hearing, the student may complete classwork and homework, including, but not limited to, examinations, missed during the period of suspension pursuant to district guidelines which shall not require the student to attend the school district's alternative programs for expelled students in order to complete classwork or;
 - d. A description of the hearing procedures provided by the act, along with procedures for appealing any decision rendered at the hearing;
 - e. A statement that the principal, legal counsel for the school, the student, the student's parent, or the student's representative or guardian has the right (i) to examine the student's academic and disciplinary records and any affidavits to be used at the hearing concerning the alleged misconduct and (ii) to know the identity of the witnesses to appear at the hearing and the substance of their testimony; and
 - f. A form on which the student, the student's parent, or the student's guardian may request a hearing, to be signed by such parties and delivered to the principal or superintendent in person or by registered or certified mail to the address provided on the form.
- 3. When a notice of intent to discipline a student by long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment is filed with the superintendent, the student may be suspended by the principal until the date the long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment takes effect, if the principal determines that the student must be suspended immediately to prevent or substantially reduce the risk of (a) interference with an educational

function or school purpose or (b) a personal injury to the student himself or herself, other students, school employees, or school volunteers.

4. Nothing in this policy shall preclude the student, student's parents, guardian or representative from discussing and settling the matter with appropriate school personnel prior to the time the long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment takes effect.
5. If a hearing is requested within five days after receipt of the notice, the Superintendent shall recommend appointment of a hearing examiner within two school days after receipt of the hearing request. The student or the student's parent or guardian may request designation of a hearing examiner other than the hearing examiner recommended by the superintendent if notice of the request is given to the superintendent within two school days after receipt of the superintendent's recommended appointment. Upon receiving such request, the superintendent must provide one alternative hearing examiner who is not an employee of the school district or otherwise currently under contract with the school district and whose impartiality may not otherwise be reasonably questioned. The student or the student's parent or guardian must, within five school days, select a hearing examiner to conduct the hearing who was recommended or provided as an alternative hearing examiner, and shall notify the superintendent in writing of the selection. The superintendent must appoint the selected hearing examiner upon receipt of such notice.
6. The hearing examiner must, within two school days after being appointed, give written notice to the principal, the student, and the student's parent or guardian of the time and place for the hearing.
7. The hearing shall be held within a period of five school days after appointment of the hearing examiner, but such time may be changed by the hearing examiner for good cause with consent of the parties. No hearing shall be held upon less than two school days' actual notice to the principal, the student, and the student's parent or guardian, except with the consent of all the parties.
8. The principal or legal counsel for the school, the student, and the student's parent, guardian, or representative have the right to receive a copy of all records and written statements referred to in the Student Discipline Act as well as the statement of any witness in the possession of the school board or board of education no later than forty-eight hours prior to the hearing.
9. If a hearing is requested more than five school days following the receipt of the written notice, but not more than thirty calendar days after receipt, the Superintendent shall appoint a hearing examiner. The hearing will be held according to the requirements of section 79-269. The student shall be entitled to a hearing but the consequence imposed may continue in effect pending final determination.
10. If a request for hearing is not received within thirty calendar days following the mailing or delivery of the written notice, the student shall not be entitled to a hearing.

In the event a hearing is requested, the hearing, hearing procedures, the student's rights and any appeals or judicial review permitted by law shall be governed by the applicable provisions of the Nebraska Student Discipline Act (NEB. REV. STAT. § 79-254 to 79-294).

SECTION FOUR

Title IX - Policy 3057

Nondiscrimination. The school district does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates including in admission and employment. Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to the school district's Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both. The school district's Title IX Coordinator may be contacted at Title IX Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator: Nick Krause at 402-235-2271 (phone number), nkrause@conestogacougars.org (e-mail address) or in person at school. The school district's nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures are included in this policy, or can be accessed at: [<https://www.conestogacougars.org/domain/207>] 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.

Publication Notice. The school district will include the following notice on its website and in each handbook, catalog, announcement, bulletin, application form, and other places as required by law:

The school district prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates and individuals may report concerns or questions to the Title IX Coordinator. The school district's Title IX policy, notice, and other information may be accessed at the following link: [<https://www.conestogacougars.org/domain/207>]

Retaliation Prohibited. Retaliation, including peer retaliation, is prohibited in the school district's education program or activity. If the school district has information about conduct that reasonably may constitute retaliation under Title IX, it may be required to treat it as an allegation of sex discrimination. Upon receiving a complaint alleging retaliation, the school district will initiate its grievance procedures or informal resolution process.

Definitions. As used in this policy, the following terms are defined as follows:

Complainant means an employee, a student, or a parent, guardian, or other individual with the legal right to act on behalf of a complainant who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment; or any other person who may have been subjected to sex discrimination when that person was participating or attempting to participate in the school district's education program or activity.

Complaint means an oral or written request to the school district that objectively can be understood as a request for the school district to investigate and make a determination about alleged sex discrimination under Title IX.

Consent for purposes of this policy means the willingness in fact for conduct to occur. An individual may, as a result of age, incapacity, disability, lack of information, or other circumstances be incapable of providing consent to some or all sexual conduct or activity. Neither verbal nor physical resistance is required to establish that an individual did not consent. School district officials will consider the totality of the circumstances in determining whether there was consent for any specific conduct. Consent may be revoked or withdrawn at any time.

Respondent means a person who is alleged to have violated the school district's prohibition on sex discrimination. When a sex discrimination complaint alleges that the school district's policy or practice discriminates on the basis of sex, the school district is not considered a respondent.

Sex-based harassment prohibited by this part is a form of sex discrimination and means sexual harassment and other harassment on the basis of sex that is:

Quid pro quo harassment. An employee, agent, or other person authorized by the school district to provide an aid, benefit, or service under the school district's education program or activity explicitly or impliedly conditioning the provision of such an aid, benefit, or service on a person's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;

Hostile environment harassment. Unwelcome sex-based conduct that, based on the totality of the circumstances, is subjectively and objectively offensive and is so severe or pervasive that it limits or denies a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the school district's education program or activity (i.e., creates a hostile environment). Whether a hostile environment has been created is a fact-specific inquiry that includes consideration of the following:

- The degree to which the conduct affected the complainant's ability to access the school district's education program or activity;
- The type, frequency, and duration of the conduct;
- The parties' ages, roles within the school district's education program or activity, previous interactions, and other factors about each party that may be relevant to evaluating the effects of the conduct;
- The location of the conduct and the context in which the conduct occurred; and
- Other sex-based harassment in the school district's education program or activity.

Sexual assault meaning an offense classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation;

Sex Offenses, Forcible—Any sexual act directed against another person, without the consent of the victim including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent.

- **Rape**—(Except Statutory Rape) The carnal knowledge of a person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.
- **Sodomy**—Oral or anal sexual intercourse with another person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity
- **Sexual Assault With An Object**—To use an object or instrument to unlawfully penetrate, however slightly, the genital or anal opening of the body of another person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity
- **Fondling**—The touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.

Sex Offenses, Non-forcible—(Except Prostitution Offenses) Unlawful, non-forcible sexual intercourse.

- **Incest**—Non-Forcible sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law
- **Statutory Rape**—Non-Forcible sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent

Dating violence meaning violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim and where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the length and type of relationship and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship;

Domestic violence meaning felony or misdemeanor crimes committed by a person who:

- Is a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim under the family or domestic violence laws of the jurisdiction of the school district, or a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim;
- Is cohabitating, or has cohabitated, with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner;
- Shares a child in common with the victim; or
- Commits acts against a youth or adult victim who is protected from those acts under the family or domestic violence laws of the jurisdiction

Stalking meaning engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for the person's safety or the safety of others or suffer substantial emotional distress.

Response to Sex-based Harassment.

All Employees. All school district employees must notify the Title IX Coordinator when the employee has information about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment under Title IX.

Title IX Coordinator. The school district will designate and authorize at least one employee as the school district's "Title IX Coordinator," to coordinate the school district's efforts to comply with its responsibilities under Title IX and this policy. The superintendent or Title IX Coordinator is authorized to delegate specific duties to one or more designees.

For conduct that could constitute sex-based harassment, the Title IX Coordinator must take the following actions:

- Offer and coordinate supportive measures for the complainant and for the respondent;
- Notify the complainant or the individual who reported the conduct of the grievance procedures and, if appropriate, the informal resolution process.
- Take other appropriate steps to avoid the recurrence of sex discrimination and restore or maintain equal access to the school district's programs and activities.

Supportive Measures. The school district will provide supportive measures, as appropriate, in cases involving sex-based harassment. These measures may include but are not limited to: counseling; extending deadlines; increased supervision; no-contact directives; leaves of absence; changes in class, work, or activities, regardless of whether there

is a comparable alternative; and training and education programs related to sex-based harassment. Supportive measures may be continued, modified, or discontinued at the conclusion of any grievance process. Supportive measures will not be disclosed to anyone other than the person to whom they apply and others, including school officials, who need to know the supportive measures to implement them.

Requests to Modify Supportive Measures. A complainant or respondent may request modification or reversal of the school district's decision to provide, deny, change, or terminate supportive measures applicable to them. Requests must be made to the Title IX Coordinator in writing, and an impartial individual will review the request.

Students with Disabilities. If the complainant or respondent is a student with a disability, the Title IX Coordinator will consult with one or more members of the student's IEP or Section 504 team to determine compliance with those laws while implementing supportive measures and all other requirements of this policy and Title IX.

Emergency Removal. The school district is authorized to remove a respondent from the school district's education program or activity on an emergency basis, provided that the school district undertakes an individualized safety and risk analysis; determines that an imminent and serious threat to the health or safety of a complainant or other persons arising from the allegations of sex discrimination justifies removal; and provides the respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal.

Administrative Leave. The school district is authorized to place an employee respondent on administrative leave from employment responsibilities during the pendency of the school district's grievance procedures.

Informal Resolution. The school district may offer an informal resolution process unless the complaint includes allegations that an employee engaged in sex-based harassment of a student or informal resolution would be contrary to law. Prior to initiating informal resolution, the parties will be provided with notice of the allegations. Participation in informal resolution is voluntary, and any informal resolution will include consent from the complainant and respondent, the ability to withdraw from the process, and the right to resume the grievance process. If an agreement is reached, it precludes the parties from initiating or resuming the grievance process.

The informal resolution facilitator will not be the same person as the investigator or the decisionmaker in the school district's grievance procedures. Potential terms that may be included in an informal resolution agreement include but are not limited to restrictions on contact, restrictions on participation in programs or activities, and disciplinary sanctions.

If informal resolution is offered, the school district will maintain all evidence gathered, communications about the informal resolution process, and the agreement reached. This information will be disclosed to outside individuals only as permitted by law and if required to implement the requirements of the agreement or Title IX. If no agreement is reached, only relevant and permissible evidence received during the informal resolution process will be considered during the grievance process.

Grievance Procedures to Resolve Complaints of Sex Discrimination. Any person designated as Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decision maker will not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against any party, generally or specifically. The decisionmaker may be the same person as the Title IX Coordinator or investigator.

Complaint. Complaints of sex-based harassment may only be made by a complainant; a parent, guardian, or other individual with the legal right to act on behalf of a complainant; or the Title IX Coordinator. Complaints of sex discrimination (excluding complaints of sex-based harassment) may be made by any person who was participating or attempting to participate in the school district's education program or activity at the time of the alleged sex discrimination.

Complaint by Coordinator. In the absence of a complaint made by any other individual, the Title IX Coordinator will determine whether to initiate a complaint of sex discrimination. The Title IX Coordinator must consider, at a minimum, the following factors:

- The complainant's request not to proceed with the initiation of a complaint;
- The complainant's reasonable safety concerns regarding the initiation of a complaint;
- The risk that additional acts of sex discrimination would occur if a complaint is not initiated;
- The severity of the alleged sex discrimination, including whether the discrimination, if established, would require the removal of a respondent from campus or imposition of another disciplinary sanction to end the discrimination and prevent its recurrence;
- The age and relationship of the parties, including whether the respondent is an employee of the school district;

- The scope of the alleged sex discrimination, including information suggesting a pattern, ongoing sex discrimination, or sex discrimination alleged to have impacted multiple individuals;
- The availability of evidence to assist a decisionmaker in determining whether sex discrimination occurred; and
- Whether the school district could end the alleged sex discrimination and prevent its recurrence without initiating its grievance procedures.

If the Title IX Coordinator initiates a complaint, they will notify the complainant prior to doing so and address reasonable concerns about the complainant's safety or the safety of others, including by providing supportive measures.

Consolidation of Complaints. The school district may consolidate complaints of sex discrimination against more than one respondent, or by more than one complainant against one or more respondents, or by one party against another party, when the allegations of sex discrimination arise out of the same facts or circumstances. When more than one complainant or more than one respondent is involved, references in this section to a party, complainant, or respondent include the plural, as applicable.

Basic Procedures. This grievance procedure is governed by the following basic requirements:

- A respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged sex discrimination until a determination is made at the conclusion of the grievance procedure;
- The school district will treat the complainant and respondent equitably throughout the grievance process;
- The school district will take reasonable steps to protect the privacy of individuals participating in the grievance process in a manner that does not restrict the parties from obtaining and presenting evidence, speaking to witnesses, consulting with family members or advisors, or otherwise participating in the grievance process;
- The District will use the following timelines for each complaint, but the Title IX Coordinator or designee may extend them as needed:

Major Stage	Target Duration (calendar days)
Completion of the school district's decision whether to dismiss or investigate a complaint of sex discrimination	1-15
Investigation	1-30
Determination	1-30
Appeal	1-20

Notice of Allegations. Upon initiation of the grievance procedure, the school district will provide notice of the allegations to the parties whose identities are known. The notice will include a copy of this policy; the parties involved in the incident(s); the conduct alleged to constitute sex discrimination; and the date(s) and location(s) of the alleged incident(s), if available. Retaliation is prohibited.

If the school district decides to investigate additional allegations of sex discrimination that are not included in the initial notice, the school district will provide notice of the additional allegations to the parties.

Complaint Investigation. The burden is on the school district to conduct an investigation that gathers sufficient evidence to determine whether sex discrimination occurred. The individual investigating and deciding the complaint will:

- Provide an equal opportunity for the parties to present fact witnesses and relevant and permissible evidence;
- Objectively review all evidence gathered through the investigation and determine what evidence is relevant and permissible;
- Provide each party with an accurate description of the relevant and permissible evidence, and upon request, copies of this evidence;
- Provide the parties a reasonable opportunity to respond to the evidence;
- Use a process that enables the decisionmaker to question parties and witnesses to adequately assess a party's or witness's credibility, but credibility will not be based upon any individual's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness; and
- Take reasonable steps to prevent and address the parties' unauthorized disclosure of information and evidence obtained solely through the grievance procedures. For purposes of this paragraph, disclosures of

such information and evidence for purposes of administrative proceedings or litigation related to the complaint of sex discrimination are authorized.

Relevant and Permissible Evidence. The school district will consider relevant and permissible evidence. Relevant evidence is evidence related to the allegations of sex discrimination under investigation as part of the grievance procedure. Questions are relevant when they seek evidence that may aid in showing whether the alleged sex discrimination occurred, and evidence is relevant when it may aid a decisionmaker in determining whether the alleged sex discrimination occurred.

Generally relevant evidence is permissible, but does not include:

- Evidence that is protected under a privilege as recognized by Federal or State law;
- A party's or witness's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychologist, or other recognized professional in connection with the provision of treatment to the party or witness unless the school district obtains that party's or witness's voluntary, written consent for use in this grievance procedures; and
- Evidence that relates to the complainant's sexual interests or prior sexual conduct, unless that evidence is offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the alleged conduct or is evidence about specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual conduct with the respondent that is offered to prove consent to the alleged sex-based harassment. The fact of prior consensual sexual conduct between the complainant and respondent does not by itself demonstrate or imply the complainant's consent to the alleged sex-based harassment or preclude a determination that sex-based harassment occurred.

Determining Whether Sex Discrimination Occurred. The school district will:

- Use the preponderance of the evidence standard of proof, that it is more likely than not, to determine whether sex discrimination occurred;
- Use only relevant and permissible evidence to reach a determination;
- Notify the parties in writing of the determination whether sex discrimination occurred, including the rationale for such determination, and the procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal, if applicable;
- If there is a determination that sex discrimination occurred, coordinate and provide remedies to restore equal access, coordinate the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions on a respondent, including notification to the complainant of any such disciplinary sanctions, and require the Title IX Coordinator to take other appropriate prompt and effective steps to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur;
- Not discipline a party, witness, or others participating in a school district's grievance procedures for making a false statement or for engaging in consensual sexual conduct based solely on the school district's determination whether sex discrimination occurred.

Dismissal of a Complaint. A complaint of sex discrimination made through the grievance procedure may be dismissed for any of the following reasons:

- The school district is unable to identify the respondent after taking reasonable steps to do so;
- The respondent is not participating in the school district's education program or activity and is not employed by the school district;
- The complainant voluntarily withdraws any or all of the allegations in the complaint, the Title IX Coordinator declines to initiate a complaint, and the school district determines that without the complainant's withdrawn allegations, the remaining alleged conduct would not constitute sex discrimination even if proven;
- The school district determines the conduct alleged in the complaint, even if proven, would not constitute sex discrimination under Title IX. Before dismissing the complaint under this paragraph, the school district must make reasonable efforts to clarify the allegations with the complainant.

Upon dismissal, the school district will promptly notify the complainant of the basis for the dismissal. If the dismissal occurs after the respondent has been notified of the allegations, then the school district must also notify the respondent of the dismissal and the basis for the dismissal promptly following notification to the complainant, or simultaneously if notification is in writing.

The school district will notify the complainant that a dismissal may be appealed and provide the complainant with an opportunity to appeal the dismissal. If the dismissal occurs after the respondent has been notified of the

allegations, then the school district must also notify the respondent that the dismissal may be appealed on the bases set out in this policy. Upon the dismissal of a complaint, at a minimum, the school district will:

- Offer supportive measures to the complainant, and offer supportive measures to the respondent if the respondent has been notified of the complaint;
- Require its Title IX Coordinator to take other appropriate prompt and effective steps to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within the school district's education program or activity.

Appeal. The school district will provide the parties the opportunity to appeal the decisionmaker's written determination or a dismissal of a complaint, on the grounds identified below. The school district will implement appeal procedures equally for the parties, including a reasonable and equal opportunity to make a statement in support of or challenging the outcome being appealed. Appeals under Title IX, like other comparable proceedings, will be handled consistent with the school district's general complaint policy.

Time for Appeal. Appeals may only be initiated by submitting a written Notice of Appeal to the superintendent within three (3) calendar days of the party's receipt of (1) the written determination of whether sex discrimination occurred from which the appeal is taken, or (2) the written dismissal of the complaint from which the appeal is taken.

Notice of Appeal Filed By Party. The Notice of Appeal must include (a) the name of the party or parties appealing, (b) the determination, dismissal, or portion thereof being appealed, and (c) a concise statement of the specific grounds (from the following subsection) upon which the appeal is based. A party's failure to timely submit a Notice of Appeal will be deemed a waiver of the party's right to appeal under this policy and Title IX.

Appeals of Dismissals. If a dismissal is appealed, the school district will provide notice of the allegations to the complainant and respondent if not provided previously.

Appeal Decision. The decisionmaker for the appeal will be an individual who did not take part in the investigation, determination, and/or decision to dismiss the complaint. The appeal decisionmaker will notify the parties of the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result.

Disciplinary Sanctions and Remedies. If it is determined that sex-based harassment occurred, the school district may impose disciplinary sanctions that may include suspension, expulsion, mandatory reassignment, adverse employment action up to and including termination, or any other actions regarding student behavior that are reasonably necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or prevent interference with the educational process. Such actions may include counseling of students, parent conferences, referral to restorative justice practices or services, rearrangement of schedules, requirements that a student remain in school after regular hours to do additional work, restriction of extracurricular activity, or requirements that a student receive counseling, psychological evaluation, or psychiatric evaluation upon the written consent of a parent or guardian to such counseling or evaluation.

Superintendent Authorized to Contract. The board authorizes the Superintendent to contract for, designate, and appoint individuals to serve in the roles of the school district's investigator(s), decision-maker(s), informal resolution facilitator(s), or appellate decision-maker(s) as contemplated by this policy.

Recordkeeping. The school district will maintain the following documents for a period of at least seven years:

- For each complaint of sex discrimination, records documenting the informal resolution process or grievance procedures and the outcome.
- Records documenting the actions the school district took to meet its obligations under Title IX for any allegation of sex discrimination.
- All materials used to provide training as required by this policy. The school district will make these training materials available upon request for inspection by members of the public.

SECTION FIVE
WELLNESS – Policy 5052

The school district is committed to providing a school environment that enhances learning and the development of lifelong wellness. The goals outlined in this policy were determined and selected after reviewing and considering evidence-based strategies.

1. Goals for Nutrition Promotion and Education

- a. The district will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs by such methods as implementing evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs and promoting foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- b. The health curriculum will include information on good nutrition and healthy living habits.
- c. Teachers will incorporate information on nutrition and wellness into the classroom curriculum as appropriate.
- d. The district will collaborate with public and private entities to promote student wellness.
- e. Water will be made available to students throughout the school day.

2. Goals for Physical Activity

- a. The school district's curriculums shall include instruction on physical activity and habits for healthy living.
- b. Students will be encouraged to engage in physical activities throughout the school day and will be provided with opportunities to do so.
- c. The district encourages parents and guardians to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.

3. Goals for Other School-Based Activities Designed to Promote Student Wellness

- a. The district will participate in state and federal child nutrition programs as appropriate.
- b. The district will provide professional development, support, and resources for staff about student wellness.
- c. Students will be provided sufficient time in which to eat school-provided meals.
- d. The district's lunchrooms will be attractive and well-lighted.
- e. The district will allow other health-related entities to use school facilities for activities such as health clinics and screenings so long as the activities meet the district's requirements and criteria for the use of facilities.
- f. The district may partner with other individuals or entities in the community to support the implementation of this policy.
- g. The district will strive to provide physical activity breaks for all students, recess for elementary students, and before and after school activities, as well as encourage students to use active transport (walking, biking, etc.)
- h. The district will use evidence-based strategies to develop, structure, and support student wellness.

4. Standards and Nutrition Guidelines for All Foods and Beverages Sold to Students on the School Campus and During the School Day

- a. The district will ensure that student access to foods and beverages meet federal, state and local laws and guidelines including, but not limited to:
 - i. USDA National School Lunch and School Breakfast nutrition standards
 - ii. USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- b. The district will offer students a variety of age-appropriate, healthy food and beverage selections with plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains aimed at meeting the nutrition needs of students within their calorie requirements in order to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity.

5. Standards for All Foods and Beverages Provided, But Not Sold to Students During the School Day

The district may provide a list of healthy party ideas or food and beverage alternatives to parents, teachers, and students for classroom parties, rewards and incentives, or classroom snacks. The district discourages the use of food and beverages as a reward or incentive for performance or behavior.

6. Food and Beverage Marketing

Marketing and advertising is only allowed on school grounds or at school activities for foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, except as follows:

- a. This requirement does not apply to marketing that occurs at events outside of school hours such as after school sporting or any other events, including school fundraising events.
- b. The district will not immediately replace menu boards, coolers, tray liners, beverage cups, and other food service equipment with depictions of noncompliant products or logos to comply with the new USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition requirements. All previously purchased products will be used, and all existing contracts honored.
- c. All equipment that currently displays noncompliant marketing materials will not be removed or replaced (e.g., a score board with a Coca-Cola logo). However, as the district reviews and considers new contracts, and as scoreboards or other such durable equipment are replaced or updated over time, any products that are marketed and advertised will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards

7. Public Participation

Parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers, school health professionals, board members, school administrators, and members of the general public shall be allowed to provide their input to the school district during the wellness policy adoption and review process.

8. Competitive Foods (Includes Food and Beverages Sold in Vending Machines, School Stores, Fundraisers or in Competition with the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs)

- a. Definitions. “Competitive food” means all food and beverages other than meals reimbursed under programs authorized by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 available for sale to students on the school campus during the school day. For the purpose of competitive food standards implementation, “school day” means the period from the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.
- b. Applicability. Except as otherwise allowed by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) or applicable law, all competitive food sold during the school day must meet the USDA Smart Snacks Standards and the nutrition standards found in 7 CFR § 210.11. The competitive food restrictions do not apply to food sold during non-school day hours, weekends, and off-campus fundraising events such as concessions during after-school sporting events, school plays or concerts; or to bulk food items that are sold for consumption at home. (Ex: frozen pizzas, cookie dough tubs, etc.)
- c. Fundraiser Exemptions. A special exemption is allowed for the sale of food and/or beverages that do not meet the competitive food standards as required in this section for the purpose of conducting an infrequent school-sponsored fundraiser. The specially exempted fundraisers must not take place more than the frequency specified by NDE during such periods that schools are in session. No specially exempted fundraiser foods or beverages may be sold in competition with school meals in the food service area during the meal service.
- d. Other Exemptions. The only other nutrition exemptions from the competitive food requirements are those found in 7 CFR § 210.11.
- e. Other Limitations. No competitive food can be sold to children anywhere on school premises beginning one half hour before breakfast and/or lunch service until one half hour after meal service unless all proceeds earned during these time periods go to the school nutrition program.

9. Triennial Assessment

The school board shall assess and review this policy at least every three years to determine:

- a. Compliance with this policy;
- b. How this policy compares to NDE model wellness policies;
- c. Progress made in attaining the goals of this policy.

The school board will update or modify this policy as appropriate.

10. Public Notice

In addition to identifying the topic on its meeting agenda as required by the Open Meetings Act, the school district will provide notice of this policy at least annually to the public and other stakeholders identified in this policy by one or more of the following methods: on its webpage, in its newsletter, in the student and employee handbooks, newspaper advertisements, direct mailings, electronic mail, and public postings.

In addition to identifying the topic on its meeting agenda as required by the Open Meetings Act, the school district will provide notice of the Triennial Assessment and progress reports towards meeting the goals in this policy using one or more of those same methods.

11. Recordkeeping

The District will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at its central office.

12. Operational Responsibility

The superintendent is responsible for coordinating the implementation of this policy and for monitoring the district's progress in meeting the goals established by this policy. The superintendent will periodically report to the board on the district's progress in implementing this policy.

* These strategies include, but are not necessarily limited to, those cited in the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's Model Wellness Policy (Updated June 2020 to Reflect the USDA Final Rule) found at <https://api.healthiergeneration.org/resource/2>.

2024-2025 CONESTOGA SCHOOL CALENDAR

August 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

August	12 S/ 16T
5 - New Staff Day	
6 - 9 Teacher PD Day	
8 - Open House	
13 - First Day/Early Dismissal	

January 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

January	16S/ 17T
6 - Teacher PD Day	
7 - Start of 3rd Quarter	

September 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

September	16 S/ 18T
9 - Teacher PD Day	
23 - Monday In Session	
25 - 26 - PT Conferences	
1:45/2:00 Early Dismissal	
27 - No School	

February 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

February	16S/ 17T
10 - Monday In Session	
14 - No School	
24 - Teacher PD Day (Flex)	

October 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

October	19 S/ 20T
11 - 1st Quarter Ends	
14 - Teacher PD Day (Flex)	

March 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

March	15 S/ 16T
10 - School In Session	
11 - 12 - PT Conferences	
1:45/2:00 Early Dismissal	
12 - End of 3rd Quarter	
13 - 14 - No School	

November 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

November	16 S/ 17T
11 - Teacher PD Day	
25 - School In Session	
27 - Early Dismissal	
28 - 29 - No School	

April 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

April	18S/ 18T
14 - School In Session	
18 - No School	

December 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

December	12 S/ 12T
20 - Early Dismissal	
20 - End of 2nd Quarter/1st Semester	

May 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

May	13S/ 13T
10 - Graduation	
22 - Last Day	
Early Dismissal 11:15/11:30	

 New Teacher Day
 Open House
 Monday School Day
 School In Session
 Early Dismissal

K-6 Early Dismiss: 1:45
7-12 Early Dismiss: 2:00

1st Quarter - August 13 - October 11 = 36 days
2nd Quarter - October 15 - December 20 = 39 days
3rd Quarter - January 7 - March 12 = 39 days
4th Quarter - March 18 - May 22 = 39 days

Teacher Days = 164 Student Days = 153

First Semester = 75 days

Second Semester = 78 days

School Hours: Elementary: 8:00 - 3:45
Jr./Sr. High School: 7:50 - 4:00

Elementary: (402) 235-2341; (402) 227-2275
Jr./Sr. High: (402) 235-2271; (402) 227-3745
District: (402) 235-2992; (402) 227-2992
Transportation: (402) 235-2206



Approved 3/12/2024

CONESTOGA JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL

GOOD STANDING POLICY

PASS YOUR CLASSES

Student must be passing
ALL classes.

BE ON TIME

Student must have fewer
than 4 tardies for the
quarter (8 tardies for the
semester).



**TO BE CONSIDERED
IN GOOD STANDING,
A STUDENT MUST
MEET ALL LISTED
EXPECTATIONS**

PAY YOUR FEES & FINES

All fees/fines must be
paid in the school office.

ATTEND SCHOOL REGULARLY

Student must miss less
than 7 days of school
during the current
semester.

HAVE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

Student must have no
office referrals resulting
in ISS or OSS.

A STUDENT MUST BE IN GOOD STANDING IN ORDER TO ATTEND DANCES AND FIELD TRIPS. THIS POLICY MAY ALSO BE APPLIED TO ANY EVENT OR ACTIVITY THAT IS CONSIDERED A PRIVILEGE.

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Handbook

I have received and read the Student Handbook that describes the Conestoga School District's discipline policies, regulations, rules, and expectations to be followed by students enrolled in the Conestoga Public Schools, including the Drug Free School Policy. My child and I have discussed these policies and understand that we must comply with them.

I, _____ (**print student's name**) understand that I have access to the Student / Parent Handbook on Conestoga Public Schools website or a hard copy is available upon request in the office. I agree to abide by these established guidelines.

Student Signature

Date

Grade

I, _____ (**print parent or legal guardian's name**) understand that I have access to the Student / Parent Handbook on Conestoga Public Schools website or a hard copy is available upon request in the office. I agree to support these established guidelines.

Parent or Legal Guardian's Signature

Date

****** Parents (or guardians) and students are required to sign and return the acknowledgement receipt ****
form by Friday, August 25, 2024.**

****** Failure to return the Acknowledgement of Receipt at the end of this handbook signifies you have read and ****
understand the contents of the Student-Parent/Guardian Handbook.**

This Student Handbook is distributed in accordance with Nebraska State Law, Section 79-262, paragraph three which states in part: "Rules and Standards which form the basis for discipline shall be distributed to students and parents at the beginning of each school year or at the time of enrollment..."