

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade \_\_\_\_\_



**2025-2026 Confirmation of Receipt of Handbook Information**  
Please return this form to the teacher designated by your school  
(MS/HS only), classroom teacher (Elem) or to the "Main Office" by  
**Friday, September 12, 2025 or upon enrollment.**



1. Great Fall District Student Handbook can be located under "Parents & Students" at:  
<https://gfps.k12.mt.us/parents-students/student-handbook>
2. Please choose one (1) of the following options for your copy of the GFPS Student Handbook:  
  
\_\_\_\_\_ ELECTRONIC COPY: I will access the handbook electronically (see number one to access).  
  
\_\_\_\_\_ PRINTED COPY (option 1): I would like a print copy of the handbook sent home with my child.  
  
\_\_\_\_\_ PRINTED COPY (option 2): I will come to the school to pick up a printed copy of the handbook in the Main Office.
3. Confirmation of receipt of handbook information  
  - ✓ I am aware that the electronic handbook contains information I will need to know during the school year. I understand that students are held accountable for their actions.
  - ✓ I have read and understand the Great Falls Public Schools School-Parent Compact regarding school and parent responsibilities for supporting student learning.
  - ✓ I understand that the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is included herein. If a student violates the agreements in the AUP, the consequences could include suspension of computer privileges and/or disciplinary or legal action. I also understand that using the computer network is a privilege and with that privilege comes responsibility.
  - ✓ I have read and understand the annual notification to parents and guardians of the district's human sexuality instruction that is included herein.
4. Health Care Information  

If your child has an ongoing medical condition that may require medical attention while at school, please check "yes" below. A Health Care Plan form will need to be filled out at your child's school. Examples include: migraines, seizure disorder, need for an inhaler -- even if the student manages the inhaler him/herself, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ **YES**, my child has an ongoing health concern.

**If your child is in need of a Health Care Plan, please contact your school secretary.**

#### 5. Release of Student Information

Regarding student records, federal law allows GFPS to release a variety of information about your child

**unless you opt out by returning the form below.**

Specific student information might be released in the following ways:

- Listing your child's name on party lists (Valentine's Day, etc...)
- Posting of your child's birthday on a birthday bulletin board
- Printing of your child's name and picture in the school yearbook
- Publishing of awards or accomplishments in the Tribune or school newsletter (Honor Roll lists, GPA lists, Student of the Week)
- Photographing, filming and/or interviewing your child for social media websites and/or by the local TV stations or the Tribune for educationally related stories.
- Printing your child's name in the programs for music concerts and other holiday programs, award ceremonies, Geography Bee, Spelling Bee, Academic Bowl, math contests, Mathlete and art contests.
- Listing your child's name for team or activity rosters (may include height, weight, and year in school)
- Providing information to the military recruiters upon their request.
- Providing information to college and athletic recruiters upon their request.

**As a matter of practice, we do not release information to persons or agencies that do not have a special need to know.** In exercising your right to limit release of this information, you must fill out this page and return it to school by **September 12, 2025 or upon enrollment.**

#### ***Fill out the following checklist:***

I am requesting that, until my son/daughter reaches the age of 18 when he/she may decide for him/herself, the Great Falls Public School District **NOT RELEASE** student directory information to the following entities that have an "X" placed in the box.

*Be aware that you are checking the box if you **DO NOT** want your child's name included.*

- ☐ **I do not want my child's student directory information released to ANYONE (including the yearbook and ALL other options listed below.)**
- ☐ **I do not want my child's photograph to be included in the Montana State Office of Public Instruction Child Photograph repository for law enforcement use of identifying missing children (as required per Senate Bill SB0040).**

- ☐ **I do not** want my child in the School Yearbook (school picture and name), event programs, or other such publications
- ☐ **I do not** want my child in the Great Falls Tribune, TV news stations, other media (including lists for honor roll, student of the week)
- ☐ **I do not** want my child in electronic media (school web page, social media websites, videotaping)
- ☐ **I do not** want information released to institutions of higher learning, including the University of Providence for direct admission (colleges, universities, & trade schools-HS Only)
- ☐ **I do not** want technology checked out to my child without my permission.
- ☐ **I do not** want information released to potential employers
- ☐ **I do not** want information provided to military recruiters
- ☐ **I do not** want my child in the list of graduates (given to the Great Falls Tribune-HS Only)
- ☐ **I do not** want my child in the graduation program (handed out at graduation to all attendees-HS Only)
- ☐ **I do not** want my child's name listed on the "Class" T-shirt (all senior names generally go on the back of a shirt that they receive with their all-night party ticket-HS Only)

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Student Name Printed

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Parent Signature

Date

## Great Falls Public Schools

### *Student Computer Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Agreement*

Great Falls Public Schools is pleased to offer our students access to the Internet and other electronic networks. The advantages afforded by the rich, digital resources available today outweigh any disadvantage. However, it is important to remember that access is a privilege, not a right, and carries with it responsibilities of digital citizenship for all involved.

#### **Terms of Agreement**

**PLEASE REVIEW THE AGREEMENT BELOW AND CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOX ON THE STUDENT/PARENT SIGN-OFF PAGE OF THE STUDENT HANDBOOK.**

In order for a student to be allowed access to a school district electronic device, network, and the Internet, parents and students must review the agreement below, check the appropriate box on the student/parent sign-off page of the student handbook, sign and return annually.

#### **Student Acceptable Uses**

The District provides electronic information, services, and networks for educational purposes. All use must be in support of education and/or research, and in furtherance of the District's stated educational goals. Accordingly, regulations for participation by anyone on the Internet shall include but may not be limited to the following:

- **Access is a privilege**, not a right, and carries with it responsibilities of digital citizenship for all involved. Students will use appropriate language and/or images (e.g. no swearing, vulgarities, suggestive, obscene, inflammatory, belligerent, or threatening language and/or images). Students will practice respect for others, by never using any technology to harass, haze, intimidate, or bully anyone.
- **Students are responsible for all activity under their electronic accounts.** Students will not share passwords with other users or log in as someone other than themselves. The only exception may be teachers safeguarding the passwords of his/her students. Students will log off of devices and/or websites when finished.
- **Students will use school district-provided devices, networks, and Internet access for educational purposes only.** Uses that promote a personal commercial enterprise for personal gain through selling or buying over the school district's network are prohibited. Uses in regards to political agendas must be in compliance with state law and Board policy.
- **Students will protect the privacy of self and others.** Students will carefully safeguard last names, personal addresses, personal phone numbers, personal email addresses, passwords, photos, or other personal information on the Internet, including such items belonging to others. Students should be aware that when using many digital tools on the Internet, published work may be publicly accessible and permanently available.
- **The District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, backup, review, and store at any time** and without prior notice any and all usage of the school district network and Internet access, and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. This also includes any information stored on school district network or local electronic devices. All such information files shall be and remain accessible by the District, and no student shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such information. Students are advised that all material in whatever form in the school district system's network may be considered public record pursuant to MCA 2-6-102.
- **Student Photos/Student Work.** Publishing student pictures and work on websites promotes learning, collaboration, and provides an opportunity to share the achievements of students. If

parents/guardians do not want release of student directory information, including photos and school work, schools must be notified in writing (see page 2 of the District's Student Handbook).

- **While the District makes every effort to filter inappropriate material, it is possible for an industrious user to gain access to such material.** Inappropriate material is defined as material that violates generally accepted social standards. It is the student's responsibility not to initiate access to or to distribute inappropriate material, or attempt to circumvent filters.
- **It is every student's responsibility to adhere to the copyright laws** of the United States (P.L. 94-553) and the Congressional Guidelines that delineate those laws regarding software, authorship, and copying information.
- **It is every student's responsibility to treat the physical and digital property of others with respect.** This includes proper treatment of digital devices and other hardware, the network system, and respecting others' electronic files. Students are not to remove, add or modify software, computer hardware or network equipment without prior Information Technology Department authorization.

### **Student Responsibilities**

Students understand that access is a privilege, not a right, and carries with it responsibilities of digital citizenship for all involved. Students understand that if they choose not to follow the rules, they may lose computer privileges and/or have other consequences.

**Limitations of Use.** Students must refrain from these activities, none of which are all inclusive:

- Uses that violate local, state and/or federal laws or encourage others to violate the law.
- Uses that include the transmission of offensive or harassing messages.
- Uses that offer for sale or use any substance of which the possession or use of is prohibited by the District's student discipline policy.
- Uses that violate generally accepted social standards of public communication such as the access of:
  - Pornographic, sexual, or obscene content;
  - Personal dating or connection sites;
  - Drugs, alcohol and gambling content; and/or
  - Hate speech, violence, weapons, and cult content.
- Uses that intrude into the networks, computers or information owned by others.
- Uses that include the downloading or transmitting of confidential, trade secret, or copyrighted information or materials.
- Uses that cause harm to others or damage to their property.
- Uses that engage in defamation (harming another's reputation by lies).
- Uses that employ another's password.
- Uses that mislead message recipients into believing that someone other than the sender is communicating, or otherwise using his/her access to the network or the Internet.
- Uses that cause the uploading of a worm, virus, other harmful form of programming or vandalism.
- Uses that are "hacking" or any form of unauthorized access to other computers, networks, or other information.
- Uses that jeopardize the security of student access and of the computer network or other networks on the Internet.
- Uses that promote a personal commercial enterprise for personal gain through selling or buying over the District's network.

- Uses that promote an individual's political agenda to include soliciting support for or opposition to any political committee, the nomination or election of any person to public office, or the passage of a ballot issue.

**Password Protections.** Users' network passwords are provided for their personal use, therefore, students are expected to protect their own and other's passwords. In order to do so, note the following:

- Students should not share their password with anyone.
- Students should not log into the network with another user's login name and password.
- If a student suspects someone has discovered their password, they should change it or have it changed immediately.
- Students shall not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users.
- Students should log off District devices when finished.

#### **Other Expectations.**

- Students must print only with permission from a teacher.
- Students must tell a teacher if he/she reads or sees something on a device that is inappropriate and/or limited (See above list of limitations).
- Students must tell a teacher if a device has been changed in any way.

#### **Teacher Responsibilities**

Teachers will provide guidance to students as they access electronic information, services, and networks **for educational purposes**. Teachers will:

- Inform all students of their rights and responsibilities as users of the district network prior to granting access to that network, either as an individual user or as a member of a class or group.
- Monitor when students are accessing the Internet.
- Address student infractions of the Acceptable Use Agreement according to the school discipline policy.
- Provide curriculum-appropriate alternate activities for students who do not have permission to use the Internet or a particular digital tool.
- Guide student use of identifiable photographs, referencing student directory release of information.
- Follow the Child Online Privacy Protection Act ([COPPA](#)) guidelines when using digital tools in the classroom.

#### **Principal Responsibilities**

Principals will provide support to teachers and students in following the Student Computer Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Agreement. Principals will:

- Address student infractions of the Acceptable Use Agreement according to school discipline policy.
- Provide an updated list of students who do not have permission to use the Internet, to use particular digital tools, or to have works or images displayed online.

## **District Responsibilities**

The District will provide support to principals, teachers, and students in following the Student Computer Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Agreement. The District will:

- Ensure that Children's Internet Protection Act ([CIPA](#))-compliant filtering technology is in use.
- Review the Staff and Student Acceptable Use Agreements as necessary.
- Staff annually reviews this policy.
- Provide professional development for staff regarding expected behavior concerning this agreement.
- Ensure curriculum reflects digital citizenship.

## **Acceptable Uses of Personal Devices on the District Network**

Students may bring their own personal electronic devices which may or may not be able to connect to the District/school wireless network. When using personal electronic devices, students must abide by the Acceptable Use Agreement, in addition to the following. Students will:

- Use personal devices in class only with the teacher's express permission.
- Only connect to the District/school wireless guest network and NOT to the District/school wired network. Students understand if their personal device is found wired to the District/school network, the device will be removed and turned into the administrator.
- Only use devices with up-to-date virus protection software.
- Turn off all peer-to-peer (music/video/file-sharing) software or web-hosting services on their device while connected to the District/school wireless network.
- Understand the security, care, and maintenance of their device is their responsibility. Student devices will be securely stored when not in use.
- Understand that the District/school is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of student devices. Students are fully responsible for their property while at school. Students understand that if they should leave their device in the custody of a staff member, that the staff member is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of the student device.
- Understand the Information Technology Department will not provide support for personal devices. Students are fully responsible for making their device work within the parameters defined in this agreement. If they are unable to make their personal device work within these parameters and the given time allotted by the teacher, the student will need to use a device that is provided by the District/school to prevent any interruption to instruction and learning.
- Understand that school staff may access student personal electronic devices if there is reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence that they are violating the law, Board policy, administrative regulation, or other rules of the District or the school. This may include, but is not limited to, audio and video recording, photographs taken on District/school property that violates the privacy of others, issues regarding bullying, verification that the student's device is connected to the District/school network, etc. Students will provide appropriate login credentials to the device if required. Failure to provide access is insubordination and will be deemed satisfactory evidence that the student device contains content that violates this section.
- Not use an audio/video recording device, to record media or take photos during school hours unless given permission from both a staff member and those being recorded.

## **Failure to Follow Acceptable Use Agreement**

Use of the school district electronic devices, network, and the Internet is a privilege, not a right. A student who violates this agreement is subject to disciplinary action according to District Policy. Note that some infractions of this Acceptable Use Agreement may be criminal, and as such, legal action may be taken.

### References:

Policy 3225 Sexual Harassment/Intimidation of Students

Policy 3226 Hazing, Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying

Policy 3231 Searches and Seizure

Policy 3300 Corrective Actions and Punishments

Policy 3310 Student Discipline

Policy 3630 Cellular Telephone and Electronic Signaling Device Policy

Policy 3612 District-Provided Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks

Policy 5450 Employee Electronic Mail and Online Services Usage

Policy 5450F Staff Computer Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Agreement

Policy 5460 Electronic Resources and Social Networking

### Legal References:

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ([FERPA](#))

Child Online Privacy Protection Act ([COPPA](#))

Children's Internet Protection Act ([CIPA](#))

### Acceptable Use Agreement History:

Original Cabinet Approval: June 2018

Adopted: July 9, 2018

Revised on: August 22, 2022



## Great Falls Public Schools Medical Exam Notification

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Great Falls Public Schools provides optional medical examinations at the school for students whose parents provide written consent. This notice is intended to inform parents that the following medical examinations will be provided at the school on the scheduled dates. A family who wants their student to receive the school-based screening listed below may provide consent to such examination(s) by completing this form.

### **Hearing Screening:**

Each year, Great Falls Public Schools completes a hearing screening to detect hearing loss. **All kindergarten students, first grade students and those new to the state of Montana** will have the opportunity to have their hearing screened. This examination will be provided at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.

Please initial:

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I provide consent for my student to receive the hearing screening.

\_\_\_\_ No, I do NOT provide consent for my student to receive the hearing screening.

### **Vision Screening:**

Great Falls Public Schools will collaborate with a local Lion's Club to provide vision screenings to **Kindergarten, 1st, 3rd, and 6th grade students**. The vision screening is performed using a PlusoptiX S12C Mobile Vision Screener. A notice will be sent home for any child receiving a recommendation for further testing. The screening is scheduled to be done \_\_\_\_\_.

Please initial:

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I provide consent for my student to receive the vision screening.

\_\_\_\_ No, I do NOT provide consent for my student to receive the vision screening.

### **Dental Screening:**

The Cascade City-County Health Department partners with volunteer dentists from the Fourth District Dental Society to provide free visual dental screenings in the elementary schools of Cascade County. Children **in grades 1, 3, and 5** will be offered this free dental screening. The results will be sent home to let parents know if their child has any potential health issues. You will be notified by your child's school when a dentist is scheduled to visit.

Please initial:

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I provide consent for my student to receive the visual dental screening

\_\_\_\_\_ No, I do NOT provide consent for my student to receive the visual dental screening.

As a parent/guardian of a student, you have the right to authorize your child to attend or receive the examination(s) in accordance with Montana law and District policy by completing, signing, and submitting this form prior to the date identified for each medical service (School Board Policy 3410 see back of form).

A student seeking such services whose parents have not completed this form will not receive the examination(s) and will be redirected to the parent/guardian in accordance with the decision noted on this form.

I provide consent for my student \_\_\_\_\_ to receive the examination(s) described above at the Great Falls Public School District.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent

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

# **Great Falls Public Schools**

## **Medical Exam Notification**

GFPS School Board Policy 3410

### **Student Health/Physical Screenings/Examinations**

The Board may arrange each year for health services to be provided to all students. Such services may include, but not be limited to:

- The development of procedures at each building for the isolation and temporary care of students who become ill during the school day;
- Consulting services of a qualified specialist for staff, students, and parents;
- Vision, hearing, and dental screening;
- Any physical examinations or screenings;
- Immunization as provided by the Department of Public Health & Human Services;
- Any mental health services or screenings.

In general, the District will notify parents of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when screening administered by the District is conducted.

Parents/guardians will receive written notice of any screening result which indicates a condition that might interfere or tend to interfere with a student's progress.

All parents will be notified of requirements of the District's policy on physical examinations and screening of students, at least annually at the beginning of the school year and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in the policy which is:

- Required as a condition of attendance.
- Administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance.
- Not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student or other students.

Parents or eligible students will be given the opportunity to consent to the above-described screenings.

Students who wish to participate in certain extracurricular activities will be required to submit to a physical examination to verify their ability to participate in the activity. Students participating in activities governed by the Montana High School Association will be required to follow the rules of that organization, as well as other applicable District policies, rules, and regulations.

#### **Cross References:**

Policy 2158 Parental and Family Engagement

Policy 3305 Seclusion and Restraint

Policy 3310P Risk Assessment

Policy 3431 Emergency Treatment

#### **Legal Reference:**

§ 20-3-324(20), MCA Powers and Duties

§ 40-6-701, MCA Parental Rights

20 U.S.C. 1232h(b), General Provision Concerning Education

Policy History: Adopted on: July 1, 2000

Revised on: December 18, 2006

Revised on: November 23, 2015

Revised on: April 22, 2024



*Great Falls Public Schools*

Curriculum Department • 1100 4th Street South • P.O. Box 2429,  
Great Falls, MT 59403 • 406.268.6020 • [www.gfps.k12.mt.us](http://www.gfps.k12.mt.us)

Dear Elementary Parents,

We hope your school year has been great to this point for you and your student(s). The Montana legislature has passed a law that places requirements on schools to notify parents about certain instructional topics. In this case, MC 20-7-120 requires schools to notify parents concerning any course that teaches topics related to human sexuality. GFPS teachers work hard to ensure the curriculum we deliver is responsible and developmentally appropriate for young children. **In a review of all curriculum in grades K-6, there are two areas to which the law applies.**

- The 5th and 6th Grade Health Enhancement curriculum includes a lesson in human growth and development. There is also a separate lesson on AIDS education for both grades.
- K-6 Personal Safety Counseling Lessons (specifically safe touch lessons including the terminology “private parts”).

Prior to any of these lessons being taught, Great Falls Public Schools parents will be notified. Parents have always had the right to review any of our curriculum. That open approach is reflected in our School Board Policy 2335 which states that parents can request their child be excluded from these lessons without prejudice.

If you have any questions or concerns or you would like to view the curriculum materials, please call the principal at your student’s school.

Sincerely,

Lance Boyd  
Executive Director of  
Student Achievement- East Side  
406-268-6008

Jackie Mainwaring  
Executive Director of  
Student Achievement- West Side  
406-268-6006

**gfps** GREAT FALLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
EAST MIDDLE SCHOOL

**Authorization to Participate**

East Middle School offers volunteer participation in student clubs. A list of clubs that have been offered at EMS is below. Active clubs that are currently offered at EMS can be seen on our website (link below), where you are able to read club descriptions(s) and advisor(s) names(s).

|                           |                         |                              |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Academic Bowl Club        | Critical Thinking Club  | Rock Painting Club           |
| Art Club                  | Crocheting Club         | Sewing Club                  |
| Basic Engineering Club    | Diamond Art             | Sing Language Club           |
| Basic Survival Club       | Fiddling                | Sports History Club          |
| Basketball Club           | For the Birds           | Sudoku                       |
| Book Clubs                | GFHS Ultimate Football  | Taylor Swifts: Lyrics        |
| Card & Dice Games Club    | Inclusion Club          | Bracelets                    |
| Chess Club                | Games of Tournaments    | The Great Outdoors           |
| Color Your Heart Out Club | Jazz Band Club          | Working with Weights for All |
| Colorful Creations        | Origami Club            | Writers Lounge               |
| Community Outreach        | Playing Cards for Skill | Your brain loves to color    |
| Cribbage Club             | Strategy Club           | word searches                |

**Other clubs may be added on an ongoing basis. Please check the EMS website for the most current active clubs, club description & names of advisors:**

**Parental permission is required for the student to participate in any/all club(s).** By signing this form, you give permission for your child to participate in the club(s) identified by you and:

- *Agree the student is fully capable of participating in the club or clubs and agree to disclose all known limitations to the district, including, but not limited to; medical conditions, physical limitations, and any other limitation known to the student or the parents.*
- *Understand and acknowledge that the student may not be skilled in one or all of the clubs;*
- *Understand and acknowledge that the student is subject to all eligibility requirements adopted by the district for participation as well as any governing agency, including but not limited to the Montana High School Association;*
- *Understand and acknowledge that engaging in any club(s) may require a degree of skill and knowledge which the student may not possess;*
- *Understand and acknowledge that the club in which the student seeks to participate may require an audition or try-out to determine if the student has the required skills/abilities to participate and that the student may be “cut” from the club through the audition/try-out*

*process;*

- *Understand and acknowledge that the district has informed us that certain risks are inherent in some clubs and cannot be eliminated without destroying the unique character of the club. These risks may include, but are not limited to; the inherent dangers related to sports, athletic events, hazards of traveling in and to areas without medical services or care, dangers due to the forces of nature (including, but not limited to, avalanches, lightning, fire, inclement weather, exposure, flooding), dehydration, falls, injury caused by malfunction or failure of any equipment, injury or sickness resulting from food, allergies, transportation accidents, and others;*
- *Understand and acknowledge that the foregoing description of risks is incomplete, and these risks and other unlisted, unknown, or unanticipated risks may result in injury or death;*
- *Understand and acknowledge that engaging in any club(s) may require a participant to listen to any instructions, warnings, or risk assessments of the district, to ask for instruction or clarification whenever needed, and to follow instructions; and*
- *Understand and acknowledge that the district may remove the student from club(s) for any breach of safety policies, or any conduct that the district deems unsafe.*

*The student and parents hereby consent to the student participating in the club(s) identified in spite of, and with full knowledge of, risks which may be associated with that club.*

*By signing this Agreement, the student and parents acknowledge they have carefully read and understand its contents.*

- **I give permission for my student to participate in ONLY the club(s) I've listed below:**

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- **My child has permission to participate in ALL of the clubs listed on this form, and/or currently offered at EMS, as well as new clubs that may be added for the 2025-2026 school year. I understand that only currently active club(s) are listed on the EMS website, so not all clubs listed above may be available to participate in at this time.**

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**STUDENT NAME**

**STUDENT SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

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**NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN**

**PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

**NOTE:** Please return this form to the club advisor. *Signed permission must be provided before a student can participate in a club or activity.*



# Be a Champion!

North Middle School: #GoGriz!



## *Club Permission Form 2025-2026*

### *Authorization to Participate and Record*

*The District offers students clubs and extracurricular activities, events, and programs to the Student, including, but not limited to, curricular and co-curricular programs and clubs and transportation and lodging to, from, and associated with these activities (Collectively “Clubs and Activities”).*

*Below is a list of some of the clubs being offered this year at North Middle School.*

*Archery Club*

*Bunco*

*Coloring for Relaxation*

*Debate Club*

*Fly-Tying Club*

*Jazz Band*

*Military Matters*

*North Grizzly Spirit Club*

*R.A.K. (kindness Club)*

*Special Olympics Montana Unified Champion Club*

*Swifties*

*Weight Lifting*

*Basketball Club*

*Card Club*

*Cribbage Club*

*Desmos Art Club*

*Ghost Adventures*

*KODU Club*

*Nail Tech Career Club*

*Origami Club*

*Reading Club*

*Tenzi!*

*Yearbook Club*

*Brian-based Board Games*

*Chess Club*

*Current Events Club*

*Drawing Club*

*Harry Potter Club*

*Local History Club*

*NMS Student Gov't*

*Paint by Numbers*

*Science Club*

*Video Production*

*\*To see the full club descriptions, please check the North Middle School website:*

*<https://mt50000605.schoolwires.net/page/47>*

*Parental permission is required for the student to participate in a Club or Activity. By signing this form, you permit your child to participate in the Club(s) and Activity(ies) identified by you and:*

*Agree the Student is fully capable of participating in the Club/Activity or Clubs/Activities and agree to disclose all known limitations to the District, including, but not limited to; medical conditions, physical limitations, and any other limitation known to the Student or the Parents.*

*Understand and acknowledge that the Student may not be skilled in one or all of the Clubs and Activities;*

*Understand and acknowledge that the Student is subject to all eligibility requirements adopted by the District for participation as well as any governing agency, including but not limited to the Montana High School Association;*



*Understand and acknowledge that engaging in any Activity may require a degree of skill and knowledge that the Student may not possess;*

*Understand and acknowledge that the Club or Activity in which the Student seeks to participate may require an audition or try-out to determine if the Student has the required skills/abilities to participate and that the Student may be “cut” from the Club or Activity through the audition/try-out process;*

*Understand and acknowledge that the District has informed us that certain risks are inherent in some Clubs and Activities and cannot be eliminated without destroying the unique character of the Club and/or Activity. These risks may include, but are not limited to; the inherent dangers related to sports, and athletic events, hazards of traveling in and to areas without medical services or care, dangers due to the forces of nature (including, but not limited to, avalanches, lightning, fire, inclement weather, exposure, flooding), dehydration, falls, injury caused by malfunction or failure of any equipment, injury or sickness resulting from food, allergies, transportation accidents, and others;*

*Understand and acknowledge that the foregoing description of risks is incomplete, and these risks and other unlisted, unknown, or unanticipated risks may result in injury or death;*

*Understand and acknowledge that engaging in any Activity may require a participant to listen to any instructions, warnings, or risk assessments of the District, to ask for instruction or clarification whenever needed, and to follow instructions; and*

*Understand and acknowledge that the District may remove the Student from Activities for any breach of safety policies, or any conduct that the District deems unsafe.*

*You further acknowledge and consent to the Student being recorded by audio or video means by a school employee/representative/coach/advisor during participation in a Club or Activity for purposes of coaching or instruction.*

*The Student and Parents hereby consent to the Student participating in the Club(s) and Activit(ies) identified despite, and with full knowledge of, risks which may be associated with that Activity.*

*By signing this Agreement, the Student and Parents acknowledge they have carefully read and understand its contents.*

☐ *I permit for my child to participate in ANY of the clubs listed above.*

*Or, please list the club(s) for which permission is given for the Student to participate (if available) :*

---

---

---

*My child has permission to participate in all of the clubs listed on page one.*

---

STUDENT NAME

STUDENT SIGNATURE

DATE

---

NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

DATE

*Please return this form to the club advisor. Signed permission must be provided before a student can participate in a Club or Activity.*



***Great Falls Public Schools***

Curriculum Department • 1100 4th Street South • P.O. Box 2429,  
Great Falls, MT 59403 • 406.268.6020 • [www.gfps.k12.mt.us](http://www.gfps.k12.mt.us)

Dear Middle School Parents,

We hope your school year has been great to this point for you and your student. The Montana legislature has passed a law that places certain requirements on schools. In this case, MCA 20-7-120 requires schools to send a letter to parents concerning any course that teaches any of the listed topics: human sexuality - including intimate relationships, human sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexually transmitted infections, sexual acts, sexual orientation, gender identity, abstinence, contraception, or reproductive rights and responsibilities.

Throughout the years, GFPS has always worked hard to find responsible and developmentally appropriate curriculum for our students. This includes developing curriculum designed to be responsive to family concerns and educate students in the areas of health and science.

At the middle school level these courses have limited and responsible exposure to a few of the subject areas listed above:

- 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Health (Diseases and STD's)
- 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Science (Life Science Reproduction, and Limited Anatomy)
- 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Family and Consumer Science (Healthy Relationship vs. Unhealthy)

Great Falls Public Schools parents have always had the right to review any of our curriculums. That open approach to our curriculum has always occurred and is reflected in our School Board Policy 2335 which states: "Parents may ask to review the materials to be used and may request that their child be excluded from sex education class sessions without prejudice."

If you have any questions or concerns or you would like to view the curriculums, please call the principal at your student's school. To reach the North Middle School Principal, Brian Miller, please call 268-6530 and, to reach the East Middle School Principal, Brad Barringer, call 268-6503.

Sincerely,

Lance Boyd  
Executive Director of  
Student Achievement- East Side  
406-268-6008

Jackie Mainwaring  
Executive Director of  
Student Achievement- West Side  
406-268-6006



## **Club Permission Form**

### **Authorization to Participate and Record**

The District offers student clubs and extracurricular activities, events, and programs to the student, including, but not limited to, curricular and co-curricular programs and clubs and transportation and lodging to, from, and associated with these activities (collectively “Clubs and Activities”).

|  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Art Club   | Key Club                    |
| Business Professionals of America BPA                  | Lunch Bunch Mentoring       |
| Club of Jesus  | JROTC                       |
| DECA   | News Club                   |
| Family Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) | Peer Mentor Group           |
| Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)                 | R Wildcats Mentoring Club   |
| Full Orchestra   | Skills USA                  |
| Gardening Club   | Speech & Debate (NSDA)      |
| HOSA: Future Health Professionals                      | Students of Service         |
| Indigenous Club  | RPG Dungeons & Dragons Club |
| International Club                                     | We Are Rustlers             |

**Other clubs may be added on an ongoing basis. Please check the CMR website for the most current list and club information at <https://cmrhs.gfps.k12.mt.us/>**

**Parental permission is required for the student to participate in a Club or Activity.** By signing this form, you give permission for your child to participate in the Club(s) and Activity(ies) identified by you and:

- Agree the Student is fully capable of participating in the Club/Activity or Clubs/Activities and agree to disclose all known limitations to the District, including, but not limited to; medical conditions, physical limitations, and any other limitation known to the Student or the Parents.
- Understand and acknowledge that the Student may not be skilled in one or all of the Clubs and Activities;
- Understand and acknowledge that the Student is subject to all eligibility requirements adopted by the District for participation as well as any governing agency, including but not limited to the Montana High School Association;
- Understand and acknowledge that engaging in any Activity may require a degree of skill and knowledge which the Student may not possess;
- Understand and acknowledge that the Club or Activity in which the Student seeks to participate may require an audition or try-out to determine if the Student has the required skills/abilities to participate and that the Student may be “cut” from the Club or Activity through the audition/try-out process;

- Understand and acknowledge that the District has informed us that certain risks are inherent in some Clubs and Activities and cannot be eliminated without destroying the unique character of the Club and/or Activity. These risks may include, but are not limited to; the inherent dangers related to sports, athletic events, hazards of traveling in and to areas without medical services or care, dangers due to the forces of nature (including, but not limited to, avalanches, lightning, fire, inclement weather, exposure, flooding), dehydration, falls, injury caused by malfunction or failure of any equipment, injury or sickness resulting from food, allergies, transportation accidents, and others;
- Understand and acknowledge that the foregoing description of risks is incomplete, and these risks and other unlisted, unknown, or unanticipated risks may result in injury or death;
- Understand and acknowledge that engaging in any Activity may require a participant to listen to any instructions, warnings, or risk assessments of the District, to ask for instruction or clarification whenever needed, and to follow instructions; and
- Understand and acknowledge that the District may remove the Student from Activities for any breach of safety policies, or any conduct that the District deems unsafe.

You further acknowledge and consent to the Student being recorded by audio or video means by a school employee/representative/coach/advisor during participation in a Club or Activity for purposes of coaching or instruction.

The Student and Parents hereby consent to the Student participating in the Club(s) and Activity(s) identified in spite of, and with full knowledge of, risks which may be associated with that Activity.

By signing this Agreement, the Student and Parents acknowledge they have carefully read and understand its contents.

**Club(s) and/or Activity(ies) for which permission is given for the student to participate:**

---

---

---

- **My child has permission to participate in all of the clubs listed on page one.**

---

**STUDENT NAME**

**STUDENT SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

---

**NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN**

**PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

**Please return this form to the club advisor. Signed permission must be provided before a student can participate in a Club or Activity.**



## Club Permission Form 2025-2026

### Authorization to Participate

Great Falls High School offers volunteer participation in student clubs. A list of clubs that have been offered at GFHS is below. Active clubs that are currently offered at GFHS can be seen on our website (link below), where you are able to read club description(s) and Advisor(s) name(s)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Art Club  | I Am Bison – IMB                         |
| Bike Club   | Indigenous Club                          |
| Business Professionals of America BPS                 | JROTC                                    |
| Chess Club  | Key Club                                 |
| Classic Card Club                                     | Montana Educational Talent Search (METS) |
| Crochet Club  | Rocketry Club                            |
| Cyber Patriots  | Role-Playing Game Club – RPG Club        |
| DECA  | Ski & Board Club                         |
| Drama   | Skills USA                               |
| Family Career & Community Leaders of America (FCCCLA) | Spanish Club                             |
| Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)                | Speech & Debate (NSDA)                   |
| Gardening Club  | Student Culture Survey                   |
| Geology Club  | Student Government (STUCO)               |
| German Club   | Welding Club                             |
| HOSA: Future Health Professionals                     | Writing Club                             |
|   | Young Life                               |

**\*Other clubs may be added on an ongoing basis. Please check the GFHS website for the most current active clubs, club descriptions & names of Advisors:** <https://gfhs.gfps.k12.mt.us/parents-students/clubs>

**Parental permission is required for the student to participate in any/all Club(s).** By signing this form, you give permission for your child to participate in the Club(s) identified by you and:

- Agree the Student is fully capable of participating in the Club or Clubs and agree to disclose all known limitations to the District, including, but not limited to; medical conditions, physical limitations, and any other limitation known to the Student or the Parents.
- Understand and acknowledge that the Student may not be skilled in one or all of the Clubs;
- Understand and acknowledge that the Student is subject to all eligibility requirements adopted by the District for participation as well as any governing agency, including but not limited to the Montana High School Association;

- Understand and acknowledge that engaging in any Club(s) may require a degree of skill and knowledge which the Student may not possess;
- Understand and acknowledge that the Club in which the Student seeks to participate may require an audition or try-out to determine if the Student has the required skills/abilities to participate and that the Student may be “cut” from the Club through the audition/try-out process;
- Understand and acknowledge that the District has informed us that certain risks are inherent in some Clubs and cannot be eliminated without destroying the unique character of the Club. These risks may include, but are not limited to; the inherent dangers related to sports, athletic events, hazards of traveling in and to areas without medical services or care, dangers due to the forces of nature (including, but not limited to, avalanches, lightning, fire, inclement weather, exposure, flooding), dehydration, falls, injury caused by malfunction or failure of any equipment, injury or sickness resulting from food, allergies, transportation accidents, and others;
- Understand and acknowledge that the foregoing description of risks is incomplete, and these risks and other unlisted, unknown, or unanticipated risks may result in injury or death;
- Understand and acknowledge that engaging in any Club(s) may require a participant to listen to any instructions, warnings, or risk assessments of the District, to ask for instruction or clarification whenever needed, and to follow instructions; and
- Understand and acknowledge that the District may remove the Student from Club(s) for any breach of safety policies, or any conduct that the District deems unsafe.

The Student and Parents hereby consent to the Student participating in the Club(s) identified in spite of, and with full knowledge of, risks which may be associated with that Club.

By signing this Agreement, the Student and Parents acknowledge they have carefully read and understand its contents.

- I give permission for my student to participate in **ONLY** the Club(s) I’ve listed below:

---



---



---



- My child has permission to participate in **ALL** of the Clubs listed on this form, and/or currently offered at GFHS, as well as new clubs that may be added for the 2025-2026 school year. I understand that only currently active Club(s) are listed on the GFHS website, so not all clubs listed above may be available to participate in at this time.

---

**STUDENT NAME**

**STUDENT SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

---

**NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN**

**PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

**NOTE:** Please return this completed form to the GFHS Main Office. ***Signed permission must be provided before a student can participate in any Club.***



## **Great Falls Public Schools**

Curriculum Department • 1100 4<sup>th</sup> Street South • P.O. Box 2429,

Great Falls, MT 59403 • 406.268.6020 • [www.gfps.k12.mt.us](http://www.gfps.k12.mt.us)

Dear High School Parents,

We hope your school year has been great to this point for you and your student. The Montana legislature has passed a law that places certain requirements on schools. In this case, MCA 20-7-120 requires schools to send a letter to parents concerning any course that teaches any of the listed topics: human sexuality - including intimate relationships, human sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexually transmitted infections, sexual acts, sexual orientation, gender identity, abstinence, contraception, or reproductive rights and responsibilities.

Throughout the years, GFPS has always worked hard to find responsible and developmentally appropriate curriculum for our students. This includes developing curriculum designed to educate students in the areas of health, science and family & consumer science.

At the high school, these courses and subject areas are listed below:

**Required Courses:**

- 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Health
- Biology 1-2
- English (Novels may touch on human relationships)

**Elective Courses:**

- Anatomy and Physiology (Science elective)
- Developing Child (Family and Consumer Science elective)
- Medical Terminology (Health Science/CTE elective)
- EMT (Health Science/CTE elective)

In addition, Advanced Placement (AP) or Dual Credit courses may contain topics related to human sexuality. These courses have curriculum based on criteria outside the GFPS and Montana State Standards. If you have concerns, you may contact the teacher of the course directly.

Great Falls Public Schools parents have always had the right to review any of our curriculums. That open approach to our curriculum has always occurred and is reflected in our School Board Policy 2335 which states: "Parents may ask to review the materials to be used and may request that their child be excluded from sex education class sessions without prejudice." If you have questions or wish to view the materials used in these lessons, **please contact your child's teacher for more information.**

Sincerely,

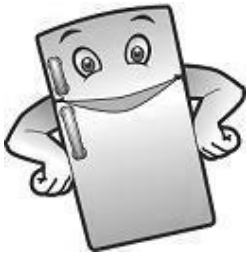
Lance Boyd  
Executive Director of  
Student Achievement- East Side  
406-268-6008

Jackie Mainwaring  
Executive Director of  
Student Achievement- West Side  
406-268-6006

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## SCHOOL DISRUPTIONS DUE TO EMERGENCIES



**Assume that school will be in session and buses will be running as scheduled unless there is official notification from the Superintendent to the contrary.**

The Superintendent may order the cancellation of some or all bus routes; the delay of some or all bus routes, the closure of school, the delay of school start, and/or the early dismissal of school.

Parents should seek out information, **but try not to call the school**. Notification may be made or accessed in the following ways:

- Mass text and/or voicemail notification from the GFPS automated communications system
  - **The school MUST have current contact information.** *Please notify the school to update your contact information.*
- GFPS Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/greatfallspublicschools/>
- GFPS Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GreatFallsPublicSchools>
- GFPS Website: [www.gfps.k12.mt.us](http://www.gfps.k12.mt.us)
- Media Twitter and websites: @KRTV, [www.krtv.com](http://www.krtv.com), @KFBB, [www.kfbb.com](http://www.kfbb.com), @GFTribune, [www.greatfalls Tribune.com](http://www.greatfalls Tribune.com), @TheElectricGF, [www.theelectricgf.com](http://www.theelectricgf.com)
- GFPS News Releases Website page: <https://greatfallsmt.net/police/news-releases>
- GFPS Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GFPolice/>
- Radio Stations: FM: 89.9, 92.9, 94.5, 97.9, 98.9, 101.7, 102.7, 104.9, and 106.1 or AM: 560 and 1450. **Please be aware that GFPS has no control over media or radio station announcements.**
- Call 406-268-6444 for a recorded phone message (you may reach a busy signal depending on caller volume)



***Information about the District's automated notifications can be found at this website:***

[10-1-2024 GFPS RemindInCaseofCrisisNotice2024.pdf](#)

*Parents have the right and responsibility to make attendance decisions for their children based on their individual circumstances.*

***Post this on your refrigerator at home for quick reference.***

## PREFACE

### To Students and Parents:

The Great Falls Public Schools Student Handbook contains information that students and parents will likely need during the school year. The handbook has a Table of Contents to use as a reference. Throughout the handbook, the term the student's parent is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student; the term Superintendent is used to refer to the Superintendent or his/her designee; the term Principal is used to refer to the Principal or his/her designee.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy. Please be aware this document is updated and then published annually every June, while policy adoption and revision are ongoing processes. Therefore, any policy changes that affect student handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents on the GFPS District website and other communications. These changes will generally supersede provisions found in this handbook that have been made obsolete by newly adopted policy.

**In case of conflict between Board policy and any provisions of student handbooks, the provisions of Board policy that were most recently adopted by the Board are to be followed.**

Please note references to policy codes are included to help parents confirm the current policy. District Board Policies can be found on the District's website at: <http://gfps.k12.mt.us/school-board>

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The Great Falls School District does not discriminate. Equal educational opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, ethnicity, language barrier, religious beliefs, physical and mental handicap or disability, economic or social conditions, or actual or potential marital or parental status, or, in accordance with binding guidance of the Federal Office of Civil Rights, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, regarding the scope of Title IX's sex discrimination prohibition, gender identity, sexual orientation, or failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and the Boy Scouts Act – providing equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

No student shall, in accordance with binding guidance of the Federal Office of Civil Rights regarding the scope of Title IX's sex discrimination prohibition, be denied equal access to programs, activities, services, or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage, or denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities. The District will not tolerate hostile or abusive treatment, derogatory remarks, or acts of violence because of disability against students, staff, or volunteers with disabilities. The District considers this behavior to constitute discrimination based on disability in violation of state and federal law. The District shall provide a free appropriate public education and necessary related services to all children with disabilities residing within the District, as required under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (hereinafter "IDEA") and implementing provisions in Montana law, and the Americans With Disabilities Act. For students eligible for services under IDEA, the District shall follow procedures for identification, evaluation, placement, and delivery of service to children with disabilities as provided in the current "Montana State Plan under Part B of "IDEA."

Inquiries regarding sexual harassment, sex discrimination, or sexual intimidation should be directed to the District's Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both. Inquiries regarding discrimination based on disability or requests for accommodation should be directed to the Districts Section 504 Coordinator. The Board designated the following individual to serve as the **District's Title IX & Section 504 Coordinator for students: Lance Boyd, Executive Director of Student Achievement (Phone: 406-268-6008).**



Any individual may file a complaint alleging violation of this policy, Policy 3200-Student Rights and Responsibilities, Policy 3225/3225P/3225F -Sexual Harassment, or Policy 3266-Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation/Hazing by following those policies or Policy 1770-Uniform Complaint Procedure. The school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs and services. It provides equal access to designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding non-discrimination policies and to coordinate compliance efforts:

Name: Lance Boyd

Title: Executive Director of Student

Achievement

Address: 1100 4<sup>th</sup> Street South, PO Box 2429, Great Falls, MT 59403

Email: lance\_boyd@gfps.k12.mt.us

Phone: (406) 268-6008

Inquiries or complaints may also be directed to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue S.W., Washington D.C. 20202, or by calling (800) 421-3481 or (877) 521-2172 (TTY).

| OFFICE USE ONLY |                   |  |  |
|-----------------|-------------------|--|--|
| Student ID #:   | Date Distributed: |  |  |

00ESEA-TPQ-01 (04/17 - US)

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**Sexual Harassment Reporting/Intake Form for Students**

This form is not required. Complaints may be submitted in any matter noted in Policy 5012. The form may be used by the Title IX Coordinator to document allegations.

School \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Student's name \_\_\_\_\_

1. Who was responsible for the harassment or incident(s)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Describe the incident(s).

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Date(s), time(s), and place(s) the incident(s) occurred.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Were other individuals involved in the incident(s)?      yes      no

If so, name the individual(s) and explain their roles.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Did anyone witness the incident(s)?      yes      no

If so, name the

witnesses. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Did you take any action in response to the incident?      yes      no

If yes, what action did you take?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Were there any prior incidents?      yes      no

If so, describe any prior incidents.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of complainant \_\_\_\_\_ Date

of parents/guardians (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ Date

Signature of the Title IX Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Date

**Feel free to attach documentation.**

Retaliation is prohibited by federal law and District policy. The identity of the individual signing this form will remain confidential in accordance with law and policy.





## Great Falls Public Schools School—Parent Compact

Dear Parent/Guardian: We value your role in working to help your child achieve academic success. The following is an outline of some of the ways you and the school staff can build and maintain a partnership to share the responsibility for supporting your child's learning.

### Title I Parent Engagement

The District and schools' Parent Advisory Councils will review and ensure the District, and schools work with families to design procedures to assist in meeting the needs of students and in support of parents as partners in the education of their children, especially in transition grades (Kindergarten, Middle School, and High School entry).

To achieve the level of Title I parent involvement desired by District policy on this topic, these procedures guide the development of the District and individual school's annual plan designed to foster a cooperative effort among parents, school, and community.

### Guidelines

Parent involvement activities developed at each school will include opportunities for:

1. Home support for the child's education;
2. Parent participation in school decision-making;
3. Parent education; and
4. Volunteering.

The school system will provide opportunities for conversations about effective parent involvement practices, professional development, and resources for staff and parents/community regarding the shared responsibility of educating the children of our community.

### Roles and Responsibilities

#### Student

It is the responsibility of the student to:

1. Come prepared;
2. Complete assignments;
3. Follow school expectations; and
4. Seek help if needed.

#### Parent

It is the responsibility of the parent to:

1. Actively communicate with school staff;
2. Encourage consistent attendance in school by their children;
3. Be aware of the rules and regulations of the school;
4. Take an active role in the child's education by reinforcing the skills and knowledge the student has learned in school and at home; and
5. Utilize opportunities for participation in school activities.

### Teacher/Staff

It is the responsibility of staff to:

1. Effectively and actively communicate with all parents about skills, knowledge, and attributes students are learning in school and making suggestions for reinforcement;
2. Send information to parents of Title I children (including parents of migrant/immigrant children if applicable) in a format and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand;
3. Develop and implement a school plan for parent engagement;
4. Promote and encourage parent engagement activities; and
5. Review the family engagement policy annually and update it when needed.

### Community

Community members who volunteer in the schools have the responsibility to:

1. Be aware of and follow the rules and regulations of the school; and
2. Utilize opportunities for participation in school activities.

### Administration

It is the responsibility of the administration to:

1. Facilitate and implement the Title I Parent Engagement Policy and Plan at the school and district levels;
2. Provide training and space for parent engagement activities;
3. Provide resources to support successful parent engagement practices;
4. Provide in-service education to staff regarding the value and use of contributions of parents and how to communicate and work with parents as equal partners; and
5. Send information to parents at Title I schools (including parents of migrant/immigrant children if applicable) in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

Thank you for your support and involvement with your child's education. Please contact the person(s) listed below for more information.

Carol Paul, Title I Coordinator, at 406-268-6779 or email [carol\\_paul@gfps.k12.mt.us](mailto:carol_paul@gfps.k12.mt.us)

Lance Boyd, Executive Director of Student Achievement, at 406-268-6008 or by email at [lance\\_boyd@gfps.12.mt.us](mailto:lance_boyd@gfps.12.mt.us)



Annual Parent Notice

July 1, 2025

### Right to Request Teacher Qualifications

Great Falls Public Schools receives federal funds for programs that are part of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*, as amended (2015). Throughout the school year, we will continue to provide you with important information about this law and your child's education. Based on current education law, teachers must have earned State certification and licensure. State certification and licensure is the training required to be a teacher.

We are very proud of our teachers and feel they are ready for the coming school year. We are prepared to give your child a high-quality education. You have the right to request information about the professional qualifications of your child's teacher(s) or paraprofessional(s). A paraprofessional provides academic or other support for students under the direct supervision of a teacher. If you request this information, the district or school will provide you with the following as soon as possible:

1. if the teacher has met State certification and licensing requirements for the grade levels and subjects for which the teacher provides instruction;
2. if State certification and licensing requirements have been waived (is not being required at this time) for the teacher under emergency or other temporary status;
3. if the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline for which they are certified or licensed;
4. if the teacher has met State-approved or State-recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements. These requirements apply to the professional discipline in which the teacher is working and may include providing English language instruction to English learners, special education or related services to students with disabilities, or both; and
5. if your child is receiving Title I or Special Education services from paraprofessionals, his or her qualifications.

Our staff is committed to helping your child develop the social, academic, and critical thinking they need to succeed in school and beyond. That commitment includes making sure all of our teachers and paraprofessionals are highly skilled.

If you would like to request information about your child's teacher(s) or paraprofessional(s), or if you have any questions about your child's assignment to a teacher or paraprofessional, please contact the following person:

Name: Luke Diekhans  
Phone: (406) 268-6010

Title: Director of Human Resources  
Email: [luke\\_diekhans@gfps.k12.mt.us](mailto:luke_diekhans@gfps.k12.mt.us)

Thank you for your interest and involvement in your child's education.

Director of Human Resource

## **ABUSED AND NEGLECTED CHILD REPORTING**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 5232**

A District employee who has reasonable cause to suspect, as a result of information they receive in their professional or official capacity, that a child is abused, neglected, or subjected to sex trafficking by anyone regardless of whether the person suspected of causing the abuse, neglect, or sex trafficking is a parent or other person responsible for the child's welfare, shall report the matter promptly to the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS). Child abuse or neglect means actual physical or psychological harm to a child, substantial risk of physical or psychological harm to a child, exposure to or involvement with sex trafficking, and abandonment. This definition includes sexual abuse and sexual contact by or with a student. The obligation to report suspected child abuse or neglect also applies to actual or attempted sexual or romantic contact between a student and a staff member.

The employee shall notify the Superintendent, Principal, or supervising administrator that a report has been made by the employee. An employee does not discharge the obligation to personally report to DPHHS by notifying the Superintendent, Principal, or supervising administrator.

Any District employee who fails to report a suspected case of abuse, neglect, or sex trafficking to DPHHS, or who prevents another person from doing so, may be civilly liable for the damages proximately caused by such failure or prevention and is guilty of a misdemeanor. The employee will also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

When a District employee makes a report, DPHHS may share information with that individual or others as permitted by law. Individuals in the District who receive information related to a report of child abuse, neglect, or sex trafficking shall maintain the confidentiality of the information.

## **ATTENDANCE**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2050, 2162, 2161R, 3100R, 3120, 3122, 3122R, 3130, 3141, 3150, 3150R.**

### **Compulsory Attendance**

Parents, guardians, or other person who is responsible for the care of any child who is seven (7) years of age or older prior to the first day of school, in any school fiscal year, is responsible for seeing that the child attends the school in which the child is enrolled for the school term and each school day in the term prescribed by the trustees of the district until the later of the following dates:

1. The child's sixteenth (16<sup>th</sup>) birthday;
2. The date the child completes the eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) grade.

The provision above do not apply to the following cases:

- a. The child has been excused under one of the conditions specified in §20-5-102, MCA.
- b. The child absent because of illness, bereavement, or other reason prescribed by the policies of the Trustees.
- c. The child has been suspended or expelled under the provisions of §20-5-202, MCA.
- d. The child is excused pursuant to Section 2 of §20-5-103, MCA.
- e. The child is excused pursuant to §40-6-701(1) or Policy 2158.

Parents shall enroll the student unless the student is:

1. Provided with supervised correspondence or home study;
2. Excused from compulsory school attendance upon a determination by a district judge that attendance is not in the best interest of the child;
3. Enrolled in a non-public or home school;
4. Enrolled in a school of another district or state under the tuition provisions of this title; or,
5. Excused by the Board upon a determination that such attendance by a child who has attained the age of sixteen (16) is not in the best interest of the child and the school.

### **Student Enrollment, Exceptional Circumstances Meriting Waiver of Age Requirements for Students**

It is the policy of the District to provide enhanced educational opportunities to students under the age of 5 when a child qualifies and when Community-Based exceptional circumstances are present. Administration shall ensure admission, enrollment, and assignment of all qualifying children under policy 2165. For more information on qualifying “exceptional circumstances” refer to policy 2165.

### **Attendance Policy**

The Board believes and research supports that students who attend school regularly are more successful than those who do not. Students are responsible for attending class. The learning experiences that take place in the classroom environment are an essential part of the educational process. Absences and tardiness tend to disrupt the continuity of the instructional program and the time lost from class is irretrievable, particularly in terms of opportunity for interaction and exchange of ideas between students and teachers. Missing class hinders a student’s ability to master the subject matter, and this may be reflected in the grade. Grades earned in any course shall reflect the student’s fulfillment of academic requirements, achievement, and daily participation. The administration does not condone absences that detract from our academics.

A student’s regular school attendance also reflects dependability and is a significant component of a student’s permanent record. Future employers are as much concerned about punctuality and dependability as they are about academic records. School success, scholarship, and job opportunities are greatly affected by a good attendance record.

### **Attendance Notification**

It is the student’s responsibility to come to school on time and be prepared each day. Daily notification to the school from a parent or legal guardian is required when a student is absent or late. Teachers shall keep a record of absence and tardiness, and all absences will be recorded on the report card. Before the end of the school day, each school shall attempt to contact every parent, guardian, or custodian whose child is absent from school but who has not reported the child as absent for the school day, to determine whether the parent, guardian, or custodian is aware of the child’s absence from school. Any absence must be verified within 48 hours of the absence, or the absence will be recorded as unexcused. The Attendance Officers and/or School Resource Officers (SRO) of each school will be notified of all unexcused absences.

Alternative attendance plans may be created when absences and/or trancies negatively impact student achievement.

Students with excessive absences may have their names shared with Alliance for Youth and/or the County Attorney's office for intervention and support.

Excessive absences will result in consequences according to policy procedure 3122R and will be reported on the report card. Specific rules and regulations regarding attendance and tardies, as well as bell schedule(s) can be found in the respective school(s) student handbook(s) and/or school webpage(s).

### **Attendance Officer**

The Great Falls School District has appointed the principal and the associate principals assigned to each school as the Attendance Officers of the school. The Attendance Officers shall have the powers and duties as stated in § 20-5-105 (1) (Section 2) MCA.

### **Attendance Part-Time**

The District will review requests for part-time enrollment of grades K-12 students on a case-by-case basis, with the Superintendent or designee making a final decision. Acceptance of students in grades K-12 for part-time enrollment will not adversely affect a school's accreditation or enrollment.

The District will accept on a first-come, first-served basis, students wishing to enroll in a course. Whenever the enrollment position of a part-time student is needed for a regular, full-time student during the year, a full-time student has priority for the position beginning with the next semester.

### **Attendance Part-Time Student Enrollment**

Montana law provides that properly enrolled students must attend school unless the child is excused from attending, as provided specifically in law. Enrollment in a non-public or home school that complies with the provisions of Montana law, § 20-5-109 MCA, excuses the child and their parent, guardian, or custodian from the compulsory enrollment and attendance requirements.

Students enrolled in private schools or registered home schools in the Great Falls Public School District may seek to enroll and be approved for enrollment on a part-time basis in Great Falls Public Schools.

Part-time student enrollment will be accommodated by Great Falls Public Schools within the following limitations:

1. Placement: The location of the services provided will be at the discretion of the District pursuant to district policy. Students may be placed in grade levels and/or in courses at the discretion of the District based on student educational records which may include assessment results.
2. Enrollment: Students must enroll for a minimum of one (1) hour per day for the school year.
3. Attendance: Upon enrollment as a part-time student with this District, the student will comply with the compulsory attendance provisions of the law for the time they are scheduled to be in class in the District. Students found in non-compliance with the attendance/enrollment rules for the time scheduled to be in class in the District will be considered truant.
4. Discipline: The parent, guardian, or custodian understands and agrees the child will be subject to Montana law and the discipline policies and procedures of Great Falls Public Schools as prescribed by law. Students determined to be in violation under these provisions may be suspended or expelled as allowed in the law.
5. Transportation: Transportation services will be provided by the parent, guardian, or custodian pursuant to Montana law and District policies.

6. FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education) and Special Education (IDEA) Services: Enrollment is afforded in compliance with these guidelines.

#### **Extra-Curricular Athletics for Home-school/Nonpublic (non-MHSA member) students**

As per state law and MHSA regulations, non-public or home-school students who meet the requirements of § 20-5-109 MCA can participate in MHSA member school extra-curricular activities with the following stipulations:

1. The same standards for participation must be met as those required of full-time students enrolled in the school (besides enrollment). Students in a nonpublic or home school seeking to participate in an extracurricular activity shall be required to provide proof of identity and residency to participate.
2. The same rules of the MHSA apply including age, semesters, academics, and transfer. Only enrollment is waived.
  - a. **Age rule:** A student who turns 19 after midnight on August 31<sup>st</sup> is age-eligible. Any 19-year-old (who turns 19 on or before midnight August 31<sup>st</sup>) can file a waiver of the age rule if the following is proved by the student: 1) the student does not create a safety risk, 2) the student does not skew the overall competitiveness of the activity, 3) participation will not exclude others, and 4) the student meets all necessary criteria to participate in MHSA activities.
  - b. **Semester rule:** Students are eligible for eight consecutive semesters and the semesters start to accrue after entering the ninth grade.
  - c. **The principal will verify when the student began high school coursework which will begin their semester accrual. (Eight consecutive semesters once they start ninth-grade coursework and semesters accrue whether they are attending school or not).**
3. The academic eligibility for extracurricular participation for a student attending a nonpublic school must be attested by the head administrator of the nonpublic school. The academic eligibility for extracurricular participation for students attending a home school must be attested in writing by the educator providing the student instruction with verification by the MHSA school principal. To meet the same standards as required by the law, a home-school and/or nonpublic school student must demonstrate they have passed five half-credit classes in the previous semester (90 school day period). Academic eligibility includes provisions 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 from the MHSA handbook (see below).
  - a. (2.2) A grading period is defined as one semester. A semester is defined as one-half of a school year (approximately 18 school weeks or 90 school days). This definition is applicable to all schools regardless of the type of class scheduling format utilized (i.e. block, traditional, trimester etc.).
  - b. (2.3) A student must have received a passing grade and received credit in at least twenty-five periods of prepared class work or its equivalent in the last previous semester, at the school where the student participates; except that any ninth-grade student enrolled and attending any junior high, in the same school system as the senior high school, may be eligible to participate on that senior high school's athletic teams. If the school prohibits participation by ninth-grade students, this action by the local school will not be subject to review by the MHSA or its Executive Board.

- c. (2.4) A student must have received a passing grade and received credit in at least twenty-five periods of prepared work per week or its equivalent during the last preceding semester in which they were enrolled.
4. The student may only participate in the school in the student's attendance area.
  - a. The student must live in your school's attendance area.
  - b. The nonpublic and/or home-school student's entire family must live in the attendance area of the school they participate in.
  - c. Nonpublic or home-school students cannot transfer.
5. No student may establish eligibility concurrently at two-member schools.
6. Dual enrollment is not recognized for the purpose of eligibility in MHSA activities.
7. A nonpublic school and/or home-school student who participates at an MHSA member school is not eligible to concurrently participate in the same sport/activity that he/she participates in at the member school in any other league (nonpublic or home school). This provision protects member schools and nonpublic and home school leagues regarding dual participation.
8. All nonpublic/home-school participants are subject to the same rules and requirements for participation as students enrolled in Great Falls Public Schools.
9. Middle School Participation: The GFPS Athletic Department follows the same policies for middle school as high school when appropriate/possible.

### **Activities or Preplanned Absences**

Participation in school activities is an important factor in a student's success in school. It is the parent's, guardian's, or custodian's and student's responsibility to notify the school prior to being absent. Absences for the participants in school-sponsored activities are excused, but students are responsible for the work missed. In order to participate in an extracurricular activity, including practice, students must be in school during the afternoon of the date of the event or in the afternoon on the last school day prior to the activity, if the activity falls on a non-school day. Exceptions may be made by the administration.

### **Excused Absences**

A student is excused when the absence is due to:

1. Illness
2. Bereavement
3. Medical or legal appointments that cannot be scheduled outside of the school day
4. Weather-related absence when the schools remain in session, but the parent, guardian, or custodian deems it unsafe for the student to attend school
5. Necessary absences approved by the parent, guardian, or custodian
6. Participation in school activities

If there is a question regarding the validity of an excused absence, the Attendance Officer and/or the SRO may request that the parent, guardian, or custodian communicate directly to them regarding the reason for the absence or tardiness. Additionally, the Attendance Officer and/or the SRO may require verification, including documentation of medical conditions contributing to the absence. In the event the Attendance Officer and/or the SRO determines an absence or tardy is unnecessary, the absence or tardy will be considered unexcused.



The school will verify requests from adult students who wish to leave school early for reasons such as job interviews, college visits, driver testing, etc., with the organization being visited. Permission to leave school early may be denied for what is considered a non-valid reason.

Schoolwork missed during an excused absence will be made up at full credit. Students will make individual arrangements with the teachers for work completion. (Teachers will grant a minimum of 2 days for each day of absence for work completion.)

### **Unexcused Absences**

An unexcused absence is an absence that has not been verified by a parent, guardian, custodian, or the school administration, an Attendance Officer, and/or SRO. Staff will not be expected to recreate the educational experience for students who have unexcused absences.

### **Truancy**

For the purpose of this policy “truant” or “truancy” means the persistent non-attendance due to “unexcused absence”, as defined in this policy, for all or any part of a school day. Truants will be reported to legal authorities as prescribed by law, § 20-5-106, MCA Truancy.

### **Alternative Attendance Plans**

Alternative attendance plans may be created when absences and/or truanancies negatively impact student achievement.

### **Discretionary Nonresident Student Attendance Policy**

The Board, recognizes an educational requirement of its resident students including the need for an orderly educational process and environment, free from disruption, overcrowding, and any kind of violence or disruptive influences, hereby establishes criteria for the admission of nonresident students. Unless the provisions of § 20-5-321 MCA apply, admission to the District as a nonresident student is at its discretion. As such, the District will screen all nonresident students and only consider those who meet the criteria set forth in Policy 3141.

The Superintendent, or designee is hereby given the authority to recommend to the Board any nonresident student’s admission in accordance with Policy 3141. The Board shall make the final admission decision. In making the recommendation to the Board, the Superintendent, or designee will take into account all academic, conduct, and attendance history. The student may be denied admission if the Superintendent or designee determines the history indicates the admission of the student could be detrimental to the educational process of the District.

The District will not admit any student prior to viewing that student’s records from the student’s previous school district(s). The District has the option of accepting a nonresident student who does not meet the criteria set forth herein, if the student agrees to special conditions of admission, as set forth by the District.

Every nonresident student who seeks to enroll in the District shall apply for admission for the succeeding school year by March 15th for fall enrollment and December 15th for spring enrollment. All applications shall be submitted using the form found at Policy 3141F1 as developed by the Superintendent or designee.

For planning purposes, late applications will be accepted only at the Superintendent or designee's discretion and shall only be considered in extreme and extenuating circumstances.

The Board may declare an emergency which, in its opinion, necessitates the removal of all nonresident students from the schools.

## **CALENDAR**

**-Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2050, 2100**

### **School Calendar**

The Board annually shall establish the dates for opening and closing classes, teacher in-services, the length and dates of vacation, and the days designated as legal school holidays. The school calendar shall have a minimum of one hundred eighty (180) days or at least the minimum aggregate hours required by the State of Montana of pupil instruction. In addition, seven (7) pupil instruction-related (PIR) days may be scheduled.

### **Extended School Year**

In accordance with the District Policy 2011, § 20-1-301, MCA, and any applicable collective bargaining agreement covering the employment of affected employees, the Board of Trustees may establish a school calendar with an earlier start date and a later end date from non-emergency school years to ensure students receive the minimum number of aggregate instructional hours. The purpose of an extended school year will be to maximize flexibility in the delivery of instruction and learning for each student in the District in the event of school closures or other impacts of District operations due to a public health emergency. When setting an extended school year, the District will collaborate with students, parents, employees, and other community stakeholders. When proposing to adopt changes to a previously adopted school term, the Board of Trustees will follow the procedures outlined in Policy 2100.

### **School Schedule and Calendar**

It is the objective of the Board of Trustees to ensure the proactive operations of the District during a public health emergency b; (1) meeting the educational needs of the students; (2) complying with all applicable statutes and rules pertaining to the aggregate hours of instruction; and (3) identifying and implementing innovative methods to meet educational and other needs of each student in the District.

### **Commemorative Holidays**

Teachers and students shall devote a portion of the day on each commemorative holiday designated in § 20-1-306, MCA, to study and honor the commemorated person or occasion. The Board may, from time to time, designate a regular school day as a commemorative holiday.

## **CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT**

**-Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3630**

The District believes that unauthorized use of cell phones and/or other electronic devices disrupts the instructional program and distracts from the learning environment.

Student possession and use of cellular phones, pagers, and other electronic signaling devices on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, and while under the supervision and control of District employees is a privilege that will be permitted only under the circumstances described herein. At no time shall any student operate a cell phone or other electronic device with video capabilities in any locker room, bathroom, or other location where such an operation may violate the privacy right of another person.

Students may use phones, pagers, and other electronic signaling devices on campus before school begins and after school ends. Students in grades 7-12 may also use such devices during the lunch period. These devices must be kept out of sight and turned off during instruction unless authorized by teachers. Unauthorized use of such devices disrupts the instructional program and distracts from the learning environment. Therefore, unauthorized use is grounds for confiscation of the device by school officials, including classroom teachers. Confiscated devices may be returned to the student, parent, or guardian dependent upon progressive discipline at the building level. Repeated unauthorized use of such devices may result in disciplinary action.

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES/CONDITIONS**

**-References; GFPS Board Policy: 2050, 3410, 3417, 3420**

In all proceedings related to this policy, the District will respect a student's right to privacy. All applicable district policies and handbook provisions governing the confidentiality of student medical information remain in full effect.

Although the District is required to provide educational services to all school-age children who reside within its boundaries, it may deny attendance at school to any child diagnosed as having a communicable disease that could make a child's attendance harmful to the welfare of other students. The District also may deny attendance to a child with suppressed immunity in order to protect the welfare of that child when others in a school have an infectious disease, which, although not normally life-threatening, could be life-threatening to a child with suppressed immunity.

The District shall provide soap and disposable towels, or other hand-drying devices, and they shall be available at all handwashing sinks. Common-use towels are prohibited. Sanitary napkin disposal shall be provided for girls of age ten or older and in teachers' toilet rooms and nurses' toilet rooms. The District shall provide sanitary napkin dispensers in the girls', nurses', and teachers' toilet rooms or some other readily available on-site access to sanitary napkins.

The Board recognizes that communicable diseases that may afflict students range from common childhood diseases, acute and short-term in nature, to chronic, life-threatening diseases such as human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection. The District shall rely on the advice of the public health and

medical communities assessing the risk of transmission of various communicable diseases to determine how best to protect the health of both students and staff.

The District shall manage common communicable diseases in accordance with DPHHS guidelines and communicable diseases control rules. If a student develops symptoms of any reportable communicable or infectious illness as defined while at school, the responsible school officials shall do the following:

1. isolate the student immediately from other students or staff;
2. inform the parent or guardian as soon as possible about the illness and request him or her to pick up the student; and
3. consult with a local health department official to determine if any further reporting or actions are needed.

Management of common communicable diseases will be in accordance with DPHHS guidelines and communicable disease control rules. A student who exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease that is readily transmitted in the school setting may be temporarily excluded from onsite school attendance. Offsite instruction will be provided during the period of absence in accordance with policy 2050.

Students who complain of illness at school may be referred to the responsible person designated by the Superintendent and may be sent home as soon as the parent or person designated on the student's enrollment card has been notified.

The District reserves the right to require a statement from the student's primary care provider authorizing the student's return to onsite instruction. The District shall respect the student's right to privacy in all proceedings related to this policy.

When information is received by a staff member or volunteer that a student is afflicted with a serious communicable disease, the staff member or volunteer shall promptly notify the responsible person designated by the Superintendent to determine appropriate measures to protect student and staff health and safety. The responsible person designated by the Superintendent, after consultation with and on the advice of public health officials, shall determine which additional staff members, if any, need to know of the affected student's condition.

Only those persons with direct responsibility for the care of the student or for determining appropriate educational accommodation will be informed of the specific nature of the condition if it is determined there is a need for such individuals to know this information.

Head lice infestations must be addressed. Every attempt will be made to maintain dignity while educating students and parents on the prevention and eradication of head lice before and after infestation is detected. The administrator, his/her designee, school nurse, or another qualified professional will examine the child in question. Siblings of students found with lice will also be checked if there is suspicion that infestation may exist. The student found with head lice may be sent home until he/she has initial treatment. Upon return, a child will be reassessed for the efficacy of treatment. Parents or guardians of the student found with head lice will be informed of procedures for treatment and requirements for reentering after initial treatment.

Parents of other children attending the school may be notified that their child has been exposed to a communicable disease without identifying the particular student who has the disease. Note: For purposes of

this policy, the term “communicable disease” refers to the diseases identified in 16.28.202, ARM, Reportable Diseases, with the exception of common colds and flu.

### **Healthy Hand Hygiene Behavior**

All student, staff and others present in any school building shall engage in hand hygiene at the following times, which include but are not limited to:

1. Arrival to the facility and after breaks
2. Before and after preparing, eating, or handling food or drinks
3. Before and after administering medication or screening temperature
4. After coming in contact with bodily fluid
5. After recess
6. After handling garbage
7. After assisting students with handwashing
8. After use of the restroom

Hand hygiene includes but is not limited to washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available. Staff members shall supervise students when they use hand sanitizer and soap to prevent ingestion. Staff members shall place grade-level appropriate posters describing handwashing steps near sinks.

### **COMPLAINTS BY STUDENTS/PARENTS**

**-References; GFPS Board Policy: 1770, 3210, 3215, 3225F, 3225P, 3226, 3300, 3310, 4310, 5215, 5232, 5255**

#### **Uniform Complaint Procedure**

All individuals may use this complaint procedure if they believe that the Board, its employees, or agents have violated their rights under state and federal law or Board policy.

The District will endeavor to respond to and resolve complaints at the lowest level, and if a complaint is formally filed, to address the complaint promptly and equitably. Each complaint shall be considered on its own merits. Use of this complaint procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies, and use of this complaint procedure does not extend any filing deadline related to the pursuit of other remedies.

#### **Level 1: Informal Problem Solving (Recommended)**

An individual with a complaint is encouraged to first discuss it with the employee, supervisor, or administrator with the objective of resolving the matter promptly and informally. An exception is that complaints of sexual harassment should be discussed with an administrator who is not involved in the alleged harassment. See the section related to Sexual Harassment below.

#### **Level 2: Informal Principal / District Administrator Problem Solving**

If the complaint is not resolved at Level 1, the individual should consult with the principal of the school or the supervisor of the program/department. The principal or supervisor shall investigate and attempt to resolve the complaint.

If the principal or supervisor is not able to remedy the situation satisfactorily, the individual should contact the appropriate District Administrator. The District Administrator may meet with the parties involved and seek support from other staff and administration as appropriate in working to resolve the matter.

### **Level 3: Formal Written Complaint**

If the complaint is not remedied successfully at Level 2, the individual may file a formal written complaint stating:

1. The nature of the complaint;
2. A description of the event or incident giving rise to the complaint, including any school personnel involved; and
3. The remedy or resolution requested.

The written complaint must be signed, and filed with the appropriate District Administrator within thirty (30) calendar days of the event or incident, or within thirty (30) calendar days from the date the complaint could reasonably become aware of the matter. The applicability of the deadline is subject to review by the Superintendent to ensure the intent of this Uniform Complaint Procedure is honored. The District Administrator shall further study and attempt to resolve the complaint. If either the complainant or the person against whom the complaint is filed has reason to believe the administrator's decision was made in error, the complaint may be advanced to Level 4 by requesting in writing that the Superintendent review the decision. This request must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent within fifteen (15) calendar days of the District Administrator's decision.

### **Level 4: Superintendent Review and Decision**

If either the complainant or the person against whom the complaint is filed appeals the administrator's decision provided for in Level 3, the Superintendent will review the complaint and the administrator's decision. The Superintendent will respond in writing to the appeal, within thirty (30) calendar days of the Superintendent's receipt of the written appeal. In responding to the appeal, the Superintendent may:

1. Meet with the parties involved in the complaint;
2. Conduct a separate or supplementary investigation;
3. Engage an outside investigator or other District employees to assist with the appeal; and/or
4. Take other steps appropriate or helpful in resolving the complaint.

If either the complainant or the person against whom the complaint is filed has reason to believe the Superintendent's decision was made in error, either may request that the Board consider an appeal in writing of the Superintendent's decision. See Level 5 below. This request must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent within fifteen (15) calendar days of the Superintendent's written response to the complaint, for transmission to the Board.

### **Level 5: The Board**

Upon written appeal of a complaint alleging a violation of the individual's rights under state or federal law or Board policy upon which the Board of Trustees has authority to remedy, the Board may consider the Superintendent's decision in Level 4. Upon receipt of the written request of appeal, the Chairperson will either:

1. Place appeal on the agenda of a regular or special Board meeting,
2. Appoint an appeals panel of not less than three (3) Trustees to hear the appeal and make a recommendation to the Board, or

3. Respond to the complaint with an explanation of why the appeal will not be heard by the Board of Trustees in accordance with Board policy.

If the Chairperson appoints a panel to consider the appeal, the panel will meet to consider the appeal and then make a written recommendation to the full Board. The Board will report its decision on the appeal, in writing, to all parties, within thirty (30) calendar days of the Board meeting at which the Board considered the appeal or the recommendation of the panel. A decision of the Board is final unless it is appealed pursuant to Montana law within the period provided by law.

**Complaint of Sexual Harassment, or Violations of Title IX, Title II, or Section 504:**

If a complaint alleges sexual harassment or a violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the building administrator or assistant superintendent may turn the complaint over to a District Nondiscrimination Coordinator. The coordinator will complete an investigation and file a report and recommendation with the Superintendent. A coordinator may request of the Superintendent that an independent investigator be hired to conduct the investigation. Within fifteen (15) calendar days of the Superintendent's receipt of the coordinator's or independent investigator's report and recommendation, the Superintendent will respond to the complaint and take such administrative steps as the Superintendent deems appropriate and necessary. If either the complainant or the person against whom the complaint is filed feels the Superintendent's decision was made in error, either may request, in writing, that the Board consider an appeal of the Superintendent's decision. This request must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent, within fifteen (15) calendar days of the Superintendent's written response to the complaint, for transmission to the Board.

The board will strive to provide a positive and productive environment. Bullying, harassment, intimidation, or hazing by students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated. Bullying is any harassment, intimidation, hazing, threatening, insulting, or demeaning gesture or physical contact, including any intentional written, verbal, or electronic communication or threat directed against a student and/or staff that is persistent, severe or repeated and that:

1. Causes a student and/or staff physical harm, damages a student's property, or places a student and/or staff in reasonable fear of harm to the student and/or staff, or their property;
2. Creates a hostile environment by interfering with or denying a student's access to an educational opportunity or benefit; or
3. Substantially and materially disrupts the orderly operation of a school.

Harassment, intimidation and bullying can take on many forms – verbal, written, electronic, visual, physical and psychological – and is often, but not always, associated with race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or physical differences.

No person, including a District employee or agent, or student, shall bully, harass, haze or intimidate another based on the provisions of applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations that prohibit discrimination or any other reason. It is the policy of the Board to comply with all nondiscrimination laws. Complaints of bullying, harassment, intimidation and hazing will be handled as set forth in the applicable grievance procedure. The District will not tolerate bullying, harassment or intimidation.

Sexual harassment is prohibited. Sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. An employee of the District conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the District on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the District's education program or activity; or
3. "Sexual assault" as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "dating violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), or "stalking" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30).

Students who believe they are victims of bullying, harassment, or intimidation, regardless of the reason, or have witnessed bullying, harassment, or intimidation, regardless of the reason, are encouraged to discuss the matter with their teacher, counselor, bus driver, coach, principal, or any responsible adult who is not involved in the alleged bullying, harassment, or intimidation.

Students who believe they are victims of sexual harassment are encouraged to discuss the matter, including the formal complaint process, with the Title IX Coordinator. Students may choose to report to a person of the student's same gender if alleging a violation of Title IX. Complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible given the need to investigate.

When the District has actual knowledge of sexual harassment in an educational program or activity of the District, the District will respond promptly in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent. When the harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex does not meet the definition of sexual harassment. The Title IX Coordinator will direct the individual to the applicable sex discrimination process, bullying and harassment policy, or public complaint procedure for investigation.

Students who believe they are victims of harassment based upon a disability are encouraged to report the matter to the Section 504 Coordinator or Principal. This may include the completion of a Harassment Reporting Form (3225F) for Students that details the complaint.

Any adult employee, adult volunteer, District contractor or agent who witnesses, overhears or receives a report, formal or informal, written or oral, of bullying, harassment, or intimidation shall report it in accordance with procedures developed under Board policy.

Any adult school employee who has notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment shall make a report to the District's Title IX Coordinator.

Formal complaints alleging sexual harassment shall be addressed through the District's Title IX Grievance Procedures. Complaints alleging disability discrimination or harassment shall be addressed through the District's Section 504 Grievance Procedures. All other complaints alleging bullying, discrimination, or harassment shall be addressed through the District's Uniform Grievance Procedures (see Level 1-5 above).

The Title IX Coordinator & Section 504 Coordinator, Lance Boyd (406-268-6008) and/or administrator are responsible for taking the following actions in conformance with the applicable grievance procedure:



1. Taking prompt action to investigate/report complaints of harassment, intimidation and bullying.
2. Promptly notifying the complainants and respondents and their parents/guardians regarding the outcome;
3. Taking supporting or remedial measures to ensure continued access to the District's programs or activities while the grievance process is pending; and
4. Taking disciplinary action as appropriate and any other actions appropriate to address the harassment, intimidation, and bullying.

In the event that a staff member or administrator knows or reasonably believes that the alleged behavior constitutes criminal activity or child abuse or neglect, the staff member or administrator shall report such activity to law enforcement and/or the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS). Nothing herein prohibits other individuals from reporting complaints to law enforcement. If it is determined that the alleged harassment, intimidation, or bullying did not occur at school or school-related activity or does not materially or substantially disrupt the orderly operation of the District, an administrator shall refer the matter, as appropriate, to other persons or entities with appropriate jurisdiction, including but not limited to law enforcement or the Department of Public and Human Services (DPHHS).

Any District employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in bullying, harassment or intimidation of a student and/or staff, regardless of reason, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in bullying, harassment or intimidation, regardless of the reason, will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension and expulsion consistent with the District's discipline policy. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding bullying, harassment and intimidation, regardless of the reason, will likewise be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge, with regard to employees, or suspension and expulsion, with regard to students.

Retaliation and reprisal against any person who reports an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying or participates in an investigation under Board policy is prohibited. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the administrator after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, in accordance with District policy.

Detailed information on sexual harassment formal complaint response, investigation, determination, appeals, resolution process, and recordkeeping can be found in Board policy 3225P.

## **COMPUTER RESOURCES**

**-Resources; GFPS Board Policy: 2050, 2169, 3225, 3226, 3300, 3310, 3612, 3612F, 3612P, 3650**

Internet access is available to the District's students, faculty, and community members. Through its computer network, the District is connected with thousands of computers all over the world. Users may have access to information ranging from different cultures, science related issues, music, politics, and access to many university library catalogs. These are just some of the area users may be able to explore through the computer network. Students utilizing school-provided Internet access are responsible for good behavior on-line, just as they are in a classroom or other area of the school. The same general rules for behavior and communications apply. The District provides filtering software for computers accessing the Internet.

The District expects all students to take responsibility for appropriate and lawful use of this access, including good behavior on-line. The District may withdraw student access to its equipment, network and to the

Internet when misuse occurs. District teachers and other staff will make reasonable efforts to supervise use of equipment, network and Internet access; however, student cooperation is vital in exercising and promoting responsible use of this access.

During the course of the school year, unexpected events may necessitate the need to transition to remote learning (i.e. weather, building mechanical issues, health issues, etc.). In these instances, the District may issue a computer directly to the student to take home so instruction can continue. If needed, a wireless hotspot may also be issued if home internet is not available.

**By signing the student handbook, you as the parent consent to the following terms written in policy 3612F and 3612P:**

1. I will grant permission for my child to check out a laptop, Chromebook, or other device to bring home as needed for academic use.
2. I will assume responsibility for any damage to, and responsibility for, the repair and or replacement of the laptop, Chromebook, or other device while it is in my child's custody.
3. I will assume responsibility for any unauthorized use of the laptop, Chromebook, or other device while it is in my child's custody and will supervise its use to see that the laptop, Chromebook, or other device is used only for academic or other purposes as assigned by school staff and in accordance with District Policy and the Student Computer Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Agreement.
4. I will assume responsibility to pay for any damage, repair and or replacement for any damage done to district software which may result from my child's use of the laptop, Chromebook, or other device.
5. I will assume responsibility to pay for any damage, repair and or replacement for any damage done to district software which may result from a virus introduced as a result of my child's use of the laptop, Chromebook, or other device.
6. I will monitor my child's internet usage and ensure they do not visit inappropriate sites. GFPS cannot guarantee the same web content filter at home as it does in the schools.
7. I will not allow my child to use the district's laptop, Chromebook, or other device to add, remove or copy any programs, software or information in a manner which may violate copyright laws.
8. I will return all equipment borrowed when the child returns to school. Devices must be returned to the school they were checked out from.

**Curriculum**

Use of District equipment and electronic networks will be consistent with the curriculum adopted by the District, as well as with varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities, and developmental levels of students, and will comply with selection criteria for instructional materials and library materials. Staff members may use the Internet throughout the curriculum, consistent with the District's educational goals.

Students and staff members have no expectation of privacy in any materials that are stored, transmitted, or received via the District's equipment, or electronic network. The District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store, at any time and without notice, any and all usage of the equipment, computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage.

### **Proficiency-Based/Transformational Learning**

Transformational Learning links intentional instruction with learning targets. It gives an accurate measure of the student's ability and allows for supervisors, teachers, students and families to see the progression of skill attainment and growth. Transformational Learning supports use of data to drive experiences and instruction, provide specific feedback and track student progress and achievement.

At the discretion of the District, a student may be given credit for courses satisfactorily completed in a period of time shorter or longer than normally required and, provided that the course meets the District's curriculum guidelines, which are aligned with the content standards stated in the educational program. Examples of acceptable coursework included, but are not necessarily limited to, those delivered through summer school, completion of MT Youth Challenge or other specific intensive programs, specially designed courses, and other embedded community-based experiential, online and work-based learning opportunities. These opportunities will foster a learning environment that can be delivered both face to face or virtually. Alternative course assessments may be specified in the individual student's "Graduation and Beyond Student Learning Plan". Proficiency measures may include but are not limited to; portfolios, individualized rubrics, alternative means of expression of knowledge, work-based evaluations, or other methods as determined by the academic variance team. All assessment methods must address and measure the learning targets of each course.

### **Acceptable Uses and Unacceptable Uses**

Please refer to Board policy 3612F and Board policy 3612P Student Computer Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Agreement for a list of acceptable and unacceptable uses.

During the course of the school year, unexpected events may necessitate the need to transition to remote learning (i.e. weather, building mechanical issues, health issues, etc). In these instances, the District will issue a computer directly to the student to take home so instruction can continue. If needed, a wireless hotspot will also be issued if home internet is not available. By signing the student handbook, you as the parent consent to the following terms:

1. I will grant permission for my child to check out a laptop, Chromebook, or other device to bring home as needed for academic use.
2. I will assume responsibility for any damage to, and responsibility for, the repair and/or replacement of the laptop, Chromebook, or other device while it is in my child's custody.
3. I will assume responsibility for any unauthorized use of the laptop, Chromebook, or other device while it is in my child's custody and will supervise its use to see that the laptop Chromebook, or other device is used only for academic or other purposes as assigned by school staff and in accordance with District Policy and the Student Computer Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Agreement.
4. I will assume responsibility to pay for any damage, repair and/or replacement for any damage done to district software which may result from my child's use of the laptop, Chromebook, or other device.
5. I will assume responsibility to pay for any damage, repair and/or replacement for any damage done to district software which may result from a virus introduced as a result of my child's use of the laptop, Chromebook, or other device.
6. I will monitor my child's internet usage and ensure they do not visit inappropriate sites. GFPS cannot guarantee the same web content filter at home as it does in the schools.
7. I will not allow my child to use the district's laptop, Chromebook, or other device to add, remove or copy any programs, software or information in a manner which may violate copyright laws.

8. I will return all equipment borrowed when the child returns to school. Devices must be returned to the school they were checked out from.

**STUDENTS and PARENTS, you are required to read the *District's Student Computer Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Agreement* inserted between the school section and part two of this handbook or on the District website: [www.gfps.k12.mt.us](http://www.gfps.k12.mt.us), Board Policy 3612F and Board Policy 3612P. By signing, either a digital copy electronically or a printed copy physically, of the "2023-2024 Confirmation of Receipt of Handbook Information" page at the front of the Great Falls Public School Handbook, you are acknowledging receipt of this information, and agreeing to and accepting the responsibilities as listed in Great Falls Public Schools Board Policy 3612F and Board Policy 3612P.**

### **Warranties/Indemnification**

The District makes no warranties of any kind, express or implied, in connection with its provision of access to and use of its equipment, computer networks and the Internet provided under this policy. The District is not responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable when using the equipment, network or for any information that is retrieved or transmitted via the Internet. The District will not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the Internet. Any user is fully responsible to the District and will indemnify and hold the District, its trustees, administrators, teachers, and staff harmless from any and all loss, costs, claims, or damages resulting from such user's access to its equipment, computer network and the Internet, including but not limited to any fees or charges incurred through purchase of goods or services by a user. The District expects a user or, if a user is a minor, a user's parents or legal guardian to cooperate with the District in the event of initiating an investigation of a user's use of access to its equipment, computer network and the Internet.

### **Violations**

Violation of this policy will result in a loss of access and may result in other disciplinary or legal action. The principal will make all decisions regarding whether or not a user has violated this policy and any related rules or regulations and may deny, revoke, or suspend access at any time, with that decision being final.

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2161-2161R, 3200, 3225, 3226, 3230, 3231, 3300, 3310, 3310P, 3311, 3312, 3340, 3345**

In order for students to take advantage of available learning opportunities and to be productive members of our campus community, each student is expected to:

1. Demonstrate courtesy, even when others do not.
2. Behave in a responsible manner, exercising self-discipline.
3. Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
4. Prepare for each class; take appropriate materials and assignments to class.
5. Meet District and building standards of grooming and dress.
6. Obey all campus and classroom rules.
7. Respect the rights and privileges of other students, teachers, and other District staff.
8. Respect the property of others, including District property and facilities.
9. Cooperate with or assist the school staff in maintaining health, safety, order and discipline.
10. Avoid violations of the Discipline Policy below.

### **Applicability of School Rules and Discipline:**

The District recognizes and honors students' constitutional rights to education opportunities. However, as provided under Montana law, the District will exercise its right to suspend or expel a student when necessary. The District expects all students to know and follow District policies and rules. The District considers a student's failure or refusal to comply with District policies and rules cause for discipline, including short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion.

The Board grants authority to a teacher or principal to hold a pupil to strict accountability for disorderly conduct in a school building, on property owned or leased by a school district, on a school bus, on the way to or from school, or during intermission or recess.

Any conduct that would constitute violation of Montana Law will be reported to the police.

Disciplinary action may be taken against any student guilty of disobedience or misconduct, **including but not limited to instances set forth below:**

1. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco products, and alternative nicotine and vapor products as defined in 16-11-302, MCA.
2. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages, including powdered alcohol. Students who may be under the influence of alcohol will not be permitted to attend school functions and will be treated as though they had alcohol in their possession.
3. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling drug paraphernalia, illegal drugs, marijuana, controlled substances, or any substance which is represented to be or looks like a narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, alcoholic beverage, stimulant, depressant, or intoxicant of any kind, including such substances that contain chemicals which produce the same effect of illegal of such substances, including but not limited to Spice and K2. Students who may be under the influence of such substances will not be permitted to attend school functions and will be treated as though they had drugs in their possession.
4. Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring a weapon in violation of the "Possession of Weapons other than Firearms" section of the Policy 3311.
5. Using, possessing, controlling or transferring any object that reasonably could be considered or used as a weapon as referred to in Policy 3311.
6. Disobeying directives from staff members or school officials or disobeying rule, violating state or federal law, or not honoring regulations governing student conduct
7. Using violence, force, noise, coercion, threats, intimidation, fear, or other comparable conduct toward anyone or urging other students to engage in such conduct except when physical force is determined to be reasonable and necessary and used as self-defense or the defense of another person after an investigation into such conduct.
8. Causing or attempting to cause damage to, or stealing or attempting to steal, school property or another person's property.
9. Engaging in any activity that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function or any other disruptive activity.
10. Unexcused absenteeism. Truancy statutes and Board policy will be utilized for chronic and habitual truants.

11. Intimidation, harassment, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, hazing or bullying; or retaliation against any person who alleged misconduct under Policy 3225 or 3226 or participated in an investigation into alleged misconduct under Policy 3225 or 3226.
12. Defaces or damages any school building, school grounds, furniture, equipment, or book belonging to the District.
13. Forging any signature, or making any false entry, or attempting to authorize any document used or intended to be used in connection with the operation of a school.
14. Records or causes to be recorded a conversation by use of a hidden electronic or mechanical device which may include any combination of audio or video that reproduces a human conversation without the knowledge of all parties to the conversation.
15. Engaging in academic misconduct, which may include but is not limited to:
  - a. cheating
  - b. unauthorized sharing of exam responses or graded assignment work
  - c. plagiarism (to include copying off websites)
  - d. accessing websites or electronic resources without authorization to complete assigned coursework,
  - e. any other act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student.

Disciplinary actions apply whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including, but not limited to:

1. On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
2. Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity, or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;
3. Traveling to and from school or a school activity, function, or event, anywhere conduct may reasonably be considered to be a threat or an attempted intimidation of bullying of a staff member, or student, or an interference with school purposes of an educational function.

### **Disciplinary Measures**

Disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to:

1. Expulsion
2. Suspension
3. Detention, including Saturday School
4. Community Service
5. Clean-up duty
6. Loss of student privileges
7. Loss of bus privileges
8. Notification to juvenile authorities and/or police
9. Restitution for damages to school property
10. Completion of a District-approved Chemical Awareness Class
11. Completion of a District-approved Tobacco Education Group

### **Non-Disciplinary Measures**

The Superintendent or designee is authorized to assign a student to non-disciplinary offsite instruction pending the results of an investigation or for reasons related to the safety or well-being of students and staff. During the period of non-disciplinary offsite instruction, the student will be permitted to complete all

assigned schoolwork for full credit. The assignment of non-disciplinary offsite instruction does not preclude the Superintendent or designee from disciplining a student who has, after investigation, been found to have violated a District policy, rule or handbook provision.

### **Corrective Actions and Discipline**

All students shall submit to the reasonable rules of the District. Refusal to comply with written rules and regulations established for the governing of the school shall constitute sufficient cause for discipline, suspension, or expulsion. It is the intent of the Board to provide each student with those due process rights which are provided by law.

For the purposes of the District's policies relating to corrective actions and discipline:

1. "Detention" is for minor infractions of school rules or regulations or for minor misconduct. Staff may detain students. Students may not be detained without prior parent/guardian notification. Students may be required to attend Saturday detention for up to four (4) hours. Preceding the assessment of such punishment, the staff member shall inform the student of the nature of the offense charged, and/or the specific conduct which allegedly constitutes the violation. The student shall be afforded an opportunity to explain or justify their actions to the staff member. Students detained for corrective action or punishment shall be under the supervision of the staff member or designee.
2. "Suspension" means the exclusion of a student from attending individual classes or school and participating in school activities for an initial period not to exceed ten (10) school days. An administrator may order suspension of a student.
3. "Expulsion" is any removal of a student for more than twenty (20) school days without the provision of education services. Expulsion is a disciplinary action available only to the Board.
4. "Discipline" constitutes all other forms of corrective action or punishment, including brief exclusions from a class for not more than the remainder of the class period and exclusion from any other type of activity conducted by or for the District. Discipline shall not adversely affect specific academic grade, subject, or graduation requirements, as long as all required work is performed.
5. Academic discipline infractions include, but are not limited to truancy, cheating, and plagiarism. The student may receive grade reductions or lose credit.

### **Suspension**

The procedure set forth below will be followed when proposed punishment of a student is to include denial of the right of school attendance from any single class or from a full schedule of classes for at least one (1) day.

1. Before any suspension is ordered, the building administrator will meet with a student to explain charges of misconduct, and the student will be given the opportunity to respond to the charges.
2. When a student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or poses an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process, a pre-suspension conference will not be required, and an administrator may suspend a student immediately. In such cases, a building administrator will provide notice of and schedule a conference as soon as practicable following the suspension.
3. A building administrator will report any suspension immediately to the student's parent or legal guardian. An administrator will provide a written report of suspension that states the reasons for a suspension, including any school rule that was violated, and a notice to a parent or guardian of the right to a review of the suspension. The parent or legal guardian may use the Uniform Complaint Procedure if they disagree with the suspension.

4. Upon a finding by a school administrator that the immediate return to a school by a student would be detrimental to the health, welfare, or safety of others or would be disruptive of the educational process, a student may be suspended for one (1) additional period not to exceed ten (10) school days, if the student is granted an informal hearing with the school administrator prior to the additional suspension, and if the decision to impose the additional suspension does not violate the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Rehabilitation Act.

#### **Make-up work:**

1. K-12 students, who are absent as a result of an out-of-school suspension, have the right to make up for the work missed. They will work with the school to determine a timeline to complete the work.
2. Paris Gibson Education Center students who are absent as a result of an out-of-school suspension, may continue their work upon reinstatement.
3. Teachers are not expected to reconstruct lessons taught while a student is on suspension.

#### **Expulsion**

Students will not be expelled unless other forms of corrective action or punishment have failed, or unless there is good reason to believe that other forms of corrective action or punishment would fail if employed. The District may employ the use of a Student Discipline Hearing Committee to review the incident(s), review the impact to the school and provide the student with an opportunity to respond. This committee will make recommendations for consideration to the Superintendent who may then refer to the Board. Suspensions or expulsions shall be used only for instances of serious student misconduct. The Board and only the Board, may expel a student from school and may do so only after following due process procedures outlined in Policy 3300.

#### **Procedures for Suspension and Expulsion of Students with Disabilities**

The District shall comply with the provisions of the IDEA the Rehabilitation Act when disciplining students. The Board will not expel any special education when a student's particular act of gross disobedience or misconduct is a manifestation of the student's disability. The Board may expel pursuant to its expulsion procedures any special education student whose gross disobedience or misconduct is not a manifestation of the student's disability. A disabled student shall continue to receive education services as provided in the IDEA or Rehabilitation Act during such period of expulsion.

#### **Corporal Punishment**

**Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3310, 3231, 3300**

No person who is employed or engaged by the District may inflict or cause to be inflicted corporal punishment on a student. Corporal punishment does not include reasonable force. District personnel are permitted to use reasonable force to maintain safety for other students, school personnel, or other persons, or for the purpose of self-defense.

#### **Disciplinary Authority**

School District employees and other individuals designated or hired by the District, when students are under their charge, are authorized to impose any disciplinary measure, other than suspension, or expulsion, corporal punishment or in-school suspension, which is appropriate and in accordance with the policies and rules on student discipline. Teachers may remove students from a classroom for disruptive behavior.



### **Student Threat Assessment**

The District may establish a threat assessment team for students whose behavior may pose a risk to the safety of the community, school, staff, students or self. Each team shall:

1. Provide guidance to students, faculty, and staff regarding recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior that may represent a risk to the community, school, staff, students or self;
2. Include persons with expertise in counseling, instruction, school administration, and/or law enforcement and other outside resources as necessary; and
3. Identify members of the internal school community and external community, as appropriate, who should be informed of behavior; and
4. Utilize available forms and procedures for the assessment of and intervention with students whose behavior poses a risk to the safety of the community, school, staff, students or self, including response plans.

All District employees, volunteers, and contractors are required to report any expressed risks or behavior that may represent a risk to the community, school, or self. In cases determined to be appropriate, teams shall follow established procedures for referrals to community services, boards, or health care providers for evaluation or treatment when appropriate.

Upon a preliminary determination that a student poses a high or extreme risk of violence or physical harm to self or others, a threat assessment team shall immediately report its determination to the Superintendent or designee.

The Superintendent or designee shall immediately attempt to notify the student's parent or legal guardian. Nothing in this policy shall prevent a District employee from acting immediately to address an imminent risk. The Superintendent may establish a committee charged with oversight of the threat assessment teams. An existing committee may be designated to assume the oversight responsibility; however, any such team may include individuals with expertise in community resources, education, school administration, mental health, medical, and/or law enforcement.

Regardless of threat assessment activities, disciplinary action and referral to law enforcement are to occur as required by Board Policy and Montana law. The District may, in accordance with the provisions in Policy 3600R, release student records or information in connection with an emergency, without parental consent, if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons.

### **COUNSELING**

#### **- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2140**

Students and parents are encouraged to talk with a school counselor, teacher, or principal about their academic concerns. Students will be provided information that will help them make the most of academic and vocational opportunities. Refer to the building handbook concerning specific information on class scheduling.

All staff will encourage students to explore and develop their individual interests in all areas, including but not limited to career and technical programs, academic curricula, post-secondary opportunities, community or military service, and employment opportunities without regard to gender, race, color, national origin,

ancestry, sex, ethnicity, language barrier, religious beliefs, physical or mental handicap or disability, economic or social condition, actual or potential marital or parental status.

The school counselor is also available to assist students and parents with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, or emotional issues or substance abuse. The counselor may make information available about community resources to address these concerns. They may also have information available about addiction services and cessation programs available to students and staff.

Students shall have access to regular school counseling services whether their instruction is provided in a District approved onsite, offsite or online setting. Staff shall promptly report any suspected student distress or concern to their supervisor or review and referral. Students receiving instruction in a District approved offsite setting are governed by the staff obligation to report suspected child abuse or neglect.

**Please note:** School counselors do not conduct psychological examinations, tests, or treatment. School counselors do not provide individual therapy. Elementary Counselors (K-6) spend the majority of their time teaching classroom lessons and working with small groups on a selected topic. The school will notify the parent or guardian of the right to opt a student out of a mental health screening and will be notified of any issues or concerns resulting from a mental health screening.

## **CYBERBULLYING**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3226, 3612, 3612P, 3630**

All forms of harassment in cyberspace, often called cyberbullying, are unacceptable. Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology:

1. Electronic communication is defined by MCA 45-8-213 and includes any communication by any electronic device, including but not limited to, text messaging e-mail, or use of social networking.
2. Harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital images or web site postings (including blogs).
3. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, the loss of computer privileges, detention, suspension or expulsion from school.
4. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

## **DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

**-References; GFPS Board Policy: 3600R, 3600P**

The District may release directory information as permitted by law, but parent(s)/guardian(s) shall have the right to object to the release of information regarding their child. Military recruiters and institutions of higher education may request and receive the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all high school students, unless the parent(s) notifies the school not to release this information.

Directory information shall be limited to:

1. Student's Name
2. Address
3. Telephone listing

4. Electronic mail address
5. Photograph (including electronic version; including to the OPI Missing Persons Repository-SB0040)
6. Date and place of birth
7. Grade level
8. Enrollment status (e.g., undergraduate or graduate; full-time or part-time)
9. Academic awards, degrees, and honors
10. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
11. Weight and height of members of athletic teams
12. Dates of Attendance
13. Degrees, major field of study, most recent educational agency or institution attended

**Montana State Legislature passed Senate Bill 0040:** An act requiring the Office of Public Instruction to create and maintain an electronic directory photograph repository; providing that the directory photographs may be used only if a student is identified as a missing child; requiring a parent or guardian to opt-in to participate in the repository; requiring school district trustees to send an annual notice with opt-in provision to parents and guardians; authorizing Department of Justice staff to access the repository; amending sections 44-2-505 and 44-2-506, MCA; and providing an effective date. See parent/guardian sign off page check boxes, located in your school handbook, if you **do not** want your child's photo to be submitted to this repository.

The notification to parent(s) and students concerning school records shall inform them of their right to object to the release of directory information.

#### **Law Enforcement/Youth Court-Probation**

The school district may disclose, without consent, personally identifiable information from an education record of a pupil to the youth court and law enforcement authorities pertaining to violations of the Montana Youth Court Act or criminal laws by the pupil. The youth court or law enforcement authorities receiving the information shall certify in writing to the school district that the information will not be disclosed to any other party except as provided under state law without the prior consent of the parent/guardian of the pupil.

#### **Military Recruiters/Institutions of Higher Education**

Pursuant to federal law, the District is required to release the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all high school students to military recruiters and institutions of higher education upon request.

The Montana Superintendent of Public Instruction may release student information to the Montana Commissioner of Higher Education and Montana Department of Labor and Industry for research purposes after entering into agreement with the Commissioner and Department. If the Superintendent of Public Instruction offers a statewide assessment that serves as a college entrance exam, the student's personally identifiable information may be released to colleges, state-contracted testing agencies, and scholarship organizations with student consent.

The notification to parents/guardians and students concerning school records shall inform them of their right to object to the release of this information.

#### **DISRUPTIONS**

- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 4313, 4315, 4332, 3200, 3226

The Principal shall see that all students are instructed about proper conduct during a safety threat. There are potential criminal and civil penalties, as well as school discipline associated with making a safety threat. The disruption and costs to the educational process stemming from a safety threat are serious. No one may disrupt or obstruct any school program, activity, or meeting. No one may threaten or incite another to commit any act that will disturb or interfere with or obstruct any lawful task, function, process or procedure of any student, official, employee or invitee of the District.

### **Conduct on School Property**

In addition to prohibitions stated in other District Policies, no person on school property shall at any time:

1. Injure, haze, harass, intimidate, bully, or threaten to injure another person;
2. Damage another's property or that of the District;
3. Violate any provision of the criminal law of the state of Montana or town or county ordinance;
4. Use, possess, distribute, purchase, or sell tobacco products, including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, snuff, smoking tobacco, smokeless tobacco, nicotine, electronic cigarettes and any other tobacco/nicotine innovation;
5. Consumer, possess, distribute, or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverages, marijuana, or illegal/controlled substances; marijuana products include but are not limited to edible products, ointments, tinctures, marijuana derivatives, marijuana concentrates, and marijuana intended for use by smoking or vaping;
6. Possess weapons (as defined in Policy 3310/3311);
7. Impede, delay, or otherwise interfere with the orderly conduct of the District's educational program or any other activity occurring on school property;
8. Enter any portion of the school premises at any time for purposes other than those that are authorized by the District as public or educational activities;
9. Willfully violate other District rules and regulations. "School Property" means within school buildings, in vehicles used for school purposes, or on owned or leased school grounds.

As circumstances warrant, appropriate action will be taken by the District's administrators.

### **DISTANCE, ONLINE, AND TECHNOLOGY-DELIVERED LEARNING**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2100, 2120, 2168, 2410, 2410R, 3650**

The District defined distance, online, and technology-delivered learning as instruction in which students and teachers are separated by time and/or location with synchronous or asynchronous content, instruction, and communication between student and teacher (e.g., correspondence courses, online learning, video conferencing, streaming video). The District may utilize a variety of distance, online and technology-delivered learning platforms including the Montana Digital Academy (MTDA) to fulfill these needs when the District is unable to utilize programs and staff of its own.

**The District may receive and/or provide distance, online, and technology-delivered learning programs, provided the following requirements are met:**

1. The distance, online, and technology-delivered learning programs and/or courses shall meet the learner expectations adopted by the District and be aligned with state content and performance standards as determined by means of the local review and adoption process as described in ARM 10.55.603;

2. When requested, the District shall provide a report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, documenting how it is meeting the needs of students under the accreditation standards, who are taking a majority of courses during each grading period via distance, online, and/ or technology-delivered programs;
3. The District will provide highly qualified, licensed instructors and/or facilitators as described in ARM 10.55.907(3)(a)(b)(c);
4. The District will ensure that the distance, online, and technology-delivered learning facilitators receive in-service training on technology-delivered instruction as described in ARM 10.55.907(3)(d).
5. Online courses are accredited by a nationally recognized accreditation program or agency or are approved and endorsed by the Montana Office of Public Instruction and are approved by the District;
6. Qualified district staff will provide information and guidance to students and parents regarding the selection of appropriate online courses to meet their needs, as well as a suitable number of online courses in which a student may enroll;
7. The curriculum requirements of the state and District are met;
8. Prior permission has been granted by the student's parent/guardian as part of the student's educational plan;
9. All online courses taken by student will be approved by the administration in advance of enrolment;
10. The District will comply with all other standards as described in ARM 10.55.907(4)(5)(ac); and
11. Private/Non-Public students enrolling with the District, for the sake of accessing on-line courses:
  - a. Must enroll for a minimum of two periods of on-line or in-person instruction, in order for the District to incur the cost now assigned by MTDA, or
  - b. The educational facility where they receive their full-time enrollment status must reimburse the District for their single period of on-line instruction.

All distance learning courses offered through the District will be considered 90 hours per semester or 180 hours per year, unless specifically designed as a quarter credit (45 hours per semester, 90 hours per year).

The District shall pay for fees for GFPS enrolled students, delivered by MTDA, which are required for graduation, as specified in District policy or the student handbook, or as determined by the Superintendent or designee. Private/Non-public school students wanting to access MTDA through Great Falls Public Schools must contact the Secondary Curriculum Director for policies guiding enrollment.

The District may charge students a reasonable fee, in conjunction with MTDA pricing, for an elective MTDA course or activity not required for graduation. The Board of Trustees authorizes the Superintendent or designee to waive the fee in cases of financial hardship.

**Credit for distance learning courses may be granted, provided the following requirements are met:**

1. Prior permission has been granted by the student's parent/guardian.
2. The program fits within the student's educational plan for graduation.
3. Credit for a particular course will be granted only for schools and institutions approved by the District.

## **DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIAL**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3221, 3222, 4321**

### **School Materials**

All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher or sponsor and the principal.

### **Student Publications**

Student publications produced as part of the school's curriculum or with the support of student body funds are intended to serve both as vehicles for instruction and student communications. They are operated and substantially financed by the student body and the District.

Material appearing in such publications should reflect all areas of student interest, including topics about which there may be controversy and dissent. Controversial issues may be presented provided they are treated in depth and represent a variety of viewpoints. Such materials may not be libelous, obscene or profane nor may they cause a substantial disruption of the school, invade the privacy rights of others, demean any race, religion, gender, or ethnic group, or advocate the violation of the law. They may not advertise tobacco, electronic, or nicotine innovations, liquor, illicit drugs or drug paraphernalia.

### **Non-School Materials**

The distribution of materials from outside the school system uses a considerable amount of valuable educational time. This time is taken away from students, teachers, and the clerical staff.

Community sponsored flyers must follow these guidelines:

1. The flyer or announcement must be for student and family related events only.
2. Flyers will be maintained on a weekly basis.
3. The information must be non-religious and non-political.
4. The information may not include; alcohol related logos, promote the use of drugs, alcohol. tobacco, and no alcohol can be served at the event.
5. The information or flyer cannot contain disruptive, libelous or obscene information.
6. Only fundraisers for schools or school-support organizations will be approved for electronic posting.

All organizations must have the approval of the Superintendent or designee before materials may be distributed either physically or electronically posted. For flyers approved for Wednesday envelope distribution, copies must be provided and counted out for individual schools. These copy sets should be given to the Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director at the District Office Building for distribution to schools.

### **Posting of Materials**

In order to facilitate the posting of materials with information about student and family activities offered in the community.

1. Schools may choose to maintain a centrally located bulletin board for the posting of District approved Community Events flyers which follow GFPS Board Policy expectations.
2. The District will **only** provide and maintain a digital posting of approved Community Flyers which can be found on the GFPS website.

## **DRESS AND GROOMING**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3224, 3611**

Students are reminded that their appearance significantly affects the way others respond to them. Matters of dress remains the primary responsibility of students, in consultation with their parents or legal guardian. Personal appearance of a student shall be respected provided it does not interfere with the health and safety of students or others and **does not materially disrupt the educational process**. The administration shall establish procedures for the monitoring of student dress in school or while engaging in extracurricular activities. Specifics regarding this policy may be found in the individual building's student handbook.

## **DRIVER EDUCATION**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2163**

Students must be a minimum of 14 ½ years of age on or before the first day of class to enroll in the Driver Education Program. Middle school students who have met the age criteria are eligible to take the training the summer after the Grade 8 year. For more you may access the District website at: [Driver Education - Great Falls Public Schools](#)

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3215, 3310, 3340, 3510, 3550, 4315, 8225**

### **Recognized Student Clubs and Organizations**

The Board recognizes that student clubs are a helpful resource for schools and supports their formation. Student clubs must complete an application process. The Superintendent or designee is delegated the authority to approve or deny club applications.

The Board of Trustees authorize the administration to approve and recognize curricular student clubs or organizations in the manner consistent with Policy 3550 and administrative procedure. Curricular student clubs are those approved student clubs that directly relate to the body of courses offered by the school. Information about the nature and purpose of student clubs and groups meetings at the school and method to consent to or opt out of participation will be provided to parents in print or electronic format consistent with parent/family rights.

Student-led and initiated groups of similar interests that do not meet the requirements to be an approved curricular student club as outlined in Policy 3550 shall be designated as non-curricular student groups. Non-curricular student groups include any student group that does not directly relate to the body of courses offered by the District but has a regular meeting schedule and established operational structure. Student meetings must be supervised by an adult. See Board Policy 3550 for more detailed permissions and limitations.

#### **1. Student Organizations:**

- a. All curricular student clubs or organizations must be approved by the administration. Secret or clandestine organizations or groups will not be permitted.

- b. Bylaws and rules of curricular student clubs or organizations must not be contrary to Board policy or to administrative rules and regulations.
  - c. Procedures in curricular student clubs or organizations must follow generally accepted democratic practices in the acceptance of members and nomination and election of officers.
  - d. Student-led and initiated non-curricular student groups may meet at school in accordance with District Policy without the sponsorship of the District.
2. Social Events:
- a. Social events must have prior approval from the administration;
  - b. Social events must be held in school facilities unless approved by the administration;
  - c. Social events must be chaperoned at all times.
  - d. Attendance at high school social events and dances shall be limited to high school students, and middle school social events shall be limited to middle school students, unless prior permission is received from the principal.
3. Extra-curricular activities:
- a. Academic and behavior eligibility rules are established by MHSA rules and District policy.
  - b. Any student convicted of a criminal offense may, at the discretion of school officials, become ineligible for such a period of time as the school officials may decide.
  - c. In establishing an interscholastic program, the Board directs the administration to:
    - i. Open all sports to all students enrolled in the District, with an equal opportunity for participation.
    - ii. Open all sports to residents of the District and who are at least 5 years of age and not more than 19 on or before September 10 of the year in which participation in extracurricular activities is sought by such child in accordance with the provisions of Policy 3510.
    - iii. Recommend sports activities based on interest inventories completed by the students.
4. Participation in District Extracurricular Activities by Unenrolled Children:
- a. Any child identified in this policy who is attending a nonpublic or home school meeting the requirements of section MCA 20-5-109:
    - i. Is eligible to seek to participate in any extracurricular activity of the District that is offered to students of the District who are of the same age.
    - ii. Is subject to the same standards for participation as those required of full-time students enrolled in the school and the same rules of any interscholastic organizations of which the school of participation is a member as specified in this policy and any related student or activity handbook provisions.
    - iii. Will be assessed for purposes of placement, team formation and cuts using the same criteria as used for full-time students enrolled in the District.
  - b. In cases where there is more than one school serving the same age group within District boundaries, a child under this policy shall be subject to the same school zone rules applicable to full-time students of the District. Participation for one school for one sport and another school for another sport is prohibited.
  - c. The academic eligibility for extracurricular participation for a student attending a nonpublic school as specified under this policy shall be attested by the head administrator of the nonpublic school. No further verification shall be required.
  - d. The academic eligibility for extracurricular participation for a student attending a home school as specified in this policy shall be attested in writing by the educator providing the student



instruction with verification by the school principal for the school of participation. The verification may not include any form of student assessment.

- e. Students participating in extracurricular activities under this policy may be considered part-time enrollees for the purposes of ANB in accordance with Policy 3150, 3121, and 3121P.
- 5. Designation of Athletic Teams:
  - a. Unless otherwise prohibited by Policy 3210 or federal law, District sponsored athletic teams or sports designated females, women, or girls may not be open to students who are biologically of the male sex. District sponsored athletic teams or events may be designated as one of the following based on biological sex in accordance with applicable MHSA rules, Policy 3510, federal law, Policy 3210, or provisions of Section 6 of Chapter 405 (2021):
    - i. Males, men or boys;
    - ii. Females, women, or girls; or
    - iii. Coed or mixed

While many of the activities are governed by the Montana High School Association (a statewide association of participating districts), eligibility for participation in any of these activities is governed by the District as well as MHSA rules:

- 1. Attendance/Academic Eligibility: To be eligible to participate in an MHSA contest, a student must be in regular attendance from the date of enrollment and must be receiving a passing grade in at least 25 periods of prepared class work per week (5 courses) in the school where the student participates.
- 2. Age Rule: A student is not eligible for MHSA-sponsored events if they turn 19 years of age before midnight, August 31, of the school year in question.
- 3. Transfer Rule: GFPS, home school or non-public student who transfers from one high school to another high school is ineligible to participate in varsity competition for 90 pupil instruction days from the date of enrollment in the new school. A transfer student who meets all other eligibility requirements may participate at a sub-varsity level during the 90-day period. The following cases are exceptions and would result in immediate eligibility if practice requirements have been fulfilled:
  - a. There is a corresponding change of residence by the parent.
  - b. The student is placed in that school district by court order.
  - c. The student is a member of an accredited, MHSA-approved foreign exchange program.
  - d. The student applies for and receives a hardship ruling from the MHSA.
- 4. Eligibility of a student will be determined by the administration in each school.
- 5. The administration shall establish procedures for the monitoring of student dress and conduct while engaging in extracurricular activities.

**Please note:** Extra/co-curricular activities and clubs may establish standards of behavior, including consequences for misbehavior that are stricter than those for students in general. If such a violation is also a violation of school rules, the consequences as determined by the administrator will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization.

### **Chemical Use Policy**

The District believes that the all-around development of students is important and that implementation of these rules will serve these purposes:

- 1. Emphasize concern for the health and well-being of all students;
- 2. Provide a chemical-free environment which will encourage healthy development;
- 3. Diminish chemical use by providing an education assistance program;

4. Promote a sense of self-discipline among students;
5. Confirm and support existing state laws regarding the use of drugs, tobacco and alcohol;
6. Emphasize standards of conduct for those students who, through their participation in extra and co-curricular activities, are leaders and role models for their peers and younger students; and
7. Assist students who desire to resist peer pressure that often directs them toward the illegal use of chemicals.

#### **All Students:**

All students will be held accountable for using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling illegal drugs or controlled substances, imitation controlled substances, look-alike drugs and drug paraphernalia, alcohol, and tobacco or nicotine innovations. Students who may be under the influence of such substances will not be permitted to attend school functions and will be treated as though they had drugs or alcohol in their possession. (Board Policy 3310) Use of tobacco products in a public school building or on public school property is prohibited, unless used in a classroom or on other school property as part of a lecture, demonstration, or educational forum sanctioned by a school. (Board Policy 8225)

#### **Students Involved in Extra and Co-Curricular Activities:**

The District views participation in extracurricular activities as an opportunity extended to students willing to make a commitment to adhere to the rules which govern them. Parent/guardian permission is required for a child to participate in a school club and/or extracurricular activity. Parents also have the right to withdraw their child from any club or extracurricular activity. Forms are available at the school of participation, and need to be completed, signed and submitted prior to any involvement be allowed. Forms will be kept on file at the school of submission and need to be renewed annually. (SB518) Students participating in school related activities whether sponsored by the MHSA or not, shall not illegally use, have in possession, sell, or distribute alcohol, tobacco, nicotine innovations or illegal drugs, or abuse prescription or non-prescription drugs. This rule is in effect twenty-four (24) hours a day for the duration of the school year. The school year is defined as the start of fall sports to the end of the school year or activities, whichever is later. If a student is charged with a Minor in Possession (MIP), Minor in Possession – Tobacco (MIPT), or Driving Under the Influence (DUI), or there is reasonable suspicion to believe the student is or has been illegally using tobacco, alcohol, or drugs, the student will forfeit the privilege of participating in school related activities. Additional sanctions for the student may apply depending upon the individual circumstances of the offense and the specific written requirements of their activity supervisors. The student will be offered a District-approved chemical awareness class. Successful completion of this class may reduce the sanctions.

The Administration shall publish the participation rules annually in the athletic activities and student handbooks.

#### **Spectator Conduct**

Any person, including an adult, who behaves in an unsportsmanlike or inappropriate manner during an event may be ejected from the event and/or denied permission to access school buildings, school property, or school events. Examples of unsportsmanlike or inappropriate conduct include, but are not limited to;

1. Using vulgar or obscene language or gestures;
2. Consume, possess, distribute, or under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, marijuana, or illegal/controlled substance;
3. Possessing a weapon;
4. Fighting or otherwise striking or threatening another person;
5. Failing to obey the instructions of a security officer or district employee, referee, judge or event official;

6. Engaging in any activity which is illegal or disruptive; and other violations of District Policy. “School property” means within school buildings, in vehicles used for school purposes, or on owned or leased school grounds.

Upon administrative recommendation, the Superintendent may deny future admission for a period of time, up to one (1) week, to any person violating Policy 4315. Any long-term suspension greater than one (1) week, must be approved by the School Board.

The Superintendent will notify such action by delivering or mailing a notice, send by certified mail with return receipt requested, containing:

1. A description of the unsportsmanlike or inappropriate conduct;
2. The time period that admission to school events will be denied;
3. The procedures by which the person may appeal

### **PENALTIES FOR STUDENTS REGARDING DRUG, ALCOHOL, TOBACCO VIOLATIONS**

In addition to disciplinary action outlined in Policy 3310, the following penalties apply:

#### **First Offense - All Students:**

1. Parent Notification.
2. SRO Notification to determine ticketing, if appropriate.
3. Out of school suspension (OSS) or In-school suspension (ISS) for the remainder of the school day and 10 additional days of OSS or ISS or Saturday School.
4. In lieu of the 10-day suspension, students may be offered a District-approved chemical awareness class and/or a tobacco education group (TEG) class. Agreeing to participate in this class can reduce the out-of-school suspension to the day of the infraction and up to 3-5 days of in-school suspension and/or Saturday School. Failure to complete the assigned class will result in reinstatement of the 10-day suspension.

All contraband will be confiscated by the school administration.

#### **First Offense - Additional Penalties for Extra or Co-Curricular Participants:**

1. Drugs and Alcohol
  - a. Students involved in extra- or co-curricular activities that violate the chemical use policy will be suspended from their activity for one calendar year for drug or alcohol offenses. The one-year sanction for drug or alcohol offenses may be reduced to 30 calendar days for the successful completion of the District approved chemical awareness class.
  - b. Students are encouraged to self-report violations to any coach or school official. If a student self-reports within 24 hours of the violation, the principal may reduce the suspension from activities to 20 days if the student successfully completes the District approved chemical awareness class within a 20-day time period from the date of infraction.
2. Tobacco
  - a. Students involved in extra- or co-curricular activities that violate the tobacco use policy will be suspended from their activity for 20 calendar days.

#### **Second Offense – All Students**

1. Parent notification.

2. Determine suspension consequences and SRO ticketing response, if appropriate.
3. Students will be referred for a chemical dependency evaluation with the District's substance abuse counselor or other approved provider, unless sufficient time has passed that might allow the student to benefit from retaking the chemical awareness class. Consult with the District substance abuse counselor to determine the most appropriate course of action for the student.
4. Failure to complete the chemical dependency assessment or other assigned consequences will result in 10 days of suspension from school.
5. Illegal tobacco violations will result in retaking the tobacco education group.

### **Second Offense - Additional Penalties for Extra or Co-Curricular Participants:**

1. Drugs and Alcohol
  - a. Same Calendar Year
    - i. Students who are repeat offenders for drug and alcohol violations within the same calendar year as their first offense will forfeit the opportunity to participate in all extra and co-curricular activities for a period of one year.
    - ii. Subsequent Calendar Years
      1. Students involved in extra- or co-curricular activities that violate the chemical use policy will be suspended from their activity for one calendar year for drug or alcohol offenses. The one-year sanction for drug or alcohol offenses may be reduced to 30 calendar days for the successful completion of the District approved chemical awareness class.
      2. Students are encouraged to self-report violations to any coach or school official. If a student self-reports within 24 hours of the violation, the principal may reduce the suspension from activities to 20 days if the student successfully completes the District approved chemical awareness class within a 20-day time period from the date of infraction.
2. Tobacco
  - a. Students involved in extra- or co-curricular activities that violate the tobacco use policy will be suspended from their activity for 20 calendar days.

### **Third and Subsequent Offenses - All Students**

1. Parent notification.
2. Determine suspension consequences and SRO ticketing response, if appropriate.
3. Consultation with the District substance abuse counselor and parent, if appropriate, to determine the level of care most appropriate for the student.
4. Illegal tobacco violations will result in retaking the tobacco education group.

### **Third and Subsequent Offenses - Additional Penalties for Extra or Co-Curricular Participants:**

1. Drugs and Alcohol
  - a. Students who are repeat offenders for drugs and alcohol will forfeit the opportunity to participate in all extra and co-curricular activities for a period of one calendar year.
2. Tobacco
  - a. Illegal tobacco violations will result in a 20-day suspension from activities and retaking the tobacco education group.

### **Student and Parent/Legal Guardian Due Process**

If a determination is made that a student has violated this policy, the student and parent or guardian shall be notified of the violation by telephone where possible, and also by mail. Also, at this time, the student and parent or guardian shall be notified of the type of discipline that will be administered.

Students who are suspended from activities for one year due to a third offense, may appeal the conditions of the suspension before an administrative hearing panel.

### **Appeal Process:**

Any parent or legal guardian and student who is aggrieved by the imposition of discipline shall have the right to appeal any administrative decision to the Board through the Uniform Complaint Procedure.

### **FEES**

#### **- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2311, 3520**

Within the concept of free public education, the District shall provide an educational program for the students as free of costs as possible. A student may be charged a reasonable fee for any course or activity not reasonably related to a recognized academic and educational goals of the District or any course or activity held outside normal school functions. Fees associated with coursework are reviewed and approved by the Board every year, prior to the start of school. The Board may waive the fee in cases of financial hardship.

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds at no charge to a student. A student, however, is expected to provide his or her own pens, pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks and may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including but not limited to:

1. Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities.
2. Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
3. Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
4. Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.
5. Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the District.
6. Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
7. Parking fees, student identification cards.
8. Fees for lost or damaged textbooks or materials, or lost, damaged or overdue library books.
9. Fees for driver education program.
10. Fees for optional courses offered for credit that requires use of facilities that are not available on District premises.
11. Fees for materials that students keep in lab courses.
12. Fees for student participation in all extracurricular activities in middle and high schools.

### **FINES**

The District holds a student responsible for the cost of replacing materials or property that are lost or damaged because of negligence. A building administrator will notify a student and parent regarding the nature of violation or damage, how restitution may be made, and how an appeal may be instituted.

## **WITHHOLDING AND TRANSFERRING RECORDS FOR UNPAID FINES OR FEES**

The District may not refuse to transfer files to another district because a student owes fines or fees. The District may not withhold the school schedule of a student because the student owes fines or fees. The District may withhold the grades, diploma, or transcripts of a current or former student who is responsible for the cost of school materials or the loss or damage of school property until the student, or the student's parents or guardian, pays the owed fines or fees.

In the event a student who owes fines or fees transfers to another school district in the state and the District has decided to withhold the student's grades, diploma, or transcripts from the student and the student's parent or guardian, the District shall:

1. Upon receiving notice that the student has transferred to another school district in the state, notify the student's parent or guardian in writing that the school district to which the student has transferred will be requested to withhold the student's grades, diploma, or transcripts until any obligation has been satisfied;
2. Forward appropriate grades or transcripts to the school district to which the student has transferred;
3. At the same time, notify the school district to which the student has transferred of any financial obligation of the student and request the withholding of the student's grades, diploma, or transcripts until any obligations are met;
4. When the student or the student's parent or guardian satisfies the obligation, inform the school district to which the student has transferred.

A student or parent may appeal the imposition of a charge for damages to the Superintendent or designee.

The Montana Legislature, MCA 20-7-1502, has made grants available to local districts to help schools and families "reduce out-of-pocket costs for pupils and families in support of post-secondary success" through CTE courses. To see if CTE related costs qualify for reimbursement, contact your schools' finance office clerk.

## **FIREARMS AND WEAPONS**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3311, 4332**

For the purposes of the firearms section of this policy, the term "firearm" means (A) 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; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 921 (4). Such term does not include an antique firearm pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 921 (16).

It is the policy of the Great Falls Public Schools to comply with the federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994 and state law 20-5-202 (2), MCA, pertaining to students who bring a firearm to, or possess a firearm at, any setting that is under the control and supervision of the school district. In accordance with 20-5-202 (3), MCA, a teacher, superintendent, or a principal shall suspend immediately for good cause a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to, or possess a firearm at, any setting that is under the control and supervision of the school district. The policy does not govern conduct in a student's home, a non-school parking lot, or a commercial business when the student is participating in an online, remote, or distance learning setting unless they have made a threat or there is a perceived threat. In accordance with Montana law, a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to, or possess a firearm at, any setting that is

under the control and supervision of the school district must be expelled from school for a period of not less than 1 year.

However, the Board of Trustees, through this policy, authorizes the Superintendent and the Administrative Hearing Panel to use their direction on a case-by-case basis and modify the requirement of expulsion of a student if they deem such modification to be warranted under the circumstances.

A decision to change the placement of a student with a disability who has been expelled pursuant to this section must be made in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Before holding a hearing to determine if a student has violated Policy 3311, the Board shall, in a clear and timely manner, notify the student if the student is an adult or notify the parent or guardian of a student if the student is a minor that the student may waive the student's privacy interest by requesting that the hearing be held in public and invite other individuals to attend the hearing.

Before expelling a student under Policy 3311, the Board shall hold a due process hearing that includes presentation of a summary of the information leading to the allegations and an opportunity for the student to respond to the allegations. The student may not be expelled unless the Trustees find that the student knowingly, as defined in Section 1-1-204, MCA, brought a firearm to school or possessed a firearm at school. The provisions of Policy 3311 do not require the Board to expel a student who has brought a firearm to school or possess a firearm at school if the firearm is secured in a locked container approved by the District or in a locked motor-vehicle the entire time the firearm is at the school, except while the firearm is in the use for a school-sanctioned instructional activity.

### **Possession of Weapons Other Than Firearms**

The District does not allow weapons on school property. Any student found to have possessed, used or transferred a weapon on school property will be subject to discipline in accordance with the District's discipline policy. For purposes of this section, "weapon" means any object, device, or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or which may be used to inflict self-injury, including but not limited to air guns; pellet guns; BB guns; fake (facsimile) weapons; all knives; blades; clubs; metal knuckles; nun-chucks; throwing stars; explosives; fireworks; mace or other propellants; stun guns; ammunition; poisons; chains; arrows; and objects that have been modified to serve as a weapon.

No student shall possess, use, or distribute any object, device, or instrument having the appearance of a weapon, and such objects, devices, or instruments shall be treated as weapons, including but not limited to weapons listed above which are broken or non-functional, look-alike guns; toy guns; and any object that is a facsimile of a real weapon. No student shall use articles designed for other purposes (i.e., lasers or laser pointers, belts, combs, pencils, files, scissors, etc.) to inflict bodily harm and/or intimidate, and such use will be treated as the possession and use of a weapon.

The District will refer to law enforcement for immediate prosecution any person who possesses, carries, or stores a weapon in a school building, and the District may take disciplinary action as well in the case of a student. In addition, the District will refer for possible prosecution to a parent or guardian of any minor violating this policy on grounds of allowing a minor to possess, carry, or store a weapon in a school building. (45-8-361 (1) (2) For the purposes of this section only, "school building" means all buildings owned or

leased by a local school district that are used for instruction or for student activities. (45-8-361 (5a))

The Board may grant persons and entities advance permission to possess, carry, or store a weapon in a school building. For the purposes of education, instruction and ceremonial occasions, the building principal, in consultation with the school resource officer, may grant students or faculty prior written permission to bring a weapon or disabled firearm into a school building. The Superintendent or designee will be notified by the building principal each time permission is granted for an individual or group to bring weapons on to a GFPS school campus for educational purposes (ex. Hunter education classes, History lessons, Shop class, etc.). All other persons who wish to possess, carry, or store a weapon in a school building must request permission of the Board at a regular meeting. The Board has sole discretion in deciding whether to allow a person to possess, carry, or store a weapon in a school building. (45-8-361 (3b)) This policy does not apply to law enforcement officers. (45-8-361 (3a)) The trustees shall annually review this policy and update this policy as determined necessary based on changing circumstances pertaining to school safety.

## **FOOD SERVICES**

### **- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 8200, 2510**

The goal of the Food Service School Meal Program is to provide nutritious meals to students during the school day so they have proper nutrition to enhance learning. School nutrition professionals are passionate about ensuring students have access to healthy school meals to support academic achievement. We never want to see a child go hungry or feel any shame during mealtime.

Families who wish to apply for free or reduced cost meals may pick up the applications in any school office or online. Parents are encouraged to complete an application whether they intend to participate in the program or not. Many school programs are funded based on the number of students eligible for free and reduced lunch. In addition, students who qualify for free and reduced priced meal status may also qualify for reduced fees for GFPS academic and extra-curricular programs, including summer school, and for scholarships for community activities. For more information on the Great Falls Public Schools Food programs you can go online to: [School Nutrition Program - Great Falls Public Schools](#) or call Jessa Youngers, Food Service Supervisor, at 406-268-6047.

## **Charging and Alternate Meal Information**

1. Full Pay and Reduced Enrolled K-6 Students:
  - a. Notification regarding account balances are provided to parents via:
    - i. Myschoolbucks.com
    - ii. Weekly notes if approaching a deficit.
    - iii. Phone calls (if up-to-date phone information is available)
  - b. Students may charge up to \$10 in meals (breakfast and lunch combined).
  - c. Once the limit is reached:
    - i. The principal is notified and makes additional contact with parents.
2. Full Pay and Reduced Enrolled 7-8 Students:
  - a. Notification regarding account balances are provided to parents via:
    - i. Myschoolbucks.com
    - ii. Weekly notes if approaching a deficit.
    - iii. Phone calls (if up-to-date phone information is available)
  - b. May charge up to \$10 in meals (breakfast and lunch combined).



- c. Once the limit is reached:
    - i. The principal is notified and makes additional contact with parents.
- 3. Full Pay and Reduced Enrolled 9-12 Students must pay at the cash register with either cash, a credit balance in their account.
  - a. The cashier will notify the principal with names of students who violate this rule.
  - b. The principal will investigate and take appropriate action.

To manage your child's account balances online go to: [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com)

School Nutrition Department breakfast/lunch prices can be found at: [School Nutrition Program - Great Falls Public Schools](#)

## **FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENTS**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3145, 3145R**

It is the policy of the Board to recognize the benefits from non-immigrant students in the District. The Board does not, however, sponsor student foreign exchange programs. The District does not provide any financial contribution to the student. The Board assumes no responsibility or control over items such as travel, living accommodations, funding, insurance, etc., which remain the responsibility of the sponsor and/or student. J-1 visa holders (students sponsored by an approved foreign exchange organization) are eligible to attend secondary schools. Any sponsoring organization must have a local representative, be a nonprofit organization, and be approved by the Council on Standards for International Education Travel. All foreign exchange students must be between the ages of 16-18 at the time of enrollment and have a minimum of two (2) years of high school experience. F-1 visa holders (individual foreign students sponsored by relatives or friends) may attend the High School District if they pay tuition and complete the I-20 application process prior to enrolling. The following practices apply to foreign exchange students/international learners:

1. No foreign exchange student will be designated a senior by classification.
2. All foreign exchange students/international learners must have a minimum of two years of high school experience and 16 years of age before being accepted as a foreign exchange student.
3. Foreign exchange students /international learners will be expected to enroll in the following academic classes:
  - a. One (1) credit of English 5-6 (Required)
  - b. One (1) credit of United States History (Required)
  - c. One-half (1/2) credit of Government (Required)
  - d. One (1) credit of Math (Recommended)
  - e. One (1) credit of Science (Recommended)
4. Foreign exchange students/international learners must maintain enrollment in a minimum of six (6) academic classes and seven (7) periods of accountability.
5. Foreign exchange students /international learners must pay all pertinent fees.
6. Foreign exchange students /international learners will be recognized at the beginning of the graduation ceremony and will receive a Certificate of Attendance.
7. **Any deviation from these guidelines must be approved by the Academic Variance Committee.**
8. Foreign exchange students /international learners must have sufficient knowledge of the English language to enable effective communication and to use instructional materials and textbooks printed in English.

## **FUND RAISING**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3530, 3535, 3550, 4210, 4320, 4321, 7260**

### **Student Fund Raising Activities**

The Board acknowledges that the solicitations of funds from students, staff and citizens must be limited since students are a captive audience and since solicitation can disrupt the program of the schools. Solicitation and collection of money by students for any purpose, including the collection of money by students in exchange for tickets, papers, magazine subscriptions, or for any other goods or services for the benefit of an approved school organization, may be permitted by the Superintendent or designee.

### **Distribution of Fund Drive Literature through Students**

Although many community drives are organized for raising funds for worthy nonprofit causes, it is the policy of the District to refrain from having the students, as student body members, used for such collection or dissemination purposes. Exceptions to this policy will be considered when recognized student or school-affiliated organizations of the District request permission to participate in such activity.

## **GANGS AND GANG ACTIVITY**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3611**

The Board is committed to ensuring a safe and orderly environment, where learning and teaching may occur void of physical or psychological disruptions, unlawful acts, or violations of school regulations. Gang activities create an atmosphere of intimidation in the entire school community. Both the immediate consequences of gang activity and the secondary effects are disruptive and obstructive to the process of education and school activities. Groups of individuals which meet the definition of gangs, defined below, shall be restricted from school grounds or school activities.

A gang is defined as any group of two (2) or more persons, whether formal or informal, who associate together in person and/or by electronic communication, including social media, to advocate, conspire, or commit:

1. One or more criminal acts; or
2. Acts which may be interpreted to threaten the safety or well-being of property or persons, including, but not limited to, harassment and intimidation.

Students on school property or at any school-sponsored activity shall not:

1. Wear, possess, use, distribute, or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, or other items which are evidence of membership in or affiliation with any gang and/or representative of any gang;
2. Engage in any act, whether verbal or nonverbal, including gestures or handshakes, showing membership in or affiliation with any gang and/or that is representative of any gang; or
3. Engage in any act furthering the interest of any gang or gang activity, including, but not limited to:
  - a. Soliciting membership in or affiliation with any gang;
  - b. Soliciting any person to pay for protection or threatening another person, explicitly or implicitly, with violence or with any other illegal or prohibited act;

- c. Painting, writing, or otherwise inscribing gang-related graffiti, messages, symbols, or signs on school property;
- d. Engaging in violence, extortion, or any other illegal act or other violation of school property.

Violations of this policy shall result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion, and/or notification of police.

## **GRADING GUIDELINES**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2169, 2410, 2410P, 2410P2, 2420, 2420R, 2168, 2421**

The issuance of grades and progress reports on a regular basis serves as the basis for continuous evaluation of the student's performance and determining changes that should be made to effect improvement. Report cards shall be issued after each grading term, except for those issued to kindergarten students, who receive a report card at the end of each semester. Paris Gibson Education Center students receive teacher advisor progress reports quarterly in lieu of report cards.

### **Parent Portal**

This is the parents' access to the GFPS Student Information System, Power School. Power School will allow parents password-protected access to grades, assignment, and attendance information at any time of the day. If you have multiple children in our schools, you will receive a unique user name and password for each child. Please keep your passwords confidential so only you can access the information.

### **Grading System**

The grading system utilized within the Great Falls Public Schools is uniform with regard to the scale used at grade levels. Primary students (grades K-2) are graded according to the following set of marks:

|                           |   |   |                       |
|---------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|
| <u>Grades K, 1 and 2:</u> | G | - | Good Progress         |
|                           | S | - | Satisfactory Progress |
|                           | I | - | Improving             |
|                           | N | - | Needs Improvement     |

At grade 3, the students are still graded according to the set of marks developed for grades 1-2, with the exception of marks in mathematics, Reading, Language, Writing, and Grammar, which are graded on the following basis:

|                          |                                |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| A = Excellent 90-100%    | D = Below Average 60-69%       |
| B = Above Average 80-89% | F = Unsatisfactory 59% - Below |
| C = Average 70-79%       |                                |

The third-grade progress report is a transition report, which allows students and parents the opportunity to experience the set of marks used uniformly in grades 4-12, while still being tied into the set of marks used in grades 1-2 in appropriate areas. Learning habits, communication, collaboration/contribution, and global citizenship, self-directed/motivated learning and graded on a C, S, NY basis in grades K-6. Students in grades K-12 may receive individualized comments from their teachers.

- C = Consistently demonstrates
- S = Sometimes demonstrates
- NY = Not yet demonstrates

Grades 4-12 utilize the grading scale shown below:

A = Excellent 90-100%

B = Above Average 80-89%

C = Average 70-79%

D = Below Average 60-69%

F = Unsatisfactory 59% - Below

Grade Point Averages, 7-12, are calculated in the following manner:

Grade Point Average or GPA (Grade Point Average) is the average obtained by dividing the total number of grade points earned by the total number of credits attempted. Grade points are based on letter grades, are calculated by grading period and are cumulative:

4 points for A+, A, A-

3 points for B+, B, B-

2 points for C+, C, C-

1 point for D+, D, D-

0 points for F, W, I. GPAs (Grade Point Average)

### **EXCEPTIONS:**

1. G, S, N, I are the marks used to denote grades in Handwriting, Art, Music, Health Enhancement (physical education), and Library in grades 4-6.
2. There are three grades available in Middle School Health Enhancement (physical education) classes in grades 7-8. They are A, P (pass) or F (fail).
3. Grades 5-6 use a separate instrumental music progress report.
4. G, S, N, and I, are the marks used to denote grades in reading at grades K-6.
5. The # sign is used in conjunction with grades K-6 to denote that the curriculum has been modified in some way, to meet individual needs.
6. The x sign is used in grades 9-12 to denote a course is being audited for no credit
7. The I mark is used in grades 9-12 to denote a course grade contains incomplete work and the student has two weeks to complete all missing work for a passing grade.
8. The IP mark is used in grades 9-12 English to denote the student is currently passing but has not yet achieved proficiency in speaking and/or writing.
9. The IR mark is used in grades 9-12 to denote a student is being allowed to recover a lost credit through the Academic Variance Committee Process.

If a grade is disputed, a review of the student's work and of the class record book is made by principal and teacher. Every effort shall be made to resolve the differences through conference.

### **GRADUATION**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2410, 2410R, 2413**

The Board shall award a high school diploma to every student enrolled in the District who meets the requirements of graduation established by the District. The official transcript will indicate the specific

courses taken and level of achievement.

To graduate from Great Falls Public Schools, a student must have satisfactorily completed the last quarter prior to graduation as a Great Falls Public School student. Highly unusual exceptions may be considered by the principal, such as a student exchange program in a recognized school.

The state of Montana requires a minimum of 20 credits to get a diploma from an accredited high school. Great Falls Public Schools requires a minimum of 23 credits for all students in order to graduate from high school. Students can choose to receive the traditional, **Comprehensive Diploma** or they may choose to pursue two optional diploma types, described below.

### **Differentiated Diplomas**

Students may choose to pursue one (1) of three (3) diploma options. All of which meet the Montana Board of Public Education minimum requirements for graduation from an accredited High School program (10.55.905, ARM). Students shall work with their high school guidance counselors, teachers and parents to determine which option best meets their individual needs.

#### **Comprehensive Diploma**

| <b>Subject Area</b>   | <b>Comprehensive Diploma</b> |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Credits Needed</b> | <b>23</b>                    |
| English               | 4                            |
| Math                  | 3                            |
| Science               | 3                            |
| Social Studies        | 3                            |
| Fine Arts             | 1                            |
| CTE                   | 1                            |
| Health/PE             | 2                            |
| Financial Tech Skills | .5                           |
| General Electives     | 5.5                          |

#### **Concentration Diploma**

| <b>Subject Area</b>   | <b>Concentration Diploma</b> |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Credits Needed</b> | <b>23</b>                    |
| English               | 4                            |
| Math                  | 3                            |
| Science               | 3                            |
| Social Studies        | 3                            |
| Fine Arts             | 1                            |
| CTE                   | .5-1                         |
| Health/PE             | 2                            |
| Financial Tech Skills | .5                           |
| General Electives     | 5.5-6.0                      |

Students choosing this diploma option must take three (3) or more elective credits in a specific area of

concentration from the following: Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) Career Pathway Concentration (Industrial Technology, Business, Family & Consumer Science), and/or Fine Arts/Humanities.

### **Honors Diploma**

| <b>Subject Area</b>   | <b>Honors Diploma</b> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Credits Needed</b> | <b>26</b>             |
| English               | 4                     |
| Math                  | 4                     |
| Science               | 3                     |
| Social Studies        | 3                     |
| Fine Arts             | 1                     |
| CTE                   | .5-1                  |
| Health/PE             | 2                     |
| Financial Tech Skills | .5                    |
| General Electives     | 8.0-8.5               |

Honors diploma candidates must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.3, six (6) or more credits in any combination of honors, AP, or early college level courses.

### **Alternative Programs**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2169, 2410R, 2600, 2600F**

Credit toward graduation requirements may be granted for planned learning experiences from accredited programs, such as summer school, university courses, and distance learning courses. Credit for work experience may be offered when the work program is a part of and supervised by the school.

### **Dual Credit**

Dual credit allows high school students to simultaneously earn credit toward both a high school diploma and college coursework that can lead to a postsecondary degree or certificate, or toward transfer to another college. The primary purpose of offering dual credit courses is to deliver high quality, introductory, college level courses to high-performing high school students. Students interested in dual credit opportunities must meet with a guidance counselor to determine available options. Students should be aware of Montana High School Association on-campus attendance eligibility requirements for activity participation.

### **Audit Courses**

Courses may be audited for no grade and no credit, by junior or senior students if the course is not specifically required for graduation and with administrative approval. Advanced Placement courses may not be taken for audit. Preference in the course will be given to students taking the course for the first time for credit.

### **Grade Averaging (Re-Taking A Course)**

Students who retake a course a second time in order to improve a grade receive elective credit toward their 23 diploma credits unless they are making up an F "no credit" grade, at which point a passing grade will receive core credit. For example, if they took Algebra II and received a "C" grade in it the first time they took the course and retook the course and received a "B" grade in the course, both the "C" and the "B" grades would show on the transcript. Both grades would figure into the GPA (Grade Point Average) and both

grades would figure in the total credit count in the transcript. The second math credit (for the retake of the semester) will count as an elective, not as a math credit. It will count towards the 23 credits required for graduation.

### **Class Rank (Grade Point Average)**

Class Rank is compiled from semester grades. Courses not eligible for GPA are designated with an asterisk on the report card.

### **Honor Roll**

Specific information regarding Elementary students' honor roll can be found in each building's handbook.

High School and Middle School students must have a minimum grade point average of 3.00 to be placed on the regular honor roll. Specific information regarding honors at graduation and honor roll requirements are included in the building handbook.

### **Transformational Learning**

Transformational Learning links intentional instruction with learning targets. It gives an accurate measure of the student's ability and allows for supervisors, teachers, students and families to see the progression of skill attainment and growth. Transformational Learning supports use of data to drive experiences and instruction, provide specific feedback and track student progress and achievement. At the discretion of the District, a student may be given credit for courses satisfactorily completed in a period of time shorter or longer than normally required and, provided that the course meets the District's curriculum guidelines, which are aligned with the content standards stated in the educational program. Examples of acceptable coursework include, but are not necessarily limited to, those delivered through summer school, completion of Mt Youth Challenge or other specific intensive programs, specially designed courses, and other embedded community-based experiential, online and work-based learning opportunities. These opportunities will foster a learning environment that can be delivered both face to face or virtually.

### **Work Experience/Internship Program**

Work Experience/Internship must provide all participating students with on-the-job experience and training along with career and complimentary vocational/technical classroom instruction to contribute to each student's employability. The student's classroom activities and on-the-job experiences must be planned and supervised by the school and the employer to ensure that both activities contribute to the student's employability. Students enrolled in a Work Experience/Internship program must receive credit for related classroom instruction and on-the-job training. In the absence of a proficiency model, the time requirement for students in Work Experience/Internship must be converted and is equivalent to the time requirement for credit to be earned.

The particular program designed for each student shall be set forth in a written protocol approved by the student, his or her parents or guardians, the work-experience coordinator and the employer. This shall stipulate the terms of employment and the provision for academic credit. The Student, Parent/Guardian, Workplace Supervisor, Work Experience/Internship Coordinator & School Counselor will be required to sign the Great Falls Public School Work Experience/Internship Affiliation Agreement (2600F).

The Work Experience/Internship coordinator shall make such arrangements as necessary with employers for evaluating the student's on-the-job performance and for keeping records of job attendance.

### **Early Graduation**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2333, 2410R profile of a learner**

At times, students may move through coursework, earning credit and progressing towards graduation faster than their peers. A student may complete graduation requirements in less than eight semesters or the equivalent amount of secondary school enrollment. Any student seeking to graduate early must submit an application to the Principal at least two (2) semesters prior to the proposed graduation date. Applications must be in writing and co-signed by parents or legal guardians if the student is a minor.

### **Participation in Commencement Exercises**

A student's right to participate in a commencement exercise of the High School graduating class is an honor. As such, participation in this ceremony is reserved for those members of the graduating class who have completed all of the state and local requirements for graduation and are in good standing before the date of the ceremony. Students who complete their requirements after the date of commencement exercises will receive their diploma at the time of completion. Students who violate the District's discipline policy may be prohibited from participating in commencement exercises.

### **Organization and Content of Commencement Exercises**

The school district will permit students to honor their Indigenous heritage through the display of culturally significant tribal regalia at commencement ceremonies. Any item that promotes drug use, weapon use, threats of violence, sexual harassment, bullying, or other intimidation, or violates another district policy, state, or federal law may not be worn during graduation.

The school administration may invite graduating students to participate in high school graduation exercises according to academic class standing or class officer status. Any student who, because of academic class standing, is requested to participate may choose to decline the invitation. Students may participate in the graduation exercises of the High School they are enrolled in during the last semester preceding graduation.

### **Waiver of Requirement/Academic Variance**

The Board grants the Superintendent or his/her designee the authority to waive specific course requirements based on individual student needs and performance levels. Waiver requests shall also be considered with respect to age, maturity, interest, and aspirations of the students and shall be in consultation with the parents or guardians. In addition, the Superintendent or designee can determine that a student may be given credit for a course satisfactorily completed in a period of time shorter or longer than normally required and, provided that the course meets the district's curriculum and assessment requirements, which are aligned with the content standards stated in the education program. Students must see their counselor to request a waiver.

### **HAZING/HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION/BULLYING**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3225, 3226, 4226, 5226**

The Great Falls Public School District is committed to providing a safe, productive and positive learning environment. A safe and accepting school environment is conducive to, and necessary for optimal academic achievement. Like other disruptive behaviors, bullying, harassment, intimidation and hazing negatively



impact the learning environment. Bullying, harassment, intimidating and hazing behaviors will not be tolerated. Students, staff and third parties are strictly prohibited from bullying, harassment, intimidation, hazing, or retaliation for reporting such action. Bullying does not include the determination after an investigation that the student's used reasonable and necessary physical force as self-defense or the defense of another in response to a physical attack.

“Bullying” means any harassment, intimidation, hazing, or threatening, insulting, or demeaning gesture or physical conduct, including any intentional written, verbal, or electronic communication (“cyberbullying”) or threat directed against a student that is persistent, severe, or repeated, and that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, that takes place on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation, at any school official bus stop, or anywhere conduct may be reasonably considered to be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a student or staff member or an interference with school purposes or an educational function, and that has the effect of:

- Physically harming a student or damaging a student property;
- Knowingly places a student in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student's property;
- Creating a hostile educational environment; or
- Substantially and materially disrupting the orderly operation of the school;

“Harassment” includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written (electronic or otherwise), or physical nature, on the basis of any protected class as defined under federal and/or Montana state law.

“Hazing” means an act against a student of coercing a student into behavior that creates risk of mental or physical harm to a person in order for the student to be initiated into, or affiliated with a student activity, team, club, or organization, or for any other purpose.

“Intimidation” includes, but is not limited to, any threat or act intended to tamper with, substantially damage, or interfere with another person or their property, cause substantial inconvenience, subject another to offensive physical contact, or inflict serious physical injury.

“Electronic Communication” is defined in 45-8-213, MCA, and includes any communication by any electronic device including but not limited to text messaging, email, or use of social networking.

No student, staff member, or third parties will engage in any of the following:

1. Bullying, harassment, hazing or intimidation of a student;
2. Retaliation against a student or staff member for reporting or thought to have reported an incident of bullying, harassment, hazing or intimidation; or
3. Coercion of another person to commit bullying, harassment, hazing or intimidation.

Bullying, harassment, hazing or intimidation is strictly prohibited in person or electronically (as defined in 45-8-213, MCA):

1. On school premises;

2. During any school sponsored program, activity, or function including on a school bus or other school-related vehicle.

If a student or staff member is found to have committed one of the above-prohibited behaviors, consequences may follow, up to and including expulsion or termination from employment. Third parties whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to appropriate sanctions as determined and imposed by the Superintendent or the Board. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials. Such action is meant not only to discipline the offending student, staff member, or third party, but also to protect individuals from future aggression or retaliation. Consequences may be implemented after a report has been investigated and a determination has been made that a prohibited act was committed.

Any student disciplined will be afforded due process as required by District policy for action taken by school administration or the Board of Trustees.

Staff, students and parents will be educated on the policy and procedures, including recognizing inappropriate behaviors; using appropriate intervention and remediation; and possible consequences and discipline.

### **HOMELESS CHILDREN**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3110, 3125, 3125F, 3141**

#### **Education of Homeless Children**

Every child of a homeless individual and every homeless child are entitled to equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other students. The District must assign and admit a child who is homeless to a District school regardless of residence and irrespective of whether the homeless child is able to produce records normally required for enrollment. The District may not require an out-of-District attendance agreement and tuition for a homeless child. A “homeless individual” is defined as provided in the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act.

Should a child become homeless over the course of the school year, the child must be able to remain at the school of origin, or be eligible to attend another school in the district. Homeless Students will have access to services comparable those offered to other students, including but not limited to:

1. Transportation services;
2. Educational services for which a student meets eligibility criteria (e.g., Title I);
3. Educational programs for children with disabilities and limited English proficiency;
4. Programs in vocational and technical education;
5. Programs for gifted and talented students; and
6. School nutrition program.

The Superintendent will give special attention to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless children and youths not currently attending school. The Superintendent will appoint a liaison for homeless children.

## **HOMEWORK**

### **- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2430, 2430R**

Homework is a constructive tool in the teaching/learning process when geared to the needs and abilities of students. Purposeful assignments not only enhance student achievement, but also develop self-discipline and positive work habits. As an extension of the classroom, homework must be planned and organized, must be viewed as purposeful to the students, and should be evaluated and returned to students in a timely manner.

Teachers may give homework to students to aid in the students' educational development. Homework should be an application or adaptation of a classroom experience, and should not be assigned for disciplinary purposes.

A written implementation plan has been developed for each educational level, building, or class (K-6, 7-8 and 9-12) that clearly indicates to students, parents and staff the procedures and practices that will be followed in assigning, completing, cementing, reviewing, evaluating and returning all assigned homework. Homework should be an appropriate extension of classwork. The assignment and its purpose should be clearly stated. Homework should be as carefully planned as any classroom activity. Please refer to the building handbook for specific homework requirements for that building.

## **IMMUNIZATION**

### **- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3110, 3110R, 3413, 3413F1, 3413F2**

The Board requires all students to present evidence of their having been immunized against the following diseases: varicella, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, poliomyelitis, rubella, mumps, and measles (rubeola), in the manner and with immunizing agents approved by the Department of Public Health and Human Services. Haemophilus influenza type "b" immunization is required for students under age five.

Upon initial enrollment, an immunization status form shall be completed by the student's parent. The certificate shall be made a part of the student's permanent record.

A student who transfers into the District may photocopy immunization records in the possession of the school of origin. The District will accept the photocopy as evidence of the immunization. Within 30 days after a transferring student ceases attendance at the school of origin, the District must receive the original immunization records for the student who transfers into the District. Immunizations may not be required if a child qualifies for conditional attendance or an exemption is filed as provided by Montana law.

Exemptions from one or more vaccines shall be granted for medical reasons upon certification by a licensed or certified health care provider in a manner provided by Section 20-5-405, required form is located on the Great Falls Public Schools website under District Policy 3413F1, and MCA. Exemptions for religious reasons must be filed in a manner provided by Section 20-5-404, MCA, required form is also located on the Great Falls Public Schools website under District Policy 3413F2. The statement for an exemption shall be maintained as part of the student's immunization record in accordance with FERPA as specified in Policy 3600P.

All students who are enrolled under an exemption and have a disease listed in Policy 3413, have been exposed to a disease listed in Policy 3413, or may be exposed to a disease listed in Policy 3413 while attending school, may be excluded from the school by the local health officer of the DPHHS until the excluding authority is satisfied that the student no longer risks contracting or transmitting that disease.

The administrator may allow the commencement of attendance in school by a student who has not been immunized against each disease listed in § 20-5-403, MCA, if that student has received one or more doses of varicella, polio, measles (rubeola), mumps, rubella, diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus vaccine, except that Haemophilus influenza type “b” vaccine is required only for children under 5 years of age.

The District shall exclude a student for noncompliance with the immunization laws and properly notify the parent. The local health department may seek an injunction requiring the parent to submit an immunization status form, take action to fully immunize the student or file an exemption for personal or medical reasons.

Students enrolled in dual credit courses in accordance with District policies may be subject to district immunization requirements of the applicable post-secondary institution.

## **INSTRUCTION**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2135, 2158, 2309, 2310F1, 2310F3, 2311, 2314, 2314F, 2330, 2335**

### **Family Engagement Policy**

The Great Falls Public School District Board of Trustees believes that engaging parents/families in the education process is essential to improved academic success for students. The Board recognizes that a student’s education is a responsibility shared by the district, parents, families and other members of the community during the entire time a student attends school. The Board believes that the district must create an environment that is conducive to learning and that strong, comprehensive parent/family involvement is an important component.

### **Parent/Family Involvement Goals and Plans**

The Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of parent/family involvement, thereby facilitating an environment that encourages collaboration with parents, families and other members of the community. Therefore, the district will promote the facilitation of parent/family involvement that shall include the following six (6) goals:

1. Promote families to actively participate in the life of the school and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.
2. Promote families and school staff to engage in regular, two-way meaningful communication about student learning.
3. Promote families and school staff to continuously collaborate to support student learning and healthy development both at home and at school and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.
4. Empower parents to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated equitably and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.
5. Encourage families and school staff to be partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs; and

6. Encourage families and school staff to collaborate with members of the community to connect students, families, and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

**The District's plan for meeting these goals is to:**

1. Provide activities that will educate parents regarding the intellectual and developmental needs of their children at all age levels. This will include promoting cooperation between the district and other agencies or school/community groups (such as parent-teacher groups, Head Start, etc.) to furnish learning opportunities and disseminate information regarding parenting skills and child/adolescent development.
2. Implement strategies to involve parents/families in the educational process, including:
  - a. Keeping parents/families informed of opportunities for involvement and encouraging participation in various programs.
  - b. Providing information about educational resources for parents/families to use together with their children.
  - c. Keeping parents/families informed of the objectives of district educational programs as well as of their child's participation and progress within these programs.
3. Enabling families to participate in the education of their children through a variety of roles. For example, parents/family members should be given opportunities to provide input into district policies and volunteer time within the classrooms and school programs.
4. Providing professional development opportunities for teachers and staff to enhance their understanding of effective parent/family involvement strategies.
5. Performing regular evaluations of parent/family involvement at each school and at the district level.
6. Provide access, upon request, to any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.
7. Provide information in a language understandable to parents.

**Parent/Family Involvement Responsibilities, And Rights**

The District believes that the best educational result for each student occurs when all three partners are doing their best: the District staff, the student's parent, and the student. Such a partnership requires trust and much communication between home and school. To strengthen this partnership, every parent is urged to:

1. Encourage their child to put a high priority on education and commit to making the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
2. Review the information in the student handbook with their child and sign the acknowledgement either digitally online or physically, then returning to the school of record. A parent with questions is encouraged to contact their school.
3. Become familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs and course of study, including special programs offered in the District. Discuss with the counselor or principal any questions, such as concerns about placement, assignments, early graduation, methods to opt-out of programs and instruction consistent with parent/family rights, and other options available to the child.
4. Monitor the child's academic progress and contact teachers as needed, including to discuss homework, attendance, and discipline. Parents have the right to review their child's education records upon request.
5. Attend scheduled conferences and request additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office for an

appointment. A teacher will usually arrange to return the call or meet with the parent during their conference period or at a mutually convenient time before or after school.

6. Access District policies, handbooks, Board and committee meeting agendas, and District grievance procedures to participate in the governance of the District through the Board of Trustees. Contact information for administrators and trustees is available at: <http://gfps.k12.mt.us/school-board>
7. Contact a counselor or principal to discuss rights related to student name and pronoun use consistent with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act and Policy 3600

### **Human Sexuality or Identity Instruction Absence**

A student may be withdrawn or absent from a class period, assembly, school function, or other instruction at the request of a parent/guardian/other person responsible for human sexuality instruction. Human sexuality instruction is instruction that has the goal or purpose of studying, exploring, or informing students about intimate relationships, sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexually transmitted infections, sexual acts, abstinence, contraception, or reproductive rights and responsibilities. These absences do not count against the child's attendance record.

Written consent from the parent or legal guardian is required prior to any student attending identity instruction. Identity instruction is instruction that has the goal or purpose of studying, exploring, or informing students about gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. A student is excused from not attending identity instruction unless the student's parent/guardian provided written consent for the student to be in attendance prior to the instruction.

The District will provide parents/guardians with at least five (5) school days' notice (but not more than 14 school days notice) before human sexuality or identity instruction is scheduled to occur.

### **No Abortion Curriculum**

Neither the District nor its personnel or agents may permit a person, entity, or any affiliate or agent of the person or entity to offer, sponsor, or furnish in any matter any course materials or instruction relating to human sexuality or sexually transmitted diseases to its students or personnel if the person, entity, or any affiliate or agent of the person or entity is a provider of abortion services.

### **Controversial Issues and Academic Freedom**

The District shall offer courses of study which will afford learning experiences appropriate to the level of student understanding. The instructional program shall respect the right of students to face issues, to have free access to information to study under teachers in situations free from prejudice, and to form, hold, and express their own opinions without personal prejudice or discrimination. A student may read the Bible or other religious material during free reading time or when self-selected and consistent with a classroom or course requirements.

Teachers shall guide discussions and procedure with thoroughness and objectivity to acquaint students with the need to recognize various points of view, importance of fact, value of good judgement, and the virtue of respect for conflicting opinions.

The Board encourages and supports the concept of academic freedom, recognizing it as a necessary condition to aid in maintaining an environment conducive to learning and the free exchange of ideas and information.

In the study or discussion of controversial issues or materials, however, the Board directs teaching staff to consider the following criteria:

1. Relative maturity of students
2. District philosophy of education and Board approved curriculum
3. Community standards, morals and values
4. The necessity for a balanced presentation; and
5. The necessity to seek prior administrative counsel and guidance in such matters

### **Health Enhancement**

Health, family life, and sex education, including information about parts of the body, reproduction, and related topics, will be included in the instructional program as appropriate to grade level and course of study. An instructional approach will be developed after consultation with parents and other community representatives. Parents and guardians may ask to review materials to be used and may request that their child be excluded from human sexuality education or instruction class sessions without prejudice in accordance with Policy 3120. In accordance with Policy 2135, the District will notify parents and guardians 48 hours prior to any event, assembly, or introduction of materials for instructional use on the topic of human sexuality. Notification of parent or guardian rights under this policy will be issued on an annual basis.

For purposes of this policy, “human sexuality education or instruction” means teaching or otherwise providing information about human sexuality, including intimate relationships, human sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexually transmitted infections, sexual acts, sexual orientation, gender identity, abstinence, contraception, or reproductive rights and responsibilities.

### **AIDS Education and Prevention**

The Board believes HIV/AIDS and other STD/STI instruction is most effective when integrated into a comprehensive health education program. Instruction must be appropriate to grade level and development of students and must occur in a systematic manner. The Board particularly desires that students receive proper education about HIV and other STD/STI's, before they reach the age when they may adopt behaviors which put them at risk of contracting the disease.

In order for education about HIV and other STD/STI's to be most effective, the Superintendent will require that faculty members who present this instruction receive continuing in-service training which includes appropriate teaching strategies and techniques. Other staff members not involved in direct instruction, but who have contact with students, will receive basic information about HIV/AIDS and other STD/STI's and instruction in use of universal precautions when dealing with bodily fluids. In accordance with Board policy, parent will have an opportunity to review the HIV/STD/STI education program before it is presented to students.

### **Library Materials**

#### **Reference: GFPS Board Policy 2309, 2310F1**

The purpose of the School District Library Program is to: prepare students to access, evaluate, and use resources effectively and efficiently to meet their information needs; provide materials in varied formats which support the district curriculum, independent learning, individual educational needs, and personal enjoyment; ensure selection of a broad range of materials on controversial issues to support student

development of critical analytical skills; and encourage collaboration with other educators to develop strategies that meet the needs of students and that honor applicable laws and regulations.

### **Selection of Library Materials**

The selection of library materials is a professional task conducted by the library staff. In selecting library materials, the librarian will evaluate the existing collection; examine materials and consult reputable, professionally prepared selection aids. Librarians involved in selection of resource materials will also use the following criteria as a guide:

1. Support and contribute to the general education goals of the District
2. Support and contribute to the objectives of specific courses and student interests
3. Demonstrate validity, currency, appropriateness for content, age and student developmental level
4. Maintain favorable reviews or recommendations found in standard selection sources
5. Demonstrate the reputation and significance of author, producer, and/or publisher
6. Foster respect for and gain an understanding of the contributions made to our society by diverse groups of people
7. Support Indian Education for All
8. Represent differing viewpoints on controversial subjects with the goal of providing a balanced collection
9. Demonstrate value commensurate with cost and/or need
10. Demonstrate quality and variety of format

### **Parental Discretion**

Parents may request in writing that their minor child/children not be allowed to check out specific book titles, authors, and/or subjects. Written requests should be submitted to their child's/children's school(s) of attendance.

### **Library Materials Reconsideration Procedures (Complaint Procedure)**

The procedure for filing a complaint about library materials in the school library is found on the district website, under Board Policy 2310R, as well as Board Policy 2310F1, which are the Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Material Form (F1).

### **Instructional Materials**

#### **Reference: GFPS Board Policy 2311, 2314**

The Board is legally responsible to approve and to provide the necessary instructional materials. Textbooks and instructional materials should provide quality learning experiences for students and:

- Be congruent with identified instructional objectives.
- Stimulate growth in knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic value, and ethical standards.
- Provide background information and enable students to make intelligent judgements.
- Present more than one viewpoint on controversial issues.
- Be representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions through realistic, non-stereotypical portrayals.
- Assist teachers in providing moral and civic instruction to students consistent with §20-4-301(1)(f), MCA.
- Recognize the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians.
- Comply and equality and nondiscrimination standards in Article X, Selection 1 of the Montana Constitution and § 49-2-307, MCA



- Be priced in a manner that is consistent with District budgetary capacity.

Basic instructional course material in the fundamental skill areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies should be reviewed at intervals not exceeding five (5) years, or consistent with the state's standards revision schedule that are consistent with the goals of continuous school improvement plan. All instructional materials must be compatible with previous and future offerings.

### **Selection, Adoption, and Removal of Textbooks and Instructional Materials**

Curriculum committees will generally be responsible to recommend textbooks and major instructional material purchases. Recommendations will be made to the Superintendent. The function of the committee is to ensure that materials are selected in conformance with stated criteria and established District goals and objectives. A curriculum committee will consist primarily of members in a particular department. The same basic selection procedures should be followed as with District-wide committees to also include one or more community members.

### **Removal of Textbooks and Instructional Materials**

Textbooks may be removed when they no longer meet the criteria for initial selection, when they are worn out, or when they have been judged inappropriate through the Learning Materials Review Process, which is explained in Board Policy 2314, and put into effect by submitting Board Policy 2314F1, which is the Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Learning Material form.

## **INVESTIGATIONS**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3230, 3232, 3310P, 3440, 4313, 4410, 4411**

### **Investigations Conducted by School Officials**

The administration has the authority and duty to conduct investigations and to question students pertaining to infractions of school rules, whether or not the alleged conduct is a violation of criminal law. The administration shall determine when the necessity exists that law enforcement officers be asked to conduct an investigation of alleged criminal behavior which jeopardizes the safety of other people or school property or which interferes with the operation of the schools.

In instances when the administration has reasonable suspicion that a violation of district policy or law has occurred, the administrator will investigate. The administrator will notify the suspected rule violator(s) and/or potential witness(es). The suspected individual shall be advised orally or in writing of the nature of the alleged offense and of the evidence against the individual. All individuals will be afforded due process.

### **Cooperation with Law Enforcement Officials other than School Resource Officers (SRO)**

Cooperation with all law enforcement officers will be maintained. Pertaining to criminal activities unrelated to the operation of the school, it is the preference of the District that law enforcement officers other than SROs, will normally not initiate, and conduct any investigation and interrogation on the school premises, during school hours. It is preferred that only in demonstrated emergencies, when law enforcement officers find it necessary, will they conduct such an investigation during school hours. These circumstances might be limited to those in which delay might result in danger to any person, flight of a person reasonably suspected of a crime from the jurisdiction or local authorities, destruction of evidence, or continued criminal behavior.

No school official, however, should ever place themselves in the position of interfering with a law enforcement official in the performance of their duties as an officer of the law. If the law enforcement

officials are not recognized and/or are lacking a warrant or court order, the building principal shall require proper identification of such officials and the reason(s) for the visit to the school. In all cases, the officers shall be requested to obtain prior approval of the Principal or other designated person before beginning such an investigation on school premises. Alleged behavior related to the school environment brought to the Principal's attention by law enforcement officers shall be dealt with under the provisions of the previous section.

### **Investigations by Law Enforcement**

When a student becomes involved with law enforcement officers due to events outside of the school environment and officers other than an SRO must interact with a student, the officer(s) is requested to confer with the student when they are ~~is~~ being investigated for conduct not under the jurisdiction of the school. If this cannot be arranged, the SRO is the first person of contact for law enforcement. If for any reason the SRO is not available to respond to a request, the following steps shall be taken to cooperate with the authorities.

- a. In cases where this no threat to person or property, the officer shall contact the school principal and present proper identification in all occasions upon his/her arrival on school premises.
- b. Parents or guardians shall be notified by the building administrator or designee, as soon as possible. The building administrator or designee shall make every effort in inform parents or guardians of the intent of law enforcement officers except when that notification may compromise the student's safety.
- c. The student's parent or guardian shall be present, of practical, during any interrogation on school premises, by law enforcement other than an SRO.

### **Students Taken into Custody**

School officials shall not release students to law enforcement authorities voluntarily unless the student has been placed under arrest, or unless the parent or guardians of the adult student agrees to the release. When students are removed from school for any reason by law enforcement authorities, every reasonable effort will be made to notify the student's parents or guardians immediately. Such effort shall be documented.

Whenever an attempt to remove a student from school occurs without an arrest warrant, court order, or without acquiescence of the parent or guardian, or the student, the administrator shall immediately notify a superior of the law enforcement officers involved to make objection to the removal of the student and shall attempt to notify the parent or guardian of the student. The Superintendent's office shall be notified immediately of any removal of a student from school by law enforcement officers under any circumstances. When it is necessary to take a student into custody on school premises and time permits, the law enforcement officer shall be requested to notify the principal and relate the circumstances necessitating such action. When possible, the principal shall have the student summoned to the principal's office where the student may be taken into custody. In all situations of interrogations, arrest or service of subpoenas of a student by law enforcement officers on school premises, all practicable steps shall be taken to ensure a minimum of embarrassment or invasion of privacy of the student and disruption to the school environment.

### **LIFE THREATS/ STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT**

Students must be discouraged from making life threats, even in jest. In every case, parents of the offending student will be notified. Suspended students will not be readmitted without a parent/administrator conference. Parents of the threatened student will be notified. When confronted with potential life threat situations, the principals, counselors, assistant superintendent, and SRO, as needed, will determine which of

the following levels apply and then take the described action:

**Level 1(No Identified Threat)**

**Level 2 (Low Risk): Ideation**

Individual/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence or serious harm to self/others; and exhibited issues/concerns can be resolved easily.

**Level 3 (Moderate Risk): Planning**

Person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence, or serious harm to self/others, at this time; exhibits behaviors that indicate a continuing intent and potential for future violence or serious harm to self/others and/or exhibits other concerning behavior that requires intervention.

**Level 4 (High Risk): Acquisition**

Person/situation appears to pose a threat of violence, exhibits behaviors that indicate both a continuing intent to harm and efforts to acquire the capacity to carry out the plan; may also exhibit other concerning behavior that require intervention.

**Level 5 (Extreme Risk): Implementation**

Person/situation appears to pose a clear and immediate threat of serious violence toward others that requires containment and action to protect identified or identifiable target(s); may also exhibit other concerning behavior that require intervention.

**MANAGEMENT OF SPORTS RELATED CONCUSSIONS**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3415, 3415F, 3415P**

The District recognizes that concussions and head injuries are commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and other recreational activities. The Board acknowledges the risk of catastrophic injuries or death is significant when a concussion or head injury is not properly evaluated and managed. Therefore, all K-12 organized sports activities, as defined by state law, will be identified for head injury management practices by the district administration.

Consistent with guidelines provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Federation of High School (NFHS) and the Montana High School Association (MHSA), the District will utilize procedures developed by the MHSA and other pertinent information to inform and educate coaches, athletic trainers, officials, youth athletes, and their parents and of the nature and risk of concussions or head injuries, including the dangers associated with continuing to play after a concussion or head injury. Resources are available on the Montana High School Association Sports Medicine page at [www.mhsa.org](http://www.mhsa.org), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services page at [www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov), and the Centers for Disease and Prevention page at: <https://www.cdc.gov/traumaticbraininjury>.

**Removal from Participation**

An athletic trainer, coach, or official shall immediately remove from play, practice, tryouts, training exercises, preparation for an athletic game, or sport camp any student-athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury or other serious injury.

### **Return to Play After Concussion or Head Injury**

In accordance with MHSA Return to Play Rules and Regulations and The Dylan Steigers Protection of Youth Athletes Act, a student athlete who has been removed from play, practice, tryouts, training exercises, preparation for an athletic game, or sport camp may not return until the athlete is cleared by a licensed healthcare professional who specializes in concussion management and is under contract with the school district. This certified health care provider may be a volunteer.

### **Impact Testing**

As a component of the District's sports related concussion management procedures, the District will utilize a neurocognitive computer-based test or other recognized neurocognitive testing program to establish a baseline of short-term memory processing speed and reaction time. Post injury scores should be comparable to the original baseline score and the student-athlete will be asymptomatic prior to being released to continued participation. This service, provided by SWAY Medical, will be initiated at the high school level in all competitive sports activities.

### **Right to Deny Participation**

The District reserves the right to deny student-athlete participation in practices or competitions as a preventative measure to further safeguard student health.

### **Information for Parents and Athletes**

Annually, the district will distribute a head injury and concussion information and sign-off sheet to all parents of student-athletes in competitive sport activities prior to the student-athlete's initial practice or competition.

### **Training**

All coaches, athletic trainers, officials, including volunteers participating in organized youth athletic activities, shall complete the training program at least once each school year as required in the District procedure. Additionally, all coaches, athletic trainers, officials, including volunteers participating in organized youth athletic activities will comply with all procedures for the management of head injuries and concussions.

### **Student-Athlete & Parent Concussion Statement**

Because of the passage of the Dylan Steigers' Protection of Youth Athletes Act, schools are required to distribute information sheets for the purpose of informing and educating student-athletes and their parents of the nature and risk of concussion and head injury to student athletes, including the risks of continuing to play after concussion or head injury. Montana law requires that each year, before beginning practice for an organized activity, a student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent(s) must be given an information sheet, and both parties must sign and return a form acknowledging receipt of the information to an official designated by the school or school district prior to the student-athletes' participation during the designated school year. The law further states that a student-athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from play at the time of injury and may not return to play until the student-athlete has received a written clearance from a licensed healthcare provider.

## **MEDICINE AT SCHOOL**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3416, 3416F, 3418, 8302, 8450, 8450R**

The Board will permit administration of medication to students in schools in its jurisdiction. Pursuant to the completion of the District's medication form signed by the parent and a licensed healthcare provider, the school nurse (who has successfully completed specific training in administration of medication), may administer medication to any student in the school or may delegate this task pursuant to Montana law. "Medication" means prescribed drugs and medical devices that are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and are ordered by a healthcare provider. It includes over-the-counter medications prescribed by the student's healthcare provider and/or authorized through parental consent.

### **Assisting Students with Self-Administration of Medication**

A building principal or school administrator may authorize, in writing, any employee:

1. To assist in the self-administration of any drug which may lawfully be sold over the counter without a prescription to a student with the written consent of a student's parent. School district personnel will not furnish students with over the counter medications at school.
2. To assist in the self-administration of a prescription drug to a student in compliance with written instructions of a medical practitioner, and with the written consent of a student's parent.

Any school employee authorized in writing by the school administrator or principal, or who has been delegated by the school nurse may assist with self-administration of medications, provided that only the following acts are used:

1. Making oral suggestions, prompting, reminding, gesturing, or providing a written guide for self-administering medications;
2. Handing to a student a prefilled, labeled medication holder or a labeled unit dose container, syringe, or original marked, labeled container from the pharmacy;
3. Opening the lid of a container for a student;
4. Guiding the hand of a student to self-administer a medication;
5. Holding and assisting a student in drinking fluid to assist in the swallowing of oral medications; and
6. Assisting with removal of a medication from a container for a student with a physical disability that prevents independence in the act.

### **Emergency Administration of Medication – Students with Individual Health Care Plans**

In the event of an emergency, a school nurse or trained staff member, exempt from the nursing license requirement under § 37-8-103(1) (c), MCA, may administer emergency medication to any student in need thereof on school grounds, in a school building, at a school function, or on a school bus according to a standing order of an authorized physician or a student's private physician. In the event that emergency medication is administered to a student, the school nurse or staff member shall call 9-1-1 and notify the student's parents. Any prescribed emergency medications kept at school will be documented on a student's Individual Health Care Plan and/or Emergency Care Plan. Reference Policy 3418

### **Life Threatening Allergies/Medical Conditions**

The Board recognizes the importance of maintaining a safe environment for students with life threatening allergies and/or medical conditions. This policy requires the disclosure of all life-threatening allergies and/or medical conditions by the parent upon enrollment of each student. The medical information is to be updated on an annual basis with the school by the parent or when medical conditions are diagnosed by a healthcare

provider. This information is critical for school staff and could avert the potential death of a student. The Great Falls Public Schools will establish guidelines for management of students with life threatening allergies and/or life-threatening medical conditions.

Therefore, it is mandated that an Individual Health Care Plan will be developed to accommodate the students' needs. The Individual Health Care Plan will be established with the parent, student (age appropriate), school administrator or designee, school nurse, medical physician and/or healthcare provider, and school food services. The Individual Health Care Plan will accommodate the child's needs throughout the school day, including in the classroom, in the cafeteria, in after-school programs, during school-sponsored activities, and on the school bus. The Individual Health Care Plan will be developed in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.

To support the Individual Health Care Plan, a core team of, but not limited to, school nurse, teacher(s), school administrator or designee, parent, student (age appropriate), medical physician or healthcare provider and other staff members as deemed necessary, will work together to support the prevention of a medical situation and respond to any emergency that may arise with the student. This team will receive the necessary training and will assure that all staff who interact with the student on a regular basis understands the student's needs and can recognize symptoms, knows what to do in an emergency, and works with other school staff to eliminate the potential allergens. An Emergency Care Plan may also be developed. It may be an excerpt of the Individual Health Care Plan or in some cases, it can be a stand-alone plan. In either case, the Emergency Care Plan will be disseminated on a need-to-know basis in order to protect the student in an emergency situation.

#### **Self-Administration or Possession of Asthma, Severe Allergy, or Anaphylaxis Medication**

Students with allergies or asthma may be authorized by the building principal or Superintendent, in consultation with medical personnel, to possess and self-administer emergency medication during the school day, during field trips, school-sponsored events, or while on a school bus. The student shall be authorized to possess and self-administer medication if the following conditions have been met:

1. A written and signed authorization from the parents, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit, or guardians for self-administration of medication, acknowledging that the District or its employees are not liable for injury that results from the student self-administering the medication.
2. The student must have the prior written approval of his/her primary healthcare provider. The written notice from the student's primary care provider must specify the name and purpose of the medication, the prescribed dosage, frequency with which it may be administered, and the circumstances that may warrant its use.
3. Documentation that the student has demonstrated to the healthcare practitioner and the school nurse, if available, the skill level necessary to use and administer the medication.
4. Documentation of a doctor approved written treatment plan for managing asthma, severe allergies, or anaphylaxis episodes of the student and for medication use by the student during school hours, such as a district Emergency Health Care Plan.

Authorization granted to a student to possess and self-administer medication shall be valid for the current school year only and must be renewed annually.

#### **Self-Administration and Possession of Other Medications**

Students may self-administer and possess other medications as long as authorized by a licensed healthcare provider through written order and stated in the student's Individualized Health Care Plan. The building administrator, school nurse, and appropriate staff will be notified of a student's plan to possess and self-administer medications. Students are not authorized to self-carry or possess controlled medication during school hours.

### **MILITARY COMPACT WAIVER**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3124**

The State of Montana is one of numerous states across the country that is a member of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. As a school district within the State of Montana subject to the laws of the State of Montana, the District shall follow the requirements of the Compact for students who enroll in the District for whom the Compact applies.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children is to remove barriers to educational success for children of military families due to frequent relocation and deployment of their parents. The Compact facilitates educational success by addressing timely student enrollment, student placement, qualification and eligibility for programs (curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular), timely graduation, and the facilitation of cooperation and communication between various member states' schools.

### **PERMISSIVE TRANSFERS**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3110, 3110R**

Parents/guardians of a student not living within an elementary, middle, or high school's attendance area boundary may apply to attend a school through the "permissive transfer" process. Permissive Transfer Forms are available at each school. A request for permissive transfer may be granted at the discretion of the District.

The following criteria will be considered in authorizing a permissive transfer:

1. Formal written approval must be given by each building principal, with final approval given by the Superintendent or designee.
2. Permissive transfers will only be considered if classroom space is available at the requested school.
3. Transportation must be provided by the parent/guardian or student for the student attending a school on a permissive transfer.
4. Permissive transfers will be judged on the educational value for the students; however, other needs such as child care will be considered.
5. The permissive transfer does not have to be renewed yearly. However, students must reapply as they move from elementary to middle school and from middle school to high school.
6. A permissive transfer may be revoked by the Superintendent at any time in response to attendance problems or disciplinary issues.
7. No transfers will be made to accommodate extra or co-curricular activities.

### **PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS/HEALTH SCREENINGS**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3410**

Students who wish to participate in certain extracurricular activities will be required to submit to a physical examination to verify their ability to participate in the activity. Students participating in activities governed by the Montana High School Association will be required to follow the rules of that organization, as well as other applicable District policies, rules, and regulations. The potential student athlete must present a GFPS Physical Examination Record signed by the examining physician or other medical personnel indicating that the student has passed a physical examination administered since the close of the previous school year. In general the District will notify parents of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when screening administered by the District is conducted. Parents will receive written notice of any screening result which indicates a condition that might interfere or tend to interfere with a student's progress. All information discovered by a physical examination or a health screening shall be held as confidential information pursuant to Montana law. The Parent-School agreement must also be signed by the parent before any equipment may be issued to the student. In certain sports, other consent and permission forms may also have to be signed before participation will be allowed.

The Board may arrange each year for health services to be provided to all students with applicable parental permission. Such services may include, but are not limited to:

1. The development of procedures at each building for the isolation and temporary care of students who become ill during the school day;
2. Consulting services of a qualified specialist for staff, students, and parents;
3. Vision, hearing, and dental screening;
4. Immunizations as provided by the Department of Public Health & Human Services.

## **PRAYER/RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY AT SCHOOL**

### **- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2332, 3510**

District officials may not invite or permit members of the clergy, staff members, or outsiders to give prayers at school-sponsored assemblies and extracurricular or athletic events. Students may express their individual religious beliefs in reports, tests, homework, and projects. Staff members should judge their work by ordinary academic standards, including substance, relevance, appearance, composition, and grammar. Student religious expression should neither be favored nor penalized. A student may read the Bible or other religious material during free reading time or when self-selected and consistent with a classroom or course requirements.

Students may distribute religious literature to their classmates, subject to the same constitutionally acceptable restrictions that the District imposes on the distribution of other non-school literature. Persons who are not enrolled in Great Falls Public Schools may not distribute religious or other literature to students on school property, consistent with and pursuant to the District's policy on solicitations.

Students may pray individually or in groups and discuss their religious views with other students, as long as they are not disruptive or coercive. The right to engage in voluntary prayer does not include the right to have a captive audience listen, to harass other students, or to force them to participate. Students may pray quietly in the classroom, except when they are expected to be involved in classroom instruction or activities. Students may gather as non-curricular groups to discuss or promote religion in accordance with District Policy 3222.



## **PROTECTION OF STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2131, 2132, 2311, 3200, 2132, 3130, 3410, 3600, 3600P 3600R, 3650**

The District recognizes fully that all students are entitled to enjoy the rights protected under federal and state constitutions and law for persons of their age and maturity in a school setting. The District expects students to exercise these rights reasonably and to avoid violating the rights of others. The District may impose disciplinary measures whenever students violate the rights of others or violate District policies or rules.

### **Surveys and Research**

All general surveys requesting personal information from students, as well as any other instrument used to collect personal information from students must advance or relate to the District's educational objectives as identified in Board Policy. This applies to all surveys, regardless of whether the student answering the questions can be identified and regardless of who created the survey.

No student will be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns sensitive personal information defined as:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
2. Mental and psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. Behavior and attitudes about sex;
4. Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, and demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom the students have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as with lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the students or student's parent; or
8. Income, (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or to receive financial assistance under such a program).

### **Surveys Created by a Third Party**

Before the District administers or distributes a survey created by a third party to a student, the student's parent(s) may:

1. Inspect the survey within a reasonable time of their request; and/or
2. Refuse to allow their child to participate in any survey requesting personal information. The school shall  
not penalize any student whose parent(s) exercise this option.

This section applies to every survey: (1) that is created by a person or entity other than a District official, staff member, or student, (2) regardless of whether the student answering the questions can be identified, and (3) regardless of the subject matter of the questions. The District will not be responsible for surveys that students elect to take which are outside the District's control (i.e. ACT, PSAT, SAT, AP...)

If a survey contains sensitive personal information, the administrator of the survey must get prior Board approval. If approved school officials and staff members shall not request, nor disclose, the identity of any

student who completes ANY survey containing sensitive personal information. Internally created surveys that do not ask for sensitive personal information do not require Board approval or parental notification.

The District will not collect, disclose, or use student individually identifiable information for the purpose of marketing or selling that information or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose. The District, however, is not prohibited from collecting, disclosing, or using individually identifiable information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.

### **Research Studies**

The District recognizes the value of participation in educational research. Studies using observation, surveys, and experimentation can aid in the improvement of the instructional program in the school system as well as growth in the profession and growth for individual teachers and researchers. Simultaneously, the District recognizes that the amount of time available for student learning is limited and must be handled carefully. It is, therefore, important that only those research studies which are of the greatest value to the District should be allowed to be conducted in the school system.

### **Notification of Rights and Procedures**

The Superintendent or designee shall notify students' parents of:

1. This policy as well as its availability from the administration office upon request;
2. How to opt their child out of participation in activities as provided in this policy;
3. The approximate dates during the school year when a survey requesting personal information, as described above, is scheduled or expected to be scheduled;
4. How to request access to any survey or other material described in this policy.
5. This notification shall be given to parents at least annually at the beginning of the school year and within a reasonable period after any substantive change in this policy.

### **Students of Legal Age**

Every student eighteen (18) years of age or older, like all other students, will comply with the rules established by the District, pursue the prescribed course of study, and submit to the authority of teachers and other staff members as required by policy and state law. For more information pertaining to adult students, and the District requirements to communicate with parents/guardians of adult students, refer to Board Policy 3130.

### **PUBLICATIONS**

#### **- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3221, 3222**

Student publications produced as part of the school's curriculum or with the support of student body funds are intended to serve both as vehicles for instruction and student communications. They are operated and substantially financed by the student body and the District.

Material appearing in such publications should reflect all areas of student interest, including topics about which there may be controversy and dissent. Controversial issues may be presented provided they are treated in depth and represent a variety of viewpoints. Such materials may not be libelous, obscene or profane nor may they cause a substantial disruption of the school, invade the privacy rights of others, demean any race,

religion, gender, or ethnic group, or advocate the violation of the law. They may not advertise tobacco, electronic or nicotine innovations, liquor, illicit drugs or drug paraphernalia. Prior to distribution in school or on school premises, a copy of all school sponsored and non-school sponsored student publications shall be provided to the principal. The principal may prohibit distribution of publications that violate the right of expression as provided in Board policy and in state and federal law.

### **RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3440**

The Board recognizes its responsibility for the proper care of students during school hours. Students shall not be removed from school grounds, any school building or school function during school hours except by a person duly authorized. Before a student is removed or excused, the person seeking to remove the student must present, to the satisfaction of the principal, evidence of their proper authority to remove the student. A teacher should not excuse a student from class to confer with anyone other than district personnel, unless the request is approved by the principal. The principal will establish procedures for removal of a student during school hours. Students will be released, with a parental request in writing, for the purpose of receiving religious instruction.

### **REPORT CARDS, PROGRESS REPORTS, AND CONFERENCES**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2420, 2420R, 3120, 3600R**

The District believes that the cooperation of school and home is a vital component in the growth and education of the student and recognizes the responsibility to keep parents informed of student welfare and progress in school.

The issuance of grades and progress reports on a regular basis serves as a basis for continuous evaluation of the student's performance and for determining changes that should be made to effect improvement. These reports ~~shall~~ will be designed to provide information that will be helpful to the student, teacher, counselor and parent/guardian. Please read the section on **Grading Guidelines**.

The Board directs the Superintendent or designee to establish a system of reporting student progress and will require all staff members to comply with such a system as part of their teaching responsibility. Staff members, parents and teachers are valued participants in this process.

Written reports of absences and student grades or performance in each class or subject are issued after each term, except for kindergarten students who receive a report at the end of the semester. Paris Gibson Education Center students are issued progress reports on a continuous basis.

Great Falls Public Schools hold two official parent-teacher conference times, one in the fall and one in the spring. Please refer to the current district calendar for the specific dates. However, parents have the right to a conference at any time. Please contact the school to request a conference.

### **RESPECT FOR ALL**

Great Falls Public Schools provides equal educational opportunities for all students without regard to race,

color, national origin, ancestry, sex, ethnicity, language barrier, religious beliefs, physical and mental handicap or disability, economic or social conditions, or actual or potential marital or parental status. At Great Falls Public Schools, we believe...Everyone has the right to feel safe and comfortable at school.

We make that happen by:

1. Respecting each other as people
2. Respecting our own property and the property of others
3. Treating others with kindness

Everyone has a right to a positive and productive learning environment. We do that by:

1. Respecting school rules
2. Being responsible
3. Being prepared to learn

At our school, we...

1. DO treat others like we would like to be treated ourselves
2. DO follow our school rules
3. DO help others when they need it
4. DO include students who are left out
5. DO tell adults if something is happening that we are concerned about

At our school, we...

1. DO NOT harass or tease others
  - a. These are negative acts committed by someone to another person (physical, written, spoken, gestured)
2. DO NOT intimidate others
  - a. These are actions or words that serve to trouble, scare or frighten another person.
3. DO NOT threaten others
  - a. These are actions or words that make others feel they are in danger
4. DO NOT bully others
  - a. These are aggressive behaviors that are intentional and that involve an imbalance of power. Most often, it is repeated over time.

### **WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING HARASSED, INTIMIDATED, THREATENED OR BULLIED OR YOU ARE A WITNESS OR KNOW ABOUT IT HAPPENING TO SOMEONE ELSE?**

1. Tell an adult:
  - a. Your parents
  - b. Your teacher, any teacher or the principal
  - c. Your counselor
  - d. The secretary
  - e. An aide
  - f. Any adult...they care about you!
2. You can write it in a note or you can talk to an adult about it
3. Tell an adult right away so they can make it stop and find out more about it right away

### **WHAT WILL THE ADULT DO ONCE THEY HAVE BEEN TOLD?**

1. Listen very carefully to what you have to say.
2. They may talk to other people about what they have seen or heard. This will include your parents. The principal will also be notified.

3. They will take action to make the behavior stop.
4. They will get the other person's side of the story.
5. They will figure out what is happening.
6. They will take disciplinary action if appropriate.
7. They will work to prevent it from happening again but you should report again if it doesn't stop.

## **WHAT HAPPENS TO PEOPLE WHO HARASS, INTIMIDATE, THREATEN OR BULLY OTHERS?**

1. People who act in this way will be made to stop by the adults in this school.
2. People who act in this way will be appropriately disciplined as outlined in our school and district discipline policies

Great Falls Public Schools prohibits hazing, harassment, intimidation, menacing, or bullying by students, staff, or third parties. Great Falls Public Schools prohibits sexual harassment in the form of unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual or sex-based nature.

These standards apply:

1. While the pupil is in school or on school property (including parking lots, playgrounds and lawn areas)
2. On the way to and from school
3. Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event or any activity or event which bears a reasonable relationship to school.
4. Anywhere, if the conduct may reasonably be considered to be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a student, staff member and/or guest or an interference with school purposes of an educational function or damage to or destruction of school district property.

To report acts of harassment, intimidation, threats or bullying, contact your school's Nondiscrimination Coordinator. For more information, please contact GFPS Non-Discrimination Coordinators: Lance Boyd, Executive Director of Student Achievement 268-6008 and/or Luke Diekhans, Director of Human Resources 268-6011.

## **RETALIATION**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3226, 4226, 5226**

“Retaliation” means an intentional act or communication intended:

1. as revenge against a person who has reported or participated in an investigation of bullying, harassment, hazing or intimidation; or
2. to improperly influence the reporting, investigation, or discipline that results from an incidence of bullying, harassment, hazing or intimidation.

Retaliation is prohibited against any person who reports or is thought to have reported a violation, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board Policy 3226, whether or not a complaint is substantiated. False charges shall also be regarded as a serious offense and will result in disciplinary action or other appropriate sanctions.

## **RETENTION/PROMOTION**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2421, 2421R, 2421F**

Great Falls Public Schools provides rich educational opportunities that allow students to progress through a curriculum based on state and national standards. The District acknowledges that educational success may require multiple supports and interventions to reach individual students at all levels. Curriculum, time, and instruction may be modified to meet the needs of individual students.

It is the belief of the District that students thrive best when placed at a grade level most appropriate to the individual student. The Superintendent or designee will develop procedures for the grade placement of students. Students, parents, staff, and the community must share the responsibility for growth in student achievement and the implementation of intervention plans for students.

Retention will be considered in instances where there is a strong likelihood that the student will benefit academically, socially, and/or emotionally. Emphasis will be placed on the implementation of an intervention plan to prevent retention.

If a parent insists that a student be retained or promoted, a notice will be placed in the student's file that the retention or promotion was a parent's decision and not recommended by the school.

Retention or promotion at any grade level is an important educational decision. The retention or promotion decision should be approved only if, in the judgment of the educational team (which includes the student's parents/guardians, appropriate teachers, counselors, administrators and other appropriate support staff at the principal's discretion), it will result in measurable improvement in the student's range of abilities, both academic and social. District retention or promotion guidelines mandate the education team develop a plan of action that shall be a two-part process; (1) documentation and consideration of the student's past and present academic and social history; (2) Customized Learning Plan (CLP) which clearly defines the purpose and goals for an individual's retention.

## **SAFETY**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3431, 3410, 3416, 3417, 8301, 8302, 8302R**

### **District Crisis Response Manual Individual Building Safety Plans,**

#### **Accident Prevention**

Student safety on campus and at school-related events is a high priority of the District. Although the District has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student is expected to:

1. Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
2. Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, teachers, or bus drivers.
3. Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders on campus.
4. Know emergency evacuation routes and signals

5. Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other District employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

### **Emergency Treatment**

The Board recognizes that schools are responsible for providing first aid or emergency treatment in case of sudden illness or injury to a student, but that further medical attention is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Each parent/guardian must provide an emergency telephone number where the parent/guardian or designee of the parent can be reached.

When a student is injured or becomes seriously ill, staff shall provide immediate care and attention until relieved by a superior, a nurse, a doctor or emergency personnel. The District will employ its normal procedures to address medical emergencies without regard to the existence of a do not resuscitate (DNR) request. The principal or designated staff member should contact the parent/guardian as soon as possible so that the parent/guardian can arrange for care or treatment of the injured student.

If a child develops symptoms of illness while at school, the responsible school officials shall do the following:

1. Isolate the child immediately from other children in a room or area segregated for that purpose.
2. Inform the parent/guardian as soon as possible about the illness and request they pick up the child.
3. Report each case of suspected communicable disease the same day by telephone to the local health authority, or as soon as possible thereafter if no contact can be made the same day.

For both emergency and illness situations, in the event that the parent/guardian cannot be reached and in the judgment of the principal or person in charge immediate medical attention is required, the injured student may be taken directly to the hospital and treated by the physician on call. When the parent/guardian is located, they may elect to continue the treatment or make other arrangements.

### **Drills: Lockdowns, Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3230, 4410, 8301**

Students, teachers, and other District employees will participate in drills of emergency procedures. The school district works closely with the Great Falls Police Department and local emergency services to annually review and revise our protocols and procedures to ensure student and staff safety.

During a drill or in an emergency situation, access to the school buildings may be limited or restricted due to the circumstances at hand. When a drill or emergency notification is given, students should follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner. Student cell phone use may be restricted during a drill or emergency situation. Parents will be notified by school officials with details of the emergency situation through a variety of means or when appropriate, in a follow up correspondence sent home with students.

### **Emergency Notifications**

To achieve the maximum safety for all children and the efficiency of operations, there may be circumstances when the Superintendent, or designee may order the:

1. Cancellation of some or all bus routes
2. Delay of some or all bus routes

3. Closure of school(s)
4. Delay of school start
5. Early dismissal of school

The closure of school is a serious decision and one that is rarely made. The District will take a variety of factors into consideration. Refer to the **GFPS REFRIGERATOR NOTE** at the front of this section of the student handbook or see the GFPS website for more information on the factors considered and other information: [www.gfps.k12.mt.us](http://www.gfps.k12.mt.us)

Bad weather and/or unforeseen emergencies can happen at any time and disruptions to school schedules require the District to distribute information to a lot of people in a very short amount of time. Parents should **seek out** information. It is also essential that parents keep the school updated on any changes in contact information. If it is deemed appropriate to put into effect any of the above-mentioned actions, notifications may be found here:

1. Mass text and/or voicemail notification from the GFPS automated communications
2. GFPS Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/greatfallspublicschools>
3. GFPS Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GreatFallsPublicSchools>
4. GFPS Website: [www.gfps.k12.mt.us](http://www.gfps.k12.mt.us)
5. Media Twitter and websites: @KRTV, [www.krtv.com](http://www.krtv.com), @KFBB, [www.kfbb.com](http://www.kfbb.com), @GFTribune, [www.greatfallstribune.com](http://www.greatfallstribune.com), @TheElectricGF, [www.theelectricgf.com](http://www.theelectricgf.com)
  - a. Be aware GFPS has no control over when the media begins posting or announcing information.
6. GFD News Releases Website page: <https://www.greatfallsmt.net/police/news-releases>
7. GFD Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GFPolice/>
8. Radio Stations: FM: 89.9, 92.9, 94.5, 97.9, 98.9, 101.7, 102.7, 104.9, and 106.1 AM: 560 and 1450
  - a. Be aware that GFPS has no control over radio station announcements.
9. Call 406-268-6444 for a recorded phone message (you may reach a busy signal depending on caller volume)

Please note: **If the decision is to operate as usual, there will NOT be postings or announcements.**

In the case of emergencies and for parental protection, parents should heed directions provided in notifications. For safety reasons, parents should not go to the schools unless the directions indicate to do so.

## **SCHOOL CLOSURES**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2221, 3122, 3122R, 8100, 8110, 8110R**

### **Temporary/Emergency School Closure / Weather Related Closure**

All students, parents and school employees should assume that school will be in session and buses running as scheduled, unless there is official notification from the Superintendent or designee to the contrary. If a severe weather event occurs, information regarding schools and busing can be found on the district webpage at: [www.gfps.k12.mt.us](http://www.gfps.k12.mt.us).



The School Board recognizes the unpredictable dangers associated with the weather in Montana and other unforeseen emergencies. To achieve the maximum safety for all children and efficiency of operation, the Superintendent may order the cancellation of some or all bus routes, the closure of school, the delay of school start and/or early dismissal of school in the event of extreme weather or other emergency, in compliance with established procedures for notifying parents, students and staff. In case of bad weather or other unforeseen emergency when the schools remain in session, parents have the right and responsibility to make attendance decisions for their children based on their individual circumstances with proper notification to the school of the student's absence.

### **SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS**

- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3225, 3225P, 3226, 3230, 3231, 3235, 3310, 3340, 3345, 3600, 3611, 4313, 4315, 4332, 4410, 4411

In order to make schools more orderly, safe and secure, the District may employ confirmed police officers or contract with the agencies to deliver security services as School Resource Officers (SROs). School Resource Officers will be recognized as school officials and will become the District's Law Enforcement Unit.

The utilization of school resource officers in district schools is to accomplish the following goals:

1. Maintain a safe and secure environment on and around school grounds;
2. Reduce incidents of school violence and crime;
3. Reduce criminal offenses committed by juveniles and young adults;
4. Establish a rapport between the SRO and the student population; and
5. Establish a rapport between the SRO and parents/guardians, faculty, staff and administrators.

### **SEARCHES**

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that schools are safe, free of firearms and other weapons, and drug free, District officials may from time to time conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects. If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law, or the District's policies or rules, such evidence may be seized and impounded by school authorities.

### **School Property and Equipment**

School property and equipment includes all District owned buildings and grounds, including parking lots and all property leased by the District. Students' desks and lockers are school property and remain under the control and jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student. Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of the assigned desks and lockers. Students must be certain that the locker is locked, and that the combination is not available to others. Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted on a random basis throughout the school or individually at any time there is a reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by District policy, whether or not a student is present. The parent/guardian will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker. The parent will also be notified if law enforcement is involved.

### **Students' Personal Effects**

School authorities may search the student and/or student's personal effects (including cell phone and other electronic devices) in the student's possession when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will produce evidence the particular student has violated or is violating the law or the District's student conduct rules.

### **Vehicles on Campus**

Any vehicle parked on school property is under the jurisdiction of the school. School officials may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable cause to do so, with or without the presence of the student. A student has full responsibility for the security of his or her vehicle and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others.

### **Video Surveillance**

The viewing and use of security and surveillance video cameras by SROs for safety and legal purposes, are allowed. If the video security and surveillance information is accessed by a school official or is provided by a school official to the SRO, the information is an educational record and subject to FERPA. The SRO may not disclose education records or surveillance materials that contain personally identifiable information absent a court order which complies with FERPA. A law enforcement record as defined above that meets the law enforcement record exception in FERPA may be disclosed to law enforcement or a criminal prosecuting agency in accordance with this policy and U.S. Code 1232g(a)(4)(B)(ii) and 34 CFR 99.8(b) and subject to 44-5-303, MCA. The District will seek consent before recording students individually in the classroom. A consent form seeking permission to record during extracurricular activities for coaching or instruction is available to sign at the student's respective school.

### **Emergency Disclosure**

The District may disclose footage in connection with an emergency to appropriate persons if the superintendent or their designee determines that the recipient's knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons without parental permission or court order in accordance with 20 U.S.C. 1232g(b)(1)(I).

### **Use of Detection Dogs/Law Enforcement Officials**

The District may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to conduct inspections and searches of lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment for illegal drugs, weapons, or other illegal or dangerous substances or material. There may be searches conducted through the use of specially trained dogs.

Our District has a contract with K316 Detection LLC to conduct periodic inspection of middle school and high school campuses. These inspections will be carried out by a nationally certified canine and handler. These units are specially trained to find contraband items that include illegal drugs, gunpowder related items, alcoholic beverages, and over-the-counter and prescription medications.

### **Passive Alcohol Sensor (PAS)**

School authorities may use a Passive Alcohol Sensor device when they have reasonable suspicion that a student has used alcohol based upon such factors as alcohol on breath, impairment of speech and motor control, admission by the student or reports of the student's consumption of alcohol by reliable sources.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT/SEXUAL INTIMIDATION**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3225, 3225F, 3225P, 3226, 5012, 5012F, 5012P**

Sexual harassment, sexual intimidation, and sexual misconduct are form of discrimination and are prohibited. An employee, District agent, or student engages in sexual harassment, sexual intimidation, and sexual misconduct *whenever* that individual makes unwelcome advances, requests sexual favors, and engages in other verbal, non-verbal, electronic or physical contact or conduct of a sexual or sex-based nature, imposed on the basis of sex, that:

1. Denies, deprives or limits the provision of educational aid, benefits, services, opportunities, or treatment, or that makes such conduct a condition of a student's academic status; or
2. Has the purpose or effect of:
  - a. Substantially interfering with the student's educational environment;
  - b. Creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
  - c. Denying, depriving, or limiting the provisions of educational aid, benefits, services, opportunities, or treatment; or
  - d. Making submission to or rejection of such unwelcome conduct the basis for academic decisions affecting a student.

Sexual harassment, sexual intimidation, and sexual misconduct prohibited by this policy includes verbal, electronic, or physical contact or conduct. The terms "intimidating", "hostile," "misconduct" and "offensive" include conduct of humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort. Examples of sexual harassment, sexual intimidation, and sexual misconduct include but are not limited to unwelcome or forceful physical touching, crude jokes or pictures, discussions of sexual experiences, pressure or requests for sexual activity or favors, intimidation by words, actions or name calling, or teasing related to sexual characteristics, and spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities. The District will evaluate sexual harassment, sexual intimidation, and sexual misconduct in light of all circumstances.

Students who believe that they may have been sexually harassed or intimidated should consult a counselor, teacher, coach, Lance Boyd the Title IX Coordinator (406-268-6777), or administrator, who will assist them in the complaint process. This may include the completion of a Harassment Reporting Form (3225F) for Students that details the complaint. Supervisors or teachers who knowingly condone or fail to report or assist a student to take action to remediate such behavior of sexual harassment or intimidation may themselves be subject to discipline.

Any District employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any student of the District who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, suspension and expulsion consistent with the District's discipline policy. Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation regarding sexual harassment will likewise be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge with regard to employees, or suspension and expulsion with regard to students.

To the greatest extent possible, complaints will be in a confidential manner. Limited disclosure may be necessary in order to complete a thorough investigation. Retaliation against persons who file a complaint is a violation of law prohibiting discrimination, and will lead to disciplinary action against the offender.

Any individual seeking further information should contact the **Title IX Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Lance Boyd, phone 406-268-6008**. An individual with a complaint alleging a violation of this policy shall follow the Uniform Complaint Procedure as outlined in Board Policy 3215.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3600, 3600P, 3600R, 3606, 3608, 3650**

School student records are confidential, and information from them shall not be released other than as provided by law. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters the District until the time the student withdraws or graduates. A copy of this record moves with the student from school to school.

State and Federal law grant students and parent(s)/guardian(s) certain rights, including the right to inspect, copy, and challenge their or their child's school records. Such requests shall be made in writing and directed to the records custodian. Access to the records shall be granted within fifteen (15) days of the District's receipt of such a request.

Where the parents are divorced or separated, both shall be permitted to inspect and copy the student's school records unless a court order, of which the District has notice, indicates otherwise. The District shall send copies of the following to both parents at either one's request, unless a court order indicates otherwise:

1. Academic progress reports or records;
2. Health reports;
3. Notices of parent-teacher conferences;
4. School calendars distributed to the parents/guardians; and
5. Notices about open houses and other major school events including pupil-parent interaction.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. Records may be reviewed during regular school hours, upon completion of a written request. The records' custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records. If circumstances prevent a parent or eligible student from inspecting the records, the District will either provide a copy of the requested records or make other arrangements to review the records.

The only persons who have general access to a student's records are parents/guardians of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests. School officials with legitimate educational interests include any employees, agents or Trustees of the District; cooperatives of which the District is a member; or facilities with which the District contracts for the placement of students with disabilities, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are:

1. Working with the student.
2. Considering disciplinary or academic actions.
3. Considering the student's case.
4. Considering an individual education program (IEP) for a student with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), or an individually designed program for a student with disabilities under Section 504.
5. Compiling statistical data, or
6. Investigating or evaluating programs.

Access shall not be granted the parent or the student to confidential letters and recommendations concerning the admission to a post-secondary educational institution, applications for employment, or the receipt of an honor or award, if the student has waived his or her right of access, after being advised of his or her right to obtain the names of all persons making such confidential letters or statements.

Student records may be released pursuant to a court order, state or federal statute, or upon receipt of request from a state educational agency with a current, demonstrable educational need. Parental consent is required to release the records to anyone else. A student that attains the age of legal majority (18) is an “eligible student” under FERPA. An eligible student has the right to access and inspect their student records. An eligible student may not prevent their parents from accessing and inspecting their student records if they are a dependent of their parents in accordance with Internal Revenue Service regulations.

Students over 18 and parents of minor students may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the District refuses the request to amend the records, the person making the request has the right to ask for a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the person making the request has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, parents and the student are not allowed to contest a student's grade in a course through this process. Parents or the student have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the District is not in compliance with the law regarding student records.

Copies of student records are available to parents and eligible students. Parents may be denied copies of a student's records: (1) after the student reaches age 18 and is no longer a dependent for tax purposes; (2) when the student is attending an institution of post-secondary education; (3) if the parent fails to follow proper procedures or pay the copying charge; or (4) when the District is given a copy of a court order terminating the parental rights. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, upon written request of the parent, one copy of the record will be provided at no charge.

Certain information about District students is considered directory information and will be released to

anyone who follows procedures for requesting it, unless the parent objects to the release of any or all directory information about the child. The opportunity to exercise such an objection was provided on the form signed by the parent to acknowledge receipt of this handbook. Should circumstances change; the parent can contact the principal to indicate his or her desire to change the original request. Directory information includes a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, photographs (which includes media coverage), dates of attendance, awards received in school, and most recent previous school attended.

### **Special Education Records**

Parents of a student with disabilities who has been provided special education services by the District will be notified when any information that specifically identifies the student is no longer needed. If the time established by law for retention has expired, the records will be destroyed. However, if the retention period

has not expired, the material will be deleted from the records, but the records will be maintained until the time has expired.

### **Student Record Challenges**

The District shall give a parent or eligible student, on request, an opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of the student's education records on the grounds that the information contained in the education records is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the privacy rights of the student.

### **SUMMER SCHOOL**

#### **- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2240**

The Board of Trustees authorizes a summer program of instructional offerings for the purpose of remediation of credit, maintenance of skills, and credit accrual. All classes offered for credit must meet minimum state requirements for accreditation and may be delivered at the school, virtually, or at another offsite location. Remediation credit courses shall be offered for grades 9-12, in accordance with the District advancement requirements. Credit course offerings must be approved by the Superintendent or designee.

Credit-bearing courses have been aligned with the district curriculum benchmarks and focus on the academic core curriculum required for graduation. The 9-12 summer school option is open to students needing to make up course work that they have failed previously. 9-12 summer school may not be taken to replace coursework not previously taken in an attempt to graduate early, unless the student has obtained prior approval through the building Academic Variance Committee. Some courses may be available for credit enhancement.

The Great Falls Public Schools Virtual Academy is available to students, entering grades 9-12, and is designed to allow students to accrue credit, through a digital platform, during the summer. Registration for the GFPS Virtual Academy occurs every spring. Families must pay a fee for Virtual Academy courses. For more information, contact the GFPS High School Coordinator of Curriculum at (406) 268-6761.

### **TEXTBOOKS**

#### **- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2311, 3520**

Board-approved curriculum textbooks are provided free of charge for each subject or class. Books must be treated with care. Students will not be charged for normal wear of materials that are lent to them; however, they will be charged replacement cost for excessive wear or loss.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

#### **- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 8100, 8101, 8110, 8110R**

The District may provide transportation to and from school for a student who:

1. Is a student with a disability, whose IEP identifies transportation as a related service; or
2. Has another compelling and legally sufficient reason to receive transportation services.
3. Follows the "in-town busing" guidelines below.

### **In Town Busing**

1. Students on all established bus routes will be provided bus transportation to their assigned school from their legal residence as follows:
  - a. **Elementary, Grades K through 6** - One (1) or more miles from an Elementary School.
  - b. **Middle School Grades 7 and 8** - One and one-half (1 ½) miles
  - c. **High School** - Two (2) miles
2. Regularly scheduled bus transportation may be provided for a lesser distance than indicated above when it is deemed by the Superintendent's designee that hazardous walking conditions or other circumstances exist that are a threat to the safety of the pupils.
3. Regularly scheduled bus transportation may also be provided for a lesser distance than indicated above when there are unassigned seats. Bus stops and routes will not be changed to accommodate these students.
4. This service is provided at no cost to students. Further information may be obtained by calling the **Transportation Department (phone 406-268-6015)**.

### **Bus Stops**

Students are required to use their assigned bus stop. Buses should stop only at designated places approved by school authorities. Exceptions should be made only in cases of emergency and inclement weather conditions.

### **Safety**

The Superintendent's designee shall develop written rules establishing the procedures for bus safety, emergency exit drills and for student conduct while riding on buses.

For more information on school bus rules please go to: [www.bigskybuslines.com](http://www.bigskybuslines.com) or the GFPS Transportation office at: [www.gfps.k12.mt.us](http://www.gfps.k12.mt.us)

### **Responsibilities: Parents**

The interest and assistance of each parent is a valued asset to the transportation program. Parents' efforts towards making each bus trip a safe and pleasant experience are requested and appreciated. The following suggestions are only three of the many ways parents can assist:

1. Ensure that students are at the bus stop in sufficient time to efficiently meet the bus.
2. Properly prepare children for weather conditions.
3. Encourage school bus safety at home. Caution children regarding safe behavior and conduct while riding on the school bus.

### **Responsibilities: Students**

Students must realize that safety is affected by individual and group conduct. Each student is responsible for following all rules and regulations regarding safety and general conduct on buses as established by the district in Policy 8110R. Since the privileges of transportation are discretionary with the Board of Trustees, students violating bus rules may be suspended from the use of bus privileges by school authorities. Parents will be notified of all misconduct.

### **VIDEO/AUDIO SURVEILLANCE/MONITORING**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 3235, 3235F**

In accordance with applicable Montana laws, the operations of Great Falls Public Schools are open to the public, and records related to district operations are subject to public disclosure. There are limited

exceptions to this requirement for transparent operations. One of those exceptions is the protection of student privacy as required by federal law. This policy is intended to honor the public's right to know while preserving student privacy rights when the two rights intersect by providing procedures on handling matters related to video surveillance. Video surveillance is only one of several investigatory techniques utilized by Great Falls Public Schools. Its presence or absence does not in and of itself constitute a complete investigation.

### **Purposes of Video Surveillance**

The Board authorizes the use of video surveillance systems on District property or areas subject to District policy and supervision to:

1. Ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property,
2. Enhance educational opportunities for students,
3. Safeguard District facilities and equipment,
4. Deter and prevent unacceptable or unlawful activities, and
5. Document violations of Board policies, administrative regulations, District or building rules or law, and provide a historical record to assist in investigations as authorized or permitted by law.

### **Confidentiality**

The District will treat educational records with appropriate confidentiality in accordance with applicable District policies and handbooks, FERPA and other applicable federal and Montana laws. Accordingly, the district will release or allow viewing of video only in certain defined situations, consistent with federal and state law. Applicable exceptions to disclosure restrictions for emergencies, law enforcement, or program audits are permitted under this policy as authorized by law.

### **Notification**

Students, parents and employees must be notified annually that students, employees and visitors are subject to video recording in common areas at any time. Additionally, notices must be conspicuously posted on school property at all regular entrances and other access points to school grounds. These notices should advise individuals that they are subject to video recording. Students and parents will be notified of the law enforcement records exception to student confidentiality as part of the annual FERPA notification in the student handbook and in accordance with District Policy 3600.

### **Audio or Video Recording/Listening/Monitoring**

Parents and students are expressly prohibited from using covert means to listen-in or make a recording (audio or video) of any meeting or activity at school. This includes placing recording devices, or other devices with one- or two-way audio communication technology (i.e., technology that allows a person off-site to listen to live conversations and sounds taking place in the location where the device is located), within a student's book bag/backpack, on a student's person or otherwise in an area capable of listening in or recording without express written consent of the Superintendent. Any requests to place a recording device or other device with one- or two-way audio communication technology within a student's bookbag/backpack or on a student's person shall be submitted, in writing, to the Superintendent along with an explanation of why such recording is necessary. The Superintendent or a designee shall notify the parent(s), in writing, whether such request is denied or granted within five (5) school days. Where consent has been given by the Superintendent, the Principal must be given access by the parent to be a school guardian on the device. This will ensure any "Listen-In" feature is disabled during school hours due to privacy concerns.



## **VISITORS**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 4301, 4302, 4313, 4332, 4315, 4316**

As District facilities are public property, parents and other citizens will be welcomed. In order to protect the safety of students and staff, all visitors shall report to the Principal's Office upon entering any District building and comply with any other applicable school safety and security policy, procedure or protocol. School Visitors shall not interfere with school operations or delivery of education services to students.

## **Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities**

Community members with disabilities shall be provided an opportunity to participate in all school-sponsored services, programs, or activities on a basis equal to those without disabilities and will not be subject to illegal discrimination. The District may provide auxiliary aids and services where necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal opportunity to participate in or enjoy the benefits of a service, program, or activity. The Superintendent shall designate the Americans With Disabilities Act, Title II Nondiscrimination Coordinator who is directed to:

1. Oversee the District's compliance efforts, recommend necessary modifications to the Board, and maintain the District's final Title II self-evaluation document and keep it available for public inspection for at least three (3) years after its completion date.
2. Institute plans to make information regarding Title II's protection available to any interested party.

Individuals with disabilities should notify the District Nondiscrimination Coordinator or building principal if they have a disability which will require special assistance or services and, if so, what services are required. This notification should occur as far as possible before the school-sponsored function, program, or meeting. Individuals with disabilities may allege a violation of this policy or federal law by reporting it to the District Title II Nondiscrimination Coordinator, or by filing a grievance under the Uniform Grievance Procedure.

## **WELLNESS**

**- Reference; GFPS Board Policy: 2510, 8200**

### **Nutrition Guidelines**

In 2009, the School Board adopted **District Guidelines** for competitive foods given or sold in school. For more information on the approved food list that meet the guideline requirements go to: [School Nutrition Program - Great Falls Public Schools](#) or Great Falls Public School Student Wellness: 406-268-6047.

### **Classroom Celebrations**

1. Parents in grades K-6 are welcome to bring snacks for their child's birthday.
2. Classroom celebrations should be planned with good nutrition in mind. Empty calories should be avoided.
3. Beverage guidelines should be followed.
4. Classroom celebrations should be reserved for special occasions with approval from the building Principal.
5. Classroom activities designed to enhance the students' understanding of diverse cultures should be planned with good nutrition in mind and with the approval of the building principal.