

CUSTER SCHOOL DISTRICT #15

STUDENT HANDBOOK



2025-2026

Welcome Students

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our students. The staff looks forward to providing you with educational opportunities that will prepare you for college, vocational school, technical school or the world of work in our ever-changing society. We encourage you to attend school each day putting forth your best effort to receive the most from the opportunities that will be available to you. School is what you make of it. The harder you work, the more you will receive in return. **Always remember that education is a lifelong process.**

The extra-curricular side of school is an important part of your education. Becoming involved in music, athletics, FFA, BPA, school clubs and organizations will help you become a well-rounded individual. We encourage you to join, participate, and contribute. The school will be better as a result, and so will you.

Every civilized society has some guiding rules and regulations to protect people and their rights. Schools also must have rules and regulations that will provide for an orderly and safe learning environment for all students. We ask for your cooperation in following school rules by assuming responsibility for your behavior in respecting yourself and the rights of others. This is your school so please take care of the building and equipment entrusted to you.

Our staff will work hard to provide you with a quality education to help you achieve your full academic potential. You will be encouraged to do your best as we help you prepare for a rapidly changing world.

EQUAL EDUCATION AND DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Custer School District #15 is committed to equality of educational opportunities. Because freedom from discrimination is a fundamental right under the Montana Constitution, it is the policy of this district to provide a learning environment free of discrimination.

All students will have the opportunity to participate in and receive benefits from all programs and activities offered by our district. No student will be denied participation on the basis of sex, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, political beliefs, marital or parental status unless based upon reasonable grounds as provided by law.

Inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination or intimidation should be directed to our Title IX Coordinator, or the school superintendent. In compliance with federal regulation, our district will notify annually all students, parents, staff and community members of this policy and the designated coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator is: Laini McNaney.

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**CUSTER SCHOOL DISTRICT #15
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**ARTICLE 1
Activities/Organizations/Clubs**

1. Any new organization/club must meet with Board approval.
2. Each club shall provide a list of officers and sponsors to the school office at the beginning of each school year.
3. Minutes of meetings shall be kept and signed by the secretary and the club sponsor(s).
4. Each club must keep financial records.
5. Fundraising activities must be coordinated through the Student Council and the superintendent. Each club/organization will be limited to three (3) fundraising events each year.
6. Organizations shall have a constitution, guidelines and a statement of purpose(s).
7. Organizations shall have the right to create awards, which they see fit, with the approval of the superintendent.
8. Current approved organizations are:

BPA
FFA
Pep Club

Music (Band & Chorus)
Student Council

Smithsonian or Close UP
National Honor Society

**ARTICLE 2
Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco**

1. Possession and/or use of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal products will not be allowed on school property or at school activities. Tobacco includes but is not limited to cigarettes, cigars, snuff, smoking tobacco, smokeless tobacco, vapor product, alternative nicotine product or any other tobacco or nicotine delivery innovation.
2. No student shall be on school property or at school activities under the influence of mind-altering chemicals or alcohol with the exception of doctor ordered prescription drugs. The use of alcohol/ drugs by minors not only constitutes a health danger to the user and those around them, it is an illegal activity. Said usage will not be tolerated in this school district.

3. Discipline for violations shall be suspension from school with the potential recommendation by the superintendent that the student be expelled from school. Criminal and drug violations will be reported to law enforcement officials and to parent(s)/guardian(s).
4. There shall be no advertising in any manner of illegal substances, alcohol, or tobacco products. This includes advertisement on clothing.
5. Any school activity shall be considered an extension of the regular school day and all items herein shall apply. A reminder that our District, Divisional and State tournaments are school activities, and alcohol, drugs and tobacco are prohibited.

ARTICLE 3 Appointments and Excused Absences

1. A legitimate appointment is defined as being medical, legal, scholarship, or academic, which includes college visitations.
2. The school needs a call from the parent or guardian by 8:15 on the day of an unexpected student absence. Please call 856-4117.
3. Each student must provide the school secretary or superintendent with a note within three days after the absence that states the reason the student was taken out of school. If the student went to court or a medical provider, please provide the note from them. A note or phone call must be received before the student can be dismissed early.
4. Students will make prior arrangements for planned absences and all work missed must be made up within the time specified by the individual teachers.

ARTICLE 4 Attendance/Absences/Truancy

This attendance criteria is based on the theory that prompt and regular attendance in school is the beginning of dependability in adult business, personal, and social life. Furthermore, regular attendance is important, because valuable skills and information gained in the classroom may or may not show up on tests or be reflected in an academic grade. The general welfare of all students is best served by regular attendance.

Excused Absences

Excused absences are those absences listed below that have been documented and authorized by the parent or guardian. Excused absences that do not apply to the excessive absence policies. These include:

1. Participation in a school-approved activity. This exemption will apply to eligible

- students participating in sports events, music-related events, FFA trips, academic field trips, and others deemed co-curricular.
2. Medical Appointments, Illness, and Chronic Health Condition. Medical documentation must be provided to the office.
 3. Legal appointments. Verification of appointments must be provided to the office.
 4. Post-secondary visitations - All post-secondary exemptions must be pre-approved through the guidance office.
 5. Bereavement/Funerals Missed work assignments and activities may be made up in the manner provided by the teacher. Time allotted for make-up work as stated in this handbook.
 6. Absence resulting from disciplinary actions suspension -Students who are removed from a class or classes as a disciplinary measure, or students who have been placed on suspension, may have the right to make up assignments or exams missed during the time they were denied entry to the classroom depending upon the reason for the disciplinary action.
 7. Family trip/activity – families are encouraged to complete vacations and trips during periods of school breaks. If that arrangement is not possible, parents or guardians shall notify the office in advance of the trip to make necessary school work arrangements.
 8. Non-school sponsored activity examples include AAU sports and 4-H. Parents are encouraged to allow participation in non-school activities by their child if eligibility requirements are being met by students. Failure to notify the school about upcoming absences may result in an unexcused absence.
 9. Family Emergencies – Documentation of the emergency shall be provided to the office by the parent or guardian when practicable after the emergency has passed.

Students that have excused absences for school activities are expected to turn their classwork in on time and will be given no extra time to complete the work. In the event of unexpected excused absence, students will have 2 days to get work turned in. This will start at the date of return and one extra day will be allowed for each additional excused absence if they are consecutive. After this point, the teacher may enter a “zero” or assess late penalties.

Unexcused Absences

Defined as absences not considered an excused absence in accordance with this policy and occur without knowledge or authorization of parent or guardian. Unexcused absences are not acceptable. The building administrator shall have the authority to determine if an absence is unexcused and the appropriate penalty for any student whose absence is considered unexcused.

Consequences for Unexcused Absences

Students who are marked with an unexcused absence are required to make up the missed class time and work outside of regular school hours. The schedule for making up the unexcused time will be determined by the principal or designee. Failure to make up the time

required may result in further disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by administration. Missed work is due upon return and teachers may assign a “zero” or late penalties for work not turned in upon return. The student who reaches 9 unexcused absences as described in District Policy 3123 and Section 20-5-103, MCA, may be referred to youth probation and the county attorney.

A student who has five (5) excused/unexcused absences in a semester will have a letter sent to the parent or guardian to set a meeting to discuss options for improving the attendance of the student. If a course of action is set for a student to improve attendance, that action shall be considered a directive from the administration. Failure to honor the directive may result in discipline for failure to honor school rules consistent with Policy 3310.

This is consistent with Board Policy 3122P.

ARTICLE 5 Tardy Policy:

1. A student shall be deemed tardy when the student fails to be physically present in the classroom prior to the sounding of the second bell, which signals the beginning of class. If a student is detained by another teacher, the student will obtain a tardy pass from that teacher explaining that the student was detained. Students who miss more than 15 minutes of the period will be entered as absent rather than tardy for that period. (Board Policy 3122P)
2. A student who is tardy to school is to stop at the office for a tardy slip before they will be admitted to class.
3. A student will be allowed two tardies each nine weeks. The third and each successive Unexcused Tardy will convert to Unexcused Absences for that class period.
4. The school office will keep a record of school tardies and teachers will keep a record of classroom tardies. Teachers will inform the superintendent when a student has three tardies. Excessive tardies that result in attendance problems are subject to Friday and Saturday School as assigned by the Attendance Committee.

ARTICLE 6 Attendance Committee

The Attendance Committee will be made up of staff members.

Guidelines

- A. The Committee will meet at least once near the end or at the end of each semester. The Committee will meet more often as needed.

- B. The meeting will be a private meeting between the parents, student, and the Committee.
- C. The Committee will assign after school, Friday, and/or Saturday School makeup time. Transportation is the responsibility of the parent.
- D. Tardies will be included in the process as described in the Student Handbook.
- E. Extenuating circumstances may be considered by the Committee, allowing the Committee to accept the reasons for absences without makeup time. These circumstances would include things like illness that is documented, death in families, and other emergencies found to be acceptable. These types of things do not excuse unexcused absences that contributed to the excessive absences. This means that unexcused absences followed by extenuating circumstances may still result in makeup time.
- F. Parents may appeal the decision of the Committee using the District Complaint Process.

ARTICLE 7
Video Surveillance

- 1. Our school district will use video cameras on District property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property and to safeguard District buildings, grounds, and equipment.
- 2. Our school district may choose to make video recordings a part of a student's educational record.
- 3. Our school district may share video recordings with law enforcement officials as deemed necessary, in accordance with law and FERPA.

ARTICLE 8
Boys State/Girls State

- 1. The school will provide information to all junior students interested in applying for Boys State or Girls State.

ARTICLE 9
Bus Behavior

- 1. Seating arrangements may be assigned by the bus driver or chaperone.
- 2. Students must stay seated while the bus in motion. Moving around the bus is not allowed.

3. For safety reasons, students must obey all requests and instructions given by our bus drivers in a prompt and courteous manner at all times. Students are bound by the rules of the school; discipline will be issued as if an infraction was on the campus. Bus suspensions may be used for repeated or serious rule violations that undermine the authority of the driver or endanger the safety of the people on the bus.
4. Buses will always strive to depart at the scheduled times of departure.
5. Students should stay off the roadway at all times while waiting for the bus.
6. Bus riders should keep their hands inside the bus at all times.
7. Students must follow the conduct policy that is set forth.
8. Any damage done to the bus should be reported to the driver at once.
9. Any student vandalizing a bus will be required to pay damages.
10. Student riders must help keep buses clean, sanitary, and orderly.
11. Students are to arrive at the bus stop five minutes in advance of the scheduled pick-up time.
12. The Custer School has some buses that are equipped with seatbelts. It is required by Montana State Law that the seatbelts are worn if they are provided. Refusal to wear the seatbelts at all times may result in denial of bus privileges. Bus riding is a privilege, not a right.

ARTICLE 10
Care of School Property

1. Students are encouraged to take care of school property. Any student who defaces or damages any school building, furniture, equipment, books, etc. will be charged for the damage. The student will also be subject to suspension or expulsion from school, and may face civil or criminal charges.

ARTICLE 11
Cell Phones

Cellphones are tools that students are encouraged to use properly. They are not to be distractions or for harassment.

1. Students are required to turn off phones and turn them in to the teacher at the start of every class. Teachers will return phones to students when their use is appropriate for class use. If the student needs to leave the classroom during class time, they must

not have their cell phone with them. High School and Junior High School students may use their cell phone during passing time and at lunch in an appropriate manner.

2. The use of cell phones cameras and regular cameras are prohibited at all times in our student athletic locker rooms, bathrooms or other locations where such operation may violate the privacy rights of another person. The school has the responsibility to protect the rights and privacy of our students and staff.
3. Consequences: If the above rules regarding cell phones are not followed, the student is subject to the regular discipline outlined in Article 17 plus the following conditions:
 - i. First Offense – The student may pick up the phone from the teacher at the end of the school day.
 - ii. Second Offense – The student’s phone is handed to the superintendent and cannot be picked up until the end of the school day.
 - iii. Third Offense and every offense thereafter – The student’s phone is handed in to the superintendent and the phone will not be returned until the student’s parents come to the school to pick it up.

ARTICLE 12 Cheating

1. Cheating in school will not be tolerated. Students caught cheating will receive a zero on the assignment or the test. The student may also receive discipline.
2. Plagiarism is also cheating. Students caught plagiarizing materials will receive a zero on that assignment. The student may also receive discipline.
3. AI generated materials are not a substitute for student work. The use of AI for any classwork must be cited as such including the specific generator used.

ARTICLE 13 Commencement

1. The school will set the date and time for graduation.
2. Honor cords or stoles are provided to students who are in the National Honor Society. Valedictorians and Salutatorians will also receive either an honor cord or a stole.
3. The responsibility of the District, upon the student’s completion of the requirements of graduation, is to issue a proper diploma to each graduate. Participation in the actual graduation ceremony is not a requirement. Those who desire to culminate their twelve years of study by participating in a graduation ceremony have the right to a dignified ceremony that maintains decorum appropriate for such an occasion.
4. The graduation ceremony will be conducted in the following manner:

- a. Each student who participates will purchase or rent the proper cap and gown as decided by the class.
- b. Caps, tassels, and gowns will be worn in a traditional manner befitting a formal ceremony.
- c. Students who participate will be expected to dress in accordance with the occasion. All visible attire/personal adornments should reflect the dignity, formality, and decorum of the ceremony.
- d. Each student who participates must attend the graduation practices, agree to cooperate with the class advisor/administrator, and participate in all portions of the graduation ceremony.

ARTICLE 14 Dances

1. Dance request forms must be turned in to the school office with all required signatures one week prior to the dance; this allows the school secretary time to prepare a change box and also provides the school administration with the names of the chaperones.
2. All school dances will be held in the old gym, the lunchroom, or the gym lobby. **No street shoes may be worn in the gym, including tennis shoes worn outside.** The club or organization sponsoring the dance will decide on the price of admission. There must be at least two chaperones, one male and one female, at all dances. At least one of the chaperones must be a school staff member. Dances will begin at 9:00 p.m. or at a time approved by the sponsor and superintendent and end by 12:00 midnight. All school rules are in effect for school dances and other activities. Once a person leaves the dance, he/she may not return.
3. Our students may invite guests providing the guest is under the age of 21, a pass has been obtained from the office, and the student assumes full responsibility for the actions of their guest. If a guest is asked to leave, the student sponsoring the guest will also have to leave.
4. The club or organization sponsoring the dance must clean up the gym, lunchroom, or gym lobby after the dance.

ARTICLE 15 Detention

1. Students will be subject to detention for violation of school rules.

2. It shall be at the discretion of the teacher and/or superintendent when detention will be served.
3. When student(s) are to serve detention, parents or guardians will be notified.

ARTICLE 16
Dress and Personal Appearance

1. Parents, as well as the student, assume responsibility for appropriate apparel to be worn at school. A well-groomed personal appearance will be mandatory for all students.

The superintendent's discretion will be used to determine if apparel is appropriate.

2. Unacceptable apparel includes, but is not limited to, bathing suits, tank tops or muscle shirts of any kind, spaghetti straps, pajamas, hats, bandanas (head coverings), clothing with holes in inappropriate places or through which skin is visible, biking or spandex shorts (unless wearing shorts over the top that are acceptable when worn independently), or gang related items. No bare midriff shirt or blouse is acceptable. No cleavage shall be visible. Shirts without sleeves may not show underwear or the bare side. Shirts or blouses should be long enough to be tucked in. Excessively revealing clothing is unacceptable. No under-garments or underwear is to be showing. Shoes must be worn at all times. Dresses or skirts of length shorter than mid-thigh are unacceptable. Clothing that has printing or pictures that are offensive, derogatory, sexually or inappropriately suggestive (innuendoes), or gang related in nature will not be allowed. All students will remove their hats upon entering the building. Students must keep hats in their lockers during school hours. No sunglasses may be worn in the school. During Spirit Week or other special occasions, items such as hats may be allowed by the superintendent for one special day.
3. Clothing with alcohol, drug, and/or tobacco insignias will not be allowed.
4. Coaches, sponsors, and teachers of extra-curricular activities shall have the right to prescribe and enforce certain rules of dress and hair length for participants, which may be more stringent than our general school rules. Also, a teacher or superintendent shall be allowed to further restrict the manner of dress when it could interfere with the education, health or safety of a student in the teacher's specific area.
5. This policy remains in effect until the administration or school board determines it is being abused by the student body. The final decision as to what dress or apparel is appropriate for school wear rests with the administration.
6. Consequences for coming to school in unacceptable dress or improper grooming will result in the following:

- a. The student's parents will be notified and the student will change into available, appropriate clothing. In extreme cases, as determined by the superintendent, the first offense may require removal from class until the clothing is changed.
- b. After the first offense and warning, the parents will be contacted and the student will be placed in In-School Suspension for the time period until the proper dress can be brought to the school. Maximum penalty would be the entire day.
- c. Repeated violations: Continued abuse of the dress code will result in Out-Of-School Suspension. The student will receive an unexcused absence for any class/classes missed because of unacceptable dress or improper grooming.

ARTICLE 17
Due Process in Discipline, Suspension and Expulsion

MCA 20-5-201. Duties and sanctions. (1) A pupil:

(a) shall comply with the policies of the trustees and the rules of the school that the pupil attends;

(b) shall pursue the required course of instruction;

*(c & d combined) shall [comply with, and is under the] authority of the teachers, principal, and district superintendent of the district, [including] while the pupil is in school or on school premises, on the way to and from school, or during intermission or recess.**

***The bracketed [...] words are paraphrased from the actual law.**

Due process has three basic steps legally listed below:

1. The student will be notified of the allegation.
1. The student will have the opportunity to respond and give the student's perspective about the incident.
2. The student will be able to appeal using the processes provided by the District.
Appeals of suspensions end with the superintendent.

The Superintendent will conduct a review of any suspension on request of a parent or legal guardian. A student and parent or legal guardian may meet with the Superintendent to discuss suspension. After the meeting and after concluding a review, the Superintendent will take such final action as appropriate. (Board Policy 3300)

Students sent to the Superintendent's office for disciplinary action on minor offenses will be treated as follows:

1. First-time offenders may be warned or given a detention depending upon the offense. A disciplinary report will be mailed to their parents if the referral is valid and receives discipline.
2. Second-time offenders will be given detention and a disciplinary report will be mailed to their parents. (Board Policy 3330)
3. Third-time offenders will be given a hearing with the superintendent. If the superintendent feels the student's actions warrant suspension, the student will be suspended. Students who are suspended from any class or from school entirely have the right to make up any work missed. The work should be done during the suspension and turning in upon return to school. Teachers may extend the makeup time. Tests missed during suspension will be taken on the day the student returns from their suspension. Students on suspension may not attend, participate or compete in any school activity on the day of a suspension. They may not even be on school property. This prohibition from activities of the school extends to functions away from the school district. If the suspension happens on the last day of the week, the activity suspension extends through the weekend. (Board Policy 3330).
4. When a student is reported to the office for breach of discipline classified as most serious, such as assaulting any school district employee, making threatening remarks, destroying school property, endangering an individual's health or other student's health, insubordination, truancy, using drugs, alcohol or smoking on school premises or at school activities, sexual harassment, or indecent exposure, immediate suspension will follow with no previous warnings to the student.
5. While most suspension will be limited to three days or less, the superintendent may order a suspension for an initial period not to exceed ten (10) school days. Upon a finding by a school administrator that the immediate return to 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. (Board Policy 3330)

EXPULSION

"Expulsion" is any removal of a student for more than twenty (20) school days without the provision of educational services. Expulsion is a disciplinary action available only to the Board.

The Board, and only the Board, may expel a student from school and may do so only after following due process procedures set forth below.

The Board will provide written notice to a student and parent or legal guardian of a hearing to

consider a recommendation for expulsion, which will be sent by registered or certified mail at least five (5) school days before the date of the scheduled hearing. The notice will include time and place of hearing, information describing the process to be used to conduct the hearing, and notice that the Board intends to conduct the hearing in closed session unless a parent or legal guardian waives the student's right to privacy.

ARTICLE 18
Field Trips:

1. Prior to planning any field trips, approval must be received from the superintendent and the teacher.
2. After receiving approval, final plans must be completed two (2) weeks prior to the event.
3. All rules and regulations that apply during regular school hours and to extra-curricular activities also apply to all individuals participating in the field trip.
4. If one or more of the aforementioned rules and regulations are broken, accompanying staff, chaperones, and/or administration will be responsible for disciplinary action.
5. The superintendent will be notified of all disciplinary action taken by accompanying staff and/or chaperones.

ARTICLE 19
Fighting

1. Fighting will not be tolerated. Disciplinary action will be taken by the superintendent.

ARTICLE 20
Fund-raising Activities

1. All fund-raising activities must be approved by the Student Council and the superintendent. Each club/organization will be limited to three (3) fundraising events each year.

ARTICLE 21
Grades/Testing

1. All semester grades are entered into our school's permanent school records together with a student's complete record of attendance.
2. Report cards will be issued every quarter (9 weeks). The end of the second quarter is also the end of the first semester of school. At this time, and also at the end of the fourth quarter, students will also receive semester grades.

3. If a student is failing a class, the teacher of that class will call the parent. Parents are encouraged to access students grades on Infinite Campus through the parent login.

Quarter and Semester Tests

1. Quarter tests may be given at the end of the first and third nine weeks of school and semester tests will be given at the end of the second and fourth nine weeks of school.

ARTICLE 22 Graduation/Promotion Requirements

Junior High Students

To be promoted, students in grades seven and eight must meet the following criteria:

1. Junior high students must pass three of the four following core subjects in each semester: English, mathematics, science, and social studies.
2. Junior high students must also pass two of the three non-core courses in each semester.

If a student does not meet these criteria, the decision as to whether or not the student shall be held back will be made by the superintendent and parents, with the parents having the final say as per Board Policy 2421.

High School Students

In high school, students are only allowed to take 1 study hall per semester and complete the following requirements:

1. To advance to the 10th grade, a student must earn at least 5 units of credit in the 9th grade, two of which must be in English, math, or science;
2. Failure to pass 9th grade English, math or science shall require the student repeat the course even though the student may have earned enough credits to advance to the 10th grade.
3. Students may be retained at each grade level if the promotion requirements are not met by August 30;
4. A minimum of 10 credits is required for advancement into the 11th grade;
5. A minimum of 15 credits is required for advancement in the 12th grade;

6. To graduate from Custer High School, a student must have satisfactorily completed the last quarter of their senior year at Custer High School. (Highly unusual exceptions may be considered by the superintendent.)

7. Graduation requirements shall consist of the following:

4 Credits English	3 Credits Math, including Algebra I and Geometry
3 Credits Science	2 Credits P.E. / Health
3 Credits Social Studies	4 Credits of Electives (1 of which must be a fine art)
1 Credit Intro to Computers	1 Credit in Personal Finance

8. To graduate, a student must have successfully passed 24 credits (started with freshmen in 2021). All course work needed for meeting graduation requirements must be completed before a student is allowed to participate in graduation exercises.

9. Montana Digital Academy (MTDA) courses (can be used under the following conditions (Board Policy 1005 FE, 2168, 2170):
 - i. Prior permission has been granted by the Superintendent;
 - ii. The program fits the education plan submitted by the regularly enrolled student
 - iii. The course is needed as credit retrieval and cannot fit into the student's schedule; and
 - iv. Credit is granted for schools and institutions approved by the District after evaluation for a particular course offering.

The District will pay for a student's distance learning courses if the following circumstances are met:

1. The class is an advanced class or College Accredited classes that we do not offer currently, or

2. The required class is in conflict with another required class, and not offered another year that will fit the student need, or

3. The class is not requested to simply graduate early, or

4. The class is needed to catch a student up with his peers, and is not offered in a class period that does not conflict with a required class.

Prior to enrolling for a MTDA class, the student and parent must meet with the Counselor. These classes are demanding and require self-motivation. The teacher is online and often not accessible at times convenient to the student. While MTDA can offer a good alternative for some students, it can be very hard and is not for everybody.

ARTICLE 23
Health Screenings

Hearing screenings are done on students in grades K, 1, and 10, new students, teacher referrals, and special education students. Vision screening is routinely done. Other health assessments are done by teacher referral, parent request, or the discretion of the school nurse. Parents/guardians will receive notice of any screening result which indicates a condition that might interfere or tend to interfere with a student's progress. If you **DO NOT** wish for your child to be screened, please notify the school nurse or superintendent.

ARTICLE 24
Honor Roll

1. All courses, except those earning less than $\frac{1}{4}$ credit per semester, will be used in computing the honor roll for students in grades 7-12. Any grade below a "C" automatically disqualifies a student for the honor roll. Grades earned in teacher's aide, work study, and any course in which a student earns less than $\frac{1}{4}$ credit per semester shall not be used to compute the student's grade point average. There are three honor roll levels: Straight A (4.00), High Honors (3.6 to 3.99), and Honors (3.3 to 3.59).

Marking System

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point
100-90	A	4.00
89-80	B	3.00
79-70	C	2.00
69-60	D	1.00
59-0	F	0.00

ARTICLE 25
Incomplete Grade:

1. An incomplete grade is given only in those cases where illness, emergency, or by pre-arrangement, the student has not been able to complete assignments. An incomplete becomes an "F" two weeks after the end of nine-week period if the work is not made up.
2. Make-up work is the complete responsibility of the student.

ARTICLE 26
Internet and Computer Use:

Students utilizing school provided internet access are responsible for good online behavior. The purpose of the school Internet system is to facilitate communications in support of research and education. All users must agree with the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy.

Students should have no expectations of privacy or confidentiality in the content of electronic communications or computer files sent and received on school computers. The school may at any time review the subject, content, and appropriateness of electronic communications.

The use of district network and the internet is for educational purposes only. All sites containing pornography or sexually explicit materials are off limits. Users shall not infiltrate or “hack” outside computing systems or networks. Students are prohibited from using email and joining chat rooms unless it is a teacher sponsored activity.

Recognize that electronic mail (e-mail) is not private. People who operate the system Have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities. Students grades 5-12 will be issued email addresses.

ARTICLE 27 **Leaving School During School Hours:**

A parental/guardian note or phone call is needed in order for a student to leave during school hours. Students leaving school must sign out in the office.

ARTICLE 28 **Lockers:**

School lockers and desks are and shall remain the property of the school district. The district reserves the right to inspect a student’s locker when the superintendent has reasonable suspicion that the locker is improperly being used for the storage of contraband, illegal substances, material which poses a hazard to the safety and good order of the school, or for a periodic check of any or all lockers. No student may use a locker as a depository for a substance or object which is prohibited or which constitutes a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of the occupants of the school or the school building itself.

The school reserves the right to inspect individual lockers without advance notice or student permission. A student may be subject to a fine for any willful damage to the school property. Procedures for conducting locker searches and/or inspections for general and specific purposes

- i. Whenever circumstances allow, the superintendent shall be accompanied by at least 1 witness.
- ii. The superintendent shall inform the student of the search immediately prior to the search being conducted, if possible. If there is a specific reason the search is being conducted, the superintendent shall state that reason.
- iii. The superintendent shall report any illegal items found to law enforcement authorities immediately.

- iv. The superintendent shall create a written report of the inspection, including who was present as a witness, the reason for the inspection, and the results of the inspection, including legal and/or disciplinary action taken as a result of the inspection.

The superintendent may request the assistance of law enforcement personnel or private individuals to conduct inspections and searches through the use of specially trained dogs.

ARTICLE 29

Loitering:

1. Because of liability and concern of the student safety at all times, students are not to remain in the building after school hours unless they are under the direct supervision of a teacher or other school official.
2. Supervisors and the students are responsible for cleaning up after themselves and behaving in an orderly fashion.

ARTICLE 30

Medications:

1. Whenever possible, medications should be administered by the parent before and/or after school.
2. Parents are to furnish a written prescription from the student's physician. This should include the following information:
 - a. Child's name
 - b. Medication
 - Name
 - Dosage
 - Times to be given
 - Special directions for administering the medication
 - c. Child's diagnosis
 - d. Possible side effects
 - e. Date medication is to be stopped
3. The parents are to provide a bottle from the pharmacy with the proper label and directions attached. This bottle will be secured by the office and administered by a designated school official.
4. Custer Schools will not provide any prescription medication or non-prescription medication.
5. Parents will be called if medication is not given. Any side effects or unusual symptoms will also be reported to the parents.
6. Forms specific to medication will need to be filled out at the office.

Emergency Medication Administration

Custer Schools is in the process of obtaining an epinephrine autoinjector (EpiPen) for use in an anaphylactic emergency. This does NOT extend to activities off school grounds; including bus/transportation, field trips, extracurricular and sport activities, etc.

The Custer Public Schools protocol for use of autoinjectable epinephrine is available upon request. Please notify the superintendent if you DO NOT want your child to receive epinephrine under any circumstance (paramedics will still be called in.)

The anaphylaxis protocol is **not intended to replace student specific orders** or parent provided individual medications. Students with known allergies should have an Emergency Health Care Plan and an epinephrine auto-injector (provided by parents) available at all times in case of accidental exposure to known allergen.

Further guidance can be obtained in Board Policy 3416.

ARTICLE 31 National Honor Society

1. Students may apply for membership into the National Honor Society only by invitation. Membership is granted only to those students selected by the Faculty Committee in the spring of the year.
2. Membership may be open to qualified sophomores, juniors, and seniors.
3. The academic requirement set by the Custer Chapter is based on a student's cumulative grade point average. The minimum grade point average allowable is a 3.00 on a 4.00 scale. Students who meet the cumulative grade point average based upon three (3) consecutive semesters are then eligible for consideration on the basis of leadership, service, and character.

ARTICLE 32 Parking Area:

1. Student and parents are not to drive in the school driveway 30 minutes before or after school or school activities.
2. Students are to observe the 15mph speed limit at all times when driving in our school zone.
3. Vehicles parked on school property are 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 or consent of the student. A student has full responsibility for the security of her or his vehicle and must make certain that it is locked and the keys are not given to others.

4. The superintendent may request the assistance of law enforcement personnel or private individuals to conduct inspections and searches of vehicles through the use of specially trained dogs.

ARTICLE 33

Pep Bus:

1. At the discretion of the chaperone or bus driver, seating arrangements may be assigned.
2. Only students in grades 7-12 will be permitted to ride our pep buses unless they are a part of the band program.
3. All students riding a pep bus to an activity are to remain inside the facility and are not to leave the facility without permission from the chaperone.
4. Any student who rides the pep bus shall be required to sit in the cheering section and support our team.
5. Stereos on the bus must be kept to a decibel level acceptable to the driver. The use of headphones is preferred and may be required.
6. If a student rides the pep bus, they must return on the pep bus unless their parent(s)/guardian signs a release form to remove them from the bus.
7. Students are responsible for keeping the bus clean and will be asked to clean the bus.
8. Disorderly conduct and/or incorrigibility may result in a student being denied the privilege of riding the pep bus for the remainder of the year.

ARTICLE 34

Pop Machines:

1. Students may not purchase pop and PowerAde during the school day, the noon hour, or the lunch period. Open containers other than water are not allowed in the hallways.
2. Students are not to drink any beverages in the classrooms during class time, except those purchased in the Grab 'n Go Breakfast Program.
3. To prevent spills, students are not to drink pop in the in the gym.

ARTICLE 35
School Building Use Regulations:

The following are specific regulations that all clubs and organizations must follow when using our school building and facilities:

1. There must be an adult school employee present and designated as advisor in charge of any group using our building and facilities.
2. No student is to be in the building beyond regular school hours unless they are under the direct supervision of a school official.
3. To maintain building security, advisors are not to give keys to students.
4. Groups or organizations wishing to use the school must receive approval from the superintendent. School groups will be given first priority in scheduling the use of our building.
5. Groups must clean up after themselves and leave the room or building in the same condition in which it was found. Lights are to be turned out and doors locked.
6. The distribution and posting of materials, ads, and announcements in the school or on school property must be approved by the superintendent.
7. Any group or organization wishing to use the athletic facilities is required to abide by the Custer Board Open Gym Use Policies and have a signed Open Gym Use Liability release for all students and community members present.

ARTICLE 36
Sexual Harassment or Intimidation:

Custer School District #15 is committed to a positive and productive working and learning environment free from harassment, intimidation, teasing and bullying. These types of actions adversely affect morale and interferes with a student's ability to learn. Complaints of sexual harassment, intimidation, teasing and bullying will be thoroughly investigated and could result in disciplinary action being taken against those who commit such acts.

The District prohibits retaliation against any employee or student because he or she has made a report of alleged sexual harassment, or against any employee who has testified, assisted, or participated in the investigation of a report. Retaliation is itself a violation of federal and state law prohibiting discrimination and will lead to disciplinary action against the offender.

ARTICLE 37
Sportsmanship:

1. Sportsmanship as a participant is expected to be exemplary to peers and younger athletes.
2. Sportsmanship as a spectator is a reflection on our school so sportsmanship should always be in good taste. **We must adhere to MHSA guidelines at home and away games.**

ARTICLE 38
ACADEMIC AND SPORTS COOPERATIVE RULES/ELIGIBILITY

PREFACE

Participation in athletics is a privilege not afforded to everyone so it should not be taken lightly. Playing time in games is not a guarantee that comes with participation.

ELIGIBILITY

1. If a student is not in school, due to an unexcused absence, by 9:00 A.M., he/she will not practice that night or participate in any of the games that day, evening, or the following weekend if it is the last day of the school week. If a bus route does not run due to weather or other emergency situations, the athlete must still be in school by 11:00 A.M. in order to practice that night or participate in any of the games that day, evening, or the following weekend if it is the last day of the school week, and the parent or guardian must notify the school by 9:00 A.M. Extenuating circumstances will be considered.
2. To be eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities, a student at Hysham and Custer (grades 4 – 12) must:
 - a) Have at least a 60% in any class. If any grades are below a 60%, the students will not be eligible to play for that week. Melstone will maintain their current grading scale.
 - b) End of the Quarter grades will be used for the following two weeks eligibility list.
 - c) If a student has an F at the end of the semester as a grade on their report card, the student cannot play until the midterm of the next quarter.
 - d) If a student is ineligible, they are encouraged to spend at least 1 hour per week with the teacher they are ineligible for during the week in order to get off the list the following week if his/her grades are at least a 60%. Melstone will maintain their current grading scale.
3. Grades will be checked every Tuesday afternoon at 1:00 P.M. Grades for eligibility will be cumulative during a grading period. A list of students with grades below a 60% will be made available to staff members by Wednesday afternoon. Eligibility will run from Wednesday morning @ 8:00 A.M. until the next Wednesday morning @ 8:00 A.M. Melstone will maintain their current grading scale.

4. A warning list of students with grades 69% or below, or an “I” will also be made available to staff members by Wednesday afternoon. Students on the warning list will also be encouraged to spend at least 1 hour with the teacher of the subject for which they are being warned.
5. A student who is listed as ineligible for 3 weeks will be dismissed from participation the remainder of the season. **Counting starts with the first eligibility check after the first practice.**
6. A student who is ineligible may practice, but may not travel with the team to games.
7. The student’s teacher will inform the parent/guardian of the student’s eligibility status if the student is on the warning or ineligibility list, and document it.
8. Each participant must adhere to the dress code of the participating schools for practices, games, and travelling, with discretion by the coaches.

ATHLETIC PHYSICALS

The Montana High School Association requires any student in Grades 8 – 12 who plan to participate in athletics **must pass** a physical examination in order to be considered eligible for participation in a MHSA contest. The certificate of physical examination, approved by the MHSA, must be completed and on file in the office **prior** to the participant’s first practice. This examination must be certified by a physician, a physician assistant (PA), or a nurse practitioner (NA). This certification is valid for a period of one school year. A physical examination conducted before May 1st is not valid for participation the following school year.

The Sports Cooperatives requires any student in Grades 4 – 12 who plans to participate in school sponsored athletics to have a physical examination on file in the main office prior to the participant’s first practice. The school districts will not pay any cost incurred by the participant for the physical examination.

PARTICIPATION FEE

Students in Grades 4 – 12 who participate in a school sponsored athletic event will pay a fee that will be used to help pay the costs. This fee will be paid by all students involved in the activity (i.e. players, cheerleaders, etc.)

The fees will be as follows:

Grades K-8	\$35.00 per school year
Grades 9-12	\$45.00 per school year

Melstone has their own fee schedule. The football fee agreement is how the money will be routed between the Custer Hysham Sports Coop and the Custer Hysham Melstone Football Coop.

The participation fee will include an activity ticket which will allow the holder entry into any home regular season game. An activity ticket is not good for tournament or play-off games held in Custer or Hysham.

Students will be charged this fee when they go out for a sport. Participants who quit or are removed from the team for academic or rule violations are not entitled to a refund. Refunds will not be given to students who move during the school year.

Any student unable to pay the participation fee due to financial constraints is encouraged to contact the Activities Director to make arrangements for an alternative method of payment of fees (e.g. installment payment).

Sports Training Rules

1. Athletes must adhere to the following basic training rules:
 - A. No use of alcohol, drugs, and/or tobacco products. Tobacco includes but is not limited to cigarettes, cigars, snuff, smoking tobacco, smokeless tobacco, vapor product, alternative nicotine product or any other tobacco or nicotine delivery innovation.
 - B. Must act with respect and class at all times
 - Respect authority
 - Model proper sportsmanship
 - Adhere to the rules of the schools as stated in the handbooks
 - C. Training Curfew hours will be 10:00 p.m. on Sunday through Thursday, or the night before a game. Friday and Saturday night will be 12:30 a.m. For students coming from a school sponsored event, Training Curfew rules will begin ½ hour following the conclusion of the event. Exceptions for special circumstances will be worked out with the coach.
 - D. Participants must practice every practice session unless previous arrangements have been made with the coaching staff.
 - E. An unexcused absence from a practice or a game will result in loss of participation for the next scheduled game. Students will not be allowed to travel with the team to the away game.
 - F. Students that are too sick to come to school for an entire day will not be allowed to practice, play in an athletic contest, or participate in an extra-curricular activity. To be able to participate in athletics and extra-curricular activities with a doctor's note, a student must be back in by noon. Exceptions may be made for afternoon medical appointments providing the student was present for school during the morning class periods.
 - G. Athletes are responsible for uniforms assigned to them. If they damage the uniform, they will be responsible for monetary reimbursement to the schools.
 - H. All students are required to ride the bus to all scheduled practices and games. If a student is not riding the bus home, the parents or legal guardian must be present to grant written permission for their son or daughter to ride with another person. (Special circumstances may apply with prior approval by the school superintendent.)
 - I. Athletes with a change in health status or using prescription or non-prescription drugs should notify coaches immediately for safety purposes.

2. Penalties will follow this format.

- A. First offense for “A” will result in no participation in the next four scheduled volleyball or basketball games, or next two scheduled football games or track meets. Athletes must practice.
- B. First offense for “B”, “C”, and/or “D” will result in exclusion from the scheduled game.
- C. Second offense for “A” will result in the dismissal from the team.
- D. Next offense for “B”, “C”, and/or “D” will result in exclusion from the next two scheduled games or termination from the team. (Coach’s discretion)
- E. A third offense is automatic dismissal from the team.

STUDENT MISCONDUCT AT A SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITY

A student misbehaving or destroying property at a school sponsored event may lead to detention, suspension (either in school or out of school) or expulsion, depending on the degree of the misconduct. Destroying of property will require the student(s) to pay reimbursement for property destroyed.

STEALING

No stealing. If stealing occurs at a school sponsored activity, at an away or overnight trip, the participant will be immediately dismissed from the team. The participant will be suspended from school for 3 days starting the first school day after the incident.

ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS

Individual coaches, sponsors, or advisors may assign additional rules pertaining to practices or curfew which may be more specific to their activity. These rules and failure to follow these rules’ consequences will be handed out to the participants at their initial meeting. These rules should also be sent to the participants’ parents and/or guardians.

SPORTS COOPERATIVE VARSITY LETTERING CRITERIA

VARSIY LETTERING CRITERIA

FOOTBALL

Athletes participating in football must meet the following criteria to be eligible for an athletic letter:

- * Must have played in a minimum of one quarter per varsity game in a minimum of 5 games.
- * Play an average of one quarter per varsity game prior to a football injury.
- * Under special circumstances, a letter may be awarded to a player as determined by the head coach and athletic directors.

VOLLEYBALL

Athletes participating in volleyball must meet the following criteria to be eligible for an athletic letter:

- * Must have played in a minimum of one game per varsity match in a minimum of 10 games or be chosen to be a member of the tournament team.
- * Play an average of one game per varsity match prior to a volleyball injury.

- * Under special circumstances, a letter may be awarded to a player as determined by the head coach and athletic directors.

BASKETBALL

Athletes participating in girls' or boys' basketball must meet the following criteria to be eligible for an athletic letter:

- * Must have played in a minimum of one quarter per varsity game in a minimum of 10 games or be chosen to be a member of the tournament team.
- * Play an average of one quarter per varsity game prior to a basketball injury.
- * Under special circumstances, a letter may be awarded to a player as determined by the head coach and athletic directors.

TRACK

Athletes participating in track must meet the following criteria to be eligible for an athletic letter:

- * Must accumulate a minimum of 10 varsity points during the track season or place in the top 6 at the District Track Meet.
- * Under special circumstances, a letter may be awarded to a player as determined by the head coach and athletic directors.

WRESTLING

Athletes participating in wrestling must meet three of the following criteria to be eligible for an athletic letter:

- * Must have wrestled in 20 varsity dual/tournament matches.
- * Has placed in any varsity tournament.
- * Has accumulated a total of 12 points – 2 points for a victory, 1 point for a loss.
- * Been a part of the team for the whole season.
- * Must be in good athletic and academic standing and have not been ineligible at any time during the season.
- * Wrestled in half of the teams scheduled events
- * Under special circumstances, a letter may be awarded to a wrestler as determined by the head coach and athletic directors.

MANAGERS

Managers are eligible to letter and will receive a manager pin and a certificate.

** The athletes from each school will receive the letters of their respective school.

ARTICLE 39 Student Conduct:

Each student is expected to strive to take full advantage of his/her educational opportunities and to do his/her best in all areas of school life. Each student has the right to an education in an orderly and safe learning environment by meeting the following responsibility:

1. Respect and work cooperatively with the fellow students and our school staff.

2. Be punctual and regular in your school attendance.
3. Respond positively and promptly to directions given by our faculty and other staff members.
4. There will be no Public Displays of Affection (PDA).
5. Refrain from the use of profanity and vulgarity.
6. Walk at all times in the halls and on our stairs.
7. Keep the noise to a minimum while in the hallways so that you do not disturb our elementary classes.
8. Do not attempt to use violence, force, coercion, threats, assault, and intimidation on school property or at school functions off of school property. Actions of this nature will not be tolerated and can result in a student being expelled from our school.
9. A student shall not knowingly possess, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any narcotic drugs, hallucinogen drugs, amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana, alcohol beverages or intoxicants of any kind on school property or at school sponsored activities. Violations of this policy can result in a student being expelled from our school. Drug violations will also be reported to legal authorities in our county.
10. A student shall not smoke, chew, or possess any tobacco products on school property or at school-sponsored events. Violation will result in a student being suspended from school.
11. The willful destruction of any school property (desks, textbooks, equipment, school building etc.) will not be tolerated. Students will be required to pay for damages and may be suspended from school.
12. A student shall not possess, handle, or transmit sling-shots, snowballs, knives (including pocket knives), razor blades, razors, ice picks, explosives such as firecrackers and smoke bombs, guns or any other object that may be considered dangerous.

ARTICLE 40
Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation/Hazing

Bullying, harassment, intimidation, or hazing, by students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated.

Definitions

1. “Third Parties” include, but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service conductors or others engaged in District business, such as employees of businesses or organizations participating in cooperative work programs with the District and others not directly subject to District control at inter-District and intra-District athletic competitions or other school events.
2. “District” includes District facilities, District premises, and non-District property if the student or employee is at any District-sponsored, District-approved, or District-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events, where students are under the control of the District or where the employee is engaged in District business.
3. “Hazing” includes, but is not limited to, any act that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or as a condition or precondition of attaining membership in or affiliation with any District-sponsored activity or grade-level attainment, including, but not limited to, forced consumption of any drink, alcoholic beverage, drug, or controlled substance, forced exposure to the elements, forced prolonged exclusion from social contact, sleep deprivation, or any other forced activity that could adversely affect the mental or physical health or safety of a student; requires, encourages, authorizes, or permits another to be subject to wearing or carrying any obscene or physically burdensome article, assignment of pranks to be performed, or other such activities intended to degrade or humiliate.
4. “Harassment, intimidation, or bullying” means any act 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, in electronic format at school or in a way that could affect the school climate, or at any official school bus stop, and that has the effect of:
 - a. Physically harming a student or damaging a student’s property;
 - b. Knowingly placing a student in reasonable fear or physical harm to the student or damage to a student’s property;
 - c. Creating a hostile educational environment.

Reporting

All complaints about behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated. Any student, employee, or third party who has knowledge of conduct in violation of this policy or feels he/she has been a victim of hazing, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, in violation of this policy is encouraged to immediately report his/her concerns to the Superintendent, who has overall responsibility for such investigations. This report may be made anonymously. A student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor, who will be responsible for notifying the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent shall be filed with the board.

The complainant shall be notified of the findings of the investigation and, as appropriate, that remedial action has been taken.

Responsibilities

The Superintendent shall be responsible for ensuring notice of this policy is provided to students, staff, and third parties and for the development of administrative regulations, including reporting and investigative procedures, as needed.

Consequences

Students whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion. Staff whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal. 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 School Board. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

Retaliation and Reprisal

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, 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.

ARTICLE 41 Uniform Complaint Procedure

The Board establishes this Uniform Complaint Procedure as a means to address complaints arising within the District. This Uniform Complaint Procedure is intended to be used for all complaints except those governed by a specific process in state or federal law that supersedes this process or collective bargaining agreement. Matters covered by a collective bargaining agreement will be reviewed in accordance with the terms of the applicable agreement.

The District requests all individuals to use this complaint procedure, when the individual believes the Board or its employees or agents have violated the individual's rights under state or federal law or Board policy. Complaints against a building administrator shall be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent or District administrator shall be filed with the Board.

The District will endeavor to respond to and resolve complaints without resorting to this formal complaint procedure and, when a complaint is filed, to address the complaint promptly and equitably. The right of a person to prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint filed hereunder will not be impaired by a person's pursuit of other remedies. Use of this complaint procedure is not a prerequisite to pursuit of other remedies, and use of this complaint procedure does not extend any filing deadline related to pursuit of other remedies.

Deadlines requiring District action in this procedure may be extended for reasons related but not limited to the District's retention of legal counsel and District investigatory procedures.

Level 1: Informal

An individual with a complaint is first encouraged to discuss it with the appropriate employee or building administrator with the objective of resolving the matter promptly and informally. An exception is that a complaint of sexual harassment should be discussed directly with an administrator not involved in the alleged harassment.

Level 2: Superintendent

When a complaint has not been or cannot be resolved at Level 1, an individual may file a signed and dated 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. This written complaint must be filed within thirty (30) days of the event or incident or from the date an individual could reasonably become aware of such event or incident. The applicability of the deadline is subject to review by the Superintendent to ensure the intent of this uniform complaint procedure is honored.

When a complaint alleges violation of Board policy or procedure, the Superintendent will investigate and attempt to resolve the complaint. The Superintendent will respond in writing to the complaint, within thirty (30) days of the Superintendent's receipt of the written complaint.

If the complainant has reason to believe the Superintendent's decision was made in error, the complainant may request, in writing, that the Board review the Superintendent's decision. (See Level 3.) This request must be submitted in writing to the Board, within fifteen (15) calendar days of the Superintendent's decision.

When a complaint alleges sexual harassment or a violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (the Civil Rights Act), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Superintendent shall turn the complaint over to the District nondiscrimination coordinator. The coordinator shall ensure an investigation is completed in accordance with the applicable procedure. In the case of a sexual harassment or Title IX complaint the applicable investigation and appeal procedure is Policy 3225P or 5012P. In the case of a disability complaint, the coordinator shall complete an investigation and file a report and recommendation with the Administrator for decision. Appeal of a decision in a disability complaint will be handled in accordance with this policy.

Level 3: The Board

Upon written appeal of a complaint alleging a violation 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 2.

Upon receipt of written request for appeal, the Chairperson will either: (1) place the appeal on the agenda of a regular or special Board meeting; or (2) appoint an appeals panel of not less than three (3) trustees to hear the appeal and make a recommendation to the Board, (3) respond to the complaint with an explanation of why the appeal will not be heard by the Board of Trustees in accordance with this policy. If the Chairperson appoints a panel to consider the appeal, the panel will meet to consider the appeal and then make written recommendation to the full Board. The Board will report its decision on the appeal, in writing, to all parties, within thirty (30) 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.

ARTICLE 42 Telephone calls:

1. Incoming calls will be received only in an emergency. The office will notify a student with a note of an incoming call.
2. Outgoing calls can only be made with the approval from the office and must be made between classes or during the noon hour.

ARTICLE 43 TITLE I Qualifications & Services

The Custer Schools are Title I Targeted Assisted Schools. We do not qualify as Schoolwide Title I Schools. This means students who meet the Title I criteria as established can qualify for services. However, the needs are prioritized. Not every child who meets the criteria necessarily needs services. For our schools, the criteria are listed in the next section. If you have questions, or think your child needs help, please talk with the teacher or the superintendent.

TITLE I CRITERIA

1. Any student who has failed the Reading, Writing, or Math portion of the State Accountability Test.
2. Any student who is one or more years behind academically in Math, Writing, or Reading.
3. Any student who has failed a semester class or a year-long class in Reading, Writing, or Math.
4. Any student who has been retained one or more years.

5. Children who are economically disadvantaged, children with disabilities, migrant children, and limited English proficient (LEP) children are eligible for Part A services on the same basis as other children that are selected for services.
6. Homeless students.
7. At-Risk Students.
8. In grades K-2, academic performance can be based upon the judgment of the teacher.

How We Serve Our Identified Students

We will use the Aims Web and MAST results to differentiate instruction for students who are struggling. Either the Title I aide will be engaged with students at least one day per week, or the classroom teacher will differentiate instruction and tutor their own students. We use the RTI process for struggling students. This gives a monitoring system to track students following the use of interventions in classroom. If this does not result in sufficient growth with a student, the in-class instruction and interventions will be supplemented with programs and methods that are proven effective through peer-reviewed scientific research. We will target the specific skills that are lacking with in-depth intervention that will intensify according to student needs. These interventions will usually be in addition to the regular classroom instruction.

ARTICLE 44 Valedictorian/Salutatorian/Requirements:

1. In order for a student to be eligible for valedictorian/salutatorian honors, a student must be in their senior year of high school and have been in attendance at Custer High School for a minimum of three semesters. The minimum grade point requirement for valedictorian is 3.50 and for salutatorian it is 3.20. The minimum Composite Score on the ACT will be 24 for the Valedictorian and 22 for the Salutatorian.
2. The highest-ranking student after the seventh semester of school in the senior class shall be awarded valedictorian honors providing they have a 3.50 grade point average or higher and an ACT score of 24 or higher. ACT results must be in no later than 1 month prior to graduation to be considered. The second highest ranking student will receive salutatorian honors providing they have a grade point average of 3.20 or higher and an ACT score of 22 or higher.
3. Multiple students may be valedictorian provided they have the same GPA and have met the requirements. Salutatorian will be awarded as well assuming they have met the requirements.
4. Speaking at the graduation ceremony is one honor that is usually bestowed upon the valedictorian and salutatorian. In the event a class has no one who meets the requirements, a class may petition the Board to allow a graduating senior to speak.

ARTICLE 45
Vehicle Use:

1. Student drivers are expected to use extreme caution when driving on school grounds and in the school zone.
2. Vehicles may not be driven at noon hour unless approved by the superintendent.
3. Students are not to park in the handicapped or visitor parking areas.
4. Students shall not sit in or on vehicles during the noon hour without permission from the superintendent.

ARTICLE 46
Weapon/Gun-Free School:

Any person who possesses, carries, or stores a weapon in a school building or on school property, except as provided below may be referred to law enforcement for immediate prosecution. In addition, a parent or guardian of any minor violating this policy may also be referred for possible prosecution on the grounds of allowing a minor to possess, carry or store a weapon in a school building.

For the purpose of this policy, a weapon shall be defined as any type of firearm, a knife with a blade two or more inches in length, a sword, a straight razor, a throwing star, nunchucks or brass or other metal knuckles. This definition of an illegal knife does not negate the no knives, including pocket knives, rule. The possession of pocket knives may result in disciplinary actions.

The school board may grant persons and entities advance permission to possess, carry, or store a weapon in a school building. All persons who wish to possess, carry or store a weapon in a school building shall present this request in person to the superintendent or school board. Permission from the superintendent or school board must be in writing. This policy does not apply to law enforcement personnel.

Gun-Free School

In accordance with the provisions of the Gun-Free Schools Act, 20 U.S.C. 3351, any student who brings a firearm onto school property, except as provided below, shall be expelled for a period of not less than one calendar year unless modified by the school board upon a recommendation from the superintendent.

In accordance with the provisions of the Gun-Free School Zones Act, 18 U.S.C. 922(q), students and other authorized persons may bring unloaded firearms onto school property for use in instructional activities with the prior written permission of the superintendent. At the conclusion of the activity, the firearms must be immediately removed from school property.

The term “firearm” shall be defined as provided in 18 U.S.C. 921. This term shall include any weapon, which is designed, or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, incendiary or poison gas.

If a student violating this policy is identified as disabled either under the IDEA or section 504, a determination must be made whether the student’s conduct is related to the disability. If the violation of this policy is due to a disability recognized by the IDEA or section 504, lawful procedures for changes in placement must be followed for suspensions of greater than ten days.

Any student subject to expulsion shall be entitled to a hearing to the Board in accordance with 20-5-202, MCA. Nothing in this policy shall prevent the school board from making an alternative placement for a student in lieu of expulsion provided that such placement removes the student from the regular school program.

The district shall keep a record of all students disciplined under this policy and the circumstances surrounding their discipline, including the number of students expelled and the types of weapons involved. This information shall be provided to local law enforcement authorities and other governmental agencies as required by law.

HAVE A GREAT SCHOOL YEAR

McKinney Homeless Assistance Act

Custer K-12 School District Homeless Liaison: Jasmine Torralba, Counselor
PO Box 69
304 4th Ave.
Custer, MT 59024

PHONE: 406-856-4117

20-5-101. Admittance of child to school. (1) The trustees shall assign and admit a child to a school in the district when the child is:

(a) 6 years of age or older on or before September 10 of the year in which the child is to enroll but is not yet 19 years of age;

(b) a resident of the district; and

(c) otherwise qualified under the provisions of this title to be admitted to the school.

(2) The trustees of a district may assign and admit any nonresident child to a school in the district under the tuition provisions of this title.

(3) The trustees may at their discretion assign and admit a child to a school in the district who is under 6 years of age or an adult who is 19 years of age or older if there are exceptional circumstances that merit waiving the age provision of this section. The trustees may also admit an individual who has graduated from high school but is not yet 19 years of age even though no special circumstances exist for waiver of the age provision of this section.

(4) The trustees shall assign and admit a child who is homeless, as defined in the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (Public Law 100-77), to a school in the district regardless of residence. The trustees may not require an out-of-district attendance agreement or tuition for a homeless child.

(5) Except for the provisions of subsection (4), tuition for a nonresident child must be paid in accordance with the tuition provisions of this title.

(6) The trustees' assignment of a child meeting the qualifications of subsection (1) to a school in the district outside of the adopted school boundaries applicable to the child is subject to the district's grievance policy. Upon completion of procedures set forth in the district's grievance policy, the trustees' decision regarding the assignment is final.

History: En. 75-6302 by Sec. 115, Ch. 5, L. 1971; R.C.M. 1947, 75-6302; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 334, L. 1979; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 558, L. 1979; amd. Sec. 74, Ch. 575, L. 1981; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 120, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 214, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 374, L. 2007; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 128, L. 2013.

Custer K-12 Schools

STUDENTS

3600F1
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Student Records

Notification to Parents and Students of Rights Concerning a Student's School Records

This notification may be distributed by any means likely to reach the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The District will maintain two (2) sets of school records for each student: a permanent record and a cumulative record. The permanent record will include:

- Basic identifying information
- Academic work completed (transcripts)
- Level of achievement (grades, standardized achievement tests)
- Immunization records (per § 20-5-506, MCA)
- Attendance record
- Record of any disciplinary action taken against the student, which is educationally related

The cumulative record may include:

- Intelligence and aptitude scores
- Psychological reports
- Participation in extracurricular activities
- Honors and awards
- Teacher anecdotal records
- Verified reports or information from non-educational persons
- Verified information of clear relevance to the student's education
- Information pertaining to release of this record
- Disciplinary information

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents/guardians and students over eighteen (18) years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1. **The right to inspect and copy the student's education records, within a reasonable time from the day the District receives a request for access.**

"Eligible" students, who are eighteen (18) years of age or older, have the right to inspect and copy their permanent record. Parents/guardians or "eligible" students should submit to the Superintendent a written request identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Superintendent will make, within forty-five (45) days, arrangements for access and notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student of the time and place the records may be inspected. The District charges a nominal fee for copying, but no one will be denied their right to copies of their records for inability to pay this cost.

The rights contained in this section are denied to any person against whom an order of protection has been entered concerning a student.

2. **The right to request amendment of the student's education records which the parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, irrelevant, or improper.**

Parents/guardians or eligible students may ask the District to amend a record they believe is inaccurate, misleading, irrelevant, or improper. They should write the Superintendent or records custodian, clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed, and specify the reason.

If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student, the District will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student of the decision and advise him or her of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. **The right to permit disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA or state law authorizes disclosure without consent.**

Disclosure is permitted without consent to school officials with legitimate educational or administrative interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as contractors, attorneys, auditors, consultants, or therapists); volunteers; other outside parties to whom an educational agency or institution has outsourced institutional services or functions that it would otherwise use employees to perform; or a parent(s)/guardian(s) or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest, if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the District discloses education records, without consent, to officials of another school district in which a student has enrolled or intends to enroll, as well as to any person as specifically required by state or federal law. Before information is released to individuals described in this paragraph, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive written notice of the nature and substance of the information and an opportunity to inspect, copy, and challenge such records. The right to challenge school student records does not apply to: (1) academic grades of their child, and (2) references to expulsions or

out-of-school suspensions, if the challenge is made at the time the student's school student records are forwarded to another school to which the student is transferring.

Disclosure is also permitted without consent to: any person for research, statistical reporting, or planning, provided that no student or parent(s)/guardian(s) can be identified; any person named in a court order; and appropriate persons if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons.

4. **The right to a copy of any school student record proposed to be destroyed or deleted.**
5. **The right to prohibit the release of directory information concerning the parent's/guardian's child.**

Throughout the school year, the District may release directory information regarding students, limited to:

Student's name
Address
Telephone listing
Photograph (including electronic version)
Date and place of birth
Dates of attendance
Grade level
Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
Weight and height of members of athletic teams
Honors and awards received

Any parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student may prohibit the release of any or all of the above information by delivering written objection to the Superintendent within ten (10) days of the date of this notice. No directory information will be released within this time period, unless the parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student are specifically informed otherwise. When a student transfers, leaves the District, or graduates, the school must continue to honor a decision to opt-out, unless the parent or student rescinds the decision.

6. **The right to request that information not be released to military recruiters and/or 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.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible students may request that the District not release this information, and the District will comply with the request.

7. **The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA.**

The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

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

Custer School District 15
Annual Parent Notice
Right to Request Teacher Qualifications

School: Custer Public Schools Date: _____

Our school 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:

- a. if the teacher has met State certification and licensing requirements for the grade levels and subjects for which the teacher provides instruction;
- b. 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;
- c. if the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline for which they are certified or licensed;
- d. 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
- e. if your child is receiving Title I or Special Education services from paraprofessionals, his or her qualifications.

Our staff are committed to helping your child develop the social, academic and critical thinking he or she needs to succeed in school and beyond. That commitment includes making sure that 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 at your child's school:

Name: Lance Olson, Superintendent, supt@custerschools.org Phone: 406-856-4117

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

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 the Boy Scouts and other 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 Olson
 Title: Superintendent
 Address: PO Box 69
 Custer, MT 59024
 Telephone: 406-856-4117
 Email: supt@custerschools.org

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:		

Student Directory Information Notification

Please sign and return this form to the school within ten (10) days of the receipt of this form **ONLY** if you do not want directory information about your child disclosed to third parties in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). If we receive no response by that date, we will disclose all student directory information at our discretion and/or in compliance with law.

_____ *Date*

Dear Parent/Eligible Student:

This document informs you of your right to direct the District to withhold the release of student directory information for _____.
Student's Name

Following is a list of items this District considers student ***directory information***.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Student's name undergraduate or -Address -Telephone listing activities -Electronic mail address -Photograph (including electronic version) teams -Date and place of birth -Dates of attendance -Grade level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Enrollment status (e.g., graduate; full-time or part-time) -Participation in officially recognized and sports -Weight and height of members of athletic teams -Honors and awards received
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If you do NOT want directory information provided to the following, please check the appropriate box.
Institutions of Higher Education, Potential Employers, Armed Forces Recruiters, Government Agencies Other

NOTE: If information such as a student's name, grade level, or photograph, and other listed information is to be withheld, the student will not be included in the school's yearbook, program events, and similar School District publications or other statewide programs related to student safety, research, and scholarship. Please review School District Policy 3600P for complete information.

_____ *Parent/Eligible Student's Signature*

_____ *Date*

We, the undersigned, verify that we have read, understand and will abide by the contents of the:

2025– 2026

Custer School District #15

Student Handbook

Parent or Guardian

Email Address*

Student

Student

Student

This verification notice is due in the school office by **Thursday, August 21, 2025**.

All junior high and high school students must have a copy of this verification form on file in the school office.

*We ask that parents please provide their email address to facilitate school to home communication.