

# **DORCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

## **STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026**



**DORCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOL**

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**Dorchester, NE 68343**

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# STUDENT - PARENT HANDBOOK DORCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2025-2026

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## **Board of Education**

Steve Vyhnalek (President)

Matt Hansen

Carol Schnell

Shelly Lehr

Matt Smith

Matt Bolton

## **Administration**

Superintendent – Nick Mumm

Principal – J.J. Wagner

Business Secretary – Jennifer Bond

School Secretary – Jessica Tuttle

## **Elementary Teaching Staff**

Bailey Schindler, Kindergarten

Sarah Vyhnalek, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade, Junior High Play

Lisa Lautzenhiser, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

Brenda Nerud, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade, HAL Coordinator

Cassidy Bruha, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade, FBLA Co-Sponsor

Brent Zoubek, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade, Activities Director, Head Coach Football, Asst. Girls Basketball

Brian Rut, 4-6 Grade Math, Technology Coordinator, Head Boys Track

Laura Barlow, Reading Interventionist, Reading Classic

## **Shared Teaching Staff**

Corey Bird, Special Education, Head Coach Boys Basketball, Asst. Track, D-Club

Jaci Dunaway, Media Specialist/Library

Jill Choyeski, Guidance

Steve Jirsa, Vocal and Instrumental Music

Stacy Lutjemeyer, Art, Student Council

Karma Ridpath, Title I/Special Education/Special Service Coordinator, Reading Classic, Junior High Play, Thespian

Brandon Sullivan, PE/Health, Asst. Coach Boys Basketball, Junior High Boys Basketball, Junior High Football, Junior High Track

Beth Mumm, District Assessment, Community Engagement, and Grant Coordinator

## **Secondary Teaching Staff**

Claire Tachovsky, Business/Technology, FBLA Co-Sponsor, Junior High Volleyball

Brandon Bruha, Industrial Technology, Head Girls Basketball, Junior High Girls Basketball, Head Girls Track, D-Club

Randy Klooz, 6-8 Math/Science, Science Olympiad, Junior High Class Sponsor

JeNae Kort, Math, Sophomore Class Sponsor  
 Chris Nelson, Science, Wrestling, Junior High Wrestling, Freshman Class Sponsor  
 Spencer Kotas, Social Studies, Assistant Football, Junior High Football, Junior High Track, Senior Class Sponsor  
 Audrey Schutte, English, Junior Class Sponsor  
 Sandy Severance, 7-8 English/Social Studies, NHS Sponsor, Yearbook, Junior High Class Sponsor, Reading Classic,  
 JH/HS Quiz Bowl

### **School Calendar – 2025-2026**

August 8	New Teacher In-Service (Stipend Day)
August 11	Start of FB & VB Practices
August 12 and 13	Teacher In-Service (Open House August 12 <sup>th</sup> )
August 14	1 <sup>st</sup> Day of School – 2:00pm Dismissal
August 18	1 <sup>st</sup> Day of School - Preschool
September 1	Labor Day – NO SCHOOL
September 2	Teacher In-Service – NO SCHOOL
October 8	PTC 5 - 8:30 P.M.
October 9	Parent/Teacher Conference – NO SCHOOL
October 10	NO SCHOOL
October 17	End of Quarter 1; 2:00pm Dismissal
November 3	NO SCHOOL K-6
November 17	Start of Winter Practice
November 26-28	Thanksgiving Break – NO SCHOOL
December 19	End of Semester 1 – Noon Dismissal
December 22 – Jan. 2	Holiday Break – NO SCHOOL
January 5	Classes Resume
January 19	Cohort Day - NO SCHOOL
February 12	Parent Teacher Conference – NO SCHOOL
February 13	NO SCHOOL
March 2	Start of Spring Practice
March 11	End of Quarter 3
March 12 and 13	NO SCHOOL
April 3- April 6	Easter Break – NO SCHOOL
May 8	Seniors Last Day
May 9	Graduation
May 20	Last Day of Preschool
May 21	End of S2, Last Day for K-11, dismiss at 11:30am
May 26 - 29	Possible Make Up Days

## **MISSION and GOALS**

### **WELCOME**

Welcome back to a new school year! We look forward to a new and exciting year at Dorchester Public Schools. We trust that you have a growth mindset and attitude to make this year a success! We hope that you are prepared to accept the responsibilities and opportunities that this school year presents. We encourage you to make your academic work a priority; set high expectations for yourself, and work to achieve them. With students, parents, and staff working together, we will have a successful school year at Dorchester Public School.

This handbook is designed to be a guide for students, parents, guardians, and staff. It contains rules, regulations, and general information about Dorchester Public Schools that will impact students daily. The contents of the handbook, and its impact on behavior, are the responsibility of each student. Parents and guardians are encouraged to use this handbook as a resource and to assist their student(s) with the different rules and procedures. Although the information found in this handbook is detailed and specific to many topics, the handbook is not intended to be all encompassing so as to cover every situation and circumstance that may arise during any school day or year. The administration reserves the right to make decisions and rules revisions at any time necessary to facilitate learning and/or to ensure the well-being of all students. The administration will interpret the rules contained in the handbook. Should a situation or circumstance arise that is not specifically covered in this handbook, the administration will make decisions based upon all applicable school district policies, and state and federal statutes and regulations.

*Dorchester Public Schools Administration*

### **MISSION**

The mission of Dorchester Public School is to prepare students to read with comprehension, write clearly, compute mathematically, and utilize information and technology to solve problems.

### **VISION**

Our vision is to create an educational system that provides all students the opportunity to practice and receive feedback in all academic areas to foster life-long learning for future success.

## **DISTRICT SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GOALS**

All students will improve their reading comprehension skills.

All students will improve their math computation skills.

### **MUTUAL RESPECT**

Dorchester Public Schools expects every staff member and student to be treated with respect and dignity. A show of disrespect toward a staff member or insubordination on the part of students will not be tolerated.

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

The proper procedures for a parent or student to make complaints or raise concerns about school staff or the school programs or activities are set forth below.

**Step 1.** The individual(s) making a complaint, charge, or challenge are to meet with the employee(s) that the complaint, charge, or challenge is leveled against to resolve the issue.

**Step 2.** If the complaint, charge, or challenge cannot be resolved with the two parties discussing the issue, the complaint, charge, or challenge will be given to the principal of the building who will then investigate the issue and make a decision. The Principal may request a written summary of the complaint. If a summary is requested, the complaint should include the following:

- a. A thorough description of the issue(s) that have led to the complaint, charge, or challenge;
- b. Any witnesses or persons who may have information in regard to the issue(s) that have led to the complaint, charge, or challenge;
- c. Any documents that bear on the issue(s) of the complaint, charge, or challenge.

**Step 3.** If the complainant is not in agreement with the Principal's ruling, the complainant shall submit a written complaint addressed to the Superintendent of Schools. The written complaint should include the following:

- a. A thorough description of the issue(s) that have led to the complaint, charge, or challenge;
- b. Any witnesses or persons who may have information in regard to the issue(s) that have led to the complaint, charge, or challenge;
- c. Any documents that bear on the issue(s) of the complaint, charge, or challenge.

Upon receipt of the complaint, the Superintendent of Schools will investigate the issue and render a decision in writing to the complainant.

**Step 4.** In the event the decision of the Superintendent of Schools is not satisfactory to the complainant, they may appeal the decision of the Superintendent by submitting a written complaint to be reviewed by the Board of Education at the next regular School Board meeting. Complainants may also request to be added to the School Board meeting agenda. The board may, but is not required to, receive statements from interested parties and witnesses relevant to the complaint appeal. The board will notify the complainant in writing of its decision. There is no appeal from a decision of the board.

Formal complaints about the Superintendent of Schools shall be filed with the President of the School Board.

**Conditions Applicable to All Levels of Complaint Procedure:** All information to be considered at each appeal step should be placed in writing in order to be most effective. Appeal decisions shall be expedited as quickly as possible. A decision at any level should be rendered within ten (10) calendar days, unless a legal hearing is requested or required.

## SCHOOL DAY

### CLASS SCHEDULES: Regular and Early Release Schedules.

Regular Class Schedule			Early Release Schedule	
<b>Building Open</b>	7:40 – Breakfast 8:00 – Students to Class		<b>Building Open</b>	7:40 – Breakfast 8:00 – Students to Class
<b>Period 1</b>	8:05 – 8:55		<b>Period 1</b>	8:05 – 8:43
<b>Period 2</b>	8:58 – 9:48		<b>Period 2</b>	8:46 – 9:24
<b>Period 3</b>	9:51 – 10:41		<b>Period 3</b>	9:27 – 10:05
<b>Period 4</b>	10:44 – 11:34		<b>Period 4</b>	10:08 – 10:46
<b>Period 5</b>	11:37 – 12:27		<b>Period 5</b>	10:49 – 11:27
<b>LUNCH</b>	12:27 – 12:57		<b>Period 6</b>	11:30 – 12:08
<b>Period 6</b>	12:59 – 1:49		<b>LUNCH</b>	12:08 – 12:38
<b>Period 7</b>	1:52 – 2:42		<b>Period 7</b>	12:41 – 1:19
<b>Period 8</b>	2:45 – 3:35		<b>Period 8</b>	1:22 – 2:00

### SEVERE WEATHER and SCHOOL CLOSING

Arrangements have been made with KOLN/KGIN (Channel 10-11) and KLKN (Channel 8) to announce the closing of school. Parents will be notified by phone through the PreK-12 Notification system when school will be closed due to weather. The decision to close school will be made as soon as possible. The announcement will be made on T.V., social media and by phone. Students and parents are urged to listen for the announcements on days of inclement weather.

Parents should not attempt to come to school during a tornado warning. School officials are not permitted to release students from the school building during a tornado warning. Students and staff practice tornado safety procedures regularly. Parents are urged not to call the school buildings during severe weather.

Parents may decide to keep their children at home in inclement weather because of personal circumstances. Students absent because of severe weather when school is in session will be marked as absent.

## **CLOSED CAMPUS**

All students are required to remain on campus during the school day. Students ARE NOT permitted to leave the building or walk downtown for lunch. They must either eat school lunch or bring a lunch from home. Exceptions may be made if arrangements are made ahead of time with the school administration. NO students are allowed to drive and/or ride in a car during the school day without the permission from the administration. Violations of these rules may result in consequences deemed appropriate by school administration.

## **STUDENTS IN THE BUILDING BEFORE and AFTER SCHOOL**

**Beginning of School Day:** Students should not be on school grounds prior to 7:50 a.m., unless they are eating breakfast. **Prior to that time, the school is not responsible for supervision of the students.** The first bell will ring at 8:00 am at which time students may proceed to their lockers and classrooms. Students are to stay in the designated waiting area of the building and not go to any other part of the school building.

**End of the Day:** Students are expected to leave the school building when they are dismissed. Only students who are supervised by a teacher and/or coach will be permitted to remain after school hours. On the days after-school activities are held in the gymnasium, students are expected to remain in that area only. **The school is not responsible for supervision of students once students have left school grounds.**

## **SIGNING A CHILD IN and OUT OF SCHOOL**

Parents or guardians are required to sign their child in and/or out of school if they are entering after their first class or leaving prior to their last class. The parent or guardian must report to the main office for this purpose. The sheet for signing in and/or out of school is located on the front counter. If a child is being signed out, office personnel will call the appropriate classroom and indicate to the teacher that the child is leaving. Parents are not to go directly to the classrooms. The school will only release children to adults designated by the parent.

If there is a special circumstance, such as a court order limiting access to a student by a parent or guardian, affecting who a student can be released to, the parent must inform the Principal and provide a copy of that order to maintain on file at the school.

## **EMERGENCY CLOSING PROCEDURES**

Parents are requested to provide an emergency contact telephone number to have on file in the event of an emergency closing or any other general or individual situation that requires the immediate presence of a parent/guardian. If a parent cannot be reached, it will be assumed that the parent instructed their child/children the procedure they are to follow should school be dismissed early.

If conditions allow and supervision is available in the event of any early dismissal, the child will be held at school until normal dismissal time. If the parent or guardian has not arrived to pick up the child by the normal dismissal time, law enforcement or child protective services may be contacted to ensure the safety of the child.

## **USE OF THE BUILDING**

### **VISITORS**

Visitors to our school are always welcome! We will treat our visitors as guests, but ask them to follow these guidelines when visiting school:

All visitors must report to the office, upon entering the main entrance, to sign in and receive a visitor's pass. Visits to classrooms during the first week of school and the last week of school may be limited to ensure a smooth transition. Visitations to classrooms must receive prior administrative permission. Visits by parents to classrooms are encouraged; provided that the visits do not disrupt the educational program, individual students, or create a safety concern. All persons are prohibited from loitering on school grounds or in the school buildings or from moving about the building and grounds while school is in session.

### **LOCKERS**

Each student in grades 6-12 will be assigned a locker. Lockers and locks are made available to all students for storing coats, books, and personal belongings. We recommend that a locker be locked with a combination lock. Students may turn in an extra key or combination to the office. Lockers and locks are school property, even though they are assigned to individual students. Students are not to trade lockers or transfer to empty lockers. A record of locker assignments is kept in the office. Students are expected to keep all books and materials in their assigned locker. Students are responsible for the cleanliness of their locker. Students are expected to stay out of other students' lockers. Dorchester School is not responsible for lost or stolen articles. Students may be assessed a fine for damage to lockers.

### **SEARCH OF LOCKERS and OTHER TYPE OF SEARCHES**

Student lockers, desks, computer equipment, and other such property are owned by the school. The school exercises exclusive control over school property. Students should not expect privacy regarding usage of or items placed in or on school property, including student vehicles parked on school property, because school property is subject to search at any time by school officials. Periodic, random searches of lockers, desks, computers, and other such property may be conducted at the discretion of administration.

The following rules apply to searches of students and of student's personal property and to the seizure of items in a student's possession or control:

1. School officials may conduct a search if there is reasonable basis to believe that the search will uncover evidence of a crime or a school rule violation. The search is to be conducted in a reasonable manner under the circumstances.
2. Illegal items or other items reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety of others or a threat to educational purposes may be taken and kept by school officials. Any firearm or other weapon will be confiscated and delivered to law enforcement officials as soon as practicable.
3. Items that have been or are reasonably expected to be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process (that is, "nuisance items") may be removed from student possession.

### **VIDEO SURVEILLANCE**

The Board of Education has authorized the use of video cameras on School District property to ensure health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to Dorchester Schools, and to safeguard District facilities and

equipment.

Notice is hereby given that surveillance may occur on District property. In the event a video surveillance recording captures a student or other building user violating school policies or rules, or local, state, or federal laws, the video surveillance recording may be used in appropriate disciplinary proceedings against the student or other building user and may also be provided to law enforcement agencies.

### **BICYCLES**

Bicycles must be parked in the racks provided. To ensure safety, bicycles should be equipped with locks. The school is NOT responsible for damage and/or theft of parts while bicycles are on school property.

### **STUDENT VALUABLES**

Students, not the school, are responsible for their personal property. Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money or items of value to school. If it is necessary to bring valuable items or more money than is needed to pay for lunch, students should leave the money or valuables with a staff member in the school office for temporary safekeeping. Even then, the school is not in position to guarantee that the student's property will not be subject to loss, theft, or damage.

### **STUDENT INSURANCE**

Under Nebraska law the District may not use school funds to provide general student accident or athletic insurance. The District requires that all student participants in athletic programs have injury and accident insurance and encourages all students who are in classes with risk of personal injury or accident to have insurance coverage. The district does not make recommendations, nor handle the premiums or claims for any insurance company, agent, or carrier. Information about student insurance providers will be available in the school office or on school bulletin boards.

### **LOST and FOUND**

Students who find lost articles are asked to take them to the office, where the articles can be claimed by the owner. If articles are lost at school, students should report that loss to office personnel.

### **BULLETINS and ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Bulletin boards and display cases are available for school-related and approved materials to be posted and displayed. Posters to be used in the halls or materials for distribution will need to be approved by administration. Posters are not to be attached to any painted wall surfaces. The person or organization responsible for distributing posters is responsible to see that all posters are removed within 48 hours after the event.

### **STUDENT DRIVING and PARKING**

1. Drive **SLOWLY** and carefully on school property
2. Do not sit in cars during school hours. Sitting in a car during these times is considered insubordination.
3. Do not cut in between buses.
4. Give pedestrians the right of way.
5. Park in designated areas only. Failure to park appropriately will result in referral to law enforcement.

## **HEALTH and WELLNESS**

*The Dorchester School district is committed to providing a school environment that enhances learning and the development of lifelong wellness.*

1. All students will be provided the opportunity to be moderately to vigorously physically active every day.
2. Opportunities for physical activity will be regularly incorporated into other subject areas (i.e. math, language arts, social studies, science, etc.).
3. Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.
4. Physical activity will not be withheld (e.g. recess, physical education, etc.) as punishment, unless the student needs to complete work for a classroom teacher.
5. Elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors.
6. Food will not be used as a reward or punishment. Healthy snacks are recommended for parties.
7. The school will have a staff wellness committee to plan and implement ongoing activities for school staff that promote health and wellness.
8. At least one school-wide activity will be conducted each year that promotes staff wellness.

## ATTENDANCE

### PURPOSE

Dorchester School is committed to the philosophy that all students should attend school every day. School Board policy requires regular and punctual attendance. Poor attendance is the greatest single cause of poor achievement in school.

The responsibility for attendance lies primarily with students and parents. However, if that responsibility is not assumed by students and parents, the school is obligated to enforce attendance laws of the State of Nebraska. Parents are asked to cooperate with the school to keep the number of absences to a minimum, and to make appointments and other engagements so that they do not interfere with the school day. Students and parents are responsible for developing behaviors which result in regular and punctual student attendance.

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Excessive absenteeism is defined as more than 10 absences per semester for each individual class period for any reason other than school-sponsored activities. Students participating in sanctioned school activities under the supervision of a school staff member will be considered present.
2. All absences shall be counted towards the 10-day limit, except those that are due to school-sponsored activities. There will be NO differentiation made between excused and unexcused absences. Days missed due to out-of-school suspensions will also count toward the 10-day limit.
3. **Tardy to School:** Students will be considered tardy if they are not seated in their assigned class or ready and attentive in their assigned area when the bell rings for their first class. Students will not be allowed in class until they receive a pass from the office.
4. **Tardy to Class:** Students have a sufficient time period between classes to make it to their next assigned class on time. Students will be considered tardy to class if they are not in their assigned classroom when the bell rings, unless they have a pass from the teacher or staff who detained them.
5. Any student who receives 4 tardies per semester will receive a detention. Failure to serve detentions will result in further consequences.
6. A student that is more than 10 minutes late to any class will be marked absent.
7. **Leaving School or Class:** Students who leave school for any reason during the school day must check out at the office before leaving. Students leaving school must be cleared in advance by a note or phone call from the student's parent or legal guardian. Students who leave school without permission and without signing out in the proper manner, or who leave their assigned classroom without teacher permission, will be considered truant.
8. **Attendance is Required to Participate in Activities:** Students must attend four (4) classes the day of any scheduled school activity in order to participate in the activity. This includes athletic contests, practices, and dances. Failure to attend will result in being withheld from participation in the activity. The Principal retains the right to grant participation for situations not mentioned above or should exceptional circumstances prevail.
9. **Make Up Work:** Written make-up work may be assigned for each day missed regardless of the type of absence. For absences, students will have two days to make up the work for each day missed with a maximum of ten (10) days allowed to complete the work. If requested, assignment sheets will be prepared for students who are ill. If parents or students request assignment sheets the school should be contacted by no later than 10:00am.

## **EXCESSIVE ABSENCES**

1. Excessive absenteeism is defined as more than 10 absences per semester for each individual class period for any reason other than school-sponsored activities. When a student receives 10 absences or the hourly equivalent in any semester, the Principal, (or Principal's designee), classroom teacher, and Guidance Counselor will meet with the student's parents/guardians to investigate possible barriers to the student's attendance. If the students are absent for medical reasons, documentation for medical absences may be requested.
2. If a meeting between the Principal, or Principal's designee and the student's parents/guardians leads to the conclusion that a condition or factor is contributing to the student's absenteeism, such that any services would remedy the problem, the Attendance Officer shall again meet with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss any referral to appropriate community agencies for economic services, family or individual counseling, educational evaluation, or other services required to remedy the conditions or factors that are contributing to the absenteeism.
3. If none of the steps above remedy the excessive absenteeism, the Principal, or Principal's designee, may take additional action(s) he/she deems appropriate to attempt to remedy the absenteeism.
4. Once a student is absent more than 10 days in a semester or the hourly equivalent for absences, the Principal, or Principal's designee will file a report with the county attorney of the county in which the student resides. The Department of Health and Human Services may also be contacted to report Academic Neglect. Absences for documented medical needs may be taken into consideration.

## **PARENT NOTIFICATION**

The school will notify the student and their parent/guardian when the student has accumulated 5 absences in a semester, and when the student has accumulated 7 absences in a semester. After the 10<sup>th</sup> absence, parents may be requested to meet with the Principal to discuss the attendance problem.

A 3<sup>rd</sup> notification to the parent/guardian will be made after 10 absences. This will notify parent/guardian of their child's potential loss of credit. A report may be filed with the County Attorney and/or Department of Health and Human Services if parent/guardian refuses to meet with the administration and the attendance problem continues.

## **ABSENCE NOTIFICATION**

Parents are requested to call the school at (402) 946-2781 between 7:30am and 9:00am daily to notify the school of any student's absence. If the student will be arriving prior to 9:00am, a phone call by the parent/guardian must be made prior to their arrival. Parents/guardians of any absent student who is unaccounted for will be called by phone by the office after 9:00am.

If verifying phone call has not been made, student must present a signed note stating the reason for absence and date of absence upon return to school. Absences which have not been verified by phone will be considered truancy.

# SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT

## ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

In order for our students to gain a superior education, they must be willing to:

1. Take responsibility for their learning.
2. Learn to ask questions and contribute to classroom learning.
3. Seek extra help when needed.
4. Concentrate on doing their best every day.
5. Complete schoolwork on time.
6. Learn to work well with others. Social skills are important now and in the future.

## GRADING SYSTEM

Students will receive letter grades on report cards and transcripts. The following scale will be used to assign letter grades and a grade point average from a percentage:

A	93-100	B	85-92
C	77-84	D	70-76
INC	2 weeks to complete	N/C	below 70

Each teacher will define the grading procedures to be used in their classes.

## REPORT CARD

Report cards are issued at the end of each quarter of the school year. Letter grades are used to designate a student's progress. Students and parents are encouraged to check with each teacher about their grading procedures. A grade of INC (incomplete) received at the end of the grading period must be made up within 2 weeks or missing assignments will receive No Credit (N/C). No incompletes will be given at the end of the fourth quarter, as all course work must be completed by the end of the fourth quarter.

## HONOR ROLL

The purpose of the Honor Roll is to recognize those students who demonstrate academic excellence. Honor Rolls will be determined for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters. Students will be recognized accordingly:

1. Students receiving a grade point average of 92% or higher will be on the Honor Roll.
2. Students receiving a grade point average of 96% or higher will be on the Honor Roll with Distinction.
3. Students receiving a grade point average of 88.0-91.99% will be listed on the Honorable Mention Honor Roll.
4. Students will not be eligible for the Honor Roll with a grade below a C in any class.
5. Honor Roll lists are published in the Crete News and Friend Sentinel each quarter.

## NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

The National Honor Society chapter of Dorchester Public School is a duly chartered and affiliated chapter of this prestigious national organization. Students in grades 10, 11, and 12 may be selected. To be considered for selection, a student must have a grade point average of 92.0 and fill out a Student Activity Information Form. If these requirements have been met, a faculty council will rate the student in regards to Leadership, Service, and Character. After all procedures are complete, a faculty council will make the final selection.

## **PROMOTION and RETENTION**

The professional staff at Dorchester Public Schools will place students at the grade level and the courses that are best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally.

Students will typically progress annually from grade to grade. A student may be retained at grade level or be required to repeat a course or program when such is determined in the judgment of the professional staff to be appropriate for the educational interests of the student and the educational program.

## **SCHEDULE CHANGES**

Any change in class schedule must be made no later than the first week of the first semester. Schedule changes for the second semester should be completed by the final day of the first semester. All classes dropped must have the approval of the guidance counselor, the teacher(s) involved, the principal, and the parent or guardian. Forms are available in the counselor's office.

## **SENCAP**

SENCAP classes are classes offered through Southeast Community College. The start times for these classes may vary. Students who are enrolled in a SENCAP course may drop the class up to, but no later than, the 1<sup>st</sup> **FULL** week of school according to the Dorchester Public School calendar.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

To participate in commencement exercises or receive a Dorchester Public School diploma, a student must fully complete all requirements for graduation prior to the official commencement exercises, and complete other administrative requirements or conditions.

To be eligible for graduation from Dorchester Public School, a student must have earned a minimum of 240-semester hours credit in grades 9-12 inclusive. Credit hours will be computed in accordance with the Nebraska Department of Education.

To participate in commencement exercises, a student must qualify for a Dorchester High School Diploma. All work must be turned in by 3:30pm on the senior's last day. Seniors who are candidates for graduation, but who need credits from extension courses to complete graduation requirements, are required to complete courses by May 1 of the year they are to graduate in order to be eligible to participate in commencement exercises. Parents of students who do not qualify for their high school diploma because of academic deficiencies will be notified of this possibility by the beginning of the second semester of the student's senior year, or as soon as the situation develops during the student's time in high school.

Eligibility for honors as a Valedictorian or Salutatorian at commencement exercises are based on overall G.P.A. earned in grades 9-12. In addition, students must be in attendance at Dorchester Public Schools for four full semesters in grades 11-12 to be eligible for Valedictorian or Salutatorian.

Appropriate dress and behavior during commencement will ensure every graduate is equally recognized and respected. Business or dress clothes are required (dresses or dress pants, dress shoes, and a dress shirt for ladies, gentlemen should wear dress pants, dress shoes, and a dress shirt, ties are recommended). Graduation candidates should refrain from any behavior that draws attention away from the class and onto an individual. Students who are not dressed appropriately will be notified and asked to change. School administration will determine if clothing is

appropriate. Jeans and/or shorts are NOT appropriate attire.

Satisfactory completion of the following courses must be presented in the candidate's record:

English (Eng. I, Eng. II, and Speech required)	45 hours
Social Studies (Am. History and Am. Gov. required)	30 hours
Math (Algebra I required)	30 hours
Science	30 hours
Computer	10 hours
Career and Technical Education	10 hours
Physical Education and Health	10 hours
Visual/Performing Arts	5 hours
Personal Finance	5 hours
Electives	65 hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>240 hours</b>
<b>Community Service Hours</b>	<b>30 hours</b>

### **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

30 Hours of community service are required for graduation. These hours are prorated for students that transfer in during their High School career. Students are required to complete 30 hours of community service by April 1<sup>st</sup> of their graduation year. These hours must be turned into the Guidance office by April 1<sup>st</sup>. These hours must not be a part of a school organization's community service project or be voluntary work for a family member. If these hours are not completed by April 1, the student will not receive a diploma. All required community service hours must be completed in order for a student to be eligible for work study or work release.

A student who has not met the requirements for graduation but who has attended school regularly may, with the recommendation of the administration, be granted a Certificate of Attendance. Students receiving a Certificate of Attendance shall not be eligible to participate in commencement exercises unless determined, prior to, by the administration.

Transfer students must meet the minimum hours required for graduation both in terms of total number and specific subject areas. Substitutions may be made for deficiencies in required courses, provided that it was not possible to include the courses on the student's schedule while enrolled at Dorchester High School.

Students who receive special education services are mainstreamed into the regular education curriculum when appropriate. The curriculum content of regular education classes may be modified to accommodate the individual needs and abilities of verified special education students. Each curriculum modification will be included on the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) by the Multi-Disciplinary Team and/or school staffing teams composed of special and regular education staff. Hours in special education will be counted toward a high school diploma and modified curriculum content classes will be so marked on the student's transcripts.

**Note:** To help prepare for the State Standards and Assessments, students will be required to be in a Language Arts, Math, and Science class during their freshman, sophomore, and junior year. This requirement may be waived with administration approval.

## **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE**

Parent-teacher conferences will be held near the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter and near the middle of 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. Conferences with teachers, at any other time, are possible by making arrangements with teachers.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

Grades in all subjects, including non-core classes, will be reported on the Eligibility Report each Tuesday beginning the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of each semester. Any student failing 2 or more classes will be ineligible to represent Dorchester Public Schools in interscholastic competition. The period of ineligibility will be from the Wednesday after the Eligibility Report through the following Tuesday. Students are expected to practice with their team during ineligibility.

### **Eligibility Report Specifics:**

Each week “DOWN and FAILING,” reports will be mailed out to parents. The following guidelines will be used to determine a student’s eligibility for the following week, Wednesday through the following Tuesday.

1. Work must be handed in by school closing on Monday, in order to count toward eligibility for the week.
2. “FAILING” are those whose present grade average is below 70%.
3. Each student has the right to have his/her eligibility reviewed.
4. Eligibility will cover all activities under the jurisdiction of the Nebraska School Activities Association or Dorchester Public Schools.
5. A student must meet the requirements of the Nebraska School Activities Association and must have received passing marks in 4 major courses (20 credit hours) the previous semester to participate in the current semester NSAA activities.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Students are expected to abide by the standards of academic integrity established by their teachers and school administration. Standards of academic integrity are established in order for students to learn as much as possible from instruction, for students to be given grades which accurately reflect the student’s level of learning and progress, to provide a level playing field for all students, and to develop appropriate values.

Cheating and plagiarism violates the standards of academic integrity. Sanctions will be imposed against students who engage in such conduct.

1. “Cheating,” means intentionally misrepresenting the source, nature, or other conditions of academic work so as to accrue undeserved credit, or to cooperate with someone else in such misrepresentation. Such misrepresentations may, but need not necessarily, involve the work of others. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: tests, papers, and/or alteration of assigned grades.
2. “Plagiarism,” means to take and present as one’s own material, portion of the ideas or words of another or to present as one’s own ideas or work derived from an existing source without full and proper credit to the source of ideas, words, or works. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, failure to credit sources and falsely presenting work as one’s own.
3. “Contributing,” to academic integrity violations means to participate or assist another in cheating or plagiarism. It includes, but is not limited to allowing another student to look at your test answers, to copy your papers or lab projects, and to fail to report a known act of cheating or plagiarism to the instructor or administration.

The following sanctions will occur for academic integrity offenses:

1. Academic Sanction – The instructor will refuse to accept the student’s work in which the cheating or plagiarism took place, assign a grade of “F” or zero for the work, and require the student to complete the assignment or project within such time and under such conditions as the instructor may determine appropriate. In the event the student completes the replacement assignment at a level meeting performance standards, the instructor will assign a grade, which the instructor determines to be appropriate for the work. Credit for the class may be withheld pending successful completion of the replacement test or project.
2. Report to Parents and Administration – The instructor will notify the Principal of the offense and the instructor will notify the student’s parents or guardians.
3. Student Discipline Sanctions – Academic integrity offenses are a violation of school rules. The Principal may recommend sanctions in addition to those assigned by the instructor, up to and including suspension or expulsion. Such additional sanctions will be given strong consideration where a student has engaged in a serious or repeated academic integrity offense or other rule violations, and where the academic sanction is otherwise not a sufficient remedy, such as for offenses involving altering assigned grades or contributing to academic integrity violations.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **GUIDANCE SERVICES**

Dorchester Public Schools offers guidance services for the purpose of assisting the District's testing program, to assist with scheduling, and for students to discuss problems and resolve conflicts. The door is open to all students and parents.

Secondary counseling services include academic counseling, personal counseling, crisis intervention, referrals and coordination with agencies and professionals outside the school setting, school testing programs, career exploration, and postgraduate planning. The guidance office invites representatives from a wide variety of post high school educational institutions to the school. Students are urged to visit with representatives for information.

### **HEALTH SCREENING**

The school nurse will complete an annual health screening of students. This includes a measure of height, weight, vision, hearing, and blood pressure. Parents will be notified if their child does not pass the screening check and referral if needed. Any parent whom objects to their child receiving the health screening should send a written statement to the nurse within one week. Nebraska statute requires school age screenings. Parents who object to the screening must submit findings from an alternate medical provider by December 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.

### **PHYSICAL EXAMS**

Evidence of a physical examination by a qualified physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner is required within six months prior to the entrance of a child into 7<sup>th</sup> grade, or in the case of transfer from out of state, to any grade. A parent or guardian who objects may submit a written statement of refusal for his or her child. Waiver forms are available in the school health office. All students who participate in a specific sport will be required to have a physical exam.

### **IMMUNIZATIONS**

Students entering 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade that are out of state transfer students, regardless of grade, are required to present evidence of the following immunizations:

- ~3 doses of DTaP, DTP, DT or Td vaccine

- ~3doses of Polio vaccine

- ~2 doses of MMR vaccine

- ~3 doses of Hepatitis B vaccine

- ~1 dose of Varicella (chickenpox) given on or after 12 months of age and prior to 13 years of age. If over 13 years 2 doses of varicella, separated by at least one month. Written documentation (including year) of chicken pox disease from parent, guardian, or health care provider will be accepted. All students not listed above are required to provide evidence of the following:

- ~3 doses of DTaP, DTP, DT or Td vaccine

- ~3doses of Polio vaccine

- ~2 doses of MMR vaccine

- ~3 doses of Hepatitis B vaccine

Exemptions shall be granted for only two reasons: 1) Refusal of immunizations for Medical Reasons as signed by a health care provider, or 2) Refusal of immunizations for Religious Reasons signed by a notary and parent / guardian.

## **ILLNESS, INJURIES and INSURANCE**

Students who become ill or are injured at school should report to the nurse, or to the office if the nurse is not available. If the student is too ill to remain at school or the injury warrants care of a physician, parents will be notified. If they cannot be notified, and the injury requires prompt attention, the student will be taken to a physician. Students need to be fever free for twenty-four hours before returning to school.

For protection against medical expense due to injury at school, student accident insurance is available (not paid by the school).

## **STUDENT ILLNESS AND HEALTH-RELATED DISMISSALS**

The school nurse or office staff will contact parents or guardians if a student becomes ill and needs to be sent home. A student may be sent home for any of the following reasons: a fever of 100°F or higher, vomiting, diarrhea, unexplained or potentially contagious skin rashes, pink or red eyes with drainage, earache or drainage from the ear, live head lice, illness or injury requiring medical attention, or as determined by school personnel that the child's condition prevents meaningful participation in the educational program, presents a health risk to the child or others, or that medical consultation is warranted unless the condition resolves.

Students may return to school only when the following conditions are met:

- The student has been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication
- The student has had no vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours
- Skin rashes must be gone or a medical provider's note must state the rash is not contagious
- Eyes must be clear with no drainage or a medical provider's note must state the student is not contagious
- Earache must be improved and there must be no drainage from the ear
- Treatment for head lice has been completed
- A medical clearance note is provided when required

Students that are ill and sent home or wish to contact parents to ask permission to be sent home must contact a parent/guardian from the school office phone.

## **MEDICATION**

If a student must take medication during school hours, the medication should be brought to the office where the school nurse or trained office staff will dispense the medication. The school will provide forms when indicated.

## **PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS**

For prescription medication, you are required to have,

- Written authorization/order from the students provider
- Written permission from the parent or guardian
- Medication must be brought to school in the original prescription container

- The prescription container must be clearly labeled with the students name, physicians name, dosage and directions for administration

## **NON-PRESCRIPTION (OVER THE COUNTER) MEDICATIONS**

For non-prescription medication, you are required to have

- Written permission from the parent/guardian for administration of medication
- Medication must be brought to the school in the original manufacturer container
- The container must be labeled with the students name and directions for administration

## **MEDIA CENTER**

The library is a resource center for all students. Students in the library should be there only to use the library resources, not to visit with friends.

To enter and stay in the library, a student must have written permission from a teacher in their planner. Any student arriving without a planner will be asked to return to class.

1. All library materials must be checked out at the circulation desk *BEFORE* leaving the Media Center.
2. Reference materials, magazines, and newspapers may not be checked out. Copies of an article may be made for 10 cents a page.
3. Any book taken from the shelves will be returned to the circulation desk to be re-shelved, except reference books. It is the student's responsibility to re-shelve any reference book.
4. Students are to conduct themselves in an orderly, respectful manner at all times while in the Media Center. Voices should be kept to a whisper or students will be asked to leave.
5. Students may check out as many books as necessary to complete their work. However, they will not be allowed to check out materials if they have overdue books.
6. Materials that are not returned on time are subject to a \$.10 fine for each day the item is late. Students are expected to pay fines promptly.
7. Any book lost or damaged will be paid for by the student to whom it is checked out.
8. Students with an excessive number of overdue items, with items that are overdue for an excessive length of time, or bills that haven't been paid may have their Media Center privileges restricted or revoked.
9. The computers in the library are available to students if they have written permission from their classroom teacher. The computers are to be used for educational purposes only, no games, e-mail, etc.

## **BUS RULES**

While riding the bus, students are expected to follow the same student conduct rules which apply when on school property or attending school activities, functions, or events. We believe all students can behave appropriately and safely while riding the school bus. We will not tolerate any student stopping the drivers from doing their job or preventing other students from having safe transportation.

### **Rules on the Bus:**

1. Be respectful of the bus driver. Immediately follow all directions of the driver or any adult on the bus.
2. Sit in your seat and keep your arms, legs, and belongings to yourself.
3. No pushing, shoving, fighting, or throwing objects at any time.
4. No smoking, lighting matches or lighters, chewing tobacco, eating sunflower seeds, or spitting.

5. Silence at railroad tracks.
6. No swearing or use of obscene language or gestures.
7. Respect property of school and others.
8. No hanging any objects or body parts out the windows.
9. Follow all the rules of the handbook.

**Consequences:** Consequences for school bus misconduct may include restriction or suspension of bus privileges and other disciplinary measures, up to and including expulsion from school.

1. Driver verbally warns student.
2. Driver reports incident to principal. Parents contacted.
3. Short-term suspension of riding privileges.
4. Long-term suspension of riding privileges.

Steps may be skipped depending on seriousness of the offense.

### **SUPPORT TIME FOR AT-RISK STUDENTS/ACADEMIC SUPPORT INTERVENTION (ASI)**

Any student that has two or more D's and/or one or more F's is required to report to Academic Support Intervention (ASI) after school each Friday there is an early release from 2:10 to 3:10. Students need only report to ASI until their grades are satisfactory. That is to say, ASI is an academic support only and not a disciplinary measure. Like the Ineligible List, the ASI list will be determined each Tuesday at 9:00. There will be a two week grace period at the start of each semester. Semester grades will be used to determine reporting to ASI, except in the case of junior-high quarter long classes.

A letter will be mailed to parents when a student must report to ASI. Failure to report to ASI will result in a detention. Repeated failures to report to ASI will result in further disciplinary actions.

Any teacher can request that a student stay after school to receive extra help, make up missing work, complete additional work to improve the student's grade, participate in a missed activity or lecture, etc. Failure to attend an after-school help session will result in detention.

## STUDENT CONDUCT RULES

### PURPOSE

It is the goal of Dorchester Public Schools to provide a safe, pleasant, and orderly learning environment. These student conduct rules are established to maintain a school atmosphere conducive to learning, that aids student development, furthers school purposes, and prevents interference with the educational process. Violations of the rules will result in disciplinary action. Each student is responsible for his/her choices.

### EXPECTATIONS OF BEHAVIOR

1. Respect the rights and property of others.
2. Respect the right of others to learn.
3. Follow the instructions of staff members promptly.
4. Obey all school rules.
5. Be responsible for your actions and accept the consequences of them.
6. Be on time and have all necessary materials.
7. Use appropriate language.
8. Treat other people kindly and politely on and off school grounds. Understand that cordial relations among people who work and learn at school are needed to ensure a proper learning environment.
9. Respect and take care of school property.

### FORMS OF SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure the constitutional rights of students. The procedure provides for five types of expulsions:

1. Detention: reinforcement of rules, up to 30 minutes.
2. Short Term Suspension: up to, and including, five days.
3. Emergency Exclusion: immediate exclusion if the student has a dangerous disease, his/her conduct presents a threat to the physical safety of the school community, or is very disruptive.
4. Long Term Suspension: more than five days, less than twenty.
5. Expulsion: remainder of semester.
6. Mandatory Reassignment: involuntary transfer to an alternative setting.

This procedure provides the conditions and applicable procedures for each type of exclusion.

#### Short Term Suspension:

1. Principal will make an investigation.
2. Principal may suspend after he/she determines it is necessary to help the student, or to prevent interference with school purposes.
3. Student will be given oral or written notice of charges, an explanation of the evidence against him/her.
4. Within 24 hours (or such times as is reasonably necessary) following suspension, the principal will:
  - a. Send a written statement to student and student's parents or guardians describing the student's conduct or violation of rule.
  - b. Give reason for the action taken.
  - c. Make a reasonable effort to confer with parents before or at the time student returns to school.

**Emergency Exclusion:**

- I. Exclusion may not last longer than necessary to avoid the threats of the emergency.
- I. If longer than five days, there must be substantial compliance with the procedures provided for long-term exclusion (listed below).

**Long Term Suspension, Expulsion, and Mandatory Reassignment:**

- I. The following behavior constitutes grounds for these types of exclusions:
  - A. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes;
  - B. Willfully causing, or attempting to cause, substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property of substantial value, or repeated damage or theft involving property;
  - C. Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to a school employee, to a school volunteer, or to any student. Personal injury caused by accident, self-defense, or other action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect some other person shall not constitute a violation of this subdivision;
  - D. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of or with the intent of obtaining money or anything of value from such student;
  - E. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon (see also board policy on weapons and firearms);
  - F. Engaging in the unlawful possession, selling, dispensing, or use of a controlled substance or an imitation controlled substance, as defined in Nebraska Statute section 28-401, a substance represented to be a controlled substance, or alcoholic liquor as defined in Nebraska Statute section 53-103.02 or being under the influence of a controlled substance or alcoholic liquor (note: the term “under the influence” for school purposes has a less strict meaning than it does under criminal law; for school purposes, the term means any level of impairment and includes even the odor of alcohol on the breath or person of a student; also, it includes being impaired by reason of the abuse of any material used as a stimulant);
  - G. Public indecency as defined in Nebraska Statute section 28-806, except that this prohibition shall apply only to students at least twelve years of age but less than nineteen years of age;
  - H. Engaging in bullying as defined in Nebraska Statute section 79-2,137 and in these policies;
    - I. Sexually assaulting or attempting to sexually assault any person if a complaint has been filed by a prosecutor in a court of competent jurisdiction alleging that the student has sexually assaulted or attempted to sexually assault any person, including sexual assaults or attempted sexual assaults which occur off school grounds not at a school function, activity, or event. For purposes of this subdivision, sexual assault means sexual assault in the first degree as defined in Nebraska Statute section 28-319, sexual assault in the second degree as defined in section 28-320, sexual assault of a child in the second or third degree as defined in section 28-320.01, or sexual assault of a child in the first degree as defined in section 28-319.01, as such sections now provide or may hereafter from time to time be amended;
  - J. Engaging in any other activity forbidden by the laws of the State of Nebraska which activity constitutes a danger to other students or interferes with school purposes; or
  - K. A repeated violation of any of the following rules if such violations constitute a substantial interference with school purposes:
    - The use of language, written or oral, or conduct, including gestures, which is profane or abusive to students or staff members. Profane or abusive language or conduct includes, but is not limited to, that which is commonly understood and intended to be derogatory toward a group or individual based upon race, gender, national origin, or religion;

- Dressing or grooming in a manner which violates the school district's dress code and/or is dangerous to the student's health and safety, a danger to the health and safety of others, or which is disruptive, distracting or indecent to the extent that it interferes with the learning and educational process;
  - Violating school bus rules as set by the school district or district staff;
  - Possessing, using, selling, or dispensing tobacco, drug paraphernalia, or a tobacco imitation substance or packaging, regardless of form, including cigarettes, chewing tobacco, and any other form of tobacco or imitation, such as electronic cigarettes, vapor pens, etc.;
  - Possessing, using, selling, or dispensing any drug paraphernalia or imitation of a controlled substance regardless of whether the actual substance possessed is a controlled substance by Nebraska law;
  - Possession of pornography;
  - Sexting or the possession of sexting images (a combination of sex and texting - the act of sending sexually explicit messages or photos electronically);
  - Engaging in hazing, defined as any activity expected of someone joining a group, team, or activity that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. Hazing activities are generally considered to be: physically abusive, hazardous, and/or sexually violating and include but are not limited to the following: personal servitude; sleep deprivation and restrictions on personal hygiene; yelling, swearing and insulting new members/rookies; being forced to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire in public; consumption of vile substances or smearing of such on one's skin; branding; physical beatings; binge drinking and drinking games; sexual simulation and sexual assault;
  - Bullying which shall include cyber-bullying, defined as the use of the internet, including but not limited to social networking sites such as Facebook, cell phones or other devices to send, post or text message images and material intended to hurt or embarrass another person. This may include, but is not limited to; continuing to send e-mail to someone who has said they want no further contact with the sender; sending or posting threats, sexual remarks or pejorative labels (i.e., hate speech); ganging up on victims by making them the subject of ridicule in forums, and posting false statements as fact intended to humiliate the victim; disclosure of personal data, such as the victim's real name, address, or school at websites or forums; posing as the identity of the victim for the purpose of publishing material in their name that defames or ridicules them; sending threatening and harassing text, instant messages or emails to the victims; and posting or sending rumors or gossip to instigate others to dislike and gang up on the target;
  - Violation of the district's computer acceptable computer use policy are subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion;
  - Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a simulated or "look-a-like" weapon;
  - Using any object to simulate possession of a weapon;
  - Knowingly making a false statement or knowingly submitting false information during the Title IX grievance process or any other school investigation or making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a Title IX grievance proceeding or any other school investigation; and
  - Any other violation of a rule or regulation established by a school district staff member pursuant to authority delegated by the board.
- II. The following procedure is required to exclude longer than five days:
- A written charge and summary of evidence supporting the charge shall be filed with the Superintendent on the date of the decision to exclude.
  - Within two days, written notice must be sent by Certified Mail to the student's parents or guardians informing them of their rights under the act.

- This notice shall include the following:
    1. Rules violated and summary of evidence.
    2. Penalty which principal has recommended.
    3. Notice of defendant's right to a hearing.
    4. Hearing procedures provided by this act and appeal procedures.
    5. A statement concerning the right to examine all records of the case.
    6. A statement concerning the right to know the identity of witnesses who will appear and the substance of their testimony.
    7. The written notice letter shall include a form to the student's parents to request a hearing.
- III. The following preliminary procedure must be followed if a hearing is requested within five days of the notice:
- Superintendent must appoint a hearing examiner.
  - Hearing examiner must give written notice to principal, student and student's parents or guardian of the time and place of the hearing.
- IV. Requirements to be a Hearing Examiner:
- Has not brought the charges against the student.
  - Shall not be a witness at the hearing.
  - Has no involvement in the charge; is impartial.
  - Must be available to answer any questions relative to the hearing.
  - May be anyone, even a school employee.
  - Hearing must be held within five days after the request, but cannot be held without providing the principal, student and student's parents of at least two school days notice.
  - The right to examine the record and written statements (including the statement of any witnesses for the school).
  - If no hearing is requested, the punishment goes into effect on the fifth day following notice. A hearing may be held, if requested, after five days, but no later than thirty calendar days following receipt of notice; here punishment continues, pending final determination.
  - All students will be expected to make up all work.

**Detention:**

Any Dorchester staff member may assign detention to students who choose not to follow the established rules or guidelines set by Dorchester Public Schools. Students will serve detention on the day it is issued unless arrangements have been made. Parents/guardians will be notified when a student receives detention. Detention will be served from 3:35 to 4:05 or for 30 minutes if the student does not arrive by 3:35. Students are expected to arrive on time to the room where detention is held. Students must have schoolwork or a book to read for the duration. One additional detention will be assigned to students who do not serve the detention on the pre-determined dates. Refusal to serve detention(s) will be referred to the principal and will result in a more severe consequences.

**STUDENT CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS**

**HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS**

Dorchester Public Schools and Board of Education clearly and unequivocally prohibit sexual harassment of students by other students. Sexual harassment of students is defined as: *Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical misconduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's educational opportunities or creates an*

*intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment.* Any sexual, physical, verbal, or mental (emotional) harassment/intimidation of any student is prohibited and will be treated as a conduct violation of the student handbook. Sanctions, which may be imposed for violating school regulations, shall include, but are not limited to, conferences, detention, and restriction from activities, administrative suspension, and or expulsion.

### **BULLYING OF STUDENTS**

Students are prohibited from engaging in any form of bullying behavior while on school grounds, in school vehicles, and at school activities sponsored by Dorchester Public Schools or in which a School District representative is participating. "Bullying behavior" is defined as any overt act by a student with the intent or effect of ridiculing, humiliating, or intimidating another student. The disciplinary consequences for bullying behavior will depend on the frequency, duration, severity and effect of the behavior and may result in consequences up to and including expulsion. Students and parents are encouraged to inform teachers or administrators orally or in writing about suspected bullying. School employees are required to inform the administration of all such reports. The appropriate building principal shall promptly investigate all such reports.

Students who experience or observe bullying behavior must immediately report what happened to a teacher or administrator. Students may always confer with their parents or guardians about bullying they experience or witness, but the students must also ultimately report the situation to a teacher or administrator. Students who make reports of bullying activity will not be retaliated against for making the report.

### **DATING VIOLENCE**

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

### **STUDENT APPEARANCE and DRESS**

Students at Dorchester Public Schools are expected to dress in a way that is appropriate for the school setting. Good personal appearance is conducive to a positive learning environment. Students should not dress in a manner that is dangerous to the health and safety of anyone or interferes with the learning environment or teaching process in our school. Following is a list of examples of attire that will not be considered appropriate, such list is not exclusive and other forms of attire deemed inappropriate by the administration may be deemed inappropriate for the school setting:

1. Two-piece outfits must touch at the waist at all times. This includes while sitting or standing. Students are not to wear clothing that exposes the midriff. Clothing must also cover the area under the arm. No undergarments should be showing.
2. Clothing usually worn as undergarments may not be worn as outer garments. Sports bras, spandex tops and shorts, and boxer shorts will not be permitted as outerwear.
3. Shorts, skirts, and dresses should be mid-thigh or longer. Short shorts are not allowed. Shirts must reach mid-thigh or longer when wearing spandex pants, yoga pants, and/or tights.
4. Skinny straps, backless shirts, and halter-tops are prohibited.
5. Clothing which promotes alcohol, tobacco/tobacco products, drugs, or which contains an inappropriate or suggestive message is prohibited.
6. The wearing of pants, jeans, or shorts worn in a sagging fashion below the waistline or oversized clothing is prohibited. Overalls and suspenders are to be worn in the manner intended, over the shoulder and fastened.

7. Belts, which are extra-long with excess hanging loosely, are prohibited. All belts are to be tucked in the belt loops and worn around the waist.
8. Shoes (including flip-flops and sandals) must be worn at all times. Shoes with wheels are prohibited.
9. Wallet chains are not permitted.
10. Students are not allowed to wear hoods, hats or bandannas in the school building during the school day. Hats may be allowed on special occasions as specified by the principal.
11. Clothing shall be in good repair. Clothing with excessive wear or holes is unacceptable. Jeans with holes more than 3" above the knee are not permitted. The appropriateness of holes in jeans is left to the discretion of the administration.
12. Students are not allowed to wear bulky coats during the school day. School staff will determine what constitutes a coat.
13. Slippers and/or pajama pants are not permitted.

On first offense of the dress code, students will be asked to correct inappropriate attire at school. If the correction is not possible at school, parents or guardians may be called upon to help make the correction. Students will not be allowed to leave campus to change clothes. Repeated violations will be treated as insubordination. All staff members have the discretion to send students they believe to be in violation of the dress code policy to the office. The Principal will have the final authority in determining the appropriateness of student attire.

### **PHONES and ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Dorchester Public Schools strongly discourages students from bringing and/or using phones and electronic devices at school. The use of electronic devices can be disruptive to the educational process and are items that are frequently stolen or lost. If a student needs to contact a parent/guardian, they will be allowed to use a school phone. In order to maintain a secure and orderly learning environment, and to promote respect and courtesy regarding the use of electronic devices, the District hereby establishes the following rules and regulations governing student use of electronic devices, and procedures to address student misuse of electronic devices.

“Electronic devices” include, but are not limited to, cell phones, mp3 players, iPods, iPads, personal digital assistants (PDA), CD player, portable game consoles, cameras, beepers, pagers, digital scanners, lap top computers, and other electronic or battery powered instruments which transmit voice, text, or data from one person to another.

“Sexting” means generating, sending or receiving, encouraging others to send or receive, or showing others, through an electronic device, a text message, photograph, video or other medium that displays sexual content, sexually exploits a person, or displays a sexually explicit message.

Cell phones and electronic devices may be used before and after school and during lunch and passing periods **so long as they do not create a distraction or a disruption**. Students will be required to turn their phones in at the beginning of each class or keep phones in their locker or vehicle. Electronic devices may be used in class with teacher’s approval. If a student’s electronic device is seen or heard in a classroom, it will be confiscated and given to the office, where it can be picked up after school. On the second offense, the student’s parents will be required to pick the phone up in the office. On the third offense, the phone will remain in the office until the end of the semester. Violations of this policy regarding the prohibited use of electronic devices that may constitute a violation of federal or state laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, the Nebraska Child Protection Act or the Nebraska Child Pornography Prevention Act, shall be reported to appropriate legal authorities and law

enforcement.

By bringing their cell phones and other electronic devices to school, students consent to the search of said devices by school staff when the staff determines that such a search is reasonable or necessary. Students may not have cell phones or electronic devices while they are in the locker rooms, classrooms, or restrooms.

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

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

### **PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION**

Students are not to engage in inappropriate public displays of affection on school property or at school activities. Such conduct includes kissing, touching, hand-holding, laying head on one another, or other displays of affection that would be reasonably considered to be embarrassing or a distraction to others. Students will face the following consequences for Inappropriate Displays of Affection:

- a. 1st Offense: Students will be confronted and directed to cease.
- b. 2nd Offense: Student will be confronted, directed to cease, and parents will be notified.
- c. 3rd Offense: Students will be suspended from school for a minimum of one (1) day, and parents and students will need to meet with the administration and/or counselor.
- d. If this type of behavior continues, or if the IPDA is lewd or constitutes sexual conduct, the student could face long-term suspension or expulsion.

### **SPECIFIC RULE ITEMS**

The following conduct may result in disciplinary action which, in the repeated violations, may result in discipline up to expulsion.

- I. Students must have a pass or planner when not in a classroom during class time. Students are to use a pass or

planner only for the purpose requested.

2. Food and beverages purchased from the school may be consumed only in the commons area **before school or during the lunch period**. Food (including candy) and beverages are not allowed outside the commons area under any circumstances without the permission of the administration or teacher. No food or beverages are to be consumed in the hallways. All containers must be clear.
3. Students are not to bring “nuisance items” to school. A nuisance item is something that is not required for educational purposes and which would cause a distraction to the student or others.
4. Students are expected to bring all books and necessary materials to class. This includes Study Halls, Detentions, and In-School Suspension.
5. Students are to be in their seats and ready for class when the tardy bell rings.
6. Assignments for all classes are due as assigned by the teacher.

## **TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

We believe that the use of technology is an important educational resource for students at Dorchester. The inappropriate use of equipment or network resources may result in having privileges revoked, school disciplinary action and/or legal action.

### **General Rules for Acceptable Use of Computers:**

1. The network is provided to staff and students to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to network services is given to staff and students who have agreed to act in a responsible manner. Access for all staff and students is a privilege, not a right.
2. Individual users of the district network are responsible for their behavior, actions, problems, and communications involving and over the network. Users will comply with district rules.
3. Network storage areas shall be treated like school lockers for students. Network administrators may review files, information, equipment, messages, and communications of staff and students to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the network system responsibility. No reasonable expectations of privacy shall exist in relation to network use.
4. Students are never to give out personal information such as home address and phone number, to any internet source.
5. The district will not be liable for, and does not warrant in any way, purchases made by any user over the network. Users shall not make purchases of goods and/or services via the district’s network.
6. Supervising staff members must give permission to a student before any material from the internet is printed, downloaded, or saved to disk.
7. Students should not use network or internet services to engage in hacking or other attempts to compromise any computer or network systems security. Students shall not erase, remake, or make unusable anyone else’s computer, information, files, programs, or disks.
8. Students shall not let other persons use name, account, log-on password or files for any reason.
9. Students shall not use or try to discover another user’s account or password.
10. Students shall not use the computer to annoy or harass others with language, images, or threats. Students shall not access, accept, create, or sent any obscene, vulgar, lewd, tasteless, or objectionable messages, information, language, or images.
11. Students shall not write, produce, generate, copy, propagate, or attempt to introduce any computer code, software, or information designed to self-replicate, damage, or otherwise hinder the performance of the network or any computer’s memory, file system, or software. Such software is often called a bug, virus, worm, Trojan horse, or similar name.

12. All technology resources are to be used for educational purposes. Students shall not access material that is obscene, pornographic, or of a harmful nature. Students shall not engage in any illegal activities, or other activities that disrupt the learning environment on the internet.

**Etiquette for use of computers and the Network:** All users of computers and the network are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. Informal rules of behavior have evolved for the use of and communication on the network, internet, and other on-line services. These rules of behavior include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. Be polite. Do not become abusive in your message to others.
2. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language, message, information, or images.
3. Do not reveal your personal account, address or phone numbers, or that of other students or colleagues.
4. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property of others.
5. Do not use unlawful information on any network system.
6. Other rules may be established by network administrators or teachers from time to time.

**Penalties for Violation of Rules:** All of the policies, rules, and procedures for acceptable use of computers and the network are intended to make the computers and the network more reliable for users. Use of computer and access to telecommunications resources is a privilege not a right. Violation of the policies, rules, and procedures concerning the use of computer and the network may result in disciplinary action up to, and including, loss of access, suspension, and/or expulsion of students from school and loss of access, suspension, termination, non-renewal, or cancellation of the contract of administrator, teachers, or other school employees. In addition to disciplinary action, legal action may occur as well.

### **REPORTING STUDENT LAW VIOLATIONS**

1. Cases of law violations or suspected law violations by students will be reported to the police and to the student's parents or guardian as soon as possible.
2. When a Principal or other school official releases a minor student to a peace officer (e.g., police officer, sheriff, and all other persons with similar authority to make arrests) for the purpose of removing the minor from the school premises, the Principal or other school official will take immediate steps to notify the parent, guardian, or responsible relative of the minor regarding the release of the minor to the officer and regarding the place to which the minor is reportedly being taken. An exception applies when a minor has been taken into custody as a victim of suspected child abuse; in that event the Principal or other school official shall provide the peace officer with the address and telephone number of the minor's parents or guardian.
3. In an effort to demonstrate that student behavior is always subject to possible legal sanctions regardless of where the behavior occurs it shall be the policy of Dorchester Public Schools to notify the proper legal authorities when a student engages in any of the following behaviors on school grounds or at a school sponsored event:
  - a. Knowingly possessing illegal drugs or alcohol.
  - b. Assault.
  - c. Vandalism resulting in significant property damage.
  - d. Theft of school or personal property of a significant nature.
  - e. Automobile accident.

- f. Any other behavior which significantly threatens the health or safety of students, staff or other persons or which is required by law to be reported.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

### PHILOSOPHY

Extracurricular activity programs enrich the school curriculum by making available a wide variety of activities in which a student can participate. Extracurricular activity programs are considered an integral part of the school's program of education and provide experiences that will help students physically, mentally, and emotionally.

### EXTRACURRICULAR CODE OF CONDUCT

Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege. The privilege carries with it responsibilities to the school, team, student body, and the community. Participants are not only representing themselves, but also their school and community in all of their actions. Others judge our school on the student participants' conduct and attitudes, and how they contribute to our school spirit and community image.

The student participants' performance and devotion to high ideals and values make their school and community proud. Consequently, participation is dependent upon adherence to this Code of Conduct and the school district's policies, procedures and rules.

### SCOPE OF CODE OF CONDUCT

**Activities Subject to the Code of Conduct:** The Code of Conduct applies to all extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities are student activities or organizations which are supervised or administered by the school district which do not count toward graduation or grade advancement and in which participation is not otherwise required by the school.

Extracurricular activities include but are not limited to: all sports, cheerleading, dance team, Pep Club, Pep Band, vocal music, band, speech, drama, One-Act, FBLA, FCCLA, Spanish Club, Quiz Bowl, Art Club, Student Council, Student Advisory Board, National Honor Society, and other school sponsored organizations and activities. The Code of Conduct also applies to participation in school-sponsored activities such as school dances and eligibility for royalty for such activities.

A participant means a student who participates in, has participated in, or will participate in an extracurricular activity.

**When:** The Code of Conduct rules apply to conduct which occurs at any time during the school year, and also includes the time frame which begins with the official starting day of the fall sport season established by the NSAA and extends to the last day of the spring sport season established by the NSAA, whether or not the student is a participant in an activity at the time of such conduct.

The rules also apply when a student is participating or scheduled to participate in an extracurricular activity that is held outside the school year or the NSAA season. For example, if an FBLA or FCCLA student plans to participate in a conference in July and commits a Code of Conduct infraction in June, the student may be suspended from participating in the conference. Conduct during the summer months may also affect a student's participation under the team selection and playing time guidelines.

**Where:** The Code of Conduct rules apply regardless of whether the conduct occurs on or off school grounds. If

the conduct occurs on school grounds, at a school function or event, or in a school vehicle, the student may also be subject to further discipline under the general student code of conduct. A student who is suspended or expelled from school shall not be permitted to participate in activities during the period of the suspension or expulsion, and may also receive an extended activity suspension.

**Grounds for Extracurricular Activity Discipline.** Students who participate in extracurricular activities are expected to demonstrate cooperation, patience, pride, character, self-respect, self-discipline, teamwork, sportsmanship, and respect for authority. The following conduct rules have been determined by the Board of Education to be reasonably necessary to aid students, further school purposes, and prevent interference with the educational process. Such conduct constitutes grounds for suspension from participation in extracurricular activities and grounds for other restrictions or disciplinary measures related to extracurricular activity participation:

1. Willfully disobeying any reasonable written or oral request of a school staff member, or the voicing of disrespect to those in authority.
2. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, harassment, or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school or extracurricular activity purposes, or making any communication that a reasonable person would interpret as a serious expression of an intent to harm or cause injury to another.
3. Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property, repeated damage or theft involving property, or setting or attempting to set a fire of any magnitude.
4. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of, or with the intent of, obtaining money or anything of value from a student, or making a threat which causes or may be expected to cause a disruption to school operations.
5. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon or that has the appearance of a weapon, or bringing or possessing any explosive device, including fireworks, on school grounds or at a school function or event, or in a manner that is unlawful or contrary to school activity rules.
6. Selling, using, possessing or dispensing alcohol, tobacco, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance, or an inhalant; being under the influence of any of the above; possession of drug paraphernalia, or the selling, using, possessing, or dispensing of an imitation controlled substance as defined in section 28-401 of the Nebraska statutes, or material represented to be alcohol, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance or inhalant. Use of a controlled substance in the manner prescribed for the student by the student's physician is not a violation. (Note: Refer to "Drug and Alcohol Violations" for further information).
7. Public indecency.
8. Sexual assault or attempting to sexually assault any person. Engaging in sexual conduct, even if consensual, on school grounds or at a school function or event.
9. Engaging in bullying, which includes any ongoing pattern of physical, verbal, or electronic abuse on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by a school being used for a school purpose by a school employee or a school employee's designee, or at school-sponsored activities or school-sponsored athletic events;
10. Engaging in any activity forbidden by law, which constitutes a danger to other students, interferes with school purposes or an extracurricular activity, or reflects a lack of high ideals.
11. Repeated violation of any of the school rules.
12. Truancy or failure to attend assigned classes or assigned activities; or tardiness to school, assigned classes or assigned activities.

13. The use of language, written or oral, or conduct, including gestures, which is profane or abusive to a school employee, school volunteer, or student. Profane or abusive language or conduct includes, but is not limited to, that which is commonly understood and intended to be derogatory toward a group or individual based upon race, gender, national origin, or religion.
14. Dressing or grooming in a manner which is dangerous to the student's health and safety or a danger to the health and safety of others or repeated violations of dress and grooming standards; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that is lewd or indecent, vulgar or plainly offensive; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that school officials reasonably conclude will materially and substantially disrupt the work and discipline of the school or of an extracurricular activity; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that a reasonable observer would interpret as advocating illegal drug use.
15. Willfully violating the behavioral expectations for those students riding Dorchester Public School buses or vehicles used for activity purposes.
16. Failure to report for the activity at the beginning of the season. Reporting for one activity may count as reporting on time if there is a change in activity within the season approved by the coach or the supervisor.
17. Failure to participate in regularly scheduled classes on the day of an extracurricular activity or event.
18. Failure to attend scheduled practices and meetings. If circumstances arise to prevent the participant's attendance, the validity of the reason will be determined by the coach or sponsor. Every reasonable effort should be made to notify the coach or sponsor prior to any missed practice or meeting.
19. All other reasonable rules or regulations adopted by the coach or sponsor of an extracurricular activity shall be followed, provided that participants shall be advised by the coach or sponsor of such rules and regulations by written handouts or posting on bulletin boards prior to the violation of the rule or regulation.
20. Failure to comply with any rule established by the Nebraska School Activities Association, including, but not limited to, the rules relating to eligibility.

***All terms used in the Code of Conduct have a less strict meaning than under criminal law and are subject to reasonable interpretation by school officials.***

## **DRUGS and ALCOHOL VIOLATIONS**

**Meaning of Terms:** Use or consume includes any level of consumption or use. Use of a controlled substance in the manner prescribed for the student by the student's physician is not a violation.

Under the influence means any level of impairment and includes even the odor of alcohol on the breath or person of a student, or the odor of an illicit drug on the student. Also, it includes being impaired by reason of the abuse of any material used as a stimulant.

Possession includes having control of the substance and also includes being in the same area where the substance is present and no responsible adult present and responsible for the substance. Possession includes situations where, for example:

1. Alcohol is in a vehicle in which the student is present. The student is considered to be in possession if the student is aware that the alcohol is in the vehicle, even though the student has not touched or consumed the alcohol; and
2. Alcohol is present at a party attended by the student. The student is considered to be in possession if the student is aware that alcohol is at the party and fails to immediately leave the party, even though the student has not touched or consumed the alcohol.

## **CONSEQUENCES**

Students may be suspended from practices or participation in interscholastic competition or participation in co-curricular activities for violations of the Code of Conduct. The period of suspension or other discipline for such offenses shall be determined by the school administration.

The disciplinary consequence will be determined based on consideration of the seriousness of the offense, any prior violations, the student's compliance with the self-reporting obligations, the student's level of cooperation and willingness to resolve the matter, and the student's demonstration of a commitment to not commit future violations.

Because of the significance of drug and alcohol violations on the student participants, other students and the school, the following consequences are established for such violations:

### **Drugs and Alcohol.**

An activity participant who violates the drug or alcohol rules (other than steroids) shall be prohibited from participating in any extracurricular activity for the following minimum periods:

1. First Violation: Two (2) weeks of the activity in which he/she are involved. Each week may include more than one event, and the weeks may not be consecutive.
2. Second Offense: Immediate dismissal from all extra-curricular activities for the remainder of the school year; unless the student receives drug/alcohol counseling/treatment. The counseling/treatment (minimum 3 hours) must be approved by the administration. Once the student is successfully progressing in their counseling/treatment program, or has completed the counseling/treatment program, the penalty period may be shortened by 3 weeks of scheduled activities in which he/she is involved. Success in counseling/treatment programs will be determined by administration. Proof of successful completion of the program must be submitted in writing to the Activities Director. The expense of the counseling/treatment program will be the responsibility of the student and his/her family.
3. Third Offense: Following counseling, a 3<sup>rd</sup> offense, will result in the dismissal from all extra-curricular activities for the remainder of the school year.

The reference to scheduled activities refers to those types of activities where competition is involved; where a score, mark, or evaluation is given to a student or team; and the activities of prom and the homecoming dance. Activities such as clinics, concerts, field trips, and other such extensions of the regular classrooms are not to be regarded as one of the penalized activities unless a rating is given to a student or a team.

**Letters and Post-Season Honors.** A student who commits a Code of Conduct violation is:

1. Eligible to letter, provided the student meets the criteria of the coach or sponsor.
2. Not eligible to receive honors during the sport or activity in which they are participating at the time of the offense and/or in sports or activities in which they have been suspended due to a code violation. The coach/sponsor, with the Athletic Director's approval, may make an exception where the student has self-reported or otherwise demonstrated excellence in character allowing for such honors.

**Procedures for Extracurricular Discipline.** The following procedures are established for suspensions from participation in extracurricular activities:

1. Investigation. The school official(s) considering the suspension will conduct a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances and determine whether the suspension will help the student or other students, further school purposes, or prevent an interference with a school purpose.
2. Meeting. Prior to commencement of the suspension, the school official considering the suspension or their designee will provide the student an opportunity to give the student's side of the story. The meeting for this purpose may be held in person or via a telephone conference.
  - a. The student will be given oral or written notice of what the student is accused of having done, an explanation of the evidence the school has, and the opportunity to explain the student's version. Detail is not required where the activity participant has made a self-report or otherwise admits the conduct. Names of informants may be kept confidential where determined to be appropriate.
  - b. The suspension may be imposed prior to the meeting if the meeting cannot reasonably be held before the suspension is to begin. In that case the meeting will occur as soon as reasonably practicable. The student is responsible for cooperating in the scheduling of the meeting.
3. Notice Letter. Within two (2) school days (two (2) business days if school is not in session), or such additional time as is reasonably necessary following the suspension, the Athletic Director or the Athletic Director's designee will send a written statement to the student and the student's parents or guardian. The statement will describe the student's conduct violation and the discipline imposed. The student and parents or guardian will be informed of the opportunity to request a hearing.
4. Informal Hearing Before Superintendent. The student or student's parent/guardian may request an informal hearing before the Superintendent. The Superintendent may designate the Athletic Director or another administrator not responsible for the suspension decision as the Superintendent's designee to conduct the hearing and make a decision.
  - a. A form to request such a hearing must be signed by the parent or guardian. A form will be provided with the notice letter or otherwise be made available by request from the Principal's office.
  - b. The request for a hearing must be received by the Superintendent's office within five (5) days of receipt of the notice letter.
  - c. If a hearing is requested:
    - i. The hearing will be held within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the request; subject to extension for good cause as determined by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.
    - ii. The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee will notify the participants of the time and place of the hearing a reasonable time in advance to allow preparation for the hearing.
    - iii. Upon conclusion of the hearing, a written decision will be rendered within five (5) school days (ten (10) calendar days if school is not in session). The written decision will be mailed or otherwise delivered to the participant, parents or guardian.
    - iv. A record of the hearing (copies of documents provided at the hearing and a tape recording or other recordation of the informal hearing) will be kept by the school if requested sufficiently in advance of the hearing by the parent/guardian.

### **PARTIES and DANCES**

Class parties and school dances are to be cleared through the office. No food parties will be scheduled an **hour before or after** lunch is served.

1. Dances may be on Friday or Saturday (or end of school week) and shall be over by 12:00am
2. Each dance must be sponsored by at least 2 faculty members.
3. Students may enter a dance or party once and should remain at the dance full time. If they leave the dance or party they may not re-enter.

4. Students who have been suspended from school or from extracurricular activities may not attend.
5. Dorchester School reserves the right to exclude persons who may or do cause a disruption or detract from the event.
6. Students may bring a guest if the student accompanies him/her. Guests are expected to follow all the rules the students must follow. Each Dorchester student is responsible for his/her guest's conduct.
7. All Dorchester Public School dances are restricted to Dorchester Public School students and their guests. Students are required to sign up their guests ahead of time and subject to approval by the administration.
8. Guest must be in high school or younger than 21 years of age.
9. Junior High Dances (7-8) are restricted to Junior High Students and will be sponsored by junior high teachers and parents.
10. Appropriate attire is expected. No blue jeans, shorts, or t-shirts will be allowed at the banquet or dance.

**Prom is a formal dance, and formal attire is required.**

## STUDENT FEES

### **Administrative Regulation**

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

There will be a \$20 service charge on all returned checks made out to the school.

### **Definitions.**

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

### **Listing of Fees Charged by this District.**

#### **1. Guidelines for Clothing Required for Courses and Activities.**

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

#### **2. Safety Equipment and Attire.**

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

#### **3. Personal or Consumable Items.**

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

#### **4. Materials Required for Course Projects.**

The district will provide students with the materials necessary to complete all curricular projects. In courses where students produce a project that requires more than minimal cost for materials, the furnished product will remain the property of the district unless the students either furnish or pay for the reasonable cost of materials required for the course project.

The maximum dollar amount charged by the district for course materials shall be:

Industrial Technology Classes	\$800
Art Classes	\$50

### **5. Extracurricular Activities.**

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

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

*Student Participation Fee	\$25
*Future Business Leaders of America	\$50
**State and/or National Conventions	\$150

\*Football - Students must provide their own football shoes, undergarments, and mouth guards.

\*Physical Education - Cost of off campus activities if not graded.

\*Track, Volleyball, Wrestling - Students must provide their own athletic shoes and undergarments.

\*Science Club \$50

\*D Club \$20

### **6. Post-Secondary Education Costs.**

Some students enroll in post-secondary courses while still enrolled in the district's high school. As a general rule, students must pay all costs associated with such post-secondary courses. However, for a course in which students receive high school credit or a course is being taken as part of an approved accelerated or differentiated curriculum program, the district shall offer the course without charge for tuition, transportation, books, or other fees. Students who choose to apply for post-secondary education credit for these courses must pay tuition and all other fees associated with obtaining credits from a post-secondary educational institution.

### **7. Transportation Costs.**

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

*The maximum dollar amount of the transportation fee charged by this district shall be \$10.*

**8. Copies of Student Files or Records.**

The district may charge a fee for making copies of a student’s files or records for the parents or guardians of such student. The Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee shall establish a schedule of student record fees. Parents of students have the right to inspect and review the students’ files or records without the payment of a fee, and the district shall not charge a fee to search for or retrieve any student’s files or records.

*The district will charge a fee of \$0.10 per page for reproduction of student records.*

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

The district will charge reasonable fees for participation in before-and-after school or pre-kindergarten services offered by the district pursuant to statute.

*The maximum dollar amount charged by the district for these services shall be \$100 per month.*

**10. Participation in Summer School or Night School.**

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

*The maximum dollar amount charged by the district for summer and night school shall be \$300.*

**11. Charges for Food Consumed by Students.**

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

*The maximum dollar amount charged by the district for the breakfast and lunch programs is as follows:*

Breakfast Program - Grades K-6	
Regular Price	\$1.80
Reduced Price	\$0.35
Breakfast Program - Grades 7-12	
Regular Price	\$1.90
Reduced Price	\$0.35
Lunch Program - Grades K-6	
Regular Price	\$2.65
Reduced Price	\$0.45
Lunch Program - Grades 7-12	
Regular Price	\$2.90
Reduced Price	\$0.45

**12. Charges for Musical Extracurricular Activities**

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

**\*Band** - Students must provide their own instruments and marching band shoes, which must be white, rubber soled shoes.

**\*Swing Choir** - Students must purchase outfits and shoes selected by the sponsor and/or student group.

### **13. Contributions for Secondary Grade Class Extracurricular Activities.**

Students are eligible to participate in a number of unique extracurricular activities during their years in high school, including prom, various recognition's dances, class trips, and graduation. In order to fund these extracurricular activities, the school district will ask each student to make a contribution to their class's fund. The suggested donation to the class fund will be \$25.

#### **Waiver Policy.**

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

#### **Distribution of Policy.**

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

#### **Voluntary Contributions to Defray Costs.**

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

#### **Student Fee Fund.**

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

### **PARENT RIGHTS TO REVIEW DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act and the Nebraska Public Records Law authorizes school districts to make "directory information" available for review at the request of non-school individuals. These laws also give parents and guardians a voice in the decision-making process regarding the disclosure of directory information regarding their children.

Directory information is information contained in an educational record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if it were disclosed. For example, an athletic program, which lists the names of team members and their heights and/or weights, and an academic program, which lists the names of students receiving academic awards both, contains directory information. So do other school district publications and the district's web sites. Directory information includes the following information about a student:

Name	Address
Telephone number	Date and place of birth
Most recent previous school attended	Dates of attendance
Weight/Height of athletic teams	Major Field of Study
Participation in activities and sports	Degrees and awards received
Picture	

By federal law and state law, schools may release directory information unless a student's parents or guardians file a written objection. Parents or guardians have **two options**:

1. If a parent or guardian does not object to the disclosure of directory information about their child, the parent or guardian does not need to do anything.
2. If a parent or guardian objects to the disclosure of any directory information about their child, the parent or guardian should complete the enclosed PARENTAL/GUARDIAN DECISION FORM DIRECTORY INFORMATION by **August 25th** of the current school year.

Internal Use of Information: Whatever choice the parent or guardian makes, the Dorchester Public Schools will be able to use this directory information for internal school purposes and to share it with other educational institutions in accordance with the law.

Response Date: The Dorchester Public Schools may provide directory information regarding the parents or guardian's child(ren) to non-school individuals who request it unless the parent or guardian submits the signature form available in the school office by **August 25th**. If the parent or guardian chooses to not authorize the school to disclose information, the signature provided shall be in effect until the ensuing school year.

### **NONDISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES**

Dorchester Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, creed, age, marital status, sex or disabilities in admission or access to or treatment or employment in its educational programs and activities, as required by Titles VI and VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the American Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Nebraska Equal Opportunity in Education Act. If you have any special needs or requests that would assist you in participating in services, programs, and activities in the school district please contact Superintendent, Nick Mumm, Dorchester Public Schools, 506 West 9th, Dorchester Nebraska, 68343, telephone [\(402\) 946-2781](tel:4029462781).

Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against, denied, or been excluded from participation in any district education program or activity on the basis of race, national origin, creed, age, marital status, sex or

disability may grieve such matters using the adopted grievance procedures of this district. Such procedures shall provide for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging acts of discrimination. Contact Person: Nick Mumm, Dorchester Public Schools, 506 West 9th, Dorchester Nebraska, 68343, telephone [\(402\) 946-2781](tel:4029462781).

The school district prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates and individuals may report concerns or questions to the Title IX Coordinator. The school district's Title IX policy, notice, and other information may be accessed at the following link: [Insert Link to Notice of Nondiscrimination]

## **MULTICULTURAL POLICY**

The philosophy of the Dorchester School District's multicultural education program is that students will have improved ability to function as productive members of society when provided with: (a) an understanding of diverse cultures and races, the manner in which the existence of diverse cultures and races, the manner in which the existence of diverse cultures and races have affected the history of our Nation and the world, and the contributions made by diverse cultures and races and (b) with the ability and skills to be sensitive toward and to student, work and live successively with persons of diverse cultures and races. The mission shall also include preparing students to eliminate stereotypes and discrimination or harassment of others based on ethnicity, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, age, or disability.

## **NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA**

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the District receives a request for access.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
4. 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, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

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**PARENTS (OR GUARDIANS) AND STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO SIGN and RETURN THIS RECEIPT BEFORE: August 31<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

The Dorchester Public Schools Handbook is available on the Dorchester Public School website at [dorchesterschool.org](http://dorchesterschool.org). Please click on the “Handbooks” link to view the handbook. If you would like to receive a hard copy of the student handbook, please contact the office at 402-946-2781.

**STUDENT GUIDELINES HANDBOOK**

The Dorchester Public Schools Handbook is distributed in accordance with Nebraska State Law, Section 79-4, 176, paragraph 3 which states in part: “Rules and Standards which form the basis for discipline shall be distributed to students and parents at the beginning of each school year or at the time of enrollment...”

**PARENT/STUDENT AGREEMENT**

- I agree that I have been provided the opportunity to review the handbook in electronic form, or have been provided a hard copy upon request, and have read the Student Handbook that describes the Dorchester School discipline policies, regulations, rules, and expectations to be followed by students enrolled in the Dorchester Public Schools. My child and I have discussed and understand the content of these policies.
- I grant the school district permission to use my child’s photograph to promote school activities. If I do not wish to grant permission to use my child’s photograph, I will provide that request in writing to the school principal.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student’s Signature                      Parent/Guardian’s Signature                      Date

**EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

_____ Student’s Name	_____ Parent/Guardian’s Name(s)
_____ Mailing Address	_____ Home Phone #
_____ Father’s Employer	_____ Work #
_____ Mother’s Employer	_____ Work #
_____ Others Who May Be Contacted in an Emergency      Phone #	

**PARENT EMAIL** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mother’s Cellular Phone #** \_\_\_\_\_ **Father’s Cellular Phone #** \_\_\_\_\_