

WELCOME

The administration, faculty, and staff of Pierce Jr.-Sr. High School welcome you to our fine school. Our school has a proud past and a reputation for excellence. The entire community takes pride in our school and expects you to represent it and yourself to the best of your ability. Our patrons have made a tremendous investment in the young people of our community. We have some of the best facilities in the state. Please help us take care of this investment.

The ultimate purpose of education is to prepare young men and women for the art of living within the basic principles of our democracy. Our goal, as an educational institution, is to help you reach your goals. We want you to become the best at whatever you choose to do. We challenge you to excel academically and prepare yourself for the future. We encourage you to participate in our activity programs to grow physically, emotionally, and socially.

Remember that your success at Pierce Jr/Sr High School will be directly proportional to your efforts. You are responsible for your own learning. Worthwhile ventures are seldom easy. It takes a great deal of determination, self-discipline, and hard work to be successful. Set your goals, make a commitment, and work hard to achieve them. We will do everything possible to help you reach your goals.

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

The student and parents/guardians must sign, date, and return the handbook form included with this handbook by **Friday, August 15th, 2025. This form must return to school before the student is allowed to participate in school activities.**

Mission Statement: PIERCE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, IN CONJUNCTION WITH ITS COMMUNITY AND FAMILIES, WILL PROVIDE A CARING, STRUCTURED, AND CHALLENGING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT WHERE ALL STUDENTS HAVE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO REACH THEIR MAXIMUM POTENTIAL AND BECOME RESPONSIBLE, PRODUCTIVE CITIZENS.

Kendall Steffensen
Superintendent

Mark Brahmer
Principal/Activities Director

Intent of Handbook

This handbook is intended to be used by students, parents, and staff as a guide to the rules, procedures, and general information about this school district. Students and their parents must become familiar with the handbook, and parents should use it as a resource and assist their children in following the rules contained in it. The use of the word "parents" refers to any adult who has the responsibility for making education-related decisions about a child, including, but not limited to biological parents, adoptive parents, legal guardians, and adults acting in loco parentis.

Although the information in this handbook is detailed and specific on many topics, it is not intended to be all-encompassing or to cover every situation and circumstance that may arise during a school day or school year. This handbook does not create a "contract" with parents, students or staff. The administration may make decisions and rule revisions at any time to implement the educational program and to assure the well-being of all

students. The administration is responsible for interpreting the rules contained in the handbook. If a situation or circumstance arises that is not specifically covered in this handbook, the administration will make a decision based on applicable school district policies, and state and federal statutes and regulations.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

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

Students who believe they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their disability or have other related concerns or questions should contact the Section 504 Coordinator, Mr. Kendall Steffensen, in person, via phone at 402-329-4677, via email at kendallsteffensen@piercebluejays.org, or via postal mail at Pierce Public Schools, 201 N. Sunset, Pierce, NE 68767.

Students who believe they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their sex, or have other related concerns or questions, should contact the Title IX Coordinator, Mr. Mark Brahmer, in person, via phone at 402-329-6217, via email at markbrahmer@piercebluejays.org, or via postal mail at Pierce High School, 201 N. Sunset, Pierce, NE 68767.

The school district's specific notice of nondiscrimination on the basis of sex may be accessed at the following link:

<https://www.piercepublic.org/vnews/display.v/SEC/Board%20of%20Education%7CPolicies>

Students who believe they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their race, color, or national origin, or they have other related concerns or questions, should contact the Title VI Coordinator, Mr. Kendall Steffensen, at the contact information listed above.

Students who believe they have been the subject of any other unlawful discrimination or harassment should contact Mr. Steffensen, the district's superintendent, who will then forward it onto the appropriate coordinator or administrator. The staff member will follow school district policies to respond to the report.

For additional prohibited discrimination and related information, please review school district policy 3053 – Nondiscrimination.

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ACADEMIC GUIDELINES

ACADEMIC GUIDELINES FOR ACTIVITIES

All students (7-12) must be in good academic standing to represent Pierce Jr.-Sr. High School in interscholastic activities and competition. A student will be considered ineligible if she/he is failing two or more classes. The restriction period will be for one week. The restriction period will run from Tuesday through the next Monday (7 calendar days). Student grades will be turned in by teachers by 8 am every Monday. The ineligible list will be available by noon each Monday. A student placed on the ineligible list will be allowed to participate in the following activities during the restriction period:

1. Attend all regularly scheduled class periods.
2. Attend any convocation or assembly designed for all or part of the student body.
3. Participate in any class trip that is developed and supervised by the classroom teacher, is expected to be attended by all members of the class, is considered part of the curriculum for that particular class and takes place within the confines of one calendar day.
4. Participate in regularly scheduled practices, meetings, fundraisers, dances, or decorating for any activity. These activities must be developed and supervised by the sponsor of the activity that the restricted student was participating in at the time of the restriction or the activity the student will be participating in when the restriction period is over.
5. Participate in regularly scheduled choir and/or band concerts held at Pierce High School.
6. Participate in regularly scheduled activities that count as a grade toward a class.

****A student will not be allowed to miss school to attend an extracurricular activity as a participant or spectator.**

ACADEMIC LETTER REQUIREMENTS

In order to qualify for an academic letter a student must complete each of the following requirements: A student must earn a 3.50 grade point average or higher in both the fall and spring semester. This GPA is for academic classes only. The student must have no unexcused absences. The academic letter is awarded annually. The first year a student earns a chenille letter and pin. In succeeding years the student will receive a bar. Any student earning all A's on his/her report card would be awarded the academic letter "with distinction."

ACCESS

We believe all students can learn, but some need more time and attention. Because of this, all instructors will be accessible in their classrooms prior to the start of the school day from 7:40-7:57 am. Students may access their instructors during this time to receive additional help or assistance. Teachers can also require students to attend access if a student needs academic assistance, needs to finish an assignment or exam, or if a student needs to retake a failed exam. Students who fail to attend access when required by an instructor will eat their lunch in the office on the first two occurrences of the 9-week term. On the third absence, the child will be detained after school from 3:25-4:10 pm. Parents may excuse 2 access absences per 9-week term. To do so, parents should send a note with their child on the day of the absence to excuse their child's absence. Parents can also telephone the school on the morning of the student's absence and speak with the principal to excuse the absence. Students who accumulate 5 unexcused access absences in a 9-week term will be in-school suspended. On a student's 5th absence, the county attorney will also be contacted about the student's lack of attendance.

ACT EXAM

All 11th graders will take the state of Nebraska ACT exam during the spring semester. All junior students will participate in the John Baylor Preparation class prior to the exam. Students will also be prompted to complete a short, optional questionnaire addressing a number of topics. If you wish to review this questionnaire prior to the administration of the exam, please submit a written request to the superintendent.

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

We also offer an alternative school for students who struggle in the regular classroom or require credit recovery. All classes within the alternative program are offered using an online curriculum, computer-based program. Students interested in the program must speak personally with the principal to apply for the alternative school. Approval will be granted based on a student's academic, social, and personal needs and situation. Students granted admission to the alternative setting are assigned one of three possible schedules:

1. Full-Time Alternative School Student
2. Part-Time Alternative School/Part-Time Regular Classroom
3. Part-Time Alternative School/Part-Time Work Release Program

Students can earn elective credits by working at a part-time job. These credits can only be earned during the school year and only when a student is officially enrolled as a student at Pierce Public Schools. Students can earn 5 elective credits for every 80 hours worked. Students must prove their work hours by presenting the principal with their pay stub. The principal will also have direct contact with the student's job supervisor or boss.

ASSESSMENT OPT OUT

The Board of Education has adopted a policy on approval and denial of state and federal assessment opt-out requests, which is based on requirements in law. The policy can be requested by contacting the Superintendent of Schools.

COLLEGE COURSES

We allow our junior and senior students to take online college courses through Northeast Community College or Wayne State College. The student must be in good standing and have a permission slip from their parent/guardian. If the college instructor has a Nebraska teaching certificate, dual credit may be earned. The number of high school credits given for these courses will be the same as what the college gives for the course.

COURSE FAILURES AND COURSE RETAKES

Senior High students who fail a required course (English, Science, Social Studies, Math, Computer Applications 1, Real World Seminar & Financial Literacy, and Health & Physical Education) will have to retake and pass the course in order to graduate. Students in grades 7, 8, and 9 will retake the failed course the following school year or, if it is offered, have the option to attempt to pass the course during the summer school session.

Students who retake and successfully pass an entire course during the school year receive the grade they earn. For example – a student fails English 10 the first time he/she takes the course. The student later retakes English 10, successfully passes, and earns a "C" grade. Both the original failing grade and the "C" grade are recorded on the student's transcript, and both grades are counted toward the student's grade point average. Students who fail certain elective courses will not be allowed to retake the class unless they have special permission from both the principal and the instructor. These classes include Band, Choir, Strength & Fitness, and Journalism. A passing grade in both Strength & Fitness and Journalism is 80%. Band, Choir, and Strength & Fitness do not count toward a student's grade point average.

DUAL CREDIT/PROJECT CHALLENGE COURSES

Pierce High, Northeast Community College, and Wayne State College have established a partnership for dual credit. Dual credit courses are offered in our curriculum for upper-level students. Students may earn high school graduation credits and college credits at the same time. These courses are taught on our campus by our instructors. The student is responsible for the tuition cost.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE/ACTIVITY CLASSES/CLASS RETAKES

Grade Point Average (GPA) is a composite average of total grade points earned. Grades for activity classes will not be used to determine GPA, class rank, academic letters, academic scholarships, or valedictorian, salutatorian, and honor graduate awards. Graduation credits will be awarded for passing an activity class. Activity classes are those which can be repeated each year, such as Strength & Fitness, Band, Choir, and Journalism. Any student who fails an activity class will not be allowed to take the class again without special permission from the instructor and principal. If a student retakes an academic class that he/she has already passed, no graduation credits will be given for the retake. The second grade doesn't count toward his/her grade point average. If a student has failed a course, both grades count toward his/her grade point average when he/she retakes the course. Students will not be allowed to retake a class if they received a grade of C or above the first time.

GRADE RETENTION OF JR. HIGH STUDENTS

The decision to retain any junior high student who doesn't pass core curriculum classes will be made solely by the administration based on their educational expertise. There is no right to appeal or grieve this decision. For a child with an IEP or 504 plan, the grade advancement and educational program decisions will be made by the student's team comprised of the student's teachers, the principal, the special education director, and the student's parent/guardian.

GRADING SYSTEM

Final grades are issued to students at the end of each term. The semester grades are recorded on the permanent record or used to calculate grade point averages. A semester grade is the average of the two term grades within that semester. For example – A student earns an 80% in a class during term 1 and earns a 90% during term 2. The student's final semester grade would be an 85%. The recommended grading system is as follows:

A+ = 98-100 = 4.0	C+ = 80-82 = 2.3	F = below 65
A = 95-97 = 4.0	C = 77-79 = 2.0	P = passing
A- = 92-94 = 3.7	C- = 74-76 = 1.7	I = incomplete
B+ = 89-91 = 3.3	D+ = 71-73 = 1.3	
B = 86-88 = 3.0	D = 68-70 = 1.0	
B- = 83-85 = 2.7	D- = 65-67 = 0.7	

GRADUATION ELIGIBILITY FOR SENIORS

A student must meet the total number of credit hours required (250) and pass all required courses to be eligible for graduation. Graduation from high school shall be on the recommendation of the high school principal and the superintendent as set forth by the Board of Education and the State Department of Education. If after the first semester of their senior year a student cannot realistically meet the graduation requirements of the school district, they will not be allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies. Blank or unsigned diplomas will not be given.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The minimum number of credit hours to be earned during grades nine through twelve for graduation is 250. Students must attend school a minimum of four school years (3 ½ school years if finishing in December of Sr. year). Any variance in this attendance requirement must be approved by the Board of Education. Students must pass the following number of courses in each of the required subject areas:

English.....	4 courses
Social Studies.....	3 courses
Science.....	3 courses
Mathematics.....	3 courses
Physical Education.....	1 course
Computer Applications.....	1 course
Real World Seminar/Financial Literacy.....	1 course

A semester course completed with a passing grade is worth 10 credits. Attendance is also expected. Students should review their credit status with their advisor and counselor after each semester. 250 total credits are required for graduation. **The Real World Seminar/Financial Literacy course can be taken during a student's junior or senior year.

HOMEWORK REQUIREMENTS/AFTER-SCHOOL STUDY HALL

Students in grades 7-12 are expected to have all of their homework complete on a daily basis. Students who fail to fulfill their homework requirements will be required to attend after school study hall the same school day with the teacher of that particular class. If the teacher is unable to meet with the student after school, the student must attend the central study hall located in the resource learning center. Parents/guardians will be contacted during the school day if their child doesn't have their homework complete. Students will not be excused from after school study hall except in the case of a doctor, dentist, or court appointment. An after-school job or work will be accepted as an excuse only on the first occasion. In the case of a doctor, dental, court appointment, or first-time work commitment, the student will then have to stay after school the next school day.

Students who skip an after-school study hall will be required to stay one hour after school on Friday or the last day of the week. Students who skip this hour may be suspended.

HONOR GRADUATE/SUMMA CUM LAUDE AWARDS

This award will be presented annually during the graduation ceremony. Students are eligible for these awards if their grade point average is 3.7 or above, or they have earned 4 academic letters, or they are ranked in the top 10% of their class. Activity class grades will not be used to determine the students' grade point averages.

HONOR ROLL

Any student achieving a semester grade point average of 3.5 or above will be placed on the Principal's Honor Roll. Students achieving a semester grade point average of 2.7 or above will be placed on the Honor Roll. Junior High Honor Roll is determined by using grades from English, Math, Social Studies, Science, Physical Education/Health, and Jr. High Exploratory.

INCOMPLETES

When a student's work is not completed by the end of the grading period, the student will receive an incomplete as a grade. The student will have three calendar weeks (21 calendar days) to complete the work from the end of the semester, or he/she will receive no credit for the class. If the incomplete is received at the end of the fourth term, the student must make arrangements to complete the work

during the summer to receive credit for the term. Time extensions for special situations (medical) must be approved by the principal.

LATE GRADE POLICY

Teachers have the liberty to establish their own late grade rule for their classrooms. It is important that students pay attention to the rule and adhere to it during the semester. Students who fail to turn in homework on time will lose partial or full credit for the assignment depending on the particular class. All students will be expected to turn in homework to prove both completion and comprehension of the information. Students who fail or refuse to turn in homework will be required to stay after school with that particular teacher or in the central study hall to complete the unfinished work.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parents may make appointments for conferences with teachers, the counselor, or the principal by telephoning the school office. Parent-teacher conferences will take place during the first and second semesters. Parents are encouraged to communicate with their child's teachers. Education of our youth is a shared responsibility. Good communication helps prevent problems.

REGISTRATION FOR CLASSES/SCHEDULE CHANGES

Students choose their courses during the previous year. Students are required to register for four classes per semester. Any exceptions must be approved by the counselor and principal. Students will be given a copy of their class schedule. If a student has a problem, an appointment should be made with the guidance counselor. However, the class in question should not be missed while waiting for the counselor. The counselor should be seen before school, after school, during lunch, or during 5th period. Before changing a class, students must have written permission from the counselor and fill out a proper Drop and Add Slip. Students are responsible for getting necessary teachers' signatures. Schedule changes must be completed by the end of the second day of each semester.

After the first 2 school days of the semester, students will not be allowed to drop a class except for instances of an extended physical illness or injury or an extended mental illness. If an extended illness or injury makes it impossible or impracticable for a student to successfully complete a class or classes, the student may be allowed to withdraw from a class or classes. In all cases, drops must be approved by the principal and guidance counselor as well as the student's parent/guardian.

REPORT CARDS

Progress reports are sent to parents on an "as needed" basis to report changes in student performance. Parents are urged to check with the teachers about their student's progress. Students and parents can access their grades at any time using their Power School accounts. A term progress report will be sent home at the conclusion of a nine-week term. Report cards will be issued at the end of each semester.

SEMESTER TESTS

All students in grades 7-12 will take semester tests on the last day of both the first and second semester. Students with positive academic and attendance records will have the option of not taking the semester tests. Students will be considered to have positive academic and attendance records if they have a semester average of 80% or above in ALL classes AND have 6 or fewer days or the class period equivalence (24 class periods) absent. The attendance records of students who have more than 6 days missed or the class period equivalence (24 periods) will have their attendance records examined by the principal. Any absences over the limit may be excused by the principal in the case of extreme

family or personal injury, illness, or emergency. All school sponsored activities are excused absences and do not count toward a student's total absences.

In addition, students can also bypass semester tests if they meet the following standards of performance, attendance, and behavior:

1. Must have a 65% or higher semester average in all classes
2. Must have 6 or fewer absence in all class periods
3. Must have no written discipline referrals during the current semester. This includes written referrals/detentions for poor behavior, excessive tardies, excessive access absences, and/or unexcused absences (skipping school or oversleeping). It also includes any type of suspension (activity, in-school, or out-of-school).

STUDENT RECORDS/FAMILY EDUCATION AND PRIVACY ACT

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

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

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

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

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

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

Parents who **OBJECT** to the disclosure of any directory information about their student should write a letter to the principal. This letter should specify the particular categories of directory information that the parents do not wish to have released about their child or the particular types of outside organizations to which they do not wish directory information to be released. This letter must be received by the school district no later than August 29, 2025.

Non-Directory Information

All of the other personally identifiable information about students that is maintained in the school district's education records will generally not be disclosed to anyone outside the school system except under one of two circumstances: (1) in

accordance with the provisions of the FERPA statutes and related administrative regulations, or (2) in accordance with the parent's written instructions.

One FERPA exception permits disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests without consent. A school official includes, but is not necessarily limited to, a teacher or other educator, administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); school board member; volunteer; contractor or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, representative of the district's insurance providers, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or a third-party website operator who has contracted with the school district or its agent to offer online programs for the benefit of students and/or the district; members of law enforcement acting on behalf of the school district; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a "legitimate educational interest" if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill a school-related professional, contractual, statutory, or regulatory responsibility.

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

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

Complaints: Individuals who wish to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA may contact the Office that administers FERPA: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Dept. of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605

SUMMER SCHOOL AND JUNIOR HIGH ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Junior High students will be required to pass the five full time classes: English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Physical Education. Listed below are the ramifications if a child fails any of the required classes:

1. If the child failed only one class, the child will retake the course the following school year.
2. If the child failed two or more classes, the student may be retained at the same grade level.
3. Summer school may be offered to 7th, 8th, and 9th grade students, who have failed a core class, based on the administration's discretion. If a summer school session is offered, 7th & 8th grade students who've failed one of the above listed classes will be expected to attend. Students who do not attend will retake the course the following school year.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

All teacher qualifications are available upon request in the superintendent's and principal's office at the Jr.-Sr. High School.

TEST RETAKES

Individual instructors will set their own test retake policy. Some instructors may allow one retake test. Some instructors may require multiple retake tests until a certain grade level is achieved. Other instructors may not allow retake tests at all. Instructors who allow retake tests will dictate the maximum grade a student can earn when taking a retake test. It is important each individual student understands the expectations of each of their individual instructors.

TRANSCRIPTS

When a student enters junior high school, they start to develop their educational transcript. This transcript is a permanent lifetime record that the school system keeps forever. Grades, attendance, test scores, activity participation, class rank, and graduation date are some of the items included in this permanent record. Colleges, tech schools, businesses, and future employers may request this information during your lifetime. The school will not send a transcript to anyone unless the student or parent/guardian gives their permission.

TRANSFERS AND WITHDRAWALS

When a student withdraws from school, he/she must report to the counselor's and principal's offices. In the counselor's office, the student will get a check-out sheet which all teachers of assigned classes must sign, and also a Release of Transcript record sheet. If this procedure is not done, transcripts may not be forwarded to the student's next school.

When students transfer into our school after a semester has started, the counselor will try to develop a schedule to match their previous schedule. Each situation will be dealt with on an individual basis. If a student enters late in the term (after two weeks), the possibility exists that they may be given a limited schedule, or audit classes without receiving graduation credits.

VALEDICTORIAN & SALUTATORIAN

The valedictorian and salutatorian of the senior class are determined by a student's grade point average. In case of a tie based on the students' grade point averages, the average percent of all senior high grades for the students involved in the tie will be calculated. Only one valedictorian and one salutatorian will be awarded at the graduation ceremony. In order to qualify for the distinction, a student must be a full-time student at Pierce High School during his/her entire 11th & 12th grade years.

WEIGHTED CLASSES

Grades earned in advanced level classes within the core curricular areas of Science, Mathematics, and Language Arts will be calculated using a 5.0 grade point scale rather than a 4.0 scale. The advanced courses include the following: Trigonometry, Statistics, Calculus, Chemistry 1, Chemistry 2, Physics, Physiology 1, Physiology 2, Intro to Health Science/Medical Terminology, and English 12.

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Period 2 – 9:34-11:04

*During this 120 minute (2 hour) period, each student will be in a class for 90 minutes and lunch for 30 minutes.

Period 4 – 1:12-2:42

Period 5/Homeroom/Study Hall – 2:45-3:20

Access time – 3:20-3:50

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ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

The staff at Pierce Jr.-Sr. High School believes in the academic, social, and ethical well-being of all our students. The following policy was adapted in an effort to teach and encourage appropriate academic behaviors here at Pierce Jr.-Sr. High School.

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1. Copying from others during an examination.
2. Collaborating on a test, quiz, homework assignment, or project with others without permission from the instructor.
3. Programming of notes, formulas, or other aids into a programmable calculator or electronic device and then using it on an exam without the instructor's permission.
4. Using a communication device such as a cell phone, pager, PDA, or electronic translator to obtain information during an exam.
5. Copying computer files from another person and representing the work as your own.

6. Allowing others to do research or writing of an assignment such as using the services of a commercial term paper company or using the services of another person (family member, tutor, etc.) inappropriately.
7. Submitting substantial portions of the same academic work for credit in more than one course with a second teacher.
8. Obtaining, attempting to obtain, or aiding another person to obtain credit for work by any dishonest or deceptive means.
9. Lying.
10. Copying another person's work or answers.
11. Discussing the answers or questions on a test or assignment unless specifically authorized by the teacher.
12. Taking or receiving copies of a test without the permission of the teacher.
13. Using or displaying notes, "cheat sheets," or other sources of unauthorized information.
14. Using the ideas or work of another person as if they were your own without giving proper credit to the source.
15. Submitting work or any portion of work completed by another person.
16. Failing to give credit for ideas, statements, facts, or conclusions which rightfully belong to another person.

B. Fabrication: The use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings. Fabrication includes but is not limited to the following examples:

1. Citation of information not taken from the source indicated. This may include incorrect documentation of source materials.
2. Listing sources in a bibliography not used in the academic exercise.
3. Submission in a paper or other academic exercise of false or fictitious data.
4. Submitting as your own any academic exercises prepared totally or in part by another.

C. Plagiarism: The inclusion of another's words, ideas, or data as one's own work. This includes both unpublished and published sources. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Quoting another person's words, sentences, paragraphs, or entire work without acknowledgement.
2. Utilizing another person's ideas, opinions, or theory without acknowledgement of the source.
3. Failing to use quotation marks or other appropriate means of attribution when quoting directly from another person or source.

Range of Consequences for Academic Dishonesty

A student who cheats, plagiarizes, or otherwise participates in any academic dishonesty is subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion, as well as grade reduction during the current semester and previous semesters.

ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

If the student does not have some type of health insurance, he/she should consider the insurance plan offered at school at the beginning of each school year. Student insurance is available at a nominal cost and is optional. When a student insured under this plan is injured, he/she may secure

a claim form from the insurance representative. This form must be completed by his/her parents and presented to the doctor or hospital. The school merely acts as a medium in supplying the insurance and assumes no liability, either for the injury or the subsequent negotiations with the company.

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

Use of or possession of, or being under the influence of, any alcoholic beverage or any controlled drug in the school building, on any school property, or at any school activity under school jurisdiction is strictly forbidden. Any student in violation of this rule will be suspended or expelled from school. Parents and the local law enforcement officers will be contacted. Every effort will be made to retain the student at the activity until parents or authorities can come and get him or her. The school will comply with State Law LB 1250.

BUILDING SECURITY

All visitors must report to the principal's office to check in and obtain a visitor's badge. All doors to the building will remain locked. All physical education and athletic lockers shall be locked.

If a student hears any type of threatening statement that would endanger the safety of anyone in the building, they should report this to an adult immediately.

BUS REGULATIONS

Riding school vehicles is a privilege, not a right. The bus drivers have the same authority as teachers while transporting students. Students must comply with the following rules and all school conduct rules and directives while riding in school vehicles. In addition, students must also comply with the student code of conduct while riding in school vehicles. If misconduct is recurring, the student will not be allowed to ride the bus.

a) **Rules of Conduct on School Vehicles:**

- 1) Students must obey the driver promptly.
- 2) Students must wait in a safe place for the bus to arrive, clear of traffic and away from where the vehicle stops.
- 3) Students are prohibited from fighting, engaging in bullying, harassment or horseplay.
- 4) Students must enter the bus without crowding or disturbing others and go directly to their assigned seats.
- 5) Students must remain seated and keep aisles and exits clear while the vehicle is moving.
- 6) Students are prohibited from throwing or passing objects on, from, or into vehicles.
- 7) Students may not use profane language, obscene gestures, tobacco, alcohol, drugs or any other controlled substance on the vehicles.
- 8) Students may not carry weapons, look-a-like weapons, hazardous materials, nuisance items or animals onto the vehicle.
- 9) Students may carry on conversations in ordinary tones, but may not be loud or boisterous and should avoid talking to the driver while the vehicle is in motion. Students must be absolutely quiet when the vehicle approaches a railroad crossing and any time the driver calls for quiet.

- 10) Students may not open windows without permission from the driver. Students may not dangle any item (e.g. legs, arms, backpacks) out of the windows.
- 11) Student must secure any item or items that could break or produce injury if tossed about the inside of the vehicle if the vehicle were involved in an accident
- 12) Student must respect the rights and safety of others at all times.
- 13) Students must help keep the vehicle clean, sanitary and orderly. Students must remove all personal items and trash upon exiting.
- 14) Students may not leave or board the vehicle at locations other than the assigned stops at home or school unless approved prior to departure by the superintendent or designee.
- 15) Video cameras may be placed on buses, at random, to monitor student behavior on the bus.

b) **Consequences**

Drivers must promptly report all student misconduct to the administration. These reports may be oral or written. Students who violate the Rules for Conduct will be referred to their building principal for discipline. Disciplinary consequences may include A note home to parents, suspension of bus riding privileges, exclusion from extracurricular activities, in-school suspension, short term or long term suspension from school, and/or expulsion.

These consequences are not progressive, and school officials have discretion to impose any listed punishment they deem appropriate, in accordance with state and federal law and board policy.

c) **Records**

Records of vehicle misconduct will be forwarded to the appropriate building principal and will be maintained in the same manner as other student discipline records. Reports of serious misconduct may be forwarded to law enforcement.

Requests to be dropped off at a point **not** on the regular route will not be accommodated, unless extenuating circumstances arise and the request is approved by the transportation director or administration.

Students who are not regular route riders may not ride the bus home with a friend, unless the parent of the non-route student presents written permission to the bus driver ahead of time. The written permission should include the date, the non-route rider's name, the signature of the non-rider's parent, and the place approved for drop off. Such requests may not be granted if they cause overcrowding of the vans or buses (Vans-10 riders only, plus driver).

BULLYING

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

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

Reporting Bullying

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

Bullying Investigations

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

CELL PHONES

Students are allowed to bring their cell phones to school. Cell phones must be stored in a student's academic school locker and must be turned off. Students may not store their cell phones in their athletic/Physical Education lockers during the school day. Students may not use their cell phones during the school day (8:00-3:20) unless they have permission from Mr. Brahmer, Mr. Steffensen, or Mrs. Nordby. Students required to be in access (7:40-7:57 am) may not have their cell phones with them. Cell phone use during the school day is limited to the office area only during a student's lunch period. In case of an emergency, a student will be allowed to use their phone in the office during other times of the day.

Any student caught with their cell phone on them, in their possession, or in their computer or duffel bag during the school day (8:00-3:20) and/or any student caught using their cell phone without permission during the school day (8:00-3:20) will be in-school suspended for 1 day. A second cell phone violation during the same school year results in a 2-day in-school suspension. A third offense results in a 1 day out-of-school suspension or, on the discretion of the principal, a 3-day in-school suspension. Cell phones will be kept in the principal's office until a parent/guardian can come to the school to pick it up. Cell phones do not belong in the classroom. It is a distraction for students, and it negatively affects the learning environment.

The taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or otherwise (commonly called texting, sexting, e-mailing, etc.) may constitute a crime under state and/or federal law. Any person engaged in these activities while on school grounds, in a school vehicle or at a school activity will be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the student code of conduct. Any student found to be in possession of obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs will be promptly referred to law enforcement and/or other state or federal agencies, which may result in arrest, criminal prosecution and possible inclusion on sex offender registries.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

School employees will report suspected abuse or neglect of a child as required by state law and school policy. Nebraska law defines abuse or neglect as knowingly, intentionally, or negligently causing or permitting a minor child or an incompetent or disabled person to be (1) placed in a situation that endangers his or her life or physical or mental health; (2) cruelly confined or cruelly punished; (3) deprived of necessary food, clothing, shelter or care; (4) left unattended in a motor vehicle, if such child is six years of age or younger; (5) sexually abused; (6) placed in a situation to be sexually exploited through sex trafficking of a minor as defined in state law or by allowing, encouraging, or forcing such person to engage in debauchery, public indecency, or obscene or pornographic photography, films, or depictions; or (7) placed in a situation to be a trafficking victim as defined in state law.

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Lunch #1 - 11:08-11:38

Lunch #2 – 11:38-12:08

Lunch #3 - 12:08-12:38

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CIRCULATION OF PETITIONS

*Students and school employees shall be permitted to circulate petitions on school grounds subject to the limitations set forth herein.

1. Time – Circulating petitions shall be limited to before school starts, during lunch time, and after school is dismissed.
2. Place – Petitions shall not be circulated in any classroom, in the library, or in any room where a class or extracurricular activity is going on. The place of circulation distribution shall not interfere with the normal flow of traffic within the school buildings, entrance ways, and corridors.
3. Manner – The manner of circulation distribution shall be such that:
 - a. Coercion is not used to induce students or others to sign petitions.
 - b. A copy of the petition to be circulated shall be submitted to the principal at least 24 hours prior to such circulation. The principal may limit the number of persons who are permitted to circulate the petitions, may specify a particular time when the petitions may be circulated, and may specify a particular area of the school buildings or school grounds where the petitions are to be circulated.
4. Review of Petition Materials – Written petitions shall be reviewed on the basis of legitimate educational concerns as heretofore set forth in this policy.
5. The administration shall temporarily confiscate materials which are distributed in violation of this policy or petitions which are circulated in violation of this policy pending a determination as to the final disposition of such materials. Students and staff shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action for distributing materials or circulating a petition in violation of this policy.

CLOSING OF SCHOOL

Closing of school due to inclement weather or whatever the reason will be announced over the following radio/TV stations: WJAG-AM (780) Norfolk, KEXL-FM (106.7) Norfolk, KNEN-FM (94.7) Norfolk, Lite Rock 97.5 Norfolk, US92 (92.7) Norfolk, and NCN. It also will be displayed on the Norfolk Daily News Website.

COLLEGE OR CAREER VISITATION DAY

Three days will be allowed for college bound seniors and two days for college bound juniors to visit colleges and/or job shadow in a career interest area. Students must be in good academic standing to use the college/career days. Any student wishing to take these "college or career visitation days" are expected to first make an appointment with the college or career area, with the assistance of the guidance counselor. A blue prearranged absence form will then be issued in the counselor's office. This will assure that all the student's assignments are completed before leaving. Each respective classroom teacher is required to sign the blue prearranged absence form when assignments are complete. The blue prearranged absence form must then be turned in to the office before the student takes the "college/career day." If all requirements are met, this absence will not be counted. A "college-career day" must be used BEFORE May 1st. Any variance must be approved by the administration.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

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

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Good communication helps to resolve many misunderstandings and disagreements. This complaint procedure applies to complaints unless the complaint is subject to a different procedure required by law, policy or contract. Individuals who have a complaint should discuss their concerns with appropriate school personnel in an effort to resolve problems at the lowest level of the chain of command. When those efforts do not resolve matters satisfactorily, including matters involving discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, or age, a complainant should follow the procedures set forth below. Allegations of sex discrimination covered by Title IX will be addressed through the board's Title IX policy. Under this policy, factual conclusions will be based on a preponderance of the evidence.

COMPLAINT AND APPEAL PROCESS

1. The first step is for the complainant to speak directly to the person(s) with whom the complainant has a concern. For example, a parent who is unhappy with a classroom teacher should initially discuss the matter with the teacher. However, the complainant should skip the first step if complainant reasonably believes speaking directly to the person would subject complainant to discrimination or harassment.
2. The second step is for the complainant to speak to the building principal, Title IX/504 coordinator, superintendent of schools, or president of the board of education, as set forth below. Anyone with questions about the appropriate person to speak with may request clarification from the superintendent.
 - a) Complaints about the operation, decisions, or personnel within a building should be submitted to the principal of the building.
 - b) Complaints about the operations of the school district or a building principal should be submitted in writing to the superintendent of schools.
 - c) Complaints about the superintendent of schools should be submitted in writing to the president of the board of education.
 - d) Complaints involving discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, or age may also be submitted, at any time during the complaint procedure to the School District's Title IX/504 coordinator. Complaints involving discrimination or harassment may also be submitted at any time to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education: by email at OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov; by telephone at (816) 268-0550; or by fax at (816) 268-0599.

3. When a complainant submits a complaint to an administrator or to the Title IX/504 coordinator, the administrator or coordinator shall first determine whether another applicable procedure is required by policy or law and if so, direct the complaint to the appropriate person to follow that procedure. If not, the administrator or Title IX/504 coordinator shall promptly and thoroughly investigate the complaint, and shall:
 - a) Determine whether the complainant has discussed the matter with the staff member involved, the respondent.
 - 1) If the complainant has not, the administrator or Title IX/504 coordinator will urge the complainant to discuss the matter directly with the staff member (the respondent), if appropriate.
 - 2) If the complainant refuses to discuss the matter with the staff member (the respondent), the administrator or Title IX/504 coordinator shall, in his or her sole discretion, determine whether the complaint should be pursued further.
 - b) Strongly encourage the complainant to reduce his or her concerns to writing.
 - c) Interview the complainant and, if necessary, the staff member (respondent) against whom the complaint is filed, to determine:
 - 1) All relevant details of the complaint;
 - 2) All witnesses and documents which the complainant believes support the complaint;
 - 3) The action or solution which the complainant seeks.
 - d) Respond to the complainant. If the complaint involves discrimination or harassment, the response shall be in writing and shall be submitted within 180 days after the administrator or Title IX/504 coordinator receives the complaint.
4. If either the complainant or the respondent is not satisfied with the decision, he or she may appeal the decision to the superintendent. The superintendent may assign a qualified designee to hear any appeal.
 - a) This appeal must be in writing.
 - b) This appeal must be received by the superintendent no later than three calendar days from the date of the decision.
 - c) For complaints addressed through other applicable procedures that do not include a separate investigatory process, the superintendent will investigate as he or she deems appropriate.
 - d) The superintendent will prepare a written decision and provide it to the complainant and any other person entitled by law to receive the appeal decision. For complaints involving discrimination or harassment, the superintendent shall submit the decision within 180 calendar days after the superintendent received complainant's written appeal. Appeals to the superintendent from complaints involving discrimination or harassment are final once the superintendent delivers the written decision, as are all other appeals/complaints to

the superintendent unless the complaint can be appealed on the limited grounds to appeal to the board below.

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

- 1) If the complainant has not, the board president or designee will urge the complainant to discuss the matter directly with the superintendent, if appropriate or required.
- 2) If the complainant refuses to discuss the matter with the superintendent, the board president shall, in his or her sole discretion, determine whether the complaint should be pursued further.

- c) Determine, in his or her sole discretion, whether to place the matter on the board agenda for consideration at a regular or special meeting by the full board.
- d) Respond to the complainant or appeal. If the complaint or appeal involves discrimination or harassment, the response shall be in writing and shall be submitted within 180 calendar days after the president received the complaint.
- e) Appoint or contract with other individuals qualified to assist the board through this process or any other applicable procedure used to address allegations against the superintendent.

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

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

COMPUTER PROGRAM

The school district will provide all 7-12 graders with laptop computers to complete academic work. Unless a parent/guardian opts out of any program or software, the district will assume parents/guardians consent to their students accessing the applications and software tools at school. As with all school property, students may be charged for damage to their laptop computers or any other student's computer. Purposeful damage done to a computer will result in the student paying the full replacement or repair costs. To protect against potential losses due to accidental damage, students and parents may, but are not required to, purchase insurance coverage for the computers. The amount of this insurance coverage facilitated by the school district will be \$25 per student.

COMPUTER USE EXPECTATIONS AND REGULATIONS

Pierce Public Schools provides computers for student and faculty use. The use of the computers, network and access to the Internet is a privilege and should be respected and used wisely.

Parent/Guardian Permission

1. Instructional staff may use or implement online applications and software that might share a student's information with third party applications. Federal and state law impose requirements on student data that can and cannot be shared with outside entities.

Parents/guardians may opt out of any online program or software that shares student data with third-party applications.

2. A written parental permission and agreement form is required for a student to be issued a laptop computer.

Security and Privacy

1. Keep your login and password private. Use by anyone other than yourself creates a security risk for both your own files and the network. If you forget your password and cannot get into your network account, seek help from the technology coordinator.
2. Students shall not use, or try to discover, another student's password.
3. Never leave your laptop computer unattended. Doing so may put your files, password, and network access at risk for misuse by others.

Care of Laptop Computer/Damage to Laptop Computer

1. Eating or drinking near computers is strictly forbidden.
2. When not in use, laptops must be carried in the provided bag to avoid accidental damage. Laptop bags should not be thrown or tossed.
3. Nothing shall be placed inside the laptop (ie stapled paper, pens, pencils, etc.) when closing the lid. Doing so may crack the screen.
4. Students shall not store items other than pens/pencils in the side pocket of the computer bag. Overloaded side pockets may lead to a damaged computer screen. Mechanical pencils/lead create a mess and should not be stored in the accessory bag. The accessory bag should be used for a student's computer charger only.
5. Students are not to deface their laptops or carrying bags in any way. Stickers, tape, paint, marking pens should never be used on a student's computer or bag.
6. The laptop is not to be left in a vehicle. This is especially the case during extreme hot or cold temperatures. Laptops left in vehicles are also susceptible to theft and damage.
7. Cleaning the computer is to be done with a soft cloth. Do not spray anything directly on the computer. Cleaning supplies are available in the high school library.
8. Students shall not purposely damage anyone's laptop computer.
9. Students shall not purposely attempt to power down another student's computer.
10. All damaged computers, chargers, and carrying bags will be repaired by Pierce Public Schools. Students will reimburse the school for repair or replacement of property lost, stolen, damaged or vandalized while under their care. Laptop computer insurance is available.

Student Responsibilities

1. Students are responsible to have their computer fully charged and at school each day. The students should also have their charger/adapter. Laptops must not be left unattended. Faculty will pick up and give unattended laptops to the principal's office.
2. Sound on laptop computers must be turned off at all times except when used for class purposes.
3. Inappropriate screensavers or pictures are not allowed on a computer.
4. Students shall not erase, change, rename, or make unusable anyone's computer, files, programs, or storage devices.
5. Students shall not use or attempt to discover another student's passwords.

6. Students shall not use a computer for unlawful purposes such as illegal copying or installation of software.
7. Students shall not allow other persons to use their name, log-in, password, or files for any reason unless directed by a teacher.
8. Students shall not disclose personal information such as their names, school, addresses, or telephone numbers outside the school network.
9. Students shall not write, produce, generate, copy, propagate, or attempt to introduce any computer code designed to self-replicate, damage, or hinder the performance of any computer's memory, file system, or software. Such software is often called, but is not limited to: bug, virus, worm, or Trojan Horse.
10. Students shall not configure or troubleshoot computers, networks, printers, or other associated equipment, except as directed by a teacher.
11. Students shall not falsify electronic mail messages or web pages.
12. Students shall not copy, change, or transfer any software or documentation provided by the school district, teachers, or other students without permission from the system administrator.
13. Students shall be responsible for backing up all necessary files used for school purposes.

Student Use of Laptop Computers

1. Academic use always takes priority over personal use of computers. Gaming on a school-issued laptop computer is not allowed.
2. Applications, messages, statements, declarations, or data bases used on PHS computers must meet the standards with regard to laws governing privacy, copyright, sexual harassment, plagiarism, or forgery.
3. Hacking (intentionally gaining or misusing access to data and computer systems) is a felony and is subject to cancellation of computer privileges and appropriate disciplinary action.
4. Internet access to visual depictions that are obscene, violent, or pornographic or are of a harmful nature to minors are filtered or blocked. Students who intentionally access or attempt to access these websites or files are subject to disciplinary measures and may have their computer taken away.
5. Participation in social chat rooms is prohibited.
6. All students are issued a student email account. Inappropriate content being sent or received subjects the account user to disciplinary actions.
7. All students are issued a PowerSchool account. Students are encouraged to use their PowerSchool login to check their grades, conduct, and attendance information.
8. The school's internet is to be used for research and as a means of obtaining academically relevant information. Material obtained through research on the internet and then used in academic work is to be properly documented. Students may not access web sites, newsgroups, or "chat" areas that contain material which is obscene or promotes illegal activity. If a student does accidentally access this type of information, he or she should notify a PHS staff member.
9. Use of the computer, including using email for anything other than a teacher directed or approved activity, is prohibited during the school day.
10. Unless specifically assigned by a teacher, computer games are prohibited in classes, hallways, etc. during the regular school day.
11. Computers may not be used to make sound recordings or digital images without the consent of all those being recorded.
12. Because of copyright laws, installation of peer-to-peer file sharing programs is strictly forbidden. Using Apple Music or similar programs to share music is also forbidden. If a student has any questions about what constitutes a copyright violation, he/she should contact a PHS staff member.
13. A student may not download additional software.

14. Students are not allowed to listen to music during the school day.
15. Students may access only those files that belong to them.
16. Deliberate attempts to degrade the network or to disrupt system performance will result in disciplinary action. A student's account shall always remain open.
17. School administrators reserve the right to remove student accounts on the network to prevent unauthorized activity.
18. Students should comply with trademark and copyright laws and all license agreements. If a student is unsure, read the copyright information at the school website or ask a teacher.
19. Students shall not deliberately use the computer to annoy or harass others with language, images, innuendos, or threats. The user shall not deliberately access or create any obscene or objectionable information, language, or images.
20. Students shall not engage in any illegal or inappropriate activities on school computers, including the downloading and copying of copyrighted material.
21. Students shall not use school computers for commercial advertising or political advocacy of any kind without the express written permission of the system administrator.
22. Students shall not publish web pages that purport to represent the school district or the work of students at the school district without the express written permission of the system administrator.

Printing

1. Do not send a file to the printer a second time if a document does not print. Ask for assistance if you have trouble printing.
2. Students may print assignments or classwork if required by a teacher. Personal printing is available with permission.

CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE/IRRESPONSIBLE LAPTOP COMPUTER USE

The following offenses will result in written detentions:

- a. Playing games on your laptop computer.
- b. Unauthorized music during the school day.

***3 written detentions in any 9-week term results in a 1 day in-school suspension. 5 written detentions in any 9-week term results in a 1 day out-of-school suspension.

The following offenses will result in a written detention, suspension of computer privileges, suspension from school, and/or expulsion from school:

- a. Inappropriate music.
- b. Inappropriate e-mail.
- c. Abuse of laptop computer.
- d. Unneeded or inappropriate printing.
- e. Inappropriate desktop pictures.
- f. Use of the computer to harass, threaten, or bully anyone.
- g. Any violation of the student code of conduct or computer use rules.

COPYRIGHT AND FAIR USE

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

The "fair use" doctrine allows limited reproduction of copyrighted works for educational and research purposes. "Fair use" of a copyrighted work includes reproduction for purposes such as criticism, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research. Students who

are unsure whether their proposed reproduction of copyrighted material constitutes "fair use" should consult with their teacher or building principal, review the school district's copyright compliance policy, and review *Copyright for Students* found at <https://www.whoishostingthis.com/resources/student-copyright/>. You can find more information on copyright compliance requirements and permitted uses from the U.S. Copyright Office and the Library of Congress at the following site: <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/copyright.html>.

COUNSELOR SERVICES

We offer services for emotional counseling, academic guidance, career guidance, and individual testing assessment. Appointments may be arranged by obtaining a pass from the counselor. These appointments should not interfere with instructional time unless it is an emergency situation. The best time to visit the counselor is before school, access time, or after school. If the counselor is busy with another student, you should return to your assigned area.

DANCE GUESTS

Pierce High School students who wish to bring an "out of town" date to any school sponsored dances must complete a Pierce High School Dance Guest Request Form. These forms will be on hand in the high school office. The following expectations must be followed if a Pierce High School student wishes to bring a guest from outside our school system:

1. A guest must come to the dance and leave with the Pierce High student who submitted the guest request form.
2. The guest request form must be completed and submitted to the high school office by 3:50 pm the Thursday prior to the dance.
3. A guest is the responsibility of the accompanying Pierce High student. If a guest violates the Pierce High Dance Policy of no alcohol, tobacco, illegal substances or inappropriate behavior, both the student and the guest may be asked to leave and shall forfeit their privilege to participate in school sponsored dances. Guests will be screened for alcohol, tobacco, and illegal substances, along with the Pierce High students.
4. Any type of inappropriate behavior displayed by the guest and/or Pierce High student will result in consequences at school for the Pierce High student, depending on the situation.

DATING VIOLENCE

Pierce Public Schools strives to provide physically safe and emotionally secure environments for all students and staff. Positive behaviors are encouraged in the educational program and are required of all students and staff. Dating violence, as that term is defined by Nebraska law, will not be tolerated by the school district. Students who engage in dating violence on school grounds, in a school vehicle or at a school activity or that otherwise violates the Nebraska Student Discipline Act will receive consequences consistent with the Act and the district's student discipline policies.

The school district shall provide dating violence training to staff deemed appropriate by the administration and in accordance with Nebraska law.

DIABETES OR ASTHMA/ANAPHYLAXIS SELF MANAGEMENT

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

DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

Students who believe that they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their disability should contact the Section 504 Coordinator: Kendall Steffensen at (402-329-4677) or via email kendallsteffensen@piercebluejays.org or in person at school. Students who believe they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their sex should contact the Title IX coordinator, Kendall Steffensen at (402-329-4677), kendallsteffensen@piercebluejays.org, or in person at the school. Students who believe that they have been the subject of any other unlawful discrimination or harassment should contact the principal, Mark Brahmer at (402-329-6217) or markbrahmer@piercebluejays.org or 201 N. Sunset, Pierce, NE 68767 or in person at school. Students may report discrimination or harassment to any staff member who will then forward it on to the appropriate coordinator or administrator. The staff member will follow school district policies to respond to the report.

DRESS CODE

The school district prohibits student attire or appearance that:

1. Causes or is likely to cause a material and substantial disruption to the district's programs and activities.
2. Promotes, depicts, or refers to violence, drugs, alcohol, vulgarity, obscenity, illegal activity, hate speech, bullying speech, or harassing speech.
3. Includes words, gestures, or images that contain or imply sexual content or innuendo.
4. Otherwise undermines the district's mission to inculcate the habits, manners, and values fundamental to civility, community, and the educational environment.

Violations of the dress code shall be addressed in a manner consistent with the Student Code of Conduct. The district reserves the right to request immediate attire changes from students. The district will require students to adhere to uniform standards and/or wear district approved or issued uniforms in order to participate in activities.

Students may be required to wear protective clothing or equipment or otherwise modify their attire or secure their hair to ensure the safety of themselves and others. In such cases, a good faith effort to reasonably accommodate students will be made to ensure safety without compromising religious beliefs, grooming practices, or requiring students to permanently alter their appearance. The least restrictive means appropriate to address the identified health or safety concern shall be used.

DRUG FREE SCHOOLS

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

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

DRUG SNIFFING DOGS

The administration is authorized to use sniffer dogs to minimize the presence of illicit items on school grounds. Students and staff are specifically notified of the following:

1. Lockers may be sniffed by sniffer dogs at any time.

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

EARLY GRADUATION

Students in the senior class will be granted the opportunity to complete their senior year at the end of the fall semester if the following items are completed:

- 1) Successfully pass all senior high core class requirements. This includes the senior English course and Government/Research.
- 2) Successfully pass the Real World Seminar/Financial Literacy course during their Jr. or Sr. year.
- 3) Successfully accumulate 250 credits.

A mid-year graduate surrenders the opportunity to participate in all Pierce High School extra-curricular activities after completion of the fall semester of his/her senior year. This includes, but is not limited to, Winter Royalty, Prom, sports, fine arts, music, and clubs/organizations. Mid-year graduate students will have the opportunity to participate in the May graduation ceremony. All mid-year and full-year graduates will be expected to follow Pierce High School expectations and rules before, during, and after the ceremony. Students will not receive their diploma until the May graduation exercises. It will be the student's responsibility to contact the senior class sponsor or principal for details and expectations for graduation.

ENERGY DRINKS & PRE-WORKOUT DRINKS OR MIXES

Energy drinks such as Red Bull, Monster, RockStar, etc. and pre-workout drinks or mixes are not allowed in the school building and may not be consumed by students during school or before or after school activities.

EXPENDITURES

All materials and supplies chargeable to the school district will be procured by requisition on a purchase order. Teachers and students will be personally responsible for purchases made without proper authorization. All expenditures of funds must have prior approval by the principal and superintendent.

FIRE AND TORNADO DRILLS

Fire drills will be conducted according to State regulations. Your teachers will instruct you on fire drill procedures. The main thing to remember is to be orderly and to leave the building by the assigned route as rapidly as possible. During the tornado season, drills will be conducted. The procedures for these drills will be outlined by your classroom teachers and are posted throughout the building.

FIREARMS, WEAPONS, EXPLOSIVES AND MATERIAL THAT CAN BE IGNITED

These items are prohibited on school property or at school sponsored events unless authorized by the school administration. According to the Gun Free Schools Act (LB 658, Federal Law 18 U.S.C. Section 921), a student shall be expelled for one calendar year for possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon.

The Nebraska School Law [(79-4, 180(5)] and the Student Discipline Act (LB 1250) also prohibit weapons, including knives, on school property or at school events.

FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

The school district provides a food service program that is designed to provide adequate nutrition and an educational experience for students. Only students' immediate family members of teammates mentors may visit during lunch time.

BREAKFAST

The school will serve breakfast daily from 7:15 a.m. until 7:50 a.m. Students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch also qualify for free or reduced-price breakfast. The school district charges students \$2.90 for breakfast.

LUNCH

Lunch prices are set by the school district. Lunch for 7-12 lunch is \$3.40 for students.

PAYMENT FOR MEALS

Students are encouraged to pay for meals several weeks in advance. Payment should be made in the office.

If a student has no funds available to pay for a meal, the student will be permitted to charge up to \$15 worth of food. Thereafter, if a student has no funds available to pay for a meal, a sack lunch including a sandwich, piece of fruit, and a milk will be provided.

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

If a student repeatedly lacks funds to purchase a meal, has not brought a meal from home, and is not eligible for the free meal program, the district will use its resources and contacts to protect the health and safety of the student. Failure or refusal of parents or guardians to provide meals for students may require mandatory reporting to child protection agencies as required by law.

COLLECTION OF DELINQUENT MEAL CHARGE DEBT

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

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin,

sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

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

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

GIFTS AND PARTIES

Classroom groups are requested not to collect money for teacher gifts. During school hours there are to be no parties or picnics except for very special occasions, and then such plans must be approved by the principal.

HEAD LICE

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

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

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

HEALTH INFORMATION AND IMMUNIZATIONS

According to State Law, students must be up to date on their immunizations before they are allowed to attend school. Parents/Guardians must furnish one of the following to school officials:

- proof of adequate immunizations for mumps, measles, rubella; diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus; polio; and hepatitis B series; or

- a signed parental statement of refusal to provide the immunization history. Homeless students who are in need of immunizations will be referred to the homeless coordinator, who shall assist in obtaining necessary immunizations or medical records.

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

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

Parents should also furnish updated health information about their children to the school during the first week of school. If your child has any problems, we need to know.

HOMELESS CHILDREN

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

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

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

If a homeless child registered to attend school in the district is receiving family reconciliation services pursuant to state law, the district will work in cooperation with any county or department of social services in the district to jointly develop an educational program for the child. The district's homeless coordinator is Mark Brahmer, who may be contacted at 402-329-6217.

HOMEROOM/STUDY HALL (5th PERIOD)

All students, except Jr. High athletic (in-season) participants, will be assigned a study hall during our school day's 5th period from 2:45-3:20 pm. All students are expected to use their time wisely during the study hall. Students who don't have homework to complete or tests to study for will be expected to silently read. Students who don't utilize their time wisely during study hall will be detained after school or possibly suspended.

Students may access other instructors during study hall. This can be done only after checking out with their study hall instructor and obtaining a pass. All students must return to their original study hall prior to the end of the school day at 3:20 pm. ***During 5th period study hall, the library can only be accessed strictly for academic reasons.*** Seniors who qualify for senior privileges will have the option to end their school day at 3:00 pm.

LIBRARY

The library has books, magazines, pamphlets and other resources for assigned study and recreational reading. It is open for use from 7:40 am until 3:50 pm. Students can access the library

before 7:40 am or after 3:50 pm if supervised by an instructor or aide. Other arrangements for usage may be made with the librarian, technology coordinator, classroom teacher or principal. Fines are charged for overdue material at an established rate.

LOCKERS AND OTHER SCHOOL PROPERTY

The school district owns and exercises exclusive control over student lockers, desks, computer equipment, and other such property. Students should not expect privacy regarding usage of or items placed in or on school property, because school property is subject to search at any time by school officials. Periodic, random searches of lockers, desks, computers and other such property may be conducted at the discretion of the administration. The assignment of a locker is on a temporary basis and may be revoked at any time. School officials may inspect student lockers without any particularized suspicion or reasonable cause. Searches by legal authorities and canine units may also occur. Each student will be responsible for the locker assigned to him/her. No tape, stickers, etc. will be allowed on lockers.

MEDICATIONS

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

Prescription medication. (1) Parents/guardians must provide a physician's written authorization for the administration of the medication. (2) Parents/guardians must provide their own written permission for the administration of the medication. (3) The medication must be brought to school in the prescription container and must be properly labeled with the student's name, the physician's name, and directions for administering the medication.

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

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

OFFICE AIDES

Only 11th grade or 12th grade students will be considered by the administrative team to be aides in the high school offices. 11th grade students who hold a cumulative 3.2 grade point average or above and have a positive attendance and discipline record will be considered. 12th grade students who hold a cumulative 3.0 grade point average or above and have a positive attendance and discipline record will be considered. Students with cumulative grade point averages lower than the set standards may be

considered as office aides only when they are recruited by the high school principal, guidance counselor, or secretary/administrative assistant.

PARKING REGULATIONS & TRANSPORTATION

Students are not allowed to drive for school related purposes or activities unless directly supervised by a staff member. Students' cars will not be driven during school hours unless a student has permission from the principal's office and permission from his or her parents. Students in industrial technology classes may be required to have their vehicles for class projects. In this case, the student will be allowed to drive their vehicle with permission from the industrial technology instructor. If a student parks improperly, he or she will be required to move the vehicle and may serve detention time. The first two rows in the main, original paved lot east of the school are reserved for faculty and visitors. The second two rows are reserved for seniors on a first come basis. The seniors will also be given a limited number of spots in the second row east of the school. All students driving to school may park in the new paved parking lot on a first come basis. If all the parking spots are taken in the two paved lots, students shall park in the Northeast gravel parking lot. Students will not be allowed to park in the west side gravel lot. Students may not park in the parallel parking area immediately east of the high school in the circle lane.

PHYSICAL EXAMS

Students entering the seventh grade, and those entering school from another state, are statutorily required to show evidence that they have had a physical examination within six months prior to the date of entering school.

POP, CANDY, GUM

Absolutely no gum is allowed in the school building. Pop and candy are not allowed during school. Food, pop, milk, etc. can be consumed in the commons area before or after school. Food and drink are not allowed in the classrooms or hallways. Lunches may be stored in student lockers, but no open (seal is broken) pop or drink containers are allowed. Detentions will be assigned to those who violate this rule. STUDENTS ARE ALLOWED TO HAVE CLEAR WATER BOTTLES WITH THEM DURING THE SCHOOL DAY.

POLICE QUESTIONING AND APPREHENSION

Police or other law enforcement officers may be called to the school at the request of school administration or may initiate contact with the school in connection with a criminal investigation. The school district shall inform parents when law enforcement officers seek access to their student prior to the student being questioned unless the officers are investigating charges that the student has been the victim of abuse or neglect. Members of the school district staff will comply with board policy regarding police questioning of students.

PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS

The school district will not discriminate in its education program or activity against any student based on the student's current, potential, or past pregnancy. Students who are pregnant or parenting are encouraged to continue participating in the district's educational and extracurricular programs. Students

who anticipate deviations from their regular school experience or accrue absences due to pregnancy or parenting should notify their building principal as early as possible to discuss their educational programming in collaboration with the Title IX Coordinator.

In order to accommodate lactating and breastfeeding students, the district will provide reasonable opportunities to express breast milk or breastfeed in a place, other than a bathroom, which is shielded from view and free from intrusion from district students, employees, and the public. The district will also provide a location for students to store expressed breast milk in or near the location designated for students to express milk to create the least amount of disruption to the student's participation in class or activities. Students who wish or need to express breast milk on a regular schedule must work with school administrators to create a schedule that accommodates the student's needs while facilitating education to the maximum extent possible.

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

PROTECTION OF STUDENT RIGHTS

The Board of Education respects the rights of parents and their children and has adopted a Protection of Pupil Rights policy in consultation with parents to comply with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) and The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The policy is available on the district's website or upon request from the district's administrative office. Parents may opt their child out of participation in activities identified by the Protection of Pupil Rights policy by submitting a written request to the superintendent. Parents may have access to any survey or other material described in the Protection of Pupil Rights policy by submitting a written request to the superintendent.

PROTECTION OF STUDENTS ON-LINE

- A. Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)
 - 1. The school will not allow companies to collect personal information from children under 13 for commercial purposes. The school will make reasonable efforts to disable advertising in educational computer applications.
 - 2. This policy allows the school to act as an agent for parents in the collection of information within the school context. The school's use of student information is solely for education purposes.
- B. Education About Appropriate On-Line Behavior
 - 1. School district staff will educate students about appropriate online behavior, both in specific computer usage units and in the general curriculum.
 - 2. Staff will specifically educate students on
 - a. Appropriate interactions with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms.
 - b. Cyberbullying awareness and response.
 - 3. The School District's technology coordinator shall inform staff of this educational obligation and shall keep records of the instruction which occurs in compliance with this policy.

RESTITUTION FOR DAMAGES

Students will be responsible for any equipment or supplies issued to them by the school. The student will pay replacement costs for school property which is damaged by the student. Willfully damaging or vandalizing school property will also result in suspension from school.

RIGHTS OF CUSTODIAL AND NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

The school district will honor the parental rights of natural and adoptive parents unless those rights have been altered by a court.

The term "custodial parent" refers to a biological or adoptive parent to whom a court has given primary physical and legal custody of a child, and a person such as a caseworker or foster parent to whom a court has given legal custody of a child.

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

The district will provide the custodial parent with routine information about his or her child, including notification of conferences. The district will not provide the non-custodial parent with such information on a routine basis but will provide it upon the non-custodial parent's request unless it has been denied by the courts.

A non-custodial parent who wishes to attend conferences regarding his or her child will be provided information about conference times so both parents may attend a single conference. The district is not required to schedule separate conferences if both parents have been previously informed of scheduled conference times.

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

SENIOR PRANK

In years past, it became tradition for our graduating seniors to play a prank on the school prior to and/or on their last official day of school. What started out, and remained for a number of years, as simple decorations mixed in with a little mischief turned into actions bordering on vandalism. To stop the yearly occurrence, any senior who plays a part in committing a senior prank at any time at the school, in the school, and/or on school grounds will surrender their opportunity to participate in the graduation ceremonies. Students who participate in any such prank also open themselves up to possible law enforcement involvement.

SENIOR PRIVILEGES

Sr. Privileges: Students can earn the opportunity to finish their school day at 3:00 pm and forgo the last 20 minutes of the required study hall. If a student chooses to remain in the building, he/she will have the option to attend a study hall monitored by an instructor, go to the locker room if they have Sr. High practice, or access an individual instructor. Students opting to access an instructor will check into the Sr. Study Hall, tell the study hall monitor which instructor they will be working with, and check out of the study hall. Students who do not want to remain in the building are free to leave at this time.

Students wanting to participate in the Sr. privilege program can earn this opportunity by proving they are competent, productive, and responsible students. All seniors who wish to earn the privileges:

***Must fulfill the following four expectations:**

1. Must be passing all classes at all times. Senior students who are failing 1 or more classes will be required to attend the Senior study hall until they are passing all of their current classes.
2. Must have earned a minimum of 200 senior high school credits by the completion of his/her junior year.
3. Must not have any unexcused absences from school during their junior or senior year. Students with unexcused absences will be required to attend the senior high study hall until 3:20 pm.
4. Must not have more than one written detention or Saturday/Friday School or suspension (In-School or Out of School) during their junior year or senior year. Students who accumulate more than one of the above disciplinary actions will be required to attend the Senior study hall.

****Must fulfill 4 of the 6 following expectations:**

1. Must be proficient on the ACT math test (students with accommodations on the test can be designated with their own proficient score).
2. Must be proficient on the ACT language arts test (students with accommodations on the test can be designated with their own proficient score).
3. Must be proficient on the ACT science test (students with accommodations on the test can be designated with their own proficient score).
4. Must be proficient on the ACT reading test (students with accommodations on the test can be designated with their own proficient score).
5. Must have a cumulative 2.0 G.P.A. and must maintain a 2.0 or above through the fall of their Sr. year.
6. Must have completed at least 3 extracurricular activities by the end of their junior year.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a violation of Pierce Public School Policy (4300.2). Sexual harassment is also a violation of federal and state law.

DEFINITION: Sexual harassment is behavior expressed in words, pictures, or actions that is offensive to a person (male or female). It is defined by the receiver, not the person that behaves offensively. Sexual harassment must involve issues of sexuality. Sexual harassment is unwanted or unwelcomed activity of a sexual nature which interferes with or disrupts the educational process. This may include, but is not limited to, unwanted touching, pinching, patting, or verbal comments of a sexual nature; sexual name-calling; pressure to engage in sexual activity; propositions, written messages, cartoons, notes, or graffiti of a sexual nature; or unwanted body contact to private areas. Touching someone or threatening to touch someone in a sexual way may be considered criminal assault as well as sexual harassment.

REPORTING: Harassment does not go away if ignored. It may get worse before it stops. Tell your harasser to stop and report the incident to your counselor or principal. Complaint forms are on file in the principal's office. The form will explain the proper procedure for you and your parents to follow. Remember to document the unwanted behavior when it occurs. Do not be afraid to file a complaint. Retaliation against someone who complains is a violation of state and federal law.

The intent of our school district is to provide a safe learning environment for all our students. The disciplinary action for sexual harassment shall be suspension or expulsion. The length of such will be determined by the administration.

SMART WATCHES

Smart watches may not be worn by students during school hours. Students who need their smart watch to monitor a health condition will need to obtain the proper paperwork from their physician documenting the specific health condition and the need for the watch. This paperwork will need to be presented to the high school principal prior to the student being allowed to wear the smart watch.

SMOKING AND TOBACCO

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

SPECIAL RULES REGARDING EDUCATIONAL SERVICES AND RELATED SERVICES TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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

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

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

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

SPLIT BLOCK CLASS PERIOD

All Sr. High students will have the opportunity to participate in a split block schedule during 1st period. Students opting for this schedule will participate in one split block class for the first 45 minutes of the period and take a different split block course during the last 45 minutes. Available split block courses may vary from school year to school year. Students who successfully pass a split block course will earn 5 credits for each class (a total of 10 credits for the 90-minute period).

STANDARDIZED TESTING

The Measure of Academic Progress (M.A.P.) is administered annually in grades 7-10 to determine a student's achievement probability for individual success. The test is administered in September or October, and the results are sent to parents/guardians.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

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

STUDENT ILLNESS

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

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

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

TELEPHONE CALLS

The office will always gladly cooperate with parents or guardians to get messages to pupils during school hours. However, calls for pupils during school hours are disturbing to the school routine and should be held to a minimum. Messages will be written down and delivered to the pupil. Pupils will not be called to the telephone while in class except in an emergency situation.

The school telephone is primarily for school business and should not be used for personal calls.

TEXTBOOKS

The school furnishes books to all students or students are given access to online textbooks on their laptop computers. This is done with the hope that this major investment will be properly safeguarded. Reasonable wear is expected as a result of daily use. Unreasonable damage to textbooks will result in fines which must be paid to the office at the end of the fall semester or the end of the school year. Book covers are expected to be used on all textbooks. Lost textbooks must be paid for and replaced immediately.

THREAT ASSESSMENT AND RESPONSE

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

1. Definitions
 - a. A threat is an expression of a willful intent to physically or sexually harm someone or to damage property in a way that indicates that an individual poses a danger to the safety of school staff, students, or other members of the school community.
 - b. The threat may be expressed/communicated behaviorally, orally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through any other means.
 - c. A transient threat is an expression of anger or frustration that can be quickly or easily resolved.
 - d. A substantive threat is an expression of serious intent to harm others which includes, but is not limited to, any threat which involves a detailed plan and means.
 - e. A threat assessment is a fact-based process emphasizing an appraisal of observed (or reasonably observable) behaviors to identify potentially dangerous or violent situations, to assess them, and to manage/address them. Threat assessment is the process of identifying and responding to serious threats in a systematic, data-informed way.
 - f. The threat assessment process is distinct from student disciplinary procedures. The mere fact that the district is conducting a threat assessment does not by itself necessitate suspension, expulsion, or emergency exclusion without complying with state law and board policy related governing those actions.
 - g. The threat assessment process is distinct from specialized instruction which a student with a disability may receive from the school district. The school district will not change a student's educational placement as that term is used in the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act solely as part of a threat assessment.
2. Obligation to Report threatening Statements or Behaviors.

All staff and students must report substantive threats to a member of the administration immediately and comply with any other mandatory reporting obligations. Staff and students who are unsure whether a threat is substantive or transient should report the situation. Staff and students must make such report regardless of the nature of the relationship between the individual who initiated the threat or threatening behavior and the person(s) who were threatened or who were the focus of the threatening behavior. Staff and students must also make such reports regardless of where or when the threat was made or the threatening behavior occurred.

THREATS OR ASSAULTS WHICH REQUIRE IMMEDIATE INTERVENTION SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE POLICE AT 911.
3. Threat Assessment Team

The threat assessment team (team) shall consist of the superintendent, principal, activities director, guidance counselor, and local law enforcement. Not every team member need participate in every threat assessment. If the threat has been made by or is directed toward a student with a disability, the threat assessment team must include a staff member who is knowledgeable about special education services or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as appropriate. Neither the student nor the student's family members are part of the threat assessment team. The team is responsible for investigating all reported threats to school safety, evaluating the significance of each threat, and devising an appropriate response. The threat assessment team shall work closely with the crisis team in planning for crisis situations. The threat assessment team shall be familiar with mental health resources available to students, staff, and patrons and shall collaborate with local mental health service providers as appropriate.

4. Threat Assessment Investigation and Response

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

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

- Review of the threatening behavior and/or communication;
- Interviews with the individuals involved including students, staff members, and family members as necessary and/or appropriate;
- Review of school and other records for any prior history or interventions with the students involved;
- Any other investigatory methods that the team determines to be reasonable and useful.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the team will determine what, if any, response to the threat is appropriate. The team is authorized to disclose the results of its investigation to law enforcement and to the target(s) of any threatened acts. The team may refer the individual of concern to the appropriate school administrator for consequences under the school's student discipline policy or, if appropriate, report the results of its investigation to the student's individualized education plan team.

Regardless of threat assessment activities, disciplinary action and referral to law enforcement will occur consistent with board policy and Nebraska law.

5. Communication with the Public about Reported Threats

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

6. Coordination with the Crisis Team After Resolution of the Threat

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

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE, VIDEO RECORDINGS, AND PHOTOGRAPHS

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

Parents/guardians and patrons may make recordings of school activities intended to be public in a non-disruptive manner including activities such as athletic contests, music concerts, 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. 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.

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 the 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 are generally 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. **At no time 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.**

VISITING SCHOOL

All visitors must obtain a visitor's pass from the principal's office prior to visiting teachers, students or school facilities. Parents are welcome to visit school and are requested to check in at the office. If a parent wishes to visit a classroom, they must use the procedure described in board policy. Numerous persons from other schools, colleges, universities, sales companies, etc. visit our school, and it is part of the school's responsibility to know who is in the building and for what purpose. **BRINGING FRIENDS TO VISIT DURING SCHOOL HOURS IS NOT ALLOWED. FRIENDS CAN'T COME TO EAT LUNCH WITH OUR STUDENTS. ONLY IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS ARE ALLOWED TO EAT LUNCH WITH OUR STUDENTS.**

DISCIPLINE REGULATIONS

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

General Discipline Philosophy

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

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

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

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

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

Forms of School Discipline

Administrative and teaching personnel may take actions regarding student behavior that are reasonably necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or prevent interference with the educational process. Such actions may include, but need not be limited to, counseling of students, parent conferences, referral to restorative justice practices or services, rearrangement of schedules, requirements that a student remain in school after regular hours to do additional work, restriction of extracurricular activity, or requirements that a student receive counseling, psychological evaluation, or psychiatric evaluation upon the written consent of a parent or guardian to such counseling or evaluation. The actions may also include in-school suspensions during the day or mandatory attendance at Saturday school. When in-school suspensions, after-school assignments, Saturday School, or other disciplinary measures are assigned, the student is responsible for complying with such disciplinary measures; a failure to serve such assigned discipline as directed will serve as grounds for further discipline, up to expulsion from school.

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

Any student who is suspended or expelled from school pursuant to this section may not participate in any school activity during the duration of that exclusion including adjacent school holidays and weekends.

The student activity eligibility of a student who is mandatorily reassigned shall be determined on a case-by-case basis by the principal of the building to which the student is reassigned.

AFTER-SCHOOL DETENTION

An after-school detention is a time when a student is required to remain after school because of an infraction of school rules or conduct which is unacceptable and hinders the educational process. All detentions will be served within one day from the time that the detention was given. Students who ride the bus will have to make their own arrangements for transportation after the detention. Students who work will have to make arrangements with their employer. Detentions will be served after school at the convenience of the instructor. The detention period will be from 3:25 P.M. until 3:50 P.M. or longer if dictated by the teacher or principal. Students will bring study materials to work on during a detention.

Basically, nothing will excuse the student from serving the detention time. Special permission from the principal's office, in some cases due to a family emergency, may excuse a student.

Any student who does not show up for the assigned detention time has shown direct insubordination and will be considered "unexcused." If the student fails to show up for a written detention, he/she will be assigned two hours of Saturday or Friday School. If a student skips an unwritten detention, it becomes a written detention and the time may double.

SATURDAY SCHOOL/FRIDAY AFTER SCHOOL

Saturday School or Friday After School will be assigned for some unexcused absences, skipped detentions, and excessive tardies. School work will be performed during this time. If a student skips Saturday School or Friday After School, the time will double. If a student skips a second time, they will be suspended from school. If a student accumulates 7 hours of Saturday School in one term, an in-school suspension will be assigned. A second offense will result in an out-of-school suspension.

SUSPENDED FROM AN INDIVIDUAL CLASS

If a student's behavior is disrupting the instructional learning process, the teacher will send the student to the principal. The following action will be taken:

1. On the first occurrence, the principal will confer with the teacher and student. The student will be suspended from this class until a written or verbal behavior agreement is settled with the instructor. The instructor will contact the student's parent or guardian. The child will make up the lost class time after school.
2. If the student is sent to the office for misbehavior a second time in an individual class, they will receive a one day in-school suspension. Depending on the severity of misbehavior, the principal can opt to suspend the student out-of-school. A conference with the parent/guardian and teacher will be arranged to develop a behavior modification plan. The student will be suspended from this class until a conference is arranged.
3. If the student is guilty of a third disturbance and is sent out of class, the student will be out-of-school suspended, short or long term, depending on the severity of the misbehavior.
4. If the student is sent out of class a fourth time for misbehavior, the student will be expelled from the class and a grade of "F" will be given. A student and/or parent will have the option to appeal to the superintendent and request a hearing as described in LB 1250.

SUSPENSION DEFINITIONS

1. In-school Suspension - The student is not allowed to attend regular classes. The entire day (8:00-3:20) is spent in the principal's office doing homework and assignments. Students who do not complete their homework during the in-school suspension day will stay after school until all of the homework is complete. The student does receive credit for his or her daily work. Computers may be used only for classwork. Personal music is not allowed.

2. Out-of-school Suspension - The student is not allowed in school or on school property during their suspension time. The student may not attend or participate in any school activities during their suspension time. Students will be given the opportunity to complete classwork, including but not limited to examinations, under the following conditions: All classwork, including tests, quizzes, and daily work, is made up and complete within the same number of days the student was suspended. EXAMPLE – A student was suspended out-of-school for 2 school days. Upon their return to school from suspension, they will have two school days to complete all missed daily work, quizzes, or tests. Instructors can provide extensions if they deem necessary.

3. Expulsion - The student is not allowed to attend school for the remainder of the current semester. The school shall provide either an alternative school, class or educational program for expelled students or shall follow the pre-expulsion procedures outlined in Neb. Rev. Stat. 79-266. If the expulsion occurs within the last ten days of the current semester, the expulsion will extend through the following semester. Some violations require that a student be expelled for an entire year. Students may request a hearing. Pierce Public Schools will comply with State and Federal Law concerning expulsion situations.

A. Summer Review of Expulsion: Any expulsion that will remain in effect during the first semester of the following school year will be automatically scheduled for review before the beginning of the school year. The review will be conducted by the hearing officer who conducted the initial expulsion hearing, or a hearing officer appointed by the Superintendent in the event no hearing was previously held or the initial hearing officer is no longer available or willing to serve, after the hearing officer has given notice of the review to the student and the student's parent or guardian. This review shall be limited to newly discovered evidence or evidence of changes in the student's circumstances occurring since the original hearing. This review may lead to a recommendation by the hearing officer that the student be readmitted for the upcoming school year. If the school board or board of education or a committee of such board took the final action to expel the student, the student may be readmitted only by action of the board. Otherwise, the student may be readmitted by action of the Superintendent.

B. Suspension of the Enforcement of an Expulsion: Enforcement of an expulsion action may be suspended (i.e., "stayed") for a period of not more than one full semester in addition to the balance of the semester in which the expulsion takes effect, and as a condition of such suspended action, the student may be assigned to a school, class, or program/plan and to such other consequences which the school district deems appropriate.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE ACT

The Student Discipline Act (LB 1250) was passed by the Nebraska Legislature in 1995. This bill provides the conditions under which students may be excluded from public schools. Its purpose is to assure the protection of school students' constitutional right to due process and fundamental fairness within the context of an orderly and effective educational process. An outline of LB 1250 will be available to parents upon request. This clarification is provided by the Pierce Public Schools in an attempt to inform parents, guardians and students about the law. The statute provides:

1. Rules must be clear and definite to provide clear notice to students.

2. Rules shall be distributed to students and their parents or guardians at the beginning of each school year, or at the time of enrollment.
3. Rules shall be posted in conspicuous places in each school during the school year.
4. Changes in rules and standards shall not take effect until reasonable effort has been made to distribute such changes to all students and parents.

The statute provides for five types of exclusions:

- (1) Short Term: Up to and including five (5) school days. During the short-term suspension, the student may not attend school or take part in any school functions.
- (2) Emergency Exclusion: Immediate exclusion if the student has a dangerous disease, or her/his conduct presents a threat to the physical safety of the school community, or is very disruptive. During the period of exclusion, a student may not attend school or take part in any school functions.
- (3) Long Term: Suspension from school and school functions for six (6) to nineteen (19) school days.
- (4) Expulsion: Suspension from school and school functions for the remainder of the semester, or up to one year. If the misconduct resulting in an expulsion occurred within the last ten days of the first semester, the expulsion will remain in effect through the second semester. If the misconduct occurred within the last ten days of the second semester, the expulsion will remain in effect for summer school and for the first semester of the following school year. Expulsion may be for two semesters in instances involving the knowing and intentional use of force in causing or attempting to cause personal injury to a school employee, school volunteer or a student or the knowing and intentional possession, use of, or transmission of a firearm or other dangerous weapon. Federal law requires that a student be expelled for a calendar year for bringing a firearm onto school property or to a school event.

No student may bring, possess, handle, or transmit a firearm on school grounds, in a school owned vehicle, or at a school activity or event off school grounds, except as permitted by this policy. The term "firearm", as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921, means any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, any firearm muffler or firearm silencer, or any destructive device (excluding an antique firearm). The only exceptions for a student to bring or possess a weapon, including a firearm, are as follows:

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

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

****Before a long term suspension or expulsion takes effect, the student or student's parent(s) may request a hearing. However, the principal has the authority to require that the student remain out of school until the hearing officer makes a recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools if, in the principal's judgment, it would "reduce the risk of (a) interference with an educational function for school purpose or (b) a personal injury to the student himself or herself, other students, school employees or school volunteers." If a hearing is not requested within five (5)**

school days after receipt of notice, the long-term suspension or expulsion will go into effect at the close of the fifth school day following receipt of notice. To request a hearing, you must complete and deliver or mail a written request to the Superintendent of Schools. The school office must receive the request for a hearing on or before the fifth school day following your receipt of notice in order to prevent the long-term suspension or expulsion from taking effect at the end of the fifth day.

(5) **Mandatory Reassignment:** Involuntary transfer to another school within the system in connection with any disciplinary action.

The statute provides the conditions and applicable procedures for each type of exclusion:

1. **Short Term Exclusion.** Up to, and including five (5) days:
 - a. Principal must make an investigation.
 - b. Principal may suspend after he/she determines it is necessary to help the student, to further school purposes, or to prevent interference with school purposes.
 - c. Student must be given oral or written notice of charges, an explanation of the evidence against him/her, and an opportunity to present his/her version.
 - d. Within 24 hours (or such time as is necessary) following suspension, the principal shall:
 - (1) Send a written statement to student, student's parents or guardian describing the student's conduct or violation of rule.
 - (2) Give reason for the action taken.
 - (3) Make a reasonable effort to confer with parents before, or at the time the student returns to school.
 - (4) Students who are short-term suspended will be given the opportunity to complete classwork, including but not limited to tests. All classwork, including tests and quizzes, must be completed within the same number of days the student was suspended. For example, a student was suspended out-of-school for three days. Upon return to school, the student will have three days to complete all of their classwork and complete any missed examinations.

2. **Emergency Exclusion:**

- a. Exclusion may not last longer than necessary to avoid the threats of the emergency.
- b. If longer than five (5) days, there must be substantial compliance with the procedures provided for long term exclusion. A hearing may be requested.

3. **Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion**

The following procedures of DUE PROCESS shall be followed with regard to any long-term suspension, expulsion or mandatory reassignment.

1. The decision to recommend discipline shall be made within two school days after learning of the alleged student misconduct. On the date of the decision to discipline, the Principal shall file with the Superintendent a written charge and a summary of the evidence supporting such charge.

2. The Principal shall serve the student and the student's parents or guardian with a written notice by registered or certified mail or personal service within two school days of the date of the decision to recommend long-term suspension or expulsion. The notice shall include the following:
 - a. The rule or standard of conduct allegedly violated and the acts of the student alleged to constitute a cause for long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment, including a summary of the evidence to be presented against the student;
 - b. The penalty, if any, which the principal has recommended in the charge and any other penalty to which the student may be subject;
 - c. A statement that, before long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment for disciplinary purposes can be invoked, the student has a right to a hearing, upon request, on the specified charges;
 - d. A description of the hearing procedures provided by the act, along with procedures for appealing any decision rendered at the hearing;
 - e. A statement that the principal, legal counsel for the school, the student, the student's parent, or the student's representative or guardian has the right (i) to examine the student's academic and disciplinary records and any affidavits to be used at the hearing concerning the alleged misconduct and (ii) to know the identity of the witnesses to appear at the hearing and the substance of their testimony; and
 - f. A form on which the student, the student's parent, or the student's guardian may request a hearing, to be signed by such parties and delivered to the principal or superintendent in person or by registered or certified mail.
3. When a notice of intent to discipline a student by long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment is filed with the superintendent, the student may be suspended by the principal until the date the long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment takes effect if no hearing is requested or, if a hearing is requested, the date the hearing examiner makes the report of his or her findings and a recommendation of the action to be taken to the superintendent, if the principal determines that the student must be suspended immediately to prevent or substantially reduce the risk of (a) interference with an educational function or school purpose or (b) a personal injury to the student himself or herself, other students, school employees, or school volunteers.
4. Nothing in this policy shall preclude the student, student's parents, guardian or representative from discussing and settling the matter with appropriate school personnel prior to the hearing stage.
5. If a hearing is requested within five days after receipt of the notice, the Superintendent shall recommend appointment of a hearing examiner within two school days after receipt of the hearing request. The student or the student's parent or guardian may request designation of a hearing examiner other than the hearing examiner recommended by the superintendent if notice of the request is given to the superintendent within two school days after receipt of the superintendent's recommended appointment. Upon receiving such request, the superintendent must provide one alternative hearing examiner who is not an employee of the school district or otherwise currently under contract with the school district and whose impartiality may not otherwise be reasonably questioned. The student or the student's parent or guardian must, within five school days, select a hearing examiner to conduct the hearing who was recommended or provided as an alternative

hearing examiner, and shall notify the superintendent in writing of the selection. The superintendent must appoint the selected hearing examiner upon receipt of such notice.

6. The hearing examiner must, within two school days after being appointed, give written notice to the principal, the student, and the student's parent or guardian of the time and place for the hearing.
7. The hearing shall be held within a period of five school days after appointment of the hearing examiner, but such time may be changed by the hearing examiner for good cause with consent of the parties. No hearing shall be held upon less than two school days' actual notice to the principal, the student, and the student's parent or guardian, except with the consent of all the parties.
8. The principal or legal counsel for the school, the student, and the student's parent, guardian, or representative have the right to receive the copy of all records and written statements referred to in the Student Discipline Act as well as the statement of any witness in the possession of the school board or board of education no later than forty-eight hours prior to the hearing.
9. If a hearing is requested more than five school days following the receipt of the written notice, but not more than thirty calendar days after receipt, the Superintendent shall appoint a hearing examiner. The hearing will be held according to the requirements of section 79-269. The student shall be entitled to a hearing but the consequence imposed may continue in effect pending final determination.
10. If a request for a hearing is not received within thirty calendar days following the mailing or delivery of the written notice, the student shall not be entitled to a hearing.

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

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

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

1. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes. The board has determined that the use of synthetic media such as deepfakes may constitute "similar conduct";
2. Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property of substantial value, or repeated damage or theft involving property;
3. Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to a school employee, to a school volunteer, or to any student. Personal injury caused by accident, self-defense, or other action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect some other person shall not constitute a violation of this subdivision;
4. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of or with the intent of obtaining money or anything of value from such student;
5. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon (*see also board policy on weapons and firearms*);

6. Engaging in the unlawful possession, selling, dispensing, or use of a controlled substance or an imitation controlled substance, as defined in section 28-401, a substance represented to be a controlled substance, or alcoholic liquor as defined in section 53-103.02 or being under the influence of a controlled substance or alcoholic liquor (*note: the term "under the influence" for school purposes has a less strict meaning than it does under criminal law; for school purposes, the term means any level of impairment and includes even the odor of alcohol on the breath or person of a student; also, it includes being impaired by reason of the abuse of any material used as a stimulant*);
7. Public indecency as defined in section 28-806, except that this prohibition shall apply only to students at least twelve years of age but less than nineteen years of age;
8. Engaging in bullying as defined in section 79-2,137. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines bullying as "any unwanted aggressive behavior(s) by another youth or group of youths who are not siblings or current dating partners that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated." Nebraska statute defines bullying as "an ongoing pattern of physical, verbal, or electronic abuse." The disciplinary consequences for bullying will depend on the severity, frequency, duration, and/or effect of the behavior and may result in sanctions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Students who believe they are being bullied should immediately inform a teacher or the building principal.
9. Sexually assaulting or attempting to sexually assault any person if a complaint has been filed by a prosecutor in a court of competent jurisdiction alleging that the student has sexually assaulted or attempted to sexually assault any person, including sexual assaults or attempted sexual assaults 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 section 28-319, sexual assault in the second degree as defined in section 28-320, sexual assault of a child in the second or third degree as defined in section 28-320.01, or sexual assault of a child in the first degree as defined in section 28-319.01, as such sections now provide or may hereafter from time to time be amended;
10. Engaging in any other activity forbidden by the laws of the State of Nebraska which activity constitutes a danger to other students or interferes with school purposes; or
11. A repeated violation of any of the following rules, or a single violation if the conduct amounts to a criminal act, if such violations constitute a substantial interference with school purposes:
 - a. The use of language, written or oral, or conduct, including gestures, which is profane or abusive to students or staff members. Profane or abusive language or conduct includes, but is not limited to, that which is commonly understood and intended to be derogatory toward a group or individual based upon race, sex, national origin, or religion;
 - b. Dressing or grooming in a manner which violates the school district's dress code and/or is dangerous to the student's health and safety, a danger to the health and safety of others, or which is disruptive, distracting or indecent to the extent that it interferes with the learning and educational process;
 - c. Violating school bus rules as set by the school district or district staff;
 - d. Possessing, using, selling, or dispensing tobacco, drug paraphernalia, an electronic nicotine delivery system, or a tobacco imitation substance or packaging, regardless of form, including cigars, cigarettes, chewing tobacco, and any other form of tobacco, tobacco derivative product, or imitation, or electronic cigarettes, vapor pens, etc.;
 - e. Possessing, using, selling, or dispensing any drug paraphernalia or imitation of a controlled substance regardless of whether the actual substance possessed is a controlled substance by Nebraska law;
 - f. Possession of pornography, including creation, possession, dissemination, accessing, sale, or any other use of synthetic media, such as deepfakes;
 - g. Sexting or the possession of sexting images (a combination of sex and texting - the act of sending sexually explicit messages or photos electronically), including creation,

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

*** Behavioral acts as listed in LB 1250 shall result in suspension or expulsion. Length of suspension shall be determined by school administration (1-19 days). The length of expulsion shall be determined according to LB 1250.

OTHER ACTS LEADING TO SUSPENSION AND/OR EXPULSION

After an investigation by the school administration, students may be suspended for any of the following acts:

1. Possession or use of any tobacco products or imitation tobacco products on school property or at school activities. This includes vapor cigarettes.
2. Repeated unexcused absences.
3. Violation of school driving regulations, obscene behavior or language, defiance of authority, vandalism, stealing school property, disrespectful behavior, verbal threats, and other acts of misbehavior that are detrimental to the normal functions of the educational program and activities.
4. Detention frequency. Three (3) detentions in a term will result in a one day in-school suspension. An additional two (2) detentions (5 total) will result in an out-of-school suspension. After that, any additional detentions will result in expulsion or long-term suspension.

*** If the administration concludes the misbehavior to be severe, the type and length of suspension will be determined by the school administration according to LB 1250. It is the legal responsibility of the administration to report criminal offenses to the proper authorities.

possession, dissemination, accessing, sale, or any other use of synthetic media, such as deepfakes;

- h. Engaging in initiations, defined as any ritualistic expectations, requirements, or activities placed upon new members of a school organization for the purpose of admission into the organization, even if those activities do not rise to the level of "hazing" as defined below. Initiations are prohibited except by permission of the superintendent;
- i. Engaging in hazing as defined by state law and this policy. Hazing is defined as any activity by which a person intentionally or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health or safety of an individual for the purpose of initiation into, admission into, affiliation with, or continued membership in any school organization. Under state criminal law, hazing activities include, but are not limited to, whipping, beating, branding, an act of sexual penetration, an exposure of the genitals of the body done with the intent to affront or alarm any person, a lewd fondling or caressing of the body of another person, forced and prolonged calisthenics, prolonged exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or harmful substance not generally intended for human consumption, prolonged sleep deprivation, or any brutal treatment or the performance of any unlawful act that endangers the physical or mental health or safety of any person. For purposes of school rules, hazing also includes any activity expected of someone joining a group, team, or activity that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate; personal servitude; restrictions on personal hygiene; yelling, swearing and insulting new members/rookies; being forced to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire in public; consumption of vile substances or smearing of such on one's skin; binge drinking and drinking games; sexual simulation and sexual assault;
- j. Bullying which shall include cyber-bullying, defined as the use of the internet, including but not limited to social networking sites such as Facebook, cell phones or other devices to send, post or text message images and material intended to hurt or embarrass another person. This may include, but is not limited to; continuing to send e-mails to someone who has said they want no further contact with the sender; sending or posting threats, sexual remarks or pejorative labels (i.e., hate speech); ganging up on victims by making them the subject of ridicule in forums, and posting false statements as fact intended to humiliate the victim; disclosure of personal data, such as the victim's real name, address, or school at websites or forums; posing as the identity of the victim for the purpose of publishing material in their name that defames or ridicules them; sending threatening and harassing text, instant messages or emails to the victims; and posting or sending rumors or gossip to instigate others to dislike and gang up on the target;
- k. Violation of the district's computer acceptable computer use policy are subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion; and
- l. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a simulated or "look-a-like" weapon;
- m. Using any object to simulate possession of a weapon;
- n. Knowingly making a false statement or knowingly submitting false information during the Title IX grievance process or any other school investigation or making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a Title IX grievance proceeding or any other school investigation;
- o. Any other violation of a rule or regulation established by a school district staff member pursuant to authority delegated by the board.

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

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

ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS

ATTENDANCE PHILOSOPHY

Students are expected to attend classes and to be on time in order to gain maximum benefit from the instructional program, develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline and responsibility.

Irregularity in attendance among students is the most frequent cause of failure. Typically, poor school attendance is only a symptom, and the real problem of not wanting to attend school is an attitude that parents should be concerned with and consult with school officials. Students learn from books, teachers, and other students. When a student is absent, they miss learning from their teachers and other students. Continuity in the learning process is seriously disrupted by excessive absences. Students do not learn as well by doing make-up work. In most instances, students who have good attendance records generally achieve higher grades, enjoy school more, and are more employable after high school. Attendance records are part of the student's permanent file. Absences are accumulated for each individual period. Our limitation is six absences per semester in any individual period.

ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED

Every person residing in the school district who has legal or actual charge or control of any child who is of mandatory attendance age shall cause that child to attend a public or private school regularly unless the child has graduated from high school or has been allowed to disenroll pursuant to this policy. This policy doesn't apply when attendance is made impossible or impracticable by severe weather conditions or by the mental or physical illness of the student or a child whom the student is parenting.

ATTENDANCE MANDATORY AGE

All children who are or will turn six years old before January 1 of the current school year are of mandatory attendance age. Children who have not turned eighteen years of age are of mandatory attendance age. Prior to turning eighteen years of age, students who are 16 or 17 years of age and wish to discontinue their enrollment must, along with their parent/guardian, apply for a waiver from the Nebraska Department of Education and prove one of the following: 1) The student must work full time to support the student's family, or 2) The student's health doesn't allow for the student to attend school. Attendance also is not mandatory for a child who has obtained a high school diploma by meeting statutory graduation requirements.

ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS

1. In case of illness or family emergency, parents are asked to call the principal's office prior to 9:30 A.M. on the first day of the student's absence. If possible, the principal will call to check on those absent who have not called in. This is a safety precaution, especially for those students who drive.
2. Any excused absences, other than sickness or an emergency, should be prearranged at least two (2) school days in advance.
3. All students going to a Pierce High School endorsed activity will be issued a pre-arranged absence form (yellow form) from the activity sponsor or coach. All assignments must be

completed and teacher signatures gathered before leaving on the activity. These forms should be turned into the sponsor or coach prior to departure for the activity.

4. If a student is absent from school or leaves school during the day because of illness, the student may not attend school activities that day or night. If a student is absent from school due to illness during the day and then goes to work after the completion of the school day, the absence will be unexcused and a one day in-school suspension will result.

5. A student leaving the school building must check out in the principal's office. He/She must have written permission from their parent or guardian prior to leaving. If not, the student must telephone their parent to get verbal permission to leave the building. If a student runs an errand for a teacher, they must have a pass and check out also. If the student does not check out properly, the absence is unexcused.

6. A student who becomes ill while at school and needs to leave will report to the principal's office. The student will be encouraged to first see the school nurse, if available. Before the student is allowed to leave the school building, the student will contact the parent or guardian at home or at work and obtain permission to leave school. School officials will not determine if a child is ill enough to go home. Parents or guardians will make this decision. The student will remain at school until the parent or guardian has been contacted. At times, students feel they are ill and go to the nurse's station to lie down. These students are counted absent if they do not attend class.

7. Upon return to school after being absent, the student must bring a written parental/guardian note stating the reason for the absence. A parent also can contact the principal to excuse their student's absence. The principal will determine whether a student's absence is excused or unexcused. Parental/guardian notes are accepted for six absences per semester only. Notes from a physician, dentist, judge, counselor, etc. must be furnished for any absence above the limit of six. Absences excused by a physician, dentist, judge, etc. will not be counted against the 6-absence limit. If the student returns to school without the proper written excuse (parent, doctor, etc.), the absence will be recorded as unexcused until the proper excuse is provided. Any forgery of excuse forms will result in suspension.

8. Upon return from an absence, a student can be required to attend morning access time and/or after school study hall until his/her work is completed.

9. Unexcused Absences: As previously defined, this type of absence falls in the category of acts leading to suspension or expulsion. The first unexcused absence in any one term will be made up during after school hours. When make-up time occurs will be determined by the principal. A student who misses any part of the school day, whether the entire day or part of the day, and the absence is unexcused, will make up the entire time missed. Any unexcused absences thereafter may result in suspension and possible credit reduction. Students are required to make up missed class work. This includes tests, quizzes, and any class/homework.

ABSENCE TYPES

1. Excused: Illness, family bereavement, doctor or dentist appointment, family emergencies, family vacations, justified church activities, and court appearances. The above are examples of excused activities. **A student is limited to six absences per class period per semester. School administrators will determine if excused absences are legitimate.**

2. Unexcused Absences: Truancy, oversleeping in the morning, leaving school without checking out, skipping class, improper written excuse (parent or doctor) or lack of proper excuse for an absence are examples of unexcused absences. After school time and/or in-school suspension time will result in the case of an unexcused absence. If a student's absence is unexcused, the student will be required to make up the missed class work. This includes tests, quizzes, and any class/homework. Summer school may also be required for unexcused absences.

3. Special Absences: Participation in any Pierce High School sponsored activity is constituted as a prearranged absence and not counted on the absence record.

ABSENCE LIMITATIONS

Absences are reviewed by office personnel on a weekly basis. Parents/guardians can excuse 6 absences per class period per semester. Any absence over the limit of 6 must be excused by a physician, dentist, counselor, or judge. Parents/guardians will be notified by mail when their child reaches 4 absences for any one period during the semester. Parents/guardians do not need to contact the school when they reach the 4-absence notice letter. Parent/guardians will be notified by mail, once again, if their child reaches 6 absences for any one period during the semester.

*****Absences excused by a doctor, dentist, counselor, or court appointments will not be counted toward the total of 6 absences per class period.

Students who are over the limit of 6 allowable absences (24 class periods) per semester are required to have these absences excused by a physician, dentist, counselor, or judge. The principal will communicate via an in-person meeting, via a zoom meeting, or via a telephone call with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student who is over the 6 allowable absences (24 class periods) if any of the absences are unexcused. This communication will include a discussion concerning the reasons for the student's absenteeism along with the development of a plan to improve the child's attendance. Ultimately, any absences that aren't properly excused will be made up in summer school. Seniors who have any unexcused absences will be required to make up the lost class time after school.

The attendance committee will review attendance records at the end of each semester. Any appeal of their decision may be directed to the Superintendent of Schools. Summer School will be assigned based on the following formula:

<u>Absences</u>	<u>Summer School</u>
0-6	No Summer School
7-8	2 days
9-10	4 days
11-12	6 days
13 or more	8 days

Senior high students who refuse to come to summer school will lose all graduation credits from the semester classes in which the student's attendance was over the limit of 6 absences. Students who are eliminated from the summer school program because of misconduct/poor behavior will also lose all graduation credits from the affected semester. Dismissal of a student from summer school will be based on the principal's discretion.

Junior high students (grades 7-8) who do not meet the attendance requirements will also be required to attend Summer School. If the child does not come to summer school, the child will be retained at their present grade level. Elimination of a jr. high student from summer school because of misconduct/poor behavior will result in retention at the present grade level. Dismissal of a student from summer school will be based on the principal's discretion.

ABSENCES – EXCESSIVE AND UNEXCUSED

Students who are over the limit of 6 parental excused absences in a semester shall be deemed to have “excessive absences” if any of those absences over 6 are unexcused. Such absences shall be determined on a per class basis. When a student has excessive absences, a meeting, in person, via zoom, or telephone, shall be held between the school principal or members of the administrative staff, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student, and the student. The purpose of the meeting will be to solve the excessive absenteeism problem and to develop a collaborative plan addressing the barriers to attendance. If the parent/guardian refuses to participate in the meeting, the principal will place in the student’s attendance records documentation of such refusal.

CLOSED CAMPUS

We operate a closed campus. Students must stay on the school grounds from the time they arrive, even if the first period has not started, until dismissal or until they are picked up by the bus. Any student leaving the school grounds must check out through the office.

CLOSED LUNCH TIME

The junior-senior high school will have a closed lunch time. That is, students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during lunch except by special permission granted by the office, the principal or superintendent. The student must also have permission from his/her parent or guardian. Students will not be allowed to leave school to get lunch off-campus.

EXCESSIVE ABSENTEEISM REPORTED TO THE COUNTY ATTORNEY

When a student is absent more than twenty (20) days per school year or the hourly equivalent and any portion of the absences is unexcused, the principal may file a report with the county attorney of the county in which the student resides. For example, if the student accumulates 23 days of excused absences due to documented illness and is tardy or unexcused one time, the principal may file a report with the appropriate county attorney. Pierce Jr.-Sr. High School will comply with Nebraska Statute 79-209.

MAKE-UP CLASSWORK

Upon returning to school after being absent, a student will report to the office and present an explanation of the absence in writing by the parent or guardian. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain the missed information and classwork from his/her instructors. This includes all tests and quizzes missed. The student will have one day to make up the work for each day of absence. Example: If a student is absent for 3 days, their make-up work will be due on the fourth day back in school. If the student knows about an assignment in advance, the work should be completed by the original due date. Example: On Monday the teacher assigns a test for Friday. If a student then misses school during the week, they are still required to test on Friday unless the instructor allows the student an extension.

PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCE SHEET

Participants in Pierce High School extracurricular activities will occasionally have to miss school for competitions, contests, or clinics. All participating students must turn in a fully completed sheet to their sponsor prior to leaving for the activity. This includes signatures from each student's individual teachers. Students who fail to obtain all the necessary teacher signatures will not be allowed to miss school to attend the event. Since parents/guardians give their student consent to participate in extracurricular activities, students are not required to obtain a parent/guardian signature on pre-arranged absence sheets for extracurricular activities. Parent/guardian signatures will still be required for college visits, job shadows, Junior days, Senior days, and some class field trips.

TARDY (LATE) LIMITATIONS

A tardy is assigned when a student is late for any class period during the day. A student will be allowed two tardies per 9-week term/quarter. A third tardy will result in an assigned detention. For every tardy thereafter, one hour of after school time will be assigned. 10 tardies in one term will result in an in-school suspension. Any tardy after 10 will result in a 30-minute detention. If a student is late 15 times in a term, he/she will be suspended out of school.

A student's tardy will only be excused by a written note from another teacher, the counselor, lunch supervisor, the principal or the office secretary. If the student misses more than the first fifteen (15) minutes of a class period, they will be counted absent unless they are excused in the same manner. If a student leaves before the end of the period, they will be counted absent.

ACTIVITIES

Student participation in extracurricular activities has been linked to improved attendance, higher academic achievement and greater student self-confidence and self-esteem. Pierce Jr.-Sr. High School provides students with the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive activities program including athletics, fine arts, and select clubs or organizations associated with academic areas.

Although the school district believes strongly in the value of student activities, participation in the activities program is a privilege, not a right. Students must obey the rules set out in this handbook and any additional rules created by their coach or activity sponsor. This handbook is advisory and does not create a "contract" with parents, students or staff. The administration reserves the right to make decisions and make rule revisions at any time to implement the educational program and to assure the wellbeing of all students. The administration is responsible for interpreting the rules contained in the handbook. If a situation or circumstance arises that is not specifically covered in this handbook, the administration will make a decision based upon all applicable school district policies, and state and federal statutes and regulations.

Please read this section of the handbook carefully. Students and their parents are responsible for complying with all of the rules and procedures detailed in this activity section.

Parents must sign the acknowledgement and permission to participate form before their student will be permitted to participate in the activity programs of the district.

The provisions in this handbook are subject to change at the sole discretion of the Board of Education. From time to time, you may receive updated information concerning changes in the handbook. These updates should be kept within the handbook so that it is up to date. If you have any questions regarding this handbook, please contact the Superintendent or Principal for assistance.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to participate in the school's activity programs, each student must (1) meet Nebraska State Activities Association (NSAA) requirements concerning scholastic eligibility, (2) be registered for 20 semesters credit hours and be in regular attendance, and (3) have not less than a 65% grade in two or more classes on the first day of the school week. Participants must attend practices and participate in all conditioning during any period of ineligibility.

The school district will notify a participant and his or her parents whenever the participant is declared academically ineligible.

Students may not participate in any activity, performance or practice while serving a short-term suspension, long-term suspension or expulsion from school.

ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Any organization planning an activity involving the school must have the activity approved by the school administration. All meetings, etc. shall be placed on the school calendar in the principal's office by noon on Friday of the preceding week. The majority of these activities will be scheduled before or after school. Pep rallies must be scheduled at least one week in advance.

ACTIVITY LETTERING REQUIREMENTS

Criteria and standards for lettering in any of the activities offered at Pierce High School is determined by the sponsor or coach of each activity.

ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION CODE OF CONDUCT AND REGULATIONS

All students associated with Pierce Public Schools are required to avoid conduct that is detrimental to the integrity of and public confidence in the school. Rules promoting lawful, ethical, and responsible conduct serve the interests of all people associated with the school. Illegal and irresponsible conduct puts people at risk, tarnishes the reputation of the offender and everyone else associated with the school, and undermines the public support and respect of the school district.

Every student in our school will be governed by the activity regulations, even those students who participate only as spectators. The following regulations will serve as the guidelines for all extra-curricular activities at Pierce Jr.-Sr. High School. The application of these rules and guidelines are year-round which means they apply to both the school year and summer. Should an activity restriction not be concluded by the last day of school, it will be carried over to the beginning of the following school year. **Any activity violations that occur during the summer shall constitute as a first offense for the upcoming school year.** The restriction period for these offenses shall begin the first day of fall sports practice.

I. Student Participation Regulations

A. In order to participate in or attend any school activity (music concert, athletic event, plays, practices, meetings, etc.), the student must be in attendance by 10:00 am. The 10:00 am rule is also in effect during early-dismissal school days. In the case of a 10 am start, the student must be in attendance at the beginning of the day at 10:00 am.

B. Any student who leaves school during the day because of illness is automatically ineligible to participate in any school activity (including practice) that day or evening. This includes as a spectator.

C. Students will not be excused to attend or participate in school activities during the school day unless: 1) They are supervised and transported by school personnel. 2) They are supervised and transported by a parent, and a written excuse by their parent is presented to the activity director or principal in advance of the activity.

D. Any exceptions to the above guidelines will need previous approval from the principal.
Example: prearranged absence for college visitation day.

*** Any violation of the above regulations (A-D) will result in a one-week activity suspension.

II. Behavioral Conduct and Restrictions

A. The following actions and/or conduct are deemed inappropriate for any student who wishes to represent Pierce Schools:

1. Receipt of a criminal citation by law enforcement for any reason.
2. Conviction of a crime in adult court or the adjudication of a criminal charge in juvenile court.

3. Any behavior that is illegal under the laws of Nebraska or the United States of America regardless of whether it results in a criminal charge or conviction.
4. Any conduct that substantially interferes with the educational process or disrupts the activity or event.
5. Possession, use, distribution, or being at parties in the presence of alcohol, illicit drugs, tobacco, or controlled substances, or any look-a-like or imitations thereof, or being under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs, tobacco, or controlled substances, or any lookalike or imitations thereof. "Look-a-like or imitations" means substances such as K2 and products like electronic cigarettes, vapor pens, etc. (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 use or abuse of any substance for the purpose of inducing a condition of intoxication, stupefaction, depression, giddiness, paralysis, inebriation, excitement, or irrational behavior, or in any manner changing, distorting, or disturbing the auditory, visual, mental, or nervous processes).
6. Engaging in initiations, defined as any ritualistic expectations, requirements, or activities placed upon new members of a school organization for the purpose of admission into the organization, even if those activities do not rise to the level of "hazing" as defined below. Initiations are prohibited except by permission of the superintendent.
7. Engaging in hazing as defined by state law and this policy Hazing is defined as any activity by which a person intentionally or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health or safety of an individual for the purpose of initiation into, admission into, affiliation with, or continued membership in any school organization. Under state criminal law, hazing activities include, but are not limited to, whipping, beating, branding, an act of sexual penetration, an exposure of the genitals of the body done with the intent to affront or alarm any person, a lewd fondling or caressing of the body of another person, forced and prolonged calisthenics, prolonged exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or harmful substance not generally intended for human consumption, prolonged sleep deprivation, or any brutal treatment or the performance of any unlawful act that endangers the physical or mental health or safety of any person. For purposes of school rules, hazing also includes any activity expected of someone joining a group, team, or activity that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate; personal servitude; restrictions on personal hygiene; yelling, swearing and insulting new members/rookies; being forced to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire in public; consumption of vile substances or smearing of such on one's skin; binge drinking and drinking games; sexual simulation and sexual assault;.
8. 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.
9. Using any Internet or social networking websites to make statements, post pictures, or take any other actions that are indecent, vulgar, lewd, slanderous, abusive, threatening, harassing or terrorizing.
10. Violating any school policy or a coach's or activity sponsor's training rules or rules of conduct.
11. Dressing or grooming in a manner which is (A) dangerous to the student's health and safety or a danger to the health and safety of others, (B) lewd, indecent, vulgar, or plainly offensive, (C) materially and substantially disruptive to the work and discipline of the school or an extracurricular

activity, (D) interpreted to advocate the use of illegal drugs or other substances by a reasonable observer.

12. Failing to report for an activity at the beginning of a season unless excused by the coach or activity sponsor.
13. Failing to attend scheduled practices and meetings unless excused by the coach or activity sponsor.

Such conduct is prohibited year-round regardless of whether it occurs on-campus or off-campus.

**Students charged with any act which is classified as a felony in adult court (subdivision 2 in juvenile court) by the State of Nebraska will be restricted from activities until the individual case has reached finality within the legal system.

**Committing any act which is classified as a felony or subdivision 2 in juvenile court by the State of Nebraska may be considered minimally as a second offense and possibly as a third offense under the "offense" section (SECTION B) of this policy.

B. If an investigation by the administration (principal, assistant principal, and/or activity director) establishes that a student is in violation of any of the items in Part II-A as stated above, the following disciplinary action shall be initiated:

1. First offense - The student shall be restricted from all activities for a 3-week period and be subject to intervention by the SCIP program. If the student isn't restricted from activities during the 3-week period because he/she isn't a current in-season participant, then the student will not participate in his/her next scheduled competition/activity after the end of the 3 week period. If a student attends an activity in which he/she is not a member of one of the competing teams during the restriction period, it shall be considered a second offense. For example, if a student-athlete who is a football player attends a volleyball game, it will be treated as a second offense of the activity policy.

2. Second offense - The student shall be restricted from all activities for an 8-week period. If the student isn't restricted during the 8-week period because he/she isn't a current in-season participant, then the student will not participate in his/her next two (2) scheduled competitions/activities after the end of the 8-week period. The student must also complete an education/counseling program approved by the administration. The cost of such program shall be the responsibility of the student. Should the student choose not to complete the education/counseling program, then they shall be restricted from all activities for the remainder of the school year. Upon completion of the education/counseling program, in which proof of completion has been provided to the school administration, the remainder of the activity restriction period shall be reduced by half. If an individual fails to complete the education/counseling program before the school year is completed, he/she will need to complete the program before their participation in activities may resume during the next school year.

3. Third offense - The student shall be restricted from all activities for the remainder of the school year or for 20 weeks, whichever is the greatest period of time. If the activity violation occurs during the last 20 weeks of the current school year, the activity restriction will carry over to the next school year.

C. **HONESTY CLAUSE** – Except in cases involving possible felony charges, students involved in an incident which would place them on activity suspension will be allowed one school day to voluntarily admit guilt to a school administrator. In this instance, the student will be expected to initiate the conversation with the school administrator to admit the violation. If a student voluntarily admits guilt within one school day, the consequences will be reduced to the following:

1. First offense - The student will be restricted from all activities for a 2 week period and be subject to intervention by the SCIP program. If the student isn't restricted from activities during the 2 week period because he/she isn't a current in-season participant, then the student will not participate in his/her next scheduled competition/activity after the end of the 2 week period.

2. Second offense - The student will be restricted from all activities for a 6-week period and complete an education/counseling program approved by the school administration. If the student isn't restricted from activities during the 6-week period because he/she isn't a current in-season participant, then the student will not participate in his/her next two (2) scheduled competitions/activities after the end of the 6-week period.

3. Third offense - There is no reduction in the consequence for the third offense.

****STUDENTS WHO INTENTIONALLY QUIT OR ARE DISMISSED FROM A SCHOOL SPONSORED ORGANIZATION WILL HAVE THEIR ACTIVITY SUSPENSION CONTINUE ON TO THEIR NEXT ORGANIZATION.**

D. A student placed under restriction will be allowed to participate in only the following activities for the duration of the restricted period:

1. Attend all regularly scheduled competitive contests as a nonparticipant of the team. A student will not be removed from school to attend any contests or to be transported to any contests. In this case, the student will not be required to attend the contest unless school transportation is available or a parent/guardian agrees to transport the student. The student will be expected to fulfill a managerial role and provide support to his/her fellow teammates.

2. Attend all regular scheduled class periods.

3. Participate in any class trip that is developed and supervised by the classroom teacher, is expected to be attended by all members of the class, is considered part of the learning curriculum for that particular class, and takes place within the confines of one calendar day.

4. Participate in any regularly scheduled practices developed and supervised by the sponsor of the activity that the restricted student was participating in at the time of the restriction or the activity the student will be participating in when the restriction period is over.

5. Attend any convocation or assembly as scheduled by the administration designed for the attendance of all or part of the student body.

6. The restriction period will begin on notification from the activity director or principal and will run in consecutive school weeks. Exceptions to this rule will be during summer and holiday activities.

7. These rules and guidelines are distributed to students and parents as part of the Student-Parent Handbook at the beginning of each school year or at the time of enrollment. They are also posted in conspicuous places throughout the building. **The student and parents must sign and return a form to the school that states they have received and read the handbook which includes the activity participation policy. The student will not be able to participate until this requirement is met.**

III. Investigative Process

- A. The administration will make an investigation. This process will include giving the student involved oral or written notice of the charges or explanation of the evidence against him/her and an opportunity to present his/her version.
- B. The administration may restrict or suspend the student from activities after he determines there has been a violation of said established rules.
- C. If a student is cited for illegal possession and/or consumption of alcohol or drugs by the legal authorities, the student shall be restricted from activities and Part II-B will be in effect.
- D. The student will be notified immediately of the action taken. Parents will be notified.

IV. Triggers

- A. The student may be found in violation of the aforementioned rules by any of the following:
 1. A faculty or staff member sees a student violating these rules and reports him/her to the administration.
 2. Intervention by the law or legal authorities.
 3. Admission of guilt.
 4. Charged with a felony.

V. Additional Athletic Guidelines

The athletic programs of Pierce Public Schools are designed to provide the opportunity for those students who desire competitive activities. All students are welcome to try out for any interscholastic program, provided they meet the requirements established by the Nebraska School Activities Association and the Pierce Board of Education.

A. Pierce Jr-Sr High Requirements

1. Attendance at practice is required unless excused by the coach or because of illness.
2. Athletes shall be neat, clean, and well-groomed and will display personal conduct of good sportsmanship in situations where they are representing the school. The athletes shall be courteous toward others and behave like ladies and gentlemen. They shall abide by the coaches' suggestions at all times.
3. Curfew for athletes during the season shall be as follows:
 - a. Home by 10:00 P.M. on nights before games or practice
 - b. Home by 12:30 on nights before non-game or non-practice days
 - c. Curfew hours may be extended by the coach on special occasions
 - d. Unexcused curfew – punishment is subject to the coach's or sponsor's discretion.

B. Nebraska School Activities Association Requirements

In order to represent a high school in interscholastic athletic competition, a student must abide by eligibility rules of the Nebraska School Activities Association. Eligibility requirements are established by the NSAA in its Constitution and its Bylaws and Approved Rulings. These documents can be found online at <http://nsaahome.org/yearbook.php>. A summary of the major rules is given below. Contact the principal, activities director or the activity sponsor or coach for an explanation of the complete rule.

1. Student must be a *bona fide* student of their member school and have not graduated from any high school.
2. After a student's initial enrollment in grade nine, he/she shall be ineligible after eight semesters of school membership beginning with his/her enrollment in grade nine.
3. Student is ineligible if nineteen years of age before August 1 of current school year. (Student in grades 7 or 8 may participate on a high school team if he/she was 15 years of age prior to August 1 of current school year.)
4. Student must be enrolled in some high school on or before the eleventh school day of the current semester.
5. Student must be continually enrolled in at least twenty credit hours per semester and regular in attendance, in accordance with the school's attendance policy at the school he/she wishes to represent in interscholastic competition.
6. Student must have been enrolled and received twenty credit hours in school the immediate preceding semester.
7. **Guardianship does not fulfill the definition of a legal parent.** If a guardian has been appointed for a student, the student is eligible in the school district where his/her legal parent(s) have their domicile. Individual situations involving guardianship may be submitted to the Executive Director for review and a ruling.
8. A student entering grade nine for the first time after being promoted from grade eight of a two-year junior high, or a three-year middle school, or entering a high school for the first time after being promoted to grade ten from a three-year junior high school is eligible. After a student makes an initial choice of high schools, any subsequent transfer, unless there has been a change of domicile by his/her parents, shall render the student ineligible for ninety school days. If a student has participated on a high school team at any level as a seventh, eighth, or ninth grade student, he/she has established his/her eligibility at the high school where he/she participated. If the student elects to attend another high school upon entering ninth or tenth grade, he/she shall be ineligible for ninety school days.
9. **Student eligibility related to domicile can be attained in the following manners:**
 - a. If the change in domicile by the parents occurs during a school year, the student may remain at the school he/she is attending and be eligible until the end of the school year or transfer to a high school located in the school district where the parents established their domicile and be eligible.
 - b. If the domicile is changed during the summer months and the student is in grade twelve and the student has attended the high school for two or more years, the student may remain at the high school he/she has been attending and retain eligibility.
 - c. If a student elects to remain at the same high school initially enrolled after being promoted from grade eight of a middle or junior high school, or grade nine of a junior high school, he/she is eligible at that school, or is eligible at a high school located within the school district in which the parents established their domicile.
 - d. **If the legal parents of a student change their domicile from one school district that has a high school to another school district that has a high**

school, the student shall be eligible immediately in the school district where the parents established their domicile.

10. Nebraska transfer students whose name appears on the NSAA transfer list prior to May 1st shall be eligible immediately in the fall. Those students whose name does not appear on the NSAA transfer list prior to May 1st shall be ineligible for ninety school days, with such transfers being subject to hardship waiver guidelines.
11. Nebraska transfer students must have signed and delivered all forms necessary to make such transfer to the school in which he/she intends to enroll for next school year prior to May 1st; for the student to be eligible, the school to which the transfer is being made must have notified the NSAA office via an NSAA online transfer form, no later than May 1st. The student would become ineligible for ninety school days the next fall if the student were to change his/her mind and decide not to transfer. If such student were to transfer to the new school, but later decides to return to his/her former district before 90 school days have elapsed, such student will be ineligible in the former district for 90 school days, with the ineligibility period commencing at the start of the fall semester. Those students, who did not have their enrollment forms signed, delivered and accepted prior to May 1st, shall be ineligible for ninety school days, with such transfers being subject to hardship waiver guidelines.
12. Once the season of a sport begins, a student shall participate in practices and compete only in athletic contests/meets in that sport, which are scheduled by his/her school. Any other competition will render the student ineligible for a portion of, or all of, the season in that sport. The season of a sport begins with the first date of practice as permitted by NSAA rules
13. During the season of a particular sport, athletes participating in that sport for a high school may attend, but may not physically take part, either as an individual or as a member of a team, in the sport activity in which instruction is being offered in the clinic, camp or school. (*Refer to NSAA Bylaw 3.5.1.1 for exception in Swimming and Diving.)
14. A student shall not participate on an all-star team while a high school undergraduate.
15. A student must maintain his/her amateur status.

NSAA Sportsmanship Rules

Students must abide by the Nebraska School Activities Association Sportsmanship Rules. A complete copy of these rules can be found at <http://www.nsaahome.org/nsaaforms/pdf/manualsp.pdf>. Unsportsmanlike conduct shall include physical or verbal assault upon any participant, game official, or spectator, or any acts, which may endanger the personal safety of individuals involved, or acts, which hinder the normal progress of a contest or lead to the restriction or discontinuance of a contest.

If a student, participant, patron, and/or staff member representing a member school acts in a manner constituting unsportsmanlike behavior during such competition the member school and/ or individuals shall be subject to penalties. A student, participant, patron, and/or staff member may not be permitted to attend activities if involved in unsportsmanlike conduct.

ACTIVITY TICKETS

All students are urged to purchase an activity ticket. It is one of the greatest bargains in school. The cost is \$5.00 for each individual student (K-12). The activity ticket will admit you to all home athletic activities, but not state sponsored activities or conference tournaments.

ATTENDANCE AT PRACTICES AND CONTESTS

Participants in the activities program are expected to attend and be on time at all practices and meetings scheduled by the coach or sponsor. Participants may be excused for absences resulting from a participant's illness, a death in the family, a doctor's appointment, a court appearance, or other

family arranged absences arranged in advance. The coach, sponsor, or director of an activity may require a participant who has an excused absence to complete an alternate assignment for missing a practice, meeting, event, performance, or contest. A participant who is unable to attend a scheduled practice, meeting, or game must contact the coach or sponsor in advance. Students who are absent from school due to illness are not required to provide the coach or sponsor with additional notification of the student's absence from practice. If a participant misses a scheduled contest, performance, or practice unexcused, the coach or sponsor may impose discipline up to and including suspension of the participant from the activity for the remainder of the season or length of the activity.

ATHLETE OF THE YEAR SELECTION

The selection of the senior girl and boy Athlete of the Year will be based upon the following criteria:

1. the ability to work with others
2. athletic accomplishments
3. athletic awards won
4. leadership in athletics
5. leadership in the classroom, not GPA alone
6. all around leadership including community relations
7. regularity of attendance at practice sessions
8. dedication to training and preparation for athletic events
9. coachability

The head coaches, assistant coaches, and activity director will meet to select the boy and the girl for Athlete of the Year. Each of these people shall vote on the candidates for both girl and boy athlete of the year.

BREATHALYZERS

Breathalyzer tests may be administered at any or all of our Sr. High dances throughout the school year. These dances include Homecoming, Winter Royalty, and Prom. The purpose for the tests is to deter any students from using alcohol prior to coming to one of our school sponsored dances. Any student who tests positive for alcohol will be referred to our local police department and will face both activity and out-of-school suspension. Guests of our students who test positive for alcohol will also be referred to the local police department.

CLOSINGS

All activities will be cancelled or postponed in the event that school has been called off for inclement weather or any other reason as determined by the administration, unless the administration determines that it is permissible for the activity to continue as scheduled.

COACH AND SPONSOR RULES

Coaches and/or activity sponsors shall establish training rules or rules of conduct for participation in or attendance at the activity or event. General training rules or rules of conduct shall be established prior to the activity or event. This Code shall control in the event that there is a conflict with coach or sponsor rules.

CONCUSSION AWARENESS

The Nebraska Unicameral has found that concussions are one of the "most commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and recreational activities and that the risk of

catastrophic injury or death is significant when a concussion or brain injury is not properly evaluated and managed."

The School District will:

- a. Require all coaches and trainers to complete one of the following on-line courses on how to recognize the symptoms of a concussion or brain injury and how to seek proper medical treatment for a concussion or brain injury
 - Heads UP Concussions in Youth Sports
 - Concussion in Sports—What You Need to Know
 - Sports Safety International
 - ConcussionWise
 - ACTive™ Athletic Concussion Training for Coaches; and
- b. On an annual basis provide concussion and brain injury information to students and their parents or guardians prior to such students initiating practice or competition. This information will include:
 - 1 The signs and symptoms of a concussion;
 - 2 The risks posed by sustaining a concussion; and
 - 3 The actions a student should take in response to sustaining a concussion, including the notification of his or her coaches.

A student who participates on a school athletic team must be removed from a practice or game when he/she is reasonably suspected of having sustained a concussion or brain injury in such practice or game after observation by a coach or a licensed health care professional who is professionally affiliated with or contracted by the school. The student will not be permitted to participate in any school supervised team athletic activities involving physical exertion, including practices or games, until the student:

- a. has been evaluated by a licensed health care professional;
- b. has received written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities from the licensed health care professional; and
- c. has submitted the written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities to the school accompanied by written permission to resume participation from the student's parent or guardian.

If a student is reasonably suspected after observation of having sustained a concussion or brain injury and is removed from an athletic activity, the parent or guardian of the student will be notified by the school of:

- a. the date and approximate time of the injury suffered by the student,
- b. the signs and symptoms of a concussion or brain injury that were observed, and
- c. any actions taken to treat the student.

The school district will not provide for the presence of a licensed health care professional at any practice or game.

School officials shall deem the signature of an individual who represents that he/she is a licensed health care professional on a written clearance to resume participation that is provided to the school to be conclusive and reliable evidence that the individual who signed the clearance is a licensed

health care professional. The school will not take any additional or independent steps to verify the individual's qualifications.

CONCUSSION GUIDE FOR PARENTS

What Is A Concussion? A concussion is a brain injury which results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function. A concussion occurs when the brain is violently rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as a result of a blow to the head or body. An athlete does not have to lose consciousness to suffer a concussion.

Concussion Facts

- *It is estimated that more than 140,000 high school athletes across the United States suffer a concussion yearly.
- *Concussions occur most frequently in football, but girls' lacrosse, girls' soccer, boys' lacrosse, wrestling, and girls' basketball follow closely behind. All athletes are at risk.
- *A concussion is a traumatic injury to the brain.
- *Concussion symptoms may last from a few days to several months.
- *Concussions can cause symptoms which interfere with school, work, and social life.
- *Athletes who have symptoms from a concussion should not return to sports because they are at risk for prolonging symptoms and further injury.
- *A concussion may cause multiple symptoms. Many symptoms appear immediately after the injury, while others may develop over the next several days or weeks. The symptoms may be subtle and are often difficult to fully recognize.

What Are the Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion?

Parent/Guardian Observations:

- *Appears dazed or stunned
- *Is confused about assignment or position
- *Forgets instructions
- *Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- *Moves clumsily
- *Answers questions slowly
- *Loses consciousness
- *Shows behavior or personality changes
- *Can't recall events prior to hit or fall

Athlete Symptoms:

- *Headache or pressure in head
- *Nausea or vomiting
- *Balance problems or dizziness
- *Double or blurry vision
- *Sensitivity to light or noise
- *Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- *Concentration or memory problems
- *Confusion

Parent Guide If They Believe Their Child Has a Concussion:

An athlete who is suspected of having a concussion must be removed from play immediately, whether it is a game or practice. Continuing to participate in physical activity after a concussion can lead to worsening concussion symptoms, increased risk of further injury, and even death. Parents and coaches are not expected to be able to diagnose a concussion, as that is the job of a medical professional. However, they must be aware of the signs and symptoms of a concussion and if they are suspicious, the child must stop playing.

When In Doubt – Sit Them Out!

Every athlete who sustains a concussion needs to be evaluated by a health care professional who is familiar with sports concussions. Parents should call their child's physician, explain what has happened, and follow the physician's instructions. A child who is vomiting, has a severe headache, or has difficulty staying awake or answering simple questions should be taken to the parent's doctor or emergency room immediately.

When May an Athlete Return to Play Following a Concussion?

No athlete who has suffered a concussion should return to play or practice the same day. Previously, athletes were allowed to return to play if their symptoms resolved within 15 minutes of the injury. Studies have shown that the young brain does not recover quickly enough for an athlete to return to activity in such a short time.

Once an athlete is free of symptoms of a concussion and is cleared to return to play by a health care professional knowledgeable in the care of sports concussions, he or she should proceed with activity in a step-wise fashion to allow the brain to readjust to exertion. On average, the athlete will complete a new step each day. The return-to-play schedule should proceed as below following medical clearance:

Step 1: Light exercise, including walking or riding an exercise bike. No weightlifting.

Step 2: Running in the gym or on the field. No helmet or other equipment.

Step 3: Non-contact training drills in full equipment. Weightlifting can begin.

Step 4: Full contact practice or training.

Step 5: Game play

If symptoms occur at any step, the athlete should cease activity and be re-evaluated by a health care provider.

DANCES

School dances are part of the district's extracurricular activity program. Students who wish to participate in school dances must comply with the activity code. Students may be prohibited from participating in school dances as a consequence for violating school rules or these activity rules.

Junior High Dances

Junior high/middle school (7-8) dances are restricted to students currently enrolled in the junior high school and in grades 7 and 8 at Zion Lutheran School. Junior high dances will be sponsored by junior high class sponsors.

High School Dances

All high school dances are restricted to Pierce High School students and their guests. Any organization wishing to sponsor a dance must obtain permission from the principal regarding date and times. Students

who leave the dance will not be readmitted unless they have permission from the dance's sponsor or the principal.

Homecoming, Winter Royalty, and Prom

The Homecoming and winter royalty dances are open to students and guests of Pierce High School. The Junior/Senior Prom is open to students and guests of the Pierce High School junior and senior classes. Guests must follow all rules that the students must follow. Each student is responsible for his/her guest's conduct. Appropriate attire is required for these dances. No blue jeans, shorts or T-shirts will be allowed at the banquet or dance for Prom. Black dress jeans will be acceptable.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

The school board supports the use of technology by coaches, extracurricular sponsors, and other staff members to communicate with students for legitimate educational, extracurricular, and other school-related purposes. However, electronic communication between students and teachers, sponsors, and coaches shall be appropriate at all times and shall not violate any law, district policies, or the Regulations and Standards for Professional Practices Criteria, commonly known as Rule 27 of the Nebraska Department of Education ("Rule 27").

EQUIPMENT

Each participant in the athletic portion of the activities program will be issued a locker to store his/her personal belongings and school equipment that has been checked out. Students should secure their athletic lockers with combination locks.

School-owned clothing or equipment that is checked out to individual students remains the property of the school. The clothing or equipment is not to be used or worn by the student except for the intended use. Each piece of equipment or clothing is to be returned to the instructor or coach when the season or the use for such clothing or equipment is over. Each participant is responsible for all equipment checked out to him/her. Students will be assessed the replacement cost for school equipment that has been checked out to him/her and is lost or stolen.

FUNDRAISING

All school-sponsored fundraising activities must be approved by a member of the administration. Fundraising for any activity must comply with the district's policies.

INDIVIDUAL TRAINING RULES AND RULES OF CONDUCT

Head coaches or sponsors may develop additional training rules or rules of conduct for their activity. Students are responsible for knowing these rules and complying with them.

INITIATIONS AND HAZING

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

Initiations are defined as any ritualistic expectations, requirements, or activities placed upon new members of a school organization for the purpose of admission into the organization, even if those

activities do not rise to the level of "hazing" as defined below. Initiations are prohibited except by permission of the superintendent.

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

INJURIES

Participants who suffer any type of injury while involved in extracurricular activities must notify the coach or sponsor immediately. The coach or sponsor will then evaluate the injury and, if necessary, notify the participant's parents or seek immediate medical treatment.

If at any time during participation, a doctor removes an athlete from participation because of an illness or injury, the athlete must have a written release from a doctor before participating again. The written release must be given to the coach or sponsor of the activity.

Note: The release requirement will be satisfied if the initial doctor's order specifies the duration of the student's restriction from participation and/or competition. Also see Concussion Awareness above.

INSURANCE

The school district does not provide medical or other insurance coverage for students who participate in athletic contests or other activities. It is the parents' responsibility to provide adequate insurance to cover any medical expenses that may be incurred while the student is participating in athletics or other activities.

The school district makes an accident insurance plan available for purchase by participants and their families through an authorized insurance agent. Information about policies which families may purchase will be available prior to each sports season and at fall registration.

LIMITATION OF PARTICIPANTS

Although Pierce Jr.-Sr. High School highly encourages student participation in activities, the number of participants in extra-curricular activities may be limited. The limitation may be a mandate of the Nebraska School Activities Association or may be imposed by the school administration and/or coach/sponsor of the activity. Whenever it is deemed necessary to limit the number of participants in an extra-curricular activity, there will be opportunities afforded to all eligible, interested students to try out for a part or position. Final selections will be made to fill all parts or positions based on the abilities demonstrated during the try-out period as judged or evaluated by the coach/sponsor of the activity or a person/persons designated by the sponsor, activity director, and/or principal.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP

1. Scholarship – The scholarship requirement set by the National Council is based on a student's cumulative grade point average. This refers to the total academic performance as demonstrated by the grades earned by the student while in attendance at the school where the chapter is found. The minimum grade point average is 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent. All students who have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 meet the scholarship requirement for membership. These students are then eligible for consideration on the basis of service, leadership, and character.
2. Leadership – The leadership criterion is considered highly important in selection. Leadership roles in both the school and community may be considered, provided they can be verified.
3. Service – Service is generally considered to be those actions undertaken by the student which are done with or on behalf of others without any direct financial or material compensation to the individual performing the service. In considering service, the contributions this candidate has made to school, classmates, and community, as well as the student's attitude toward service can be reviewed.
4. Character – Character is probably the most difficult criterion to define. The council should consider the positive as well as the negative aspects of character. All judgments in this and other selection criteria should be free of speculation and rumor. A person of character demonstrates the following six qualities: respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, caring, and citizenship.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY RATING PROCEDURES

1. Membership in the Pierce chapter of the NHS is an honor bestowed upon a worthy student by the faculty of Pierce High School.
2. To be eligible for membership a student must be a member of the sophomore, junior or senior class. The student must also have been in attendance at Pierce High School for one term prior to selection.
3. The student must have a cumulative scholastic average of at least 3.0.
4. Those students who have attained the 3.0 scholastic requirement are then evaluated on the basis of service, leadership and character by a faculty council consisting of five faculty members appointed annually by the National Honor Society sponsor. The council is provided the following information concerning the eligible students:
 - a. Cumulative grade point average
 - b. Completed questionnaires concerning leadership and service qualities – provided by the eligible students
 - c. Leadership, Character, and Service averages – provided by faculty (Each faculty member has the opportunity to rate each eligible student in leadership, character, and service on a scale of 4 (high) to 1 (low) similar to a grade. Averages are then calculated by the National Honor Society sponsor.)
5. Final selection of members shall be by majority vote of the faculty council.
6. There is no quota system concerning membership

7. An NHS member who transfers to Pierce High from another school system automatically becomes a member of the Pierce chapter by bringing a letter from the former principal or chapter advisor showing membership.

8. Membership selection occurs at or near the end of the first semester with the formal induction ceremony to follow.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY WARNING AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

National Honor Society members are liable for dismissal from membership if they do not maintain the standards of scholarship, leadership, service, and character used as the basis of their selection. A student who resigns or is dismissed may never again become a member.

Dismissal shall be used sparingly. Other disciplinary measures will be used for minor offenses, with the goal being reeducation of the student to more appropriate behavior.

National Honor Society members are allowed limited warnings during their membership, but in the case of a flagrant violation of school rules or civil laws a warning is not necessary.

The chapter advisor shall periodically (such as at the end of each term) review the standing of members for compliance with National Honor Society standards of scholarship (cumulative GPA of 3.00), and the other membership criteria. The advisor should inform any errant member in writing of the nature of the violation, the time period for improvement and the possible consequence for non-improvement. For example, in the case of scholarship, members shall be given one term to improve the GPA to 3.00 or face dismissal. Following the warning letter, the student, the National Honor Society advisor, and the school guidance counselor shall have a conference to create a compliance plan.

In the case of a flagrant violation of school rules or civil laws a member does not necessarily have to be warned. The chapter advisor shall ask the faculty council to investigate thoroughly. If the faculty council determines the facts warrant consideration of dismissal, the member and his or her parent or guardian shall be notified in writing of the violation and possibility of dismissal. The member shall then appear before the faculty council and explain the situation. The faculty council shall make a decision concerning the dismissal or other disciplinary measure following this meeting.

If a member is dismissed, written notice shall be sent to the member, his or her parents or guardians, and the school principal. The member must surrender the National Honor Society emblem and membership card to the chapter advisor.

The dismissed member may appeal to the administration within seven days following the decision of the faculty council to the administration.

The National Council of the National Honor Society and its sponsoring organization, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, will not hear appeals in dismissal cases.

SCHOLAR/ATHLETE OF THE YEAR SELECTION

The selection of the senior girl and boy Scholar/Athletes of the Year will be based on a formula using the students' overall grade point averages and the total number of athletic letters earned during their high school careers.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The student council will be the governing body for the students in our school. This is an opportunity for students to become involved in educational issues and school government. The student council will provide input to help improve our educational system. These students will be asked to serve on educational committees during our school improvement process. The group will sponsor a number of activities during the year to promote a positive learning atmosphere for their fellow students. They will help formulate regulations and govern their peers. Selection is as follows: Students volunteer to be candidates for student council by signing up in the principal's office during the first week of school. Their classmates vote on the candidates during class meetings at the beginning of the year.

SUNDAY AND WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES

In order to provide students sufficient time away from school for family-related activities, the school will endeavor not to schedule activities on Wednesday evenings or on Sundays. Practices will be organized so that all participants are showered, dressed and/or leave the facilities by 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday nights. An exception to this guideline would be when a team, group of students, or an individual may be required to participate in an activity sponsored by the conference, district, or state on a Wednesday night.

The school does not allow Sunday practice sessions or activities unless in the case of a varsity team having a varsity contest the following Monday. In this case, the practice still needs administrative approval.

TRANSPORTATION TO ALL SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The district will provide or approve the means of transportation to all school activities. All participants will ride to and from the activity in the school sponsored vehicle unless prior arrangements have been made with the activity director. Students may not be transported by any other means without prior approval of the activity director. Parents who wish to have their own child return with them from an event shall present (in person) the activity director or event sponsor with a written request. Any violation of this rule will result in activity suspension.

For state level competitions, a pep bus may be offered to our student body. Any student who wishes to ride the activity/pep bus, when provided, must sign up in the principal's office prior to the event and deposit the equivalent of the event admission. This will be refunded to the student when they board the bus. If a student rides the pep bus to the activity, then they shall also ride the bus home. If behavior problems or violation of the above rule occur, the student will lose their privilege to ride any pep bus for the remainder of the school year. Additional consequences for any of the above school transportation violations may include detention time, in-school or out-of-school suspension, and/or activity suspension.