



Bridges

Positive Approach to Learning School (PALS)

Student Handbook

2017-2018

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School Expectations

Rules and expectations for Southern Plains Programs can be summed up in our three expectations:

Be Safe
Be Respectful
Be Responsible

We strive for a safe and positive school. We treat ourselves and others with respect. We take responsibility for our learning and behavior.

Mission Statement

Southern Plains Education Cooperative (SPEC) understands the importance of meeting the needs of all learners. The primary goal of the Southern Plains Programs is to equip students with the tools they need for academic, personal, and social achievement. We believe that all individuals are unique and valuable and are deserving of respect. Each and every person can learn. It is our belief that emotional, physical, and social well-being enhance learning. Learning occurs most effectively when there are positive partnerships among students, staff, family, and community.

Food Service

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](tel:8008778339). 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](tel:8666329992). 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](tel:202-690-7442); or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Full-Pay Student Rate:

Breakfast: \$1.65 Lunch: \$2.80

Adult Rate:

Breakfast: \$2.25 Lunch: \$3.65

Free/Reduced Student Rate:

Breakfast: Free Lunch: Free

Each lunch includes 1 carton of milk. Each additional milk will result in a lunch account deduction of \$.40 per milk.

Payment of Meals

- A. Students have use of a meal account. When the balance reaches zero, a student may charge no more than \$10.00. When an account reaches this limit, the student shall not be able to charge further meals or a la carte items until the negative balance is paid. Families may send lunch money with students, drop it off in the main office of the school, or mail to:
Southern Plains Winnebago
Attn: Peg Rock
132 1st Ave SE
Winnebago, MN 56098
- B. All students qualifying for a free or reduced lunches will have a qualifying school lunch available regardless of the student's meal account balance.
- C. A student with an outstanding meal charge debt will be allowed to purchase a meal if the student pays for the meal when it is received.

Alternate Meals

- A. The cooperative may provide an alternate meal that meets federal and state guidelines to a student who does not have sufficient funds in the student's account or who cannot pay cash for the meal. The cost of the alternate meal will be \$1.50 and will be charged to the student's account or otherwise charged to the student.

- B. The cooperative will accommodate special dietary needs with respect to alternate meals. All special dietary needs of students must be confirmed with documentation from the student's physician. A copy of this documentation will be kept with registered staff in the kitchen and in the main office.

Notification

- A. The cooperative will make reasonable efforts to notify families when meal account balances are low and getting near zero.
- B. Families will be notified of an outstanding negative balance once the balance reaches \$10.00. This notification will be made via U.S. Mail.
- C. Reminders for payment of outstanding student meal balances will not demean or stigmatize any student.
- D. The cooperative will make reasonable effort to communicate with families to resolve the matter of unpaid meal charges. Where appropriate, families may be encouraged to apply for free or reduced-price meals for their children.
- E. The cooperative will make reasonable effort to collect unpaid meal charges classified as delinquent debt.
- F. Negative balances of more than \$10.00 not paid prior to the end of the school year will be turned over to the director for collection. Collection options may include, but are not limited to use of collection agencies, claims in the conciliation court, or any other legal method permitted by law.

Wellness

The purpose of this policy is to set forth methods that promote student wellness, prevent and reduce childhood obesity, and assure that school meals and other food and beverages sold and otherwise made available on the school campus during the school day are consistent with applicable minimum local, state, and federal standards.

Referral & Eligibility

Southern Plains Education Cooperative believes that all children deserve to be educated in their least restrictive environment. For this reason, a referral to one of the Southern Plains Programs in Winnebago will be made only after all efforts have been made to provide the best possible education program in the child's resident school district. For further referral and eligibility information, please see the special education coordinator for your child's school district.

Reintegration

The ultimate goal of the Southern Plains Programs is to teach students the skills and strategies necessary for success in their traditional school settings. Once this goal has been met and students have made sufficient progress toward academic and social goals as determined by a student's Individual Education Program (IEP), students will begin to reintegrate or "transition" back to their home school districts. The transition plan

will look different dependent on the student and be specifically designed to meet a student's individual needs.

Equal Educational Opportunity

It is the school district's policy to provide an equal educational opportunity for all students. Southern Plains Education Cooperative does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, parental status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation, or age. Southern Plains Education Cooperative makes reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities.

Students with Disabilities

The purpose of this policy is to protect students with disabilities from discrimination on the basis of disability and to identify and evaluate learners who, within the intent of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, need services, accommodations, or programs in order to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). A learner eligible for protections under Section 504 is one who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities
- Has a record of such impairment
- Is regarded as having such impairment

A learner does not need to be eligible for special education services as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in order to be eligible for programs under the provisions of Section 504.

It is the responsibility of the school district to identify and evaluate learners who, within the intent of Section 504, need services, accommodations, or programs in order that such learners receive FAPE.

Should you encounter further questions or concerns in relation to the provisions of Section 504, please contact the School Nurse, Britney Kawecky at 507-238-1472 or 507-893-3701.

Student Sex Nondiscrimination

Students are protected from discrimination on the basis of sex pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Minnesota Human Rights Act. SPEC provides equal educational opportunity for all students, and does not lawfully discriminate on the basis of sex. No student will be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity operated by the cooperative on the basis of sex.

Any student who believes that he/she has been a victim of unlawful sex discrimination by a teacher, administrator, or other school personnel should contact the Administrative Coordinator at 507-893-3701.

Pledge of Allegiance

Southern Plains Education Cooperative recognizes the need to display an appropriate United States flag and to provide instruction to students in the proper etiquette, display, and respect for the flag. Students in this school district shall recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America a minimum of one time each week. Anyone who does not wish to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance for any personal reason may elect not to do so. Students and school personnel will respect another person's right to make that choice. Students choosing not to participate will be asked to sit quietly until the Pledge of Allegiance has been recited.

Definition of School of Location

School location includes any school building, grounds, whether leased, rented, owned, or controlled by the school district, locations of school activities or trips, bus stops, school buses or school vehicles, school-contracted vehicles, the area of entrance or departure from school premises or events, all locations where school-related functions are conducted, and anywhere students are under jurisdiction of the school district.

School Visitors

Prospective students and families who wish to visit the Southern Plains Programs in Winnebago should make arrangements through the special education coordinator in their resident school district. All visits must be arranged as far in advance as is possible. All visitors must stop and register in the designated office location prior to entering any other school area.

An individual or group may be denied permission to visit a school or school property and such permission may be revoked if the visitor does not comply with district regulations or if the visit is not in the best interest of students, employees, or the school district. An individual or group who enters school property without complying with procedures may be guilty of criminal trespass and thus subject to criminal penalty.

We at Southern Plains Education Cooperative respect your child's right to privacy. In order to ensure that this right to privacy is maintained for all children, all visitors, including parents, must sign in at the main office on the first floor of the building and wait for further guidance.

Personal Property

Students, staff, and visitors are responsible for adequately securing their personal property while on a school site or in attendance at a school sponsored event. The school cannot be held responsible for property that is lost, damaged, or stolen.

Lost, Damaged, or Destroyed Learning Materials

In the event that school materials are intentionally lost, damaged, or destroyed, the school district reserves the right to charge a fee for said items.

Theft

Theft is an act of intentionally taking, using, transferring, concealing, or keeping someone else's property without expressed permission. This includes finding lost items and not attempting to return the item to its rightful owner. Violations of this policy will be subject to the Student Discipline Policy

Damage to Property

Any student who willfully and knowingly damages school property and/or the personal property of other students or staff will be required to make restitution and may be subject to further disciplinary action in accordance with the school district's Student Discipline Policy. The student will be referred to legal officials as appropriate.

Cheating

Cheating includes the following, but is not limited to: cheating on a school assignment or test, plagiarism, collusion, and the use of picture phones or other technology when not given permission to do so.

Student Services

Medication

When possible, students are responsible for their own medication management. However, prescribed medications are considered controlled substances. These medications require a doctor's order and parental consent in order for the medication to be administered on school grounds. School personnel are trained in medication management. The prescribed medication must be kept in a locked cabinet at the school. All medications must be brought to school by an adult in the original prescription containers. At no time is a student allowed to be in possession of a prescribed medication unless verified by school administration. At no time is a student allowed to be in possession of a prescribed medication that is not meant for him or her.

Administration of prescription medication at school requires a completed signed request from the student's parent or guardian in addition to a doctor's order. An oral request

must be followed up in writing within two school days, allowing school personnel to rely on an oral request until a written request is received.

Prescription medications are not to be carried by the student. Exceptions to this requirement include prescribed asthma medications self-administered with an inhaler, and medications administered as noted in a written agreement between the school and the parent or guardian as specified in an IEP, Section 504 plan, or IHP (Individual Health Plan).

Use of Cell Phones or Other Electronic Devices

The cooperative is aware that many students and staff are now in possession of cell phones and other electronic devices. However, the use of such devices during class is considered especially obtrusive to the learning environment. For this reason, the use of electronic devices or cell phones in the classroom is expressly prohibited unless allowed by the classroom teacher. Should a student be found using his or her devices in class without permission (this is defined as any activity in which a student is found to have a device in his or her possession), the student will be directed to put the device away. If the student complies, no further action will be taken. If the student fails to follow this direction, the classroom teacher will ask for the device and keep it until the end of the class period. If a student willingly gives up his or her device, the device will be returned without question at the end of the class period. If the student does not willingly give up his or her device, the building administrator or designee will request the device. If the student gives up the device willingly at this time, the device will be returned to the student at the end of the day. If the student does not willingly give up the device, one or more of the following will occur:

- The student will receive after school detention up to or equal to the amount of learning time lost.
- Parent or guardian will be called to either come and take the device or a plan will be created regarding the device.
- Student will be placed in In School Suspension (ISS).
- Student will be placed in Out of School Suspension (OSS).
- Regular meetings scheduled with parent/guardian.
- Reasonable action to be determined according to the Southern Plains disciplinary policy.

SPALC respectfully requests that parents do not contact their children on their cell phones or other devices during the school day. This is disruptive to your children and the learning environments of the other students. Should you need to contact your child during the school day, please contact the SPALC office at 507-893-3701.

Students: If you need to make a phone call during the school day, you can arrange to do so in a number of ways. You may use a school phone or you may make arrangements to call from your personal cell in a private location. Please make these

arrangements with the School Social Worker, Administrative Coordinator, or the School Secretary.

Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy

In making decisions regarding student access to the school district computer system and the Internet, including electronic communications, the school district considers its own stated educational mission, goals, and objectives. Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees. Access to the school district computer system and to the Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, bulletin boards, and other resources while exchanging messages with people around the world. The school district expects that faculty will blend thoughtful use of the school district computer system and the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in their use.

The school district is providing students with access to the school district computer system, which includes Internet access. The purpose of the system is more specific than providing students with general access to the Internet. The school district system has a limited educational purpose, which includes use of the system for classroom activities, educational research, and professional or career development activities. Users are expected to use Internet access through the district system to further educational and personal goals consistent with the mission of the school district and school policies. Uses which might be acceptable on a user's private personal account on another system may not be acceptable on this limited-purpose network.

The use of the school district system and access to use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Depending on the nature and degree of the violation and the number of previous violations, unacceptable use of the school district system or the Internet may result in consequences as outlined in the Student Discipline Policy.

Users will not use the school district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, receive, transmit, or distribute:

- a. pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material or other visual depictions that are harmful to minors;
- b. obscene, abusive, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful, or sexually explicit language;
- c. materials that use language or images that are inappropriate in the education setting or disruptive to the educational process;
- d. information or materials that could cause damage or danger of disruption to the educational process;

- e. materials that use language or images that advocate violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature) or that may constitute harassment or discrimination.
2. Users will not use the school district system to knowingly or recklessly post, transmit, or distribute false or defamatory information about a person or organization, or to harass another person, or to engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
3. Users will not use the school district system to engage in any illegal act or violate any local, state, or federal statute or law.
4. Users will not use the school district system to vandalize, damage, or disable the property of another person or organization, will not make deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt equipment, software, or system performance by spreading computer viruses or by any other means, will not tamper with, modify, or change the school district system software, hardware, or wiring or take any action to violate the school district's security system, and will not use the school district system in such a way as to disrupt the use of the system by other users.
5. Users will not use the school district system to gain unauthorized access to information resources or to access another person's materials, information, or files without the implied or direct permission of that person.
6. Users will not use the school district system to post private information about another person, personal contact information about themselves or other persons, or other personally identifiable information, including, but not limited to, addresses, telephone numbers, school addresses, work addresses, identification numbers, account numbers, access codes or passwords, labeled photographs, or other information that would make the individual's identity easily traceable, and will not repost a message that was sent to the user privately without permission of the person who sent the message.

All school district computers with Internet access and available for student use will be equipped to restrict, by use of software filtering technology or other effective methods, all student access to materials that are reasonably believed to be obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors under state or federal law.

All school district computers with Internet access will be monitored to ensure that technology is being used to further educational opportunities for students. Students will be educated about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

By authorizing use of the school district system, the school district does not relinquish control over materials on the system or contained in files on the system. Users should expect only limited privacy in the contents of personal files on the school district system. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the school district system may lead to a discovery that a user has violated this policy, another school district policy, or the law. An individual investigation or search will be conducted if school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school district policy. The school district will cooperate fully with local, state, and federal authorities in any investigation concerning or related to any illegal activities or activities not in compliance with school district policies conducted through the school district system.

Use of the school district system is at the user's own risk. The system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The school district will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss, damage, or unavailability of data stored on the school district system. The school district will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the school district system or Internet.

Student Dress

The policy of the school district is to encourage students to be dressed appropriately for school activities and in keeping with community standards. This is a joint responsibility of the student and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s). Students shall not wear clothing or hairstyles which contribute to the following:

- A disruption to the learning process within the school.
- Are contrary to the educational process or discriminate against gender, race, or religion. (i.e. clothing, accessories, or symbols that are obscene, disruptive, profane, promote unhealthy, illegal or violent life styles, that expose cleavage, front and/or back mid-sections, or underwear) The recommended length for shorts and skirts is at least the length of the student's extended fingertips. Clothing that promotes tobacco or chemical use or is sexual in nature will be prohibited.
- A health or safety hazard to any person or persons, including the offender.
- Undue school maintenance problems, such as heavy boots or shoes, which cause excessive floor markings or trousers with metal rivets that scratch furniture.
- Prevent the student from doing his/her best work because of blocked vision or restricted vision or restricted movement.
- Footwear must be worn at all times.
- Concerns about school violence and thus all coats will not be worn in the

classrooms.

Excessive Displays of Affection

Excessive displays of affection between couples are not appropriate in a school. Any staff member may warn couples who are seen displaying or engaging in inappropriate behavior. Examples include: kissing and inappropriate touching. Consequences will be determined according to the Student Discipline Policy.

Student Attendance

The school board believes that regular school attendance is directly related to success in academic work, benefits students socially, provides opportunities for important communications between teachers and students, and establishes regular habits of dependability important to the future of the student. The purpose of this policy is to encourage regular school attendance. It is intended to be positive and not punitive.

In order for an absence to be considered an excused absence, the student's parent or guardian will be asked to verify either verbally or in writing the reason for the student's absence from school. If a student is ill for three (3) or more days consecutively, or a pattern of absence has developed, a physician's verification will be required. Absences may be considered unexcused even with parental approval when absences have become excessive and are interfering in the student's ability to make adequate progress toward graduation requirements.

An absence will **not** be considered excused in the following circumstances:

- a. A parent or guardian does not report their child absent and give a reason for the absence. If a student is 18 years of age or older and resides with his or her parents or legal guardian, it is still the responsibility of the parent or guardian to report the student's absence to the school.
- b. A student is in the school building but has not reported to the assigned class. Should the student have permission from a school staff member to be somewhere other than his or her assigned class, this will not be considered unexcused.
- c. A student is tardy by 15 minutes or more without a valid excuse.
- d. A student chooses to engage in activities not sanctioned by the school during school hours. Examples include: going to work without permission from school staff, going on family vacations without informing and making a plan with school staff, going on a college visit without informing and making a plan with school staff, and any other instances that may arise during the course of a school year.
- e. A student is absent from school multiple times for illness, but the illness cannot be corroborated by a doctor or mental health professional.

Truancy

In an event that a child is absent without a lawful excuse for three (3) or more class periods in a single school year (Minn. Stat. § 260A.02; § 120A.22; § 120A.05), a designated school official shall notify the student's parent or legal guardian, by first class mail or other reasonable means, of the following:

1. That the child is truant;
2. That the parent or guardian should notify the school if there is a valid excuse for the child's absences;
3. That the parent or guardian is responsible for ensuring that a child attend school pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 120A.22.
4. That this notification serves as the notification required by Minn. Stat. § 120A.34;
5. That the parent or guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the child's truancy.
6. That if the child continues to be truant, the parent and child may be subject to juvenile court proceedings under Minn. Stat. Ch. 260.
7. That if the child is subject to juvenile court proceedings, the child may be subject to legal restrictions, or delay of the child's driving privilege pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 260C.201.

In an event that a child is absent without a lawful excuse for seven (7) or more class periods in a single school year and have not been legally withdrawn from school, A cooperative attendance officer shall refer a habitual truant child and the child's parent or legal guardian to appropriate services and procedures, under Minn. Stat. Ch. 260A.

Driving to School and Parking

Students attending the programs outlined in this handbook are not permitted to drive to school unless specific arrangements are made.

Bus Behavior Guidelines

Students using school bus transportation are expected to follow the rules and guidelines as determined by the bus companies and the respective school districts. Violation to school bus policies may result in revocation of bus privileges. Southern Plains Education Cooperative will follow the transportation guidelines as outlined through the individual member districts.

Fire Safety

Students are advised that giving a false fire alarm is a misdemeanor in violation of M. S. A. 2609.866. Pulling a false fire alarm will result in discipline in accordance with the school district's Student Discipline Policy and the student will be referred to legal officials as appropriate.

Nuisance Items

Nuisance items are considered any items that disrupt student learning. These items include but are not limited to, laser pointers, toys, cell phones, personal audio devices, etc. A nuisance item may also be an item that is used for something other than its intended purpose. If a student is in possession of a nuisance item and has been asked to put it away, a student must do so immediately. Failure to do so will result in the item being taken from the student. On the first offense, the item will be returned at the end of the school day. After the first offense, it is the discretion of the staff and parents to determine the next course of action. Possible actions include: parent must retrieve the item, student is not allowed to bring item to school, student must turn item into the office at the beginning of the day and pick it up again prior to leaving school for the day.

Weapons

No student or non-student, including adults and visitors, shall possess, use, or distribute a weapon when in a school location except as provided in this policy. The cooperative will act to enforce this policy and to discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, school employee, volunteer, or member of the public that violates this policy.

A weapon is defined as any object, device, or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or which may be used to inflict self-injury including but not limited to, any firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, air guns, pellet guns, BB guns; all knives; blades; clubs' metal knuckles; num chucks' throwing starts; explosives; fireworks, mace and other propellants; stun guns; ammunition; poisons, chains, arrows; and objects that have been modified to serve as a weapon.

No person shall possess, use or distribute any object, device or instrument having the appearance of a weapon and such objects, devices or instruments shall be treated as weapons including, but not limited to, weapons listed above which are broken or non-functional look-alike guns; toy guns; and any object that is a likeness of a real weapon.

No person shall use articles designed for other purposes (i.e. belts, combs, pencils, scissors, etc.) to inflict bodily harm and/or intimidate and such use will be treated as the possession and use of a weapon.

Violation of this policy shall result in discipline in accordance with the cooperative's Student Discipline Policy and the student will be referred to legal officials as appropriate.

Exceptions

- A. A student who finds a weapon on the way to school or in a school location, or a student who discovers that he or she accidentally has a weapon in his or her

possession, and takes the weapon immediately to the main office shall not be considered to be in possession of a weapon. If it would be impractical or dangerous to take the weapon to the main office, a student shall not be considered in possession of a weapon if he or she immediately turns it over to a school staff member or notifies a school staff member of the weapon's location.

- B. It shall not be a violation of this policy if an individual falls into one of the following categories:
- a. Active licensed peace officers
 - b. Military personnel, or individuals participating in military training, or individuals on duty performing official duties
 - c. Individuals authorized to carry a pistol under Minn. Stat. § 624.714 while in a motor vehicle and the weapon is kept or stored in the motor vehicle in accordance with Minn. Stat. § 624.714 or 624.715 or other firearms in accordance with § 97B.045
- C. While the Cooperative does not allow the possession, use, or distribution of weapons by students or nonstudents, such a position is not meant to interfere with instruction or the use of appropriate equipment and tools by students or nonstudents. Such equipment and tools, when properly possessed, used, and stored, shall not be considered in violation of the rule against possession, use, or distribution of weapons. However, when authorized instructional and work equipment and tools are used in a potentially dangerous or threatening manner, such possession and use will be treated as possession and use of a weapon.

Consequences for Student Weapon Possession/Use/Distribution

The Cooperative does not allow the possession, use, or distribution of weapons by students. Consequently, the minimum consequence for students possessing, using, or distributing weapons shall include:

1. Immediate out-of-school suspension
2. Confiscation of weapon
3. Immediate notification of police
4. Parent or guardian notification
5. Consideration of further discipline including a recommendation of dismissal for a period of time not to exceed one year

Chemical Use & Tobacco

Students, regardless of age, shall not possess, sell, consume, or be under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances and/or unauthorized drugs; or possess or sell equipment (i.e. lighters, matches, rolling papers, electronic cigarettes, pipes or items used to ingest tobacco) for the use in connection with the consumption of alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances and/or unauthorized drugs. This rule applies to the school building, school grounds at all times, on school busses, and at school events that take place away from school property (i.e. field trips, athletic events. etc.). Official

school property for the purposes of tobacco use is defined as a two block radius surrounding the school building.

Violation of this policy shall result in discipline in accordance with the cooperative's Student Discipline Policy and the student will be referred to legal officials as appropriate.

Searches

Pursuant to Minnesota statutes, school lockers are the property of the school district. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of lockers may be conducted by school officials for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. The personal possessions of students within a school locker may be searched only when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. As soon as practical after the search of a student's personal possessions, the school officials must provide notice of the search to students whose lockers were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.

School desks are the property of the school district. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of desks provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of desks may be conducted by school officials for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

The personal possessions of students and/or a student's person may be searched when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. The search will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness.

It shall be a violation of this policy for students to use lockers and desks for unauthorized purposes or to store contraband. It shall be a violation for students to carry contraband on their person or in their personal possessions. If a search yields contraband, school officials will seize the item and, where appropriate, turn it over to legal officials for ultimate disposition.

Use of Canines in School

The school board has determined that police canine units will be used in all school district buildings and properties to search for illegal drugs and other contraband. Students/staff are given notice that they should have no expectation of privacy where such searches are concerned regarding their locker, personal possessions, or automobile while on school property. If a search yields contraband, school officials will seize the item and, where appropriate, turn it over to legal officials for ultimate disposition.

Definitions

“Contraband” means any unauthorized item possession of which is prohibited by school district policy and/or law. It includes but is not limited to weapons and “look-alikes,” alcoholic beverages, controlled substances and “look-alikes,” overdue books and other materials belonging to the school district, and stolen property.

“Personal possessions” includes but is not limited to purses, backpacks, bookbags, packages, and clothing.

“Reasonable suspicion” means that a school official has grounds to believe that the search will result in evidence of a violation of school district policy, rules, and/or law. Reasonable suspicion may be based on a school official’s personal observation, a report from a student, parent or staff member, a student’s suspicious behavior, a student’s age and past history or record of conduct both in and out of the school context, or other reliable sources of information.

“Reasonable scope” means that the scope and/or intrusiveness of the search is reasonably related to the objectives of the search. Factors to consider in determining what is reasonable include the seriousness of the suspected infraction, the reliability of the information, the necessity of acting without delay, the existence of exigent circumstances necessitating an immediate search and further investigation (e.g. to prevent violence, serious and immediate risk of harm or destruction of evidence), and the age of the student.

Crisis Prevention and Intervention

Southern Plains Education Cooperative recognizes the need to balance the rights of students with the need of the school district to maintain safety in all school buildings. For this reason, a separate crisis plan is available and will be disseminated upon request.

Insubordination

Students are expected to obey reasonable requests of school staff. Refusal to comply with a reasonable request is considered insubordination and will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the school district’s Student Discipline Policy.

Abusive Language

Use of profane or abusive language will not be tolerated. When a student uses profane or abusive language he or she will be informed by school staff that such behavior is offensive and needs to stop. If the behavior continues, the student will be subject to disciplinary action as described in the Student Discipline Policy.

Harassment & Other Forms of Violence

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a learning environment that is free from harassment and violence on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability. A violation to this policy occurs when any student, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel or group of students engages in conduct or communication that is perceived as threatening, or is intended to inflict harm on any person or group of people on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability.

All complaints will be investigated by the school district and appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the Student Discipline Policy.

Stalking

Stalking is a method of harassment in which one person intentionally causes another person to feel oppressed, persecuted, or intimidated. Stalking can include but is not limited to: The intent of a person to injure another person or their property, following or pursuing another person; repeatedly making phone calls or electronic communication; whether or not a conversation is held; repeatedly making the phone ring; or one person harassing another which interferes with or intrudes upon the person's privacy or liberty. Any person who believes he or she has been a victim of stalking should report the alleged facts to an appropriate school official.

Hazing

"Hazing" means committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person, in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization, or for any other school-related purpose.

No student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district shall plan, direct, encourage, aid, or engage in hazing.

No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district shall permit, condone, or tolerate hazing.

Apparent permission or consent by a person being hazed does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

This policy applies to behavior that occurs on or off school property and during and after school hours.

A person who engages in an act that violates school policy or law in order to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization shall be subject to discipline for that act.

The school district will act to investigate all complaints of hazing and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who is found to have violated this policy.

Fighting

Fighting is considered a verbal or physical altercation between two or more individuals. This can include, but is not limited to: violations against person, assault or threatened assault, fighting, harassment, interference or obstruction, attack with a weapon, or look-alike weapon, sexual assault, illegal or inappropriate sexual conduct, or indecent exposure; use of language that is discriminatory, abusive, obscene, threatening, intimidating, or that degrades other people. Violations of this policy will result in consequences as outlined in the Student Discipline Policy.

Bullying Prohibition

A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to educate students in a safe environment. The cooperative cannot monitor the activities of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when students are not under the direct supervision of school personnel. However, to the extent such conduct affects the educational environment of the cooperative and the rights and welfare of its students and is within the control of the Cooperative in its normal operations, it is the Cooperative's intent to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond, remediate, and discipline those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented. The purpose of this policy is to assist the cooperative in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, and other similar disruptive behavior.

An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited on cooperative property or at school-related functions. This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying. This policy also applies to any student whose conduct at any time or in any place constitutes bullying that interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the cooperative or the safety or welfare of the student, other students, or employees. The misuse of technology including, but not limited to, teasing, intimidating, defaming, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the cooperative by sending or posting e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings, including blogs, also may constitute an act of bullying regardless of whether such acts are committed on or off cooperative property and/or with or without the use of cooperative resources.

No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the cooperative shall permit, condone, or tolerate bullying.

Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited.

False accusations or reports of bullying against another student are prohibited.

A person who engages in an act of bullying, reprisal, or false reporting of bullying or permits, condones, or tolerates bullying shall be subject to discipline for that act in accordance with cooperative's policies and procedures. The cooperative may take into account the following factors:

1. The developmental and maturity levels of the parties involved;
2. The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature of the behavior;
3. Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior;
4. The relationship between the parties involved; and
5. The context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

Consequences for students who commit prohibited acts of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. Consequences for employees who permit, condone, or tolerate bullying or engage in an act of reprisal or intentional false reporting of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or discharge. Consequences for other individuals engaging in prohibited acts of bullying may include, but not be limited to, exclusion from cooperative property and events and/or termination of services and/or contracts.

The cooperative will act to investigate all complaints of bullying and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the cooperative who is found to have violated this policy.

The cooperative will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the cooperative who commits an act of reprisal or who retaliates against any person who asserts, alleges, or makes a good faith report of bullying or alleged misconduct.

Reporting Procedure

- A. Any person who believes he or she has been the target or victim of bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying or prohibited conduct under this policy shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school official. A person may report bullying anonymously. However, the Cooperative may not rely solely on an anonymous report to determine discipline or other remedial responses.
- B. The reporting party is encouraged to use the report form available from a school staff member or in the main office. However, an oral report shall be considered complaints as well.
- C. The Administrative Coordinator is the person responsible for receiving reports of bullying or other prohibited conduct at an individual school building level. Any person may report bullying or other prohibited conduct directly to the SPEC office. If the complaint involves the building report taker, the complaint shall be made or filed directly with the Director of Special Services for the Cooperative.

Definitions

- A. Bullying is defined as intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and:
 - a. An actual or perceived imbalance of power exists between the student engaging in the prohibited conduct and the target of the prohibited conduct
 - b. The conduct is repeated or forms a pattern
 - c. The conduct materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or ability to participate in school functions or activities, or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.
- B. This policy specifically includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is defined as using technology or other electronic communication to engage in prohibited conduct. This policy applied to prohibited conduct which occurs on school premises, on cooperative property, at school functions or activities, on school transportation, on school computers, networks, forums, mailing lists, or off school premises to the extent that it substantially and materially disrupts student learning or the school environment.

Student Discipline Policy

When possible, it is the desire of school staff to keep students in school and participating in the learning process. Consequences that allow the student to remain in school and rectify the inappropriate behavior will always be used whenever possible. However, certain behaviors and repeated offenses are recognized as requiring other disciplinary measures such as removal from the classroom and in severe cases, the school. At a minimum, violation of cooperative rules, regulations, policies, or procedures will result in discussion of the violation and a verbal warning. The Cooperative shall, however, impose more severe disciplinary sanctions for any violation, including exclusion or expulsion, if warranted by the student's misconduct, as determined by the Cooperative.

Interventions for student violations will depend on:

- the seriousness of the violation
- the frequency with which the student has violated the rule
- the willingness of the student to correct the behavior and act in a positive way
- the age of the student

All students have the right to an education and a right to learn. All students have the responsibility:

- A. For their behavior and for knowing and obeying all school rules, regulations, policies, and procedures;
- B. To attend school daily, except when excused, and to be on time to all classes and other school functions;
- C. To pursue and attempt to complete the courses of study prescribed by the state and local school authorities;
- D. To make necessary arrangements for making up work when absent from school;
- E. To assist the school staff in maintaining a safe school for all students;
- F. To be aware of all school rules, regulations, policies, and procedures, including those in this policy, and to conduct themselves in accord with them;
- G. To assume that until a rule or policy is waived, altered, or repealed, it is in full force and effect;
- H. To be aware of and comply with federal, state, and local laws;
- I. To volunteer information in disciplinary cases should they have any knowledge relating to such cases and to cooperate with school staff as appropriate;
- J. To respect and maintain the school's property and the property of others;
- K. To dress and groom in a manner which meets standards of safety and health and common standards of decency and which is consistent with applicable cooperative policy;
- L. To avoid inaccuracies in student newspapers or publications and refrain from indecent or obscene language;

- M. To conduct themselves in an appropriate physical or verbal manner; and
- N. To recognize and respect the rights of others.

Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:

- A. Student conference with teacher, principal, counselor, or other cooperative personnel, and verbal warning;
- B. Confiscation by cooperative personnel and/or by law enforcement of any item, article, object, or thing, prohibited by, or used in the violation of, any cooperative policy, rule, regulation, procedure, or state or federal law. If confiscated by the cooperative, the confiscated item, article, object, or thing will be released only to the parent/guardian following the completion of any investigation or disciplinary action instituted or taken related to the violation.
- C. Parent contact;
- D. Parent conference;
- E. Removal from class;
- F. In-school suspension;
- G. Suspension from extracurricular activities;
- H. Detention or restriction of privileges;
- I. Loss of school privileges;
- J. In-school monitoring or revised class schedule;
- K. Referral to in-school support services;
- L. Referral to community resources or outside agency services;
- M. Financial restitution;
- N. Referral to police, other law enforcement agencies, or other appropriate authorities;
- O. A request for a petition to be filed in district court for juvenile delinquency adjudication;

- P. Out-of-school suspension under the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act;
- Q. Preparation of an admission or readmission plan;
- R. Saturday school;
- S. Expulsion under the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act;
- T. Exclusion under the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act; and/or
- U. Other disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the cooperative.

Removal of Students From Class

The teacher of record shall have the general control and government of the classroom. Teachers have the responsibility of attempting to modify disruptive student behavior by such means as conferring with the student, using positive reinforcement, assigning detention or other consequences, or contacting the student's parents. When such measures fail, or when the teacher determines it is otherwise appropriate based upon the student's conduct, the teacher shall have the authority to remove the student from class pursuant to the procedures established by this discipline policy. "Removal from class" and "removal" mean any actions taken by a teacher, principal, or other Cooperative employee to prohibit a student from attending a class or activity period for a period of time not to exceed five (5) days, pursuant to this discipline policy.

Grounds for removal from class shall include any of the following:

1. Willful conduct that significantly disrupts the rights of others to an education, including conduct that interferes with a teacher's ability to teach or communicate effectively with students in a class or with the ability of other students to learn;
2. Willful conduct that endangers surrounding persons, including Cooperative employees, the student or other students, or the property of the school;
3. Willful violation of any school rules, regulations, policies or procedures, including the Code of Student Conduct in this policy; or
4. Other conduct, which in the discretion of the teacher or administration, requires removal of the student from class.

Such removal shall be for at least one (1) activity period or class period of instruction for a given course of study and shall not exceed five (5) such periods.

A student must be removed from class immediately if the student engages in assault or violent behavior. "Assault" is an act done with intent to cause fear in another of immediate bodily harm or death; or the intentional infliction of, or attempt to inflict, bodily harm upon another. The removal from class shall be for a period of time deemed appropriate by the principal, in consultation with the teacher.

If a student is removed from class more than ten (10) times in a school year, the Cooperative shall notify the parent or guardian of the student's tenth removal from class and make reasonable attempts to convene a meeting with the student's parent or guardian to discuss the problem that is causing the student to be removed from class.

Should a student need to be removed from class for any reason, the staff member requesting the removal must complete an office referral form indicating the reason for the removal and the requested length of time for the removal. Once received in the office, the building administrator will investigate the situation to determine an appropriate course of action. In the event that the building administrator is not available, the school social worker will conduct the investigation and consult the building administrator for further action.

If removed from class, a student is to report to the main office for further direction.

A student's return to class will be governed by the information outlined in the office referral form and the consequential investigation. The student's plan will be individualized based on student's need and the severity of the violation. Potential plans can include student/teacher conference, student/parent/teacher conference, phone call or email home, or any other reasonable plan indicated by the classroom teacher, school social worker, or building administrator.

Crisis Prevention and Intervention

Southern Plains Education Cooperative recognizes the need to balance the rights of students with the need of the cooperative to maintain safety in all school buildings. For this reason, a separate crisis plan is available and will be disseminated upon request.

Use of Peace Officers and Crisis Teams to Remove Students with IEPs from School Grounds

The cooperative is committed to promoting learning environments that are safe for all members of the school community. It further believes that students are the first priority and that they should be reasonably protected from physical or emotional harm at all school locations and during all school activities.

In general, all students, including those with IEPs, are subject to the terms of the cooperative's discipline policy. Corrective action to discipline a student and/or modify a student's behavior will be taken by staff when a student's behavior violates the cooperative's discipline policy. If a student with an IEP engages in conduct which, in the

judgement of school personnel, endangers or may endanger the health, safety, or property of the student, other students, staff members, or school property, that student may be removed from school grounds in accordance with this policy.

If the behavior of a student with an IEP escalates to the point where the student's behavior endangers or may endanger the health, safety, or property of the student, other students, staff members, or school property, the school building's crisis team may be summoned. The crisis team may attempt to de-escalate the student's behavior by means including, but not limited to, those described in the student's IEP and/or behavior intervention plan. When such measures fail, or when the crisis team determines that the student's behavior continues to endanger the health or safety of others and the crisis team cannot safely manage the student's behavior, the crisis team will contact the School Resource Officer to assist.

If a student with an IEP is restrained or removed from a classroom, school building, or school grounds by a peace officer at the request of a school administrator or staff person during the school day twice in a 30-day period, the student's IEP team must meet to determine if the student's IEP is adequate or if additional evaluation is needed.

Whether or not a student with an IEP engages in conduct which endangers or may endanger the health, safety, or property of the student, other students, staff members, or school property, school personnel may report a crime committed by a student with an IEP to appropriate authorities. If school personnel report a crime committed by a student with an IEP, school personnel shall transmit copies of the special education and disciplinary records of the student for consideration by appropriate authorities to whom it reports the crime, to the extent that the transmission is permitted by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, and cooperative policy.

The fact that a student with an IEP is covered by special education law does not prevent state law enforcement and judicial authorities from exercising their responsibilities with regard to the application of federal and state law to crimes committed by a student with an IEP.

In the event that a student with an IEP is removed from school grounds by a School Resource Officer, the building administrator or designee will make reasonable efforts to notify the student's parent or guardian as soon as is possible following the removal.

Suspension

Suspension is defined as an action taken by the director or other licensed school administrator prohibiting a student from attending school for a period of no more than 10 school days. Suspension is imposed on a student for violation of school rules or incident of misconduct as defined in the Student Discipline Policy. Suspension procedures shall be consistent with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act. Following a suspension there may be a meeting with the student, student's parent or guardian, staff, and others as appropriate

prior to readmission to class.

In the event that a suspension exceeds five (5) school days, the Cooperative will make every effort to implement an alternate education plan. Alternative educational services may include, but are not limited to, special tutoring, modified curriculum, modified instruction, instruction through electronic media, homebound instruction, supervised homework, or other suitable plan that will allow the student to progress toward meeting graduation standards.

The school administration shall not suspend a student from school without an informal administrative conference with the student. The conference shall take place prior to a suspension, except in the case of immediate harm to self, others, or property. In this case, the conference shall take place as soon as is practical following the suspension. At the informal conference, a school administrator shall notify the student of the grounds for suspension, provide an explanation of supporting evidence, and allow the student to present his/her version of the facts.

A written notice containing the grounds for suspension, a brief statement of the facts, a description of student and witness testimony, a readmission plan, and a copy of the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act shall be personally served upon the student at or before the time the suspension is to take effect, and upon the student's parent or guardian by mail within forty-eight (48) hours of the conference.

School personnel shall make reasonable efforts to notify the student's parent or guardian of the suspension by telephone before, during, or immediately after the suspension is imposed.

In the event that a student is suspended without an informal administrative conference on the grounds that the student is a potential harm to self, others, or property, the written notice will be served upon the student and the parent or guardian within forty-eight (48) hours of suspension. This written notification will take place via mail.

Expulsion

Expulsion is an action taken by the school board to prohibit an enrolled student from further attendance for a period that shall not exceed beyond the school year.

No expulsion or exclusion shall be imposed without a hearing, unless the right to a hearing is waived in writing by the student and parent or guardian.

The student and parent or guardian shall be provided written notice of the Cooperative's intent to initiate expulsion or exclusion proceedings. This notice shall be served upon the student and his or her parent or guardian personally by mail, and shall contain a complete statement of facts; a list of witnesses and a description of testimony; state the date, time, and place of hearing; be accompanied by a copy of the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act; describe alternative educational services accorded the student in an attempt to

avoid the expulsion proceedings; and inform the student and parent or guardian of their right to: (1) Have a representative of the student's own choosing, including legal counsel at the hearing; (2) Examine the student's records before the hearing; (3) Present evidence and; (4) Confront and cross-examine witnesses. The Cooperative shall advise the student's parent or guardian that free or low-cost assistance may be available and that a legal assistance resource list is available from the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE).

The hearing shall be scheduled within ten (10) days of the service of the written notice unless an extension, not to exceed five (5) days, is requested for good cause by the Cooperative, student, parent, or guardian.

Please see the Minnesota Fair Pupil Dismissal Act for further information.

Protection and Privacy of Student Records

The procedures and policies regarding the protection and privacy of parents and students are adopted by the cooperative, pursuant to the requirements of 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, et seq., (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)) 34 C.F.R. Part 99 and consistent with the requirements of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minn. Stat. Ch. 13, and Minn. Rules Parts 1205.0100-1205.2000.

Student Surveys

Student surveys may be conducted as determined necessary by the cooperative. Surveys, analyses and evaluations conducted as part of any program funded through the U.S. Department of Education must comply with 20 U.S.C. § 1232h.

How to Request Full Text Copies of Policies

Full text copies of all policies addressed in this handbook may be requested by contacting:

Julie Stoltz
Southern Plains Winnebago
132 1st Ave SE
Winnebago, MN 56098

Phone: 507-893-3701

Email: Julie.stoltz@southernplainsedcoop.org

OR

By going to the Southern Plains Education Cooperative's website:

Under the “Board” tab, search “Policy Manual”

COMPUTER USAGE AND INTERNET POLICY

Internet access has been established for a limited educational purpose that shall be consistent with the schools’ curriculum and the State Standards. The term “educational purpose” includes academic activities, career development, and approved limited activities. All students and parent/guardians must sign a copy of this policy prior to being allowed access to computers.

- Under no circumstances should a student provide passwords to other students or allow anyone access to online accounts.
- Students are not authorized to load any software on a computer system.
- Students are not allowed to play CDs or DVDs on the school’s computers.
- Students are not allowed to stream music or movies via such websites as YouTube.
- Students are not allowed to use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, threatening, or disrespectful language while on the school’s computers.
- Students are not allowed to access inappropriate internet sites while on the school’s computers. Such sites include but are not limited to: pornographic, obscene, or otherwise offensive sites.
- Students are not allowed to utilize the school’s computers to engage in bullying behavior.
- Students are not allowed to plagiarize works found on the internet. Copy and pasting work from the internet into your work is a form of plagiarism.
- Students are restricted from changing the settings of the computers and removing or adding programs.
- No food or beverages are allowed around the computers.
- Students may not unplug any keyboards or mice without prior permission from a teacher.
- Students are responsible for reporting any problems they see with the computers immediately to a staff member.

Failure to follow these rules and standards can result in the suspension of the student's computer privileges and/or other disciplinary action. Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the policy. Your signature below indicates that you agree to follow the policy. If you fail to follow the policy, you acknowledge that you understand the potential consequences.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have received and read my copy of the Southern Plains Programs Student Handbook for the 2017-2018 school year. I know that I am responsible for following the rules and guidelines contained in this handbook, even if I don't agree with them. I also understand that if I do not follow the rules and guidelines, that the appropriate consequences will follow.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date