

Aberdeen Middle Schools Parent & Student Handbook



Holgate Middle School

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Aberdeen School District Website

<http://www.aberdeen.k12.sd.us>

Dear Parents and Students,

We welcome you to a new and exciting school year in the Aberdeen School District. Our staff is committed to providing a quality educational opportunity for students in a safe and orderly environment. Our schools offer a happy, safe, and challenging place for your child to learn and grow. A high expectation of student performance and behavior is important to be successful. We do our very best to meet the needs of each student by helping them reach their greatest potential.

As part of our continuing effort to keep you better informed, this handbook is to provide a reference for parents and students regarding general policies, information, and events at our schools. We hope you and your child will read it carefully and refer back to it for quick reference. We also encourage you to consult each school's website for up-to-date information. Additional information about specific events will be communicated on a regular basis. Please contact the principal regarding any of the policies contained in the handbook.

We look forward to providing an outstanding educational experience for your child in the Aberdeen School District. We hope you feel pride and ownership for the opportunities and programs we provide. On behalf of the faculty and staff, we would like to extend an invitation for you to visit our schools and be an active part in your child's education. Ask questions, come to events, and show your child that school and learning matters. We are looking forward to a successful and exciting school year.

Warmest regards,

Bo Beck, Principal
Hogate Middle School

Dr. Colleen Murley, Principal
Simmons Middle School

Peggy Cox, Assistant Principal
Hogate Middle School

Tina Board, Assistant Principal
Simmons Middle School

Aberdeen School District Strategic Plan

VISION:

To provide all students with the knowledge and skills necessary to reach their potential in a global community through high expectations of academic achievement, diverse educational opportunities, and community involvement in a safe environment.

MISSION:

Empowering all students to succeed in a changing world.

BELIEFS:

- All students can succeed when given the opportunity to learn through appropriate instruction, academic experiences and involvement in activities.
- All students benefit from a safe and nurturing learning environment.
- All students benefit from positive role models.
- Student progress is achieved by holding all students, parents and the school district accountable.
- Students' success is enhanced when the school, parents and community work together as partners.

GOALS:

- To meet academic targets in all schools in the areas of math and reading.
- Provide a safe and supportive learning environment for all students and staff.
- Provide equitable access to current and developing technology tools for all students and teachers.
- Ensure a positive climate/culture that promotes collegiality among/between staff, parents, and students.
- Promote active partnerships within the community.

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ADDRESS CHANGE

It is important that the school office be notified immediately of a change of address, home or office telephone number, or emergency information during the academic year. If the student is moving out of the district, the school should be notified at least a day in advance so proper transfer records can be prepared and the student's books and supplies can be collected.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Students may be dropped off after 7:30 a.m. if they are eating school breakfast. All other students should arrive after 7:45 a.m. For your child's safety pull to the side of the road and have your child get out of your vehicle. Help keep traffic flowing by dropping off your child and continuing on with the flow of traffic. Encourage your student to use designated crosswalks for safety purposes. If you have business in the school, please park your vehicle away from the traffic flow to avoid congestion. **PLEASE BE COURTEOUS. THERE IS NO LOADING OR UNLOADING OF STUDENTS FROM PRIVATE VEHICLES IN THE BUS LOADING ZONES.**

ASSESSMENTS

Students may be given several District and State mandated tests during the school year including:

Grade 6: *Smarter Balanced English Language Arts and Math	Grade 7: *Smarter Balanced English Language Arts and Math	Grade 8: *Smarter Balanced English Language Arts and Math *South Dakota Science
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These assessments are given to determine student needs, guide instruction, and monitor programs.

*Results of standardized tests are made available to parents each year.

ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR MIDDLE LEVEL (School Board Policy JH, JH-R)

Our desire is to cultivate a successful learning climate in the classroom, but it is difficult for students to succeed in school if they do not attend regularly. It is essential that students attend school on a consistent basis to ensure continuity of instruction. When students are absent or tardy, they miss out on important lessons where key concepts or skills are introduced. This puts them at a disadvantage when they return because of gaps in learning and the need to play "catch-up" with lessons that have already been taught in class.

It is our goal to provide each student with the best possible education. Please assist us in achieving this goal by helping to assure your child's regular attendance at school. School board policy, **JH-R Student Absences and Excuses**, will be implemented by all District schools as follows:

1. On the fifth partial or full day absence (whether excused or unexcused) during a school year, a referral will be made to the Principal or Student Assistance Team Coordinator.

2. The Principal or Student Assistance Team Coordinator will decide whether to continue to monitor the student's attendance or to make a further referral.

When it is determined that a further referral is necessary, he/she will send the referral to the Student Assistance Team. The Student Assistance Team will consider special circumstances which may be causing the excessive absenteeism and will also consider available options in working with the parents/legal guardians to solve the problem which causes the student to be absent. These options may include school based support groups, and other guidance services, community based services, and/or referral to legal authorities.

3. On the sixth to ninth partial or full day absence (whether excused or unexcused) or the tenth tardy during a school year, a letter will be sent home to the parent(s) or guardian(s) outlining attendance responsibilities.

4. On the twelfth partial or full day absence (whether excused or unexcused) or the twentieth tardy during a school year, truancy charges will be filed if warranted.

5. In cases of truancy or unexcused absence, parents/legal guardians will be notified and the progressive discipline policy (JK-Middle School and JK-Elementary) will be followed.

6. Upon the fifteenth absence, the school will send the parents/guardians a letter stating that on the twentieth absence, the attendance committee will recommend retention or summer school. Further, the District may file truancy charges on the twentieth day.

Due to SDCL 13-27-1 (Compulsory School Attendance), caregivers are required by law to send their child(ren) (six years-eighteen years old) to school on a regular basis. After 12 absences or 20 tardies, the Aberdeen School District will consider submitting a truancy report to the Deputy State's Attorney's office.

-B-

BACKPACKS/PURSES

All personal items need to be stored in a student's locker during the day. Students will not be allowed to carry backpacks/purses from class to class. Backpacks/purses will not be allowed in the classroom. Students will be allowed to stop at lockers between classes to exchange books or put books away for lunch and elective classes.

BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

The building will be open for students at 7:25 a.m. If a student arrives between 7:25 and 7:50, they will be required to wait in designated areas in the building. Our middle schools have a closed campus and students must remain on campus during the school day. ***Students who are not participating in an activity should be on their way home by 3:20.*** Students will not be allowed to enter and exit the building, nor should they "hang out" on school grounds. School campus must be cleared by 3:30.

*****Please pick your students up on time.**

BIKES, SKATEBOARDS, ROLLERBLADES, and SCOOTERS

Aberdeen School District realizes that some students may rely on a bicycle as a means of transportation to and from school. Students must take full responsibility for securing their bicycle in the proper area. Locks are strongly recommended. Students are welcome to ride a bicycle, skateboard, roller blades or a scooter on public sidewalks but are not allowed to use them on campus grounds. If a student chooses to ride a skateboard, scooter or roller blades on school grounds, it may be confiscated, and it will only be released to a parent/guardian.

BIRTH CERTIFICATES

According to State law, all students are required to have a certified copy of their original birth certificate in their cumulative file. A copy of the birth record from the hospital is not a certified copy. State Law reads:

Any person who is required pursuant to § 13-27-1 to cause any child to attend any public or nonpublic school or alternative instruction program pursuant to § 13-27-3 in this state shall, either at the time of enrollment in any school in this state or upon being excused from school attendance pursuant to § 13-27-3 or within thirty days of initial enrollment or excuse, provide the public or nonpublic school or the alternative instruction program with a certified copy of the child's birth certificate or affidavit in lieu of birth certificate as issued by the Department of Health in such cases where the original birth certificate is deemed unattainable. A violation of this section is a Class 2 misdemeanor.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Anything sent to students will not be delivered to their classroom. All deliveries will go to the school office. **It is recommended that flower and balloon deliveries be made to the student's home.** Staff and students will be informed of any delivery and it can be picked up at the school office at the end of the day.

BREAKFAST

School Breakfast is available 7:30 – 7:50 a.m. when school is in session.

BULLYING (School Board Policy JFCD, JFCE, JFCE-R, JFCE-E)

The Aberdeen School District is committed to maintaining a constructive, safe school climate that is conducive to student learning and fostering an environment in which all students are treated with respect and dignity.

Persistent bullying can severely inhibit a student's ability to learn and may have lasting negative effects on a student's life. The bullying of students by students, staff or third parties is strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated.

Bullying consists of persistent physical, verbal, written or electronic conduct directed toward a student that is so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it:

1. has the purpose of effecting or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive academic environment, or
2. has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with a student's academic performance which deprives the student access to educational opportunities.

This policy is in effect while students are on property within the jurisdiction of the board; while students

are in school-owned or school-operated vehicles; while students are attending or engaged in school-sponsored activities; and while students are away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district. All bullying incidents should be reported to an adult in the school building. Each incident will be taken seriously, investigated, and if warranted, will be addressed through the discipline policy.

BUSSES

Bus routes are determined by Dietrich Transportation of Aberdeen. Transportation will be offered to students who live at least five miles from their assigned attendance center and beyond. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner on the busses. Violations may lead to consequences related to their bus privileges. Athletes must pay a fee to utilize the shuttle bus between schools. You are asked to call Dietrich's at 226-5958 if you have any bussing questions.

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CALENDARS

School year calendars can be found on the District website at <http://www.aberdeen.k12.sd.us>.

CELL PHONES

We discourage bringing cell phones to school. If a student must bring a cell phone it must be kept in their locker and turned off during school hours. The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen phones. Cell phones will be confiscated if they are seen, heard, or used in the building **prior to school**, during the school day, or in detention. *If there is reasonable suspicion that a student has been using the cell phone (texting, calling, taking and sharing photos) the administration reserves the right to inspect the phone.*

Consequences:

- 1st Offense:** Student may pick up after school, parent notified.
- 2nd Offense:** Parent pick up plus 30 min. detention
- 3rd Offense:** Parent pick up plus one day ISS.
- 4th Offense:** Two days ISS, student may no longer bring the device to school.

COMPLAINT POLICIES (School Board Policy KLB, KLD, KED)

In accordance with federal Title regulations, the Aberdeen School District must inform students and parents of Policy KLB (Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Classroom Instructional Materials), Policy KLD (Public Complaints about School Personnel), and Policy KED (Public Complaints about Federal Programs). The Aberdeen School District welcomes constructive criticism of the schools when it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program and to help the school personnel in performing their tasks more effectively. The policies provide the specific procedures for contacting district personnel with this feedback. The policies are available on the district's website at <http://www.aberdeen.k12.sd.us> and can also be obtained in all district buildings.

CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher Conferences are offered for all students at the end of the first and third quarters. Other conferences may be arranged by appointment with your child's teacher when you feel it necessary. Parent-Teacher Conferences are a valuable tool to be used in helping children to be successful at school. Be sure to take advantage of this tool!

COMPUTER USE(School Board Policy IJNDC, IJNDC-R, IJNDC-E)

Internet usage is a privilege. Students must have a computer use agreement signed and returned to their homeroom teacher in order to use the Internet at school. Violations of the computer use policy will result in disciplinary action.

COUNSELING PROGRAM

School Counseling Services are an integral part of our school's total educational program. These services are developmental by design and include sequential activities organized and implemented by a certified, professional school counselor with the support of teachers, administrators, students, and parents.

The Counseling Program addresses the needs of students by helping them to acquire competencies in academic, career, and personal/social development which include:

- Classroom Counseling Curriculum
- Individual Planning
- Responsive Services (individual and small group)
- System Support

School counselors do not offer long term personal counseling or family counseling, but can help find resources available in the community. Parents are encouraged to contact the school counselor anytime they have questions or concerns about their child's school experience.

-D-

DISCIPLINE (School Board Policy JK)

We expect courtesy, cooperation, friendliness and respect for people and property. In the event that a student needs help with self-discipline, he/she needs to realize that he/she will receive appropriate consequences for his/her behavior. Parents/guardians will be notified. The consequences received will depend on the nature and the seriousness of inappropriate behavior and the number of prior offenses. Out of School suspension will cancel a student's participation in any school events on that day. Violations that are against the law will result in suspension and/or police/court referral. The district's progressive discipline plan can be found at https://aberdeen.k12.sd.us/nepn/j/JK_Conduct%20Discipline.pdf.

DISTRICT AND SCHOOL REPORT CARD

The state of South Dakota has recently changed the way student achievement is calculated and considered. More emphasis has been placed on how kids are growing academically through the entire school year, instead of how they perform on a test one time a year. This new system is being put in place a piece at a time with input from the United States Department of Education and other educational groups. Student test scores, along with other information, are being used to help determine a School Performance Index or SPI, which allows our schools to be compared to other in the state to see how we are doing. Detailed reports of how all students in South Dakota scored may be found by going to the Department of Education's webpage at <http://doe.sd.gov/reportcard/index.aspx>

and looking at the state level reports. District and school level reports may also be found on the same website by selecting the school year and the type of report you would like to look at. For help in getting to these reports or understanding what is in these reports, please call your child's school and talk to the teachers or the principal.

DRESS GUIDELINES

Students are expected to dress with standards that enhance a safe learning environment. Attire that creates a health or safety hazard, invades the rights of others, detracts from decency and decorum in school, or disrupts the educational environment will not be permitted. Profanity and suggestive themes, such as alcohol, drugs, tobacco, sex, death, suicide, or violence will not be permitted on school attire.

- All garments must completely cover the upper and lower body and cover the waist at all times.
 - All shirts must have a single shoulder strap that is at least 2" wide.
 - Underclothing should NOT be visible.
 - Skirts, shorts, and skorts must be mid-thigh or longer.
- No headgear, chains, studs, studded jewelry, or face paint.
- No coats in the classroom without teacher permission.
- No clothing with excessive holes or holes located above mid-thigh.
- No "heelies" (shoes with wheels) are allowed.
- Piercings must not interfere with the education of the student or be disruptive. Piercings are not allowed in physical education class for safety reasons and must be removed during class.

If the appropriateness of clothing is in question, the administration will determine if it is suitable. Students may be asked to refrain from wearing the garment in question again or be required to wear something else for the remainder of the school day. Parents may need to be contacted to bring other clothing to school.

DRIVING

Students who drive to school must check with the office for appropriate parking locations.

-E-

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

All staff working for the Aberdeen School District has a State e-mail address. All staff and their e-mail addresses are listed on each school's website at <http://www.aberdeen.k12.sd.us>.

EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS

There is always the possibility that, without much forewarning, circumstances may force us to dismiss school early. Our major concern at that time will be the safety of students returning home when the parent or another responsible person may not be there to receive them.

To assure that each of our students will know what to do in this situation; we ask that you assume these responsibilities:

1. Work out with your son/daughter a contingency plan should he/she be dismissed early from school, such as going to a neighbor, or entering the house and remaining there.

2. Periodically listen to the Aberdeen radio stations for information during any period which might indicate a possible early dismissal from school, such as freezing weather, high winds, blowing snow, flooding rains, or other such natural weather-related conditions.
3. School Messenger should notify you of any instances regarding early dismissal, no school, or late start. In addition to School Messenger, an announcement will be made over local media outlets and the School District app. For more information on School Messenger please look under the letter "S."

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The primary focus of the school is to create a productive learning environment. Electronic devices such as ipods, mp3 players, lasers, toys, smartwatches, etc. are a distraction. **They should not be brought to school.** If students choose to bring these items to school, they may be confiscated and will only be released to a parent or guardian.

Students may bring their electronic book device (Nook, Kindle, eReader, etc) for the purpose of silent reading. It is a privilege rather than a right; thus, when the policies are abused, the privileges may be taken away and confiscation and/or disciplinary action may occur. At no time will students be allowed to connect to the Internet while at school. Students will take full responsibility for the device and secure the device when not in use. Each student using an electronic reading device, along with his/her parent, will need to sign an Acceptance of Responsibility and Use Agreement Permission Form. This form can be picked up from the office.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Fire and tornado evacuation drills, along with safe area drills, are held throughout the year. Each teacher will explain the drill procedures and evacuation schedule in his/her class. Students should move out quietly and orderly, stand away from the building, and return to class when directed by the adult supervisor in evacuation drills. For a lockdown, students should wait quietly and follow directions of school staff.

ENGLISH LEARNERS (EL)

The goal of the English Learner (EL) program is to teach English to nonnative speakers so that they may acquire the language and communication skills necessary to participate successfully in the mainstream classroom from kindergarten through grade twelve. Instruction is designed to meet the needs of students at various English proficiency levels. Language and culture taught in the EL program reinforce skills and concepts taught in all areas of the regular curriculum. Contact the EL Coordinator at 725-7120 if you have questions.

FERPA

Annual notice of confidentiality of information

In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Part B of IDEA, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1983, parents and eligible students have the right to do the following:

- Inspect and review the student's educational records;
- Request the amendment of the student's educational records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights;
- Consent to disclosure of personally identified information that is contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent that the act or District Policy authorizes disclosure without consent;
- File with the U. S. Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failure by the agency or institution to comply with the requirements of the act of this Chapter; and
- Obtain a copy of the district's policy. This right extends to all approved schools located within the Aberdeen School District boundaries.

Model Notification of Rights Under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Institutions Published as Appendix to Federal Register (Nov. 21, 1996) The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 year of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the District receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask (this school district) to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They would write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the district discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. (Note: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.)

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

Note: Listed below is the system's directory information public notice, as required by Section 99.37 of the regulations, with its annual notification of rights under FERPA. 99.37 is listed below:

What conditions apply to disclosing directory information?

- a) An educational agency or institution may disclose directory information if it has given public notice to parents of students in attendance and eligible students in attendance at the agency or institution of
 - 1) The types of personally identifiable information that the agency or institution has designated as directory information;
 - 2) A parent's or eligible student's right to refuse to let the agency or institution designate any or all of those types of information about the student as directory information; and
 - 3) The period of time within which a parent or eligible student has to notify the agency or institution in writing that he or she does not want any or all of those types of information about the student designated as directory information.
- b) An educational agency or institution may disclose directory information about former students without meeting the conditions in paragraph (a) of this section.

Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1232g(a)(5) (A) and (B)]

Directory Information:

Information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed, such as the student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of student, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency of institution attended. A copy of these policies and regulations may be obtained in the building principal's or superintendent's office of the named school district. Complaints regarding violation of rights accorded parents and students should be submitted to the Superintendent of Schools of the Aberdeen School District, or the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

FOOD AND DRINK

Students are allowed to have water in a clear container with them in class. Other food and drink will not be allowed in the classrooms with the exception of limited special activities. Chewing gum may be allowed during the school day at the discretion of individual classroom teachers. **Energy drinks will not be allowed in the school at any time.** Students will be asked to dispose of the drink immediately.

Our middle schools are **PEANUT ALLERGY AWARE** schools! We have students with severe and potentially lethal peanut allergies. Students bringing their own lunch, snacks, etc. should avoid items with peanut ingredients.

-G-

GRADING (School Board Policy IKA)

The adopted grading scale will be used by all teachers, for all subjects requiring a letter grade for students in grades 4 – 12. Letter grades will be assigned using the following percentages:

Policy IKA District Grading Scale:

	Grades 6-8
A =	93% - 100%
B =	84% - 92%
C =	75% - 83%
D =	67% – 74%
F =	0% – 66%

-H-

HALLWAY CONDUCT

Students are expected to show respect for themselves, others, and school property at all times. Horseplay will not be allowed and students may be referred to the office for further consequences

HOMEWORK (School Board Policy JHA)

If your child missed a day of school, you may request their homework by contacting the office, or the teacher, and ask that the day's work be sent home with a sibling or can be picked up in the office after school has dismissed for the day. Unless there are special circumstances, the time period allowed for make-up work will be two school days for each day missed.

HYGIENE – PE UNIFORMS

Students are required to wear a PE uniform, and need to wash their PE clothes on a regular basis. Deodorant should be used by the students and applied only while in the locker room area. Students need to be considerate of those with allergies and asthma by not using cologne, perfume or smelly lotions in the hallway or classroom.

-I-

IMMUNIZATIONS

State law requires that all children entering a South Dakota school for the first time meet certain immunization requirements. These requirements can be waived only if a properly signed medical or religious exemption is filed with the school.

The South Dakota Department of Health, under the authority granted in Section 13-28-7.1, South Dakota Codified Law, has established the following minimum requirements for children enrolled in South Dakota:

1. Four or more doses of diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis containing vaccine. At least one dose must have been given on or after age 4.
2. Four or more doses of poliovirus vaccine, at least one dose given on or after age 4.
3. Two doses of measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine (MMR) or submit serological evidence of immunity. The minimum age for the first dose is 12 months. The second dose is routinely administered at age 4 through 6 years.
4. Two doses of varicella vaccine (chicken pox). The minimum age for the first dose is 12 months. The second dose is routinely administered at age 4-6 years. History of disease is acceptable with parent/guardian signature on the South Dakota Department of Health Certificate of Immunization Form.

Requirements for 6th grade entry:

5. One dose of Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (Tdap) vaccine is required on or after the 11th birthday.
6. One dose of Meningococcal (MCV4) vaccine is required on or after the 11th birthday.

NOTE: Kindergarten & 6th grade students not complying with the above immunization requirements will be excluded from school after 30 days.

Students who transfer to the Aberdeen School District during the school year must meet the minimum immunization requirements. Compliance must be shown within 45 days. Failure to meet these requirements is a basis for excluding a student from attending school until immunizations are complete.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

If school is closed due to inclement weather, an announcement will be made over local media outlets and the School District app. The School Messenger phone program will also notify parents about school closures and early dismissal due to inclement weather.

INTERNET POLICY (School Board Policy EHAA, IJNDC, IJNDC-R, IJNDC-E)

As our school's curriculum is tied to ever evolving technology including the Internet, students will be using internal and external software and sites. All of Aberdeen schools have Internet filtering provided by the State of South Dakota to minimize unwanted sites. No filter is 100% effective so we educate our students who could possibly see an offensive site to report the site to a teacher, leave the site immediately, and continue their school work. Parents must give permission for their child to use the Internet independently for educational purposes by signing the "Acceptable Use Policy Agreement" form. Permission for Internet use is effective during a student's attendance at a site (i.e., K-5, 6-8, 9-12). Photographic images of students may be published without student names. Our District policy, EHAA Internet Safety, is in effect for all buildings and is located at the District web page, <http://www.aberdeen.k12.sd.us>.

-L-

LEAVING AND RETURNING TO SCHOOL DURING THE DAY

Students may not leave school without observing the following procedure:

- Parents/guardians must call the attendance office to receive approval for the planned absence.
- Sign in and out at the office before leaving and upon return.

The middle schools have closed lunch periods. The 30 minute lunch period does not allow students time to leave the building for lunch.

LOCKERS

School lockers are the property of the school district and are subject to inspection by school officials or School Resource Officers. Lockers need to be locked at all times, and students should not share their locker combinations with others. Possessions are the responsibility of the student. If a student mistreats his/her locker, he/she will lose the privilege of using it and have to carry items from class to class. At the end of the year, he/she will be financially responsible for any mistreatment of a school locker. Do not bring large amounts of money or other valuables to school. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

LOST AND FOUND

Visit the office to return or recover any lost and found items. Please check often and put your child's name on personal items to ensure that your child's clothing can be returned or identified.

LUNCH AND BREAKFAST POLICY

We encourage your child to participate in your school's food programs. This will insure your child an adequate, well-balanced nutritious meal. These meals have been certified by USDA and meet all federal requirements. Please check with your child's school for specific serving times for the different grades.

Paying for School Meals

The meal payment system, "Lunchbox" is used in all schools. This prepayment system assigns each student a four digit ID number, the account is set up at enrollment and goes with the student to the next grade level. Meal purchases are subtracted from the account balance.

MySchoolBucks is a secure online meal payment system that allows you to make deposits into your student's school meal accounts, view account balances, create payment reminders and review purchase history, all in one secure online location. There is a small fee for making the online deposits.

Checks may be sent to the schools for deposit into accounts. Please make checks payable to School Food Service Program. Sending cash to school with students is discouraged.

If you have questions about your deposits please call 725-7105.

Free/Reduced Price Meals

Students from households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (RANF) qualify for free meals based on direct notification from the state agency. Households may also qualify for free/reduced price meals based on income guidelines. For information on applications please call 725-7105.

Guests Eating Lunch at School

If you would like to eat lunch with your child, you are welcome to do so. Please contact the school by 8:00 am to notify the school of your plans. Your meal will be included with the school's meal order for the day.

Menus

Menus are available on the District Website at <http://www.aberdeen.k12.sd.us>.

Sack Lunches

Students wishing to bring a sack lunch are welcome to do so. Milk is available for purchase. Due to allergies students are asked to avoid bringing tree nuts, peanuts, peanut butter, and any products that contain peanuts to school.

Sack lunch menus should include food of maximum nutritional value. Fresh fruits and vegetables are encouraged. Pop, sugared drinks and candy are discouraged. Glass containers are not allowed. All packaging of items sent with students should be “student” friendly to open.

Special Diets/School Lunch Menu

A student with a disability, food allergy or other medical condition may submit a “Special Diet Prescription For Meals” form. The form is available on line on the District Website at <http://www.aberdeen.k12.sd.us>; it must be completed, signed by a physician and turned in to the Food Service Office for implementation. For more information on special menus please call Susan Nash at 725-7131.

-M-

MANDATORY REPORTING

South Dakota Codified Law mandates that school personnel having reasonable cause to suspect that any child under the age of 18 years has received physical or emotional injury as the result of abuse or intentional neglect shall immediately report to the Department of Social Services or the Police Department. Failure to report is a misdemeanor.

MEDIA RELEASE

There are times when our students are photographed for the newspaper or other media. Information will be released in accordance with FERPA regulations that are provided within this handbook.

MEDICATION (School Board Policy JLCD, JLCD-R, JLCD-E)

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

1. Early Childhood through Grade 8 - The parent/guardian must deliver prescription medication to the school nurse or a qualified staff member.
2. Prescription medications brought to school shall be in pharmacy-labeled containers, including the student’s name, the name of the drug, dosage to be taken, name of the physician and the date of the prescription.
3. The school nurse or a qualified staff member will count and document all prescription medications received. The medication will be stored in a locked location. Any unused medication will be returned to the parent/guardian at the end of the school year. If the parent/guardian does not pick up the medication, it will be disposed of properly.
4. The parent must complete the Parent Request for Assistance with Medication Form (NEPN Policy JLCD-E). In the event that written permission is not received from the parent, medication will be given for one day only, upon telephone consent.
5. It is the responsibility of the child to come to the office to take the medication. The child shall be supervised by qualified school personnel when taking medication.

6. All medications administered by qualified school staff will be documented on the “Daily Medication Recording Form.” Recording should be done immediately after medications have been taken.
7. Each school shall maintain the “Parent Request for Assistance with Medication Form” and the “Daily Medication Recording Form.” Parent request and recording forms will be retained at the Nurses’ Office for one year and then destroyed.
8. Grades Early Childhood – Grade 8: Students **will not** be allowed to self-administer prescription or nonprescription medication with the exception of insulin which is supervised by a school nurse, or any other medication included in this policy. Students are allowed to carry and self-administer cough drops.
9. Grades 9 – 12: Students **will be** allowed to personally carry and self-administer **nonprescription** medication, providing it is in the original container. The building principal maintains the right to discontinue the privilege if the student is abusing the intent of this regulation.
10. School personnel shall not provide medications for student use.

Epinephrine

School buildings may acquire and maintain a stock of epinephrine auto-injectors pursuant to a prescription issued by an authorized health care provider for use in an emergency situation of a severe allergic reaction causing anaphylaxis.

Any school nurse or staff member may administer an epinephrine auto-injector to a student, in accordance with the standing protocol, if they believe that the student is experiencing anaphylaxis. Prior to administering an epinephrine auto-injector, staff members shall be trained by a licensed health care professional to:

- Recognize the symptoms of a severe allergy or anaphylactic reaction.
- Know the procedure for the administration of an epinephrine auto-injector.
- Know the procedure for storage of an epinephrine auto-injector.
- Know the emergency care and aftercare for a student who has an allergic or anaphylactic reaction.

Asthma or Anaphylaxis

Any student with asthma or anaphylaxis may possess and self-administer prescription medication if:

1. The prescription medication has been prescribed for that student as indicated by the prescription label on the medication.
2. The self-administration is done in compliance with the prescription or written instructions from the student’s physician or other licensed health care provider.
3. A parent/guardian of the student provides to the school:

- a. Written authorization for the student to self- administer the medication.
- b. A written statement in which the parent releases the school district and its employees from liability for an injury arising from the student’s self-administration of a prescription medication while at school.
- c. A written statement from the student’s physician or other licensed health care provider that states that the student has asthma or anaphylaxis and that the student is capable of self-administration. The statement should include the name and purpose of the medication, the dose, time, frequency and circumstances under which the medication can be administered, and the period for which the medication is prescribed.

Misuse

Students are prohibited from transferring, delivering or receiving any medication to or from another student. All violations will result in confiscation of the medication and subject student(s) to discipline in accordance with the District’s progressive discipline policy. Students who use medication for purposes other than for its intended use will be disciplined and will no longer be allowed to carry and self-administer medications.

-N-

NEWSLETTERS

Each school will post on-line event information on the District Website at <http://www.aberdeen.k12.sd.us>, including pertinent information about activities and upcoming events affecting the students at their school.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY (School Board Policy AC, AC-R, AC-E)

Applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, employees, and all unions or professional organizations holding negotiated agreements or professional agreements with the school district are hereby notified that this district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, age, gender, disability, national origin, or ancestry in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities. Inquiries can be directed to Dr. Becky Guffin, Title IX Coordinator, 1224 3rd Street South, Aberdeen, SD 57401 605-725-7111; Renae Rausch, 504 Coordinator, 1224 3rd Street South, Aberdeen SD 57401 605-725-7106; Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, One Petticoat Lane, 1010 Walnut Street, 3rd Floor, Suite 320, Kansas City MO 64106.

NURSE SERVICES

The School District is concerned with the health and welfare of your child and every child in the school. To ensure complete medical attention to your student, the nurses need information regarding any health problem your child has or any changes in your child’s health such as asthma, diabetes, seizure disorders, and allergies. Completed blue emergency cards will be reviewed by the school nurse. The school nurse may call you to clarify any documented health concerns. If the health concern is a special diet or food allergy the parent should inform the school lunch coordinator. When all the necessary medical and emergency contact information is gathered the school nurse will make a health plan to be given to appropriate school staff. Training for staff will be provided for any specialized health services required for the student and will be documented on content and attendance.

Please inform the school when your child has a communicable disease (chickenpox, strep throat, head lice, pink eye, etc.). When the nurse is aware of a communicable disease in the classroom, information may be sent home about signs and symptoms that parents can watch for in their children. Keeping the nurses informed with health care needs is appreciated and aids in the safety of all students. It is vitally important the school nurse is notified of any severe health concern.

GUIDELINES FOR KEEPING YOUR CHILD AT HOME

We are concerned with the health and welfare of every child at school. Sometimes it is difficult to determine whether to keep your child home or send your child to school when your child has been ill.

Keep your child at home if he or she:

- Has a fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Has vomiting or diarrhea
- Has symptoms of an eye infection (red, itchy, watering or mattering)
- Has symptoms that prevent him or her from participating in school, such as:
 - Excessive tiredness or lack of appetite
 - Productive coughing, sneezing
 - Headache, body aches, earache
 - Severe sore throat

Keep your child home until his or her fever has been gone 24 hours without medication. Returning to school too soon may slow the recovery process and unnecessarily expose others to illness. Children may return to school 24 hours after starting an antibiotic if symptoms are no longer present.

-O-

OFFICE HOURS

Middle school offices are open and staffed from 7:45 AM until 4:00 PM. You may leave a message such as absences, tardies, and appointments on the school phone 24 hours a day. School Office numbers are as follows:

- Holgate Middle School 725-7700
- Simmons Middle School 725-7900

-P-

PARENT PORTAL

The Aberdeen School District is committed to providing effective opportunities to enhance school-home communication. Educational research cites parental involvement as one of the most important components contributing to student success. Schools need parents to share in the responsibility and accountability for the outcome of their children's education.

In an effort to facilitate this communication, the Aberdeen School District will make the Parent Portal component of the Infinite Campus Student Management Software accessible to parents/guardians of students attending the Aberdeen School District. The Parent Portal allows parents/guardians to monitor the attendance, assignments, behavior infractions, and grades of their children. Parents/Guardians electing to take advantage of Parent Portal will be expected to follow the guidelines outlined in

Aberdeen School Board Guidelines KDA-R. Any parent who, by court order, has been deprived of visitation rights or of access to school records, shall not be permitted computer access to the school records.

The Parent Portal form activation form is available at the District Service Center, 1224 South 3rd Street, or at all school offices. Contact Parent Portal Support at 725-7133 if you have additional questions.

PARENT/TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

The PTA invites you to become an active member. The yearly membership drive begins in August. Through participation in the PTA's activities, parents assist in providing additional teaching aids and materials for our schools. There is also a great value and satisfaction in the friendships fostered through participation in school endeavors. PTA meetings will be held several times a year. Meeting notices will be announced through the school newsletter.

PHONE USE

Students are allowed to use the student phone at the office **before school, during lunch, and after school** with permission from the secretary. We ask that students limit their calls to three minutes and only use the phone when absolutely necessary.

Students will not be called out of class to receive messages unless they are of extreme importance.

PICTURES

Student pictures will be taken in the fall and spring by Life Touch Photos. The fall photo will be used in the yearbook. Parents who wish to have their child's picture omitted from the yearbook need to provide written notice to the office.

PLANNERS

All middle school students are required to use the planners that the school orders. They may be purchased from the school for a nominal fee. Planners need to be taken to every class every day as it is to be used when a student checks out of class. Students are expected to record assignments in their planner daily.

If a student loses his/her planner, the student is to report to the office to purchase a new one.

-R-

REPORT CARDS

Students will receive mid-term grades 4 ½ weeks into each quarter and formal grades every nine weeks. Parents/guardians may have access to parent portal to track attendance, assignments, and grades. Feel free to contact teachers with any questions you may have regarding your child's classroom performance and behavior. It is important that students attend conferences with parents/guardians to keep on top of their progress.

Restraint and Seclusion (School Board Policy JGB, JGB-E)

As part of the emergency procedures in place in our schools, any student who poses an imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others may be physically restrained and/or placed in seclusion by school personnel in accordance with the District's Restraint and Seclusion policy, as well as in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. Significant violations of the law, including assaults on students and school personnel, will be reported to the police. Parents/guardians will be informed as soon as possible after any such incident.

RULES FOR DANCES/SOCIALS

The following rules are in effect for our school dances/socials. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the school.

1. All students attending the social event must enter through the main entrance door only.
2. All students must remove their coats or jackets before entering the social event.
3. Students must remain in one of the designated spaces for the event unless using the restroom.
4. Any student who intends to leave early from the dance/social must bring a note from parents or the parents need to call the principal and indicate when their child will be leaving the event.
5. **Any student not in attendance at school during the day of an event will NOT be allowed to attend the event.**
6. Parents should be at the school promptly at the end of the event to pick up their student(s).
7. Admission to events at each middle school will be allowed ONLY to students of that specific school.
8. Supervision will be provided by school personnel for all school sponsored dances/socials.
9. In addition to the rules stated above, all school rules, as stated in the handbook, will be in effect.

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SCHEDULING

Schedule changes may be made during the year with the approval of administration. Students in vocal music, band, or orchestra can only drop these courses at semester time after previous approval from the teacher, principal, and parent.

SCHOOL MESSENGER

In our efforts to improve communications between parents and school, Aberdeen School District uses a telephone broadcast system that enables school personnel to notify all households and parents by phone within minutes of an emergency or unplanned event that causes early dismissal, school cancellation, or late start. The service may also be used from time-to-time to communicate general announcements or reminders. This service is provided by School Messenger, which specializes in school- to-parent communications. Aberdeen School District will continue to report school closings due to snow or weather as before on regular media outlets and will use this system as an overlay to the public announcements.

You should get an automated message from the school if a cancellation should occur. Again, this does not replace the radio and TV for school closings, but rather gives us another tool to use to contact you. When used, the service will simultaneously call all listed phone numbers in our parent contact list and

will deliver a recorded message from one of the school administrators. The service will deliver the message to both live answer and answering machines. No answer/busy signals will be automatically retried twice in 15 minute intervals after the initial call.

Here is some specific information you should know:

Live Answers: There is a short pause at the beginning of the message, usually just a few seconds. **Answer** your phone as you normally would, say “Hello” and wait for the message to begin. Multiple “Hello's” will delay message. Inform all family members of this process who may answer your phone.

- **Answering Machines:** The system will detect that your machine has answered and will play the recording to your machine. The maximum numbers of rings before hang up is 5. Make sure your machine answers after 4 rings or you may miss the message.
- **Morning & Day Calls:** In the event a cancellation decision is made the night before or in the early morning hours, the broadcast message will be sent to home phone and cell phone numbers. In the event a cancellation decision is made mid-day, the broadcast message will be sent to all numbers in the database. General announcements would also be sent to all numbers.
- **Message Repeat:** At the end of the message you will be prompted to “press one” to hear the message again. This is very effective when a child answers the phone and hands it to a parent, who can then "Repeat" the message in its entirety.
- **Please understand that with the multitude of phone numbers we work with, you may not get a School Messenger every time a message goes out.** We strongly advise you still watch local television stations and/or listen to our local radio stations as announcements will be made also by these revenues. If you consistently do not receive School Messenger calls, please contact your local school office.
- If you need to update your telephone information, please contact the Principal's office for your child.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Supply lists are available during the summer at local stores, looking on-line under each school's website, or contacting the District Service Center at 725-7100.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT (School Board Policy GBAA, GBAA-R, GBAA-E)

Because sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination and compromises the attainment of educational and work excellence, the Aberdeen School District 6-1 strictly prohibits sexual harassment of its employees or students. Such behavior may occur between members of the same or opposite sex and may be cause for disciplinary action up to and /or including expulsion for students and termination for employees. This policy applies to employees and students attending any event on district property, and at any event or location when the behavior involves district employee(s) or students.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Aberdeen School District Special Education Program provides direct services to students in need of special education or special education and related services. To receive these services, a student is referred to the special education program either by a parent or via the Student Assistance Team in the building. If the District determines that an evaluation is warranted, staff from the District will conduct a comprehensive evaluation to assess if the student's educational needs meet the criteria for being in need of special education. After the completion of a comprehensive evaluation, the multidisciplinary team, which includes the parent, determines if a student meets the criteria for special education services. If the student does, with the parent's consent, they will then develop a plan to address the student's areas of need. This plan, called an Individualized Education Program (IEP), functions as the

roadmap to meet the student’s goals and identify related services. Services may be delivered across a variety of settings, with emphasis being placed on ensuring the student remains with their same-age peers to the highest extent possible.

STATE CERTIFIED STAFF

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) all teachers are required to be highly qualified for their teaching assignments. It is our district’s policy to hire only highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals. If you would like information regarding the professional qualifications of your student’s teacher, please contact the school principal.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Students are strongly encouraged to participate in co- and extra-curricular activities. Participating in these activities is a privilege. Schoolwork comes first and athletes may, on occasion, have to miss a practice, competition, or activity for academic reasons. Students must be in school the entire day to be allowed to participate in after-school events and activities. Exceptions to this rule would be scheduled medical appointments, death or serious illness in the student’s family, or special circumstances beyond the student’s control. Prior notification must be provided whenever possible. See the district website for more information on each activity.

Activities Open to Grades 6-8		
Drama	Jazz Band	Show Choir
Youth Power	Student Senate	TATU/Peer Helpers
Math Counts	FOR Club (SMS)	Fuel Up to Play 60
Cross Country	Golf	S.O.S. (Holgate)
Wrestling	Gymnastics	Tennis

7 th Grade	8 th Grade
Football	Football
Basketball	Basketball
Volleyball	Volleyball
Track	Track
	Cheerleading

STUDENT RECORDS

The Aberdeen School District has developed and implemented policies and procedures on the confidentiality of information consistent with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.

The parent/guardians of a child who is now, or was, enrolled in the Aberdeen Public Schools shall be afforded, in accordance with the policy, an opportunity to inspect and review all education records concerning that child.

Confidentiality procedures are assurances that personally identifiable data shall be used for the purpose for which it is collected and be released only in the manner provided by the law.

Parents have the rights to:

- 1) Review and inspect records.
- 2) A listing of types and location of records.
- 3) Request an explanation of or an amendment to the records and a hearing regarding all records affecting your child, should there be a disagreement as to any part of the contents of such file. Any other information relative to records or procedures in handling of records can be secured from the Principal or Superintendent.

-T-

TARDIES

Being on time is an important habit to build. Students will be counted tardy if they are not seated in their assigned seat when the bell rings.

Consequences for excessive tardiness during the school day include:

- Violations 1 through 4 – warnings only.
- Fifth violation and further violations will result in detention.

***The Administration reserves the right to deviate from this discipline plan to fit the needs of all students and/or school personnel.**

TEXTBOOKS

Good care of the books is each student's responsibility. Students will be assessed fines for any of the following:

- Ink on a page, torn pages, missing page or pages requiring a new book
- Lost or destroyed book
- Any cause for rebinding the book
- Fines will be levied for unnecessary damage to all books

Classroom teachers will assess the fines and students may pay the fines to the teacher or the office.

TRANSFERS

Families who have been granted a transfer request for the current school year need not apply next year unless there has been a change of address. However, if a family who has been granted a transfer request has a new sixth grade child entering school next year, they **MUST** turn in a transfer request form for the sixth grade student. Just because a family was granted a request this year **DOES NOT** mean that their sixth grade student will automatically go to the requested school as the rest of the family does. The District will do everything possible to grant those requests. The District Service Center will begin receiving transfer requests on January 1. Requests are reviewed based upon earliest date of submission.

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VALUABLES

It is strongly recommended any items of significant value be left at home. The school will not be responsible for valuables that are lost or stolen.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

ALL VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT TO THE OFFICE! We ask that you please make arrangements with the classroom teacher/office prior to your visits.

-W-

WEAPONS AND THREATS (School Board Policy JK)

Schools have no tolerance for weapons (real or facsimile). Students who carry, bring, use or possess a weapon facsimile, create a threat of physical harm, or physically harm a student or school personnel shall face possible suspension or expulsion from school, depending on the nature of the violation. Fire starting equipment, such as matches and lighters, and tools that could be construed as weapons are also considered contraband. If students bring such items to school, parents will be contacted and students may face school suspension.