

COMPREHENSIVE SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

Philosophy

All students have the right to attend school in a drug free environment which is conducive to good learning. The use of illicit drugs, alcohol, and other substances is not only illegal, but it interferes with both effective learning and the healthy development of young individuals. The educational system has a fundamental and ethical obligation to prevent drug abuse and to maintain a drug free and safe educational environment, not only throughout the schools, but also at all school related activities.

Statement of Purpose

1. Emphasize school personnel's concerns for the health and well-being of all students.
2. Provide a kindergarten through twelfth grade program of instruction, curriculum, implementation, review, in-service - staff development, coordination and cooperation among other allied agencies.
3. Promote equity, order, and discipline among students.
4. Conform to and support existing state laws.
5. Establish standards of acceptable conduct for all students.
6. Assist students to resist peer pressure that directs them toward the use of drugs and alcohol.
7. Assist students referred for help or evaluation regarding drug use.
8. Ensure due process for all students, as well as fair and equitable treatment.
9. Establish standards of conduct for all school personnel, including students, staff, and associates.

USE AND POSSESSION OF HEALTH ENDANGERING SUBSTANCES

Pursuant to its statutory authority to adopt rules, regulations and policies necessary to protect the government and health of students in the School District, the Board of Education of the Gering Public Schools has determined that the possession or use by students of tobacco or tobacco products, alcohol, narcotics, or any other dangerous and/or illegal drugs shall be prohibited:

- During the school day
- On school grounds
- By participants or spectators at school activities which involve Gering participants

Students who possess or use tobacco or tobacco products, alcohol, drug paraphernalia, narcotics, or any other dangerous drugs (except as directed by a physician) during the school day, on school grounds, or while participating in or attending school activities, shall be subject to sanctions including but not limited to suspension or expulsion. Additional requirements are in effect for those students who are involved in extra-curricular activities.

The regulations which shall guide the enforcement of this policy shall be in keeping with applicable laws and shall be observed by all staff members. Appropriate procedures shall be followed by all school personnel in working with students who may:

1. Be under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, or any other drugs on school property or at school sanctioned activities.
2. Possess tobacco, alcohol, narcotics, other dangerous drugs, "look-alike" drugs, or drug paraphernalia on school property or at school sanctioned activities.
3. Be engaged in acts of selling or distributing alcohol, narcotics, other dangerous drugs, "look-alike" drugs, or drug paraphernalia on school property or at school sanctioned activities.

The administration is charged with implementing this policy through the use of procedures outlined below, which includes staff training.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES RELATED TO THE PREVENTION OF CHEMICAL ABUSE

I. Intent

These procedures for substance abuse prevention and intervention are designed to assist implementation of the School Substance Abuse Policy.

The purpose of the Substance Abuse Policy and Procedure is to assure that students receive careful consideration and assistance if substance use is a cause of unsatisfactory school performance or attendance, and to insure the involvement of all schools in prevention activities.

II. Definition of Terms

Substance-In this context it is defined as alcohol, drugs, tobacco in any form, over-the-counter and prescription medications, hallucinogens, mind altering, toxic or addictive substances such as marijuana, LSD, cocaine, heroin and other opiate derivatives and harmful petroleum-based inhalants such as paint and lacquer, or substances suspected to be any of the above.

Substance Abuse-The use of a substance to a degree that is commonly regarded as detrimental to either the user or to those who may come into contact with the user. This includes cases of physical or psychological dependence.

Crisis Intervention-Is defined as actions taken to temporarily resolve a substance induced health or emotional crisis on school grounds or in situations under the auspices of the School District.

Designated School Coordinator-A specific individual at each school site officially designated by the School Superintendent to coordinate substance use/abuse prevention and intervention strategies on behalf of students enrolled at the school. This individual may be from the regular school staff, a special person operating under contract with the school, or an experienced staff/prevention person from a credible counseling or abuse treatment/prevention program.

Intervention-Is defined as those actions taken to identify and provide assistance for substance use when it already exists.

Parent-One or both of the student's parents, or a responsible adult who is functioning in the role of the student's parents or legal guardian.

Prevention-Is defined as those activities designed to motivate students to avoid substance use altogether.

Principal/Site Administrative Staff-The individual at each school site who is vested with primary responsibility for overall school administration, or the individual directly assigned to act on behalf of the principal to carry out these policies and procedures.

School Staff Member-Is an individual employed by Gering Public Schools, either in a certified staff position or in a classified staff position.

Student-Is an individual enrolled in any educational or extra curricular activity sponsored by the Gering Public School District.

III. Prevention

Prevention is directed toward providing students with information and developmental experiences, which will enable them to avoid the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

A. The Student

Prevention efforts shall be implemented on a comprehensive, coordinated basis in all grades (K-12) and will include:

1. Pharmacological and health information appropriate to the student's age and development, to include: potential social, psychological, and physical effects of substances.
2. Promotion of student understanding of peer pressure and other influences upon student's lives.
3. Skill development related to self esteem, goal setting, decision making, understanding feelings, conflict management and problem solving, refusal skills, and the development of communication skills.
4. Ensuring student understanding of the effects of emotions, and stress on the lives of students and families.

B. Educational Environment

Prevention efforts will emphasize effective communication throughout all levels of the educational environment. Communication requires a receptive audience. Maintaining such a receptive audience is dependant upon providing a healthy classroom environment that encourages:

1. The student's positive self-concept.
2. The student's enthusiasm for learning.

3. Outlets for student self-development and creativity which acknowledges individual skill levels, needs, and interests.
4. Responsible student decision making and problem solving.
5. Recognition of the special needs of high risk students of families experiencing undue stress.

C. **Family and Community**

The successful prevention of substance involvement must entail a plan to ensure that parents and the community are participants in the prevention process. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Family communication and parenting.
2. Child growth and development
3. Understanding peer pressure.
4. Problem solving.
5. Early signals of chemical usage.
6. Self help support groups and community counseling programs.
7. Community involvement in providing prevention in the school setting.

IV. Searches

Searches within the school building or on school grounds will be authorized by the principal when there are circumstances, which would cause a reasonable person to believe that the search of a particular person, place, or thing will lead to the discovery of:

1. Evidence of a violation of the student conduct standards contained in the policies of the Board of Education or a violation of Federal, State, or local laws.
2. Anything, which because of its presence, presents an immediate danger of physical harm or illness to any person.

A. **Locker/Desk/Storage Area Searches**

All lockers and other storage areas on school premises remain the property of the issuing agency and are provided for the use of the students and are subject to inspection, access for maintenance, and search pursuant to this policy. No student shall lock or otherwise impede access to any locker or storage area except with a lock provided by or approved by the principal of the school in which the locker or storage area is located. Unapproved locks will be removed.

1. The principal, or a member of the administrative staff designated in writing by the principal and a faculty witness, will search a locker and its contents when the person conducting the search has reasonable cause to conduct the search.

B. Personal Searches

The principal, or another member of the administrative staff designated in writing by the principal and acting at the direction of the principal, will search the person of a student while on the school premises and/or during a school activity if the principal has reasonable cause to conduct a search of that student for a violation of the policy herein. Searches of the person of a student shall be limited to:

1. Searches of the pockets of the student.
2. Searches of the shoes and socks of the student.
3. Any objects in the possession of the student, such as a purse or briefcase.
4. A “pat down” of the exterior of the student’s clothing.
5. Rapid Eye check.

More extensive searches of the person of a student than those enumerated above shall be conducted in a private room by a person of the same sex as the student being searched and witnessed by one other person of the same sex as the person being searched. Searches of the person of a student which requires removal of clothing other than coat or jacket and shoes and socks shall be conducted only upon grounds of probable cause.

C. Motor Vehicle Searches

The principal or a member of the administrative staff designated in writing by the principal may request a law enforcement officer to search a motor vehicle on the school premises, subject to the sub-section of this regulation entitled, “Involvement of Law Enforcement Officers,” when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that alcohol, drugs, or a controlled substance in possession of the vehicle owner in violation of this policy is contained therein.

D. Custody of Evidence

Anything found in the course of a search conducted in accordance with this section which is evidence of a violation of the student conduct standards may be:

1. Seized and admitted as evidence in any suspension or expulsion proceeding if it is tagged for identification at the time it is seized and kept in a secure place by the principal or the principal’s designee until it is presented at the hearing.
2. Turned over to a law enforcement officer in accordance with the sub-section of this regulation entitled “Involvement of Law Enforcement Officers.”

E. Involvement of Law Enforcement Officers

Except in cases of extreme danger to life or property, or when notification is not possible through reasonable diligent efforts, the parent of any student shall be notified prior to requesting police to conduct a search of the person. In those instances when notification is not possible prior to requesting police to conduct the search, the student's parents shall be notified as soon as is reasonable possible thereafter. Upon finding probable cause for a search, the principal, or a member of the administrative staff designated in writing by the principal, may request the assistance of a law enforcement officer to:

1. Search any area of the school premises, any student, or any motor vehicle on the school premises.
2. Identify, retain, or dispose of contraband found in the course of a search conducted in accordance with this section.

V. Helping Intervention Procedures

Effective substance abuse prevention and timely identification of students involved in substance use requires constant awareness and astute observation on the part of all individuals who relate to the student on a daily basis, including the student himself. Following are procedures to be used by students and employees of the school district.

A. Identification of Involved Students

1. Teacher

The teacher is the professional, having the most contact with a student, and is therefore, in the best position to observe any significant change in a student's behavior. At all times, the teacher should focus upon observable behavior in evaluating any change in a student.

- a. The teacher will document absenteeism, poor performance, sickness, negative personality changes or peculiar behavior in general.
- b. The teacher may discuss these behaviors with the student.
- c. If the teacher has reason to believe the student has a drug use/abuse problem, the teacher will initiate a referral to the Student Assistance Team or Student Assistance Program (SAT, SAP).

2. The Student Assistance Team

The Student Assistance Team will evaluate the student by following the established procedures for the (SAT, SAP), with recommendations for proper intervention strategies to assist students with identified drug use problems.

3. Student

The student may be in the best position to know what, how much, and how often he uses substances. The student may also be aware of the negative impacts these substances are having on his own body, personality, physical and academic performance, or that of other students.

- a. The student should consider the possibility that some or all of the problems he is experiencing could be caused by use of substances.
- b. The student should care enough about his friends and associates to tell them substance use is creating health or other problems.
- c. If the student is worried that he is not able to deal with a situation by himself, the student should ask for help by discussing substance problems with either his teacher or school coordinator.
- d. The student should be able to expect that a teacher or school coordinator will provide accurate and appropriate assistance, through the Student Assistance Team, is seeking help from a counseling or substance abuse treatment agency.

4. Designated School Coordinator

- a. The designated school coordinator is responsible for overseeing that prevention activities are instituted.
- b. The designated school coordinator is responsible for assisting those students involved with substance use to access community treatment resources.
- c. The school coordinator will be provided with specialized training in substance abuse prevention and recognition.
- d. The school coordinator or designee shall have the authority to conduct preliminary screening/field testing on students who have been referred for being under the influence or in possession of alcohol, drugs or other harmful substances.

VI. Disciplinary Procedures and Actions

Any student charged with having violated school rules or Nebraska State laws relating to possession use or sale of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, mood-altering drugs, controlled substances, drug paraphernalia or any drug “look-alike” substance, on school

premises, at school sponsored sanctioned activities, or when being transported in vehicles dispatched by the school district, shall be immediately notified (along with the student's parents) of the charge, given a full written statement of the charge and accompanying suspension, and advised of his/her rights to a review of the validity of the charge in the form of a hearing before the school's Board of Education within a reasonable time. In order to insure the student's right to due process, the procedural requirements of Nebraska State Law. Student Suspension or Expulsion Act sections 79-4170 to 79-4205 shall be followed. Those students found to have violated school rules or Nebraska State laws shall be subject to the following disciplinary actions and procedures under the direction of the school principal or the school's site administrative staff, as determined by the number of prior offenses by the student. Students involved in extra curricular activities shall be subject to additional disciplinary actions as specified in the Guidelines for students participating in Extra Curricular Activities. These guidelines are established and approved by the Board of Education and published in the Parent-Student Handbook/Manual.

A. Procedures for Dealing with Students Under the Influence of Alcohol, Drugs or Other Harmful Substances Other than Tobacco.

1. Any staff member who believes that a student is under the influence of alcohol or drugs will notify a principal or designee immediately.
2. The principal or designee will take the necessary disciplinary actions as outlined in the following section (Section VI-B).

B. Disciplinary Actions for Students Under the Influence of Alcohol, Drugs or Other Harmful Substance Other Than Tobacco.

1. First Offense

- a. A meeting is held with student and parents.
- b. The student is given a five (5) day out of school suspension, but shall be offered the option of in school suspension if he/she agrees to have immediate testing for drugs/alcohol in the body and to seek diagnostic evaluation for substance abuse if the tests are positive. The student must follow those recommendations made by a resource specialist for substance use/abuse or related problems. If the student fails to follow treatment recommendations he/she shall be required to complete the remainder of the five day out of school suspension. (The School District will provide a list of qualified specialists).
- c. A recommendation for long term suspension or expulsion will be considered, depending upon the severity of the case.

d. In an emergency case necessitating immediate health care services, the above procedures shall be put in place as soon as the student is physically and mentally functional.

2. Second Offense (occurring within three years of the first offense).

a. A conference will be held with the parents as soon as possible. Immediate drug/alcohol testing will take place.

b. Upon confirmation of a positive drug/alcohol test, the student will automatically be suspended ten (10) days.

c. Parents will be provided with information on qualified substance abuse treatment resources.

d. The student will be required to undergo assessment by a qualified substance abuse specialist and submit proof of an assessment by that specialist before being allowed to return to school. The student must agree to fulfill those recommendations made by the substance abuse specialist.

e. Failure to comply with the above will result in long term suspension or expulsion hearings being initiated against the student.

3. Third Offense (occurring within three years of the first offense).

a. The student will be suspended pending expulsion proceedings which will be initiated according to the School District's expulsion policy.

C. Procedures for Dealing with Students in Possession

Students who possess alcohol, narcotics, other drugs, drug "look-alikes," or drug paraphernalia on school property or at school sponsored/sanctioned activities will be handled in the following manner:

1. Any staff member who comes in contact with evidence and/or contraband will notify a principal or a designee immediately.

2. Any staff member who has reasonable suspicion to believe that a student is in possession of alcohol, narcotics, other drugs, drug "look-alikes," or drug paraphernalia will notify a principal or designee immediately.

3. The principal or designee may call the local police department and request assistance in conducting a search for any illegal substances. All substances (contraband) found in the search will be given to the police department for analysis to determine if it is an illegal substance.

4. Upon notification by the appropriate agency for law enforcement that the contraband contains narcotics or other dangerous drugs, or if possession of alcohol is involved, the principal or designee will take the necessary disciplinary action as outlined in Section **VI-E**.

D. Procedures for Dealing with Students Engaged in Selling, Giving, or Exchanging

Students who are engaged in selling, giving or exchanging alcohol, narcotics, other drugs, drug “look-alikes”, or drug paraphernalia on school property or at school sponsored/sanctioned activities will be handled in the following manner:

Discipline is the same as outlined in the Disciplinary Actions for Students Under the Influence of Alcohol, Drugs or Other Harmful Substance Other Than Tobacco in Section B of Comprehensive Substance Abuse Policy.

1. If an employee is witness to any act in which alcohol, narcotics, other drugs, drug “look-alikes,” or drug paraphernalia is transferred from one person to another, the employee will immediately attempt to detain the student(s) involved and request that they accompany him to a principal or designee. If the student refuses, the employee will notify a principal or designee immediately.

2. The principal or designee will attempt to obtain evidence by directly requesting it from the student or through search procedures outlined in Section **IV**. “Searches.”

3. Follow the same procedure for handling evidence and/or contraband as outlined above in Section **VI-C**.

E. Disciplinary Actions for Students Selling, Giving, or Exchanging

Any student found to be in violation of school rules or Nebraska State laws by selling, giving, or exchanging any substance stated herein, shall be immediately notified (along with the parents) of the charge, and shall otherwise be entitled to the same right to a hearing according to School District policy.

1. First Offense

a. Student is given a **TEN** (10) day suspension, but shall be offered the option of returning to school after **FIVE** (5) days if he/she agrees to have immediate testing for drugs/alcohol in the body and to seek diagnostic evaluation for substance abuse if the tests are positive. The student must follow the recommendations made by a resource specialist for substance use/abuse or related problems. If the student fails to follow treatment recommendations, he/she shall be required to complete the remainder of the five day suspension. (The School District will provide a list of qualified specialists).

b. The principal or designee will conduct a conference with parents and/or police representatives.

- c. A recommendation for long term suspension or expulsion will be considered, depending upon the severity of the case.
- d. The school administration will cooperate fully with local law enforcement agencies when investigations and searches, related to drug offenses, are in progress.

2. Second Offense

- a. The student will be suspended, pending a long term suspension or expulsion proceeding which will be initiated according to the School District's expulsion policy.

F. Procedures for Dealing with Students in Possession of Tobacco Products

1. First Offense

- a. Student will be given a written warning.
- b. Parents will be contacted and receive a copy of the written warning given to the student.

2. Second and Subsequent Offense (s)

- a. The student will be suspended from school for three (3) days or must successfully complete a smoking cessation class/rehabilitative program.
- b. The principal or designee will conduct a conference with the student and parent.

3. Students who are involved in extra curricular activities shall be subject to the guidelines and rules as established and approved by the Board of Education and published in the Parent-Student Handbook/Manual.

VII. Emergency of Crisis Intervention

Immediate intervention is merited whenever the behavior of a student jeopardizes the health, safety or welfare of himself or that of other students or staff. In addition, immediate intervention is often mandated when a student is directly observed using mood-altering drugs or chemicals.

A. The Intervention

Should a student demonstrate behavior suggesting immediate danger to his health, the following actions will be taken:

- 1. The staff member involved will secure whatever help is needed to provide first aid to the student and to insure the well-being of others present.

2. Should the student's behavior indicate a potential overdose or withdrawal, the staff member should attempt to determine the type of drug taken.
 - a. An inspection of the student's clothing or locker may be necessary.
 - b. Staff members will try to ask friends and associates of the student for information.
 - c. Careful observation will be noted of any odors or types of behaviors displayed.
3. Parents will be contacted immediately, advised of the crisis situation, and involved in the decision of whether or not the student should be transferred to a medical facility.
4. When parents cannot be contacted, the student will be transferred to a medical facility at the discretion of the principal or designee.
5. The local police department shall be notified.

B. Plan for Ongoing Intervention

After the student's immediate needs have been attended to and a determination has been made that the student has violated the provisions of this policy, planning with the student and the parents will begin. The student will be subjected to disciplinary actions as stated in Section **VI**. Long range planning to make the students behavior fall within the school context as well as within the larger community shall be initiated. Within this context, it is essential that:

1. The student shall be held responsible for his actions.
2. Support shall be provided to help the student understand his behavior within the school and broader social context.
3. Students shall be informed of legal actions which may be pursued at the discretion of the school, the student's parents, or the appropriate law enforcement agency.

VIII. Staff Training

In order to implement the prevention, intervention, and disciplinary phases of the program, it is important that administration, full and part-time certified staff, and all classified staff be made aware of the part they can play in creating a caring and responsible school community. By cooperating with community resources, a successful training program can be accomplished. Guidelines for training are as follows:

- A. Training should include information which enhances staff awareness of various "patterns of use." This training would dictate in-service training annually punctuated with periodic activities designed to strengthen staff knowledge and skills.

B. Fundamental to such training is an emphasis on techniques that develop communication skills to encourage positive growth in students.

C. Cooperation with community resources such as media, churches, service organizations, colleges, and universities will enable a variety of programs to develop which can strengthen awareness and skills.

IX. Distribution of Policy

A copy of this policy will be distributed to each building in the district. This policy will be available to all school personnel, parents, community members and students. In addition, a summary of the policy will be provided to the parents of every student, either at the time of registration or at the time this policy first goes into effect. A summary will also be provided to each student and incorporated in the Student Handbook.

X. Review of Policy

This policy shall be reviewed on a continuing basis to determine if it needs to be changed or revised. The Drug Free Schools Committee shall be responsible for the review of all suggested changes or revisions and to make the appropriate recommendation to the Board of Education.