

Pocahontas School District

2022-2023 DISTRICT STUDENT POLICIES

Lesa Grooms
SUPERINTENDENT

MEMBERS OF
POCAHONTAS SCHOOL BOARD
2022-2023

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PUPILS ENTERING POCAHONTAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

To enroll in a school in the District, the child must be a resident of the District as defined in District policy — RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS, HOMELESS STUDENTS or —STUDENTS WHO ARE FOSTER CHILDREN, be accepted as a transfer student under the provisions of the district’s student transfer policy, or participate under a school choice option and submit the required paperwork as required by the choice option.

Students may enter kindergarten if they will attain the age of five (5) on or before August 1 of the year in which they are seeking initial enrollment. Any student who has been enrolled in a state-accredited or state-approved kindergarten program in another state for at least sixty (60) days, will become five (5) years old during the year in which he/she is enrolled in kindergarten, and meets the basic residency requirement for school attendance may be enrolled in kindergarten upon written request to the District. Any student who was enrolled in a state-accredited or state-approved kindergarten program in another state or in a kindergarten program equivalent in another country, becomes a resident of this state as a direct result of active military orders or a court-ordered change of custody, will become five (5) years of age during the year in which he or she is enrolled in kindergarten, and meets the basic residency requirement for school attendance may be enrolled in kindergarten upon a written request to the District.

Any child who will be six (6) years of age on or before October 1 of the school year of enrollment and who has not completed a state-accredited kindergarten program shall be evaluated by the district and may be placed in the first grade if the results of the evaluation justify placement in the first grade and the child’s parent or legal guardian agrees with placement in the first grade; otherwise the child shall be placed in kindergarten.

Any child may enter first grade in a District school if the child will attain the age of six (6) years during the school year in which the child is seeking enrollment and the child has successfully completed a kindergarten program in a public school in Arkansas.

Any child who has been enrolled in the first grade in a state-accredited or state-approved elementary school in another state for a period of at least sixty (60) days, who will become age six (6) years during the school year in which he/she is enrolled in grade one (1), and who meets the basic residency requirements for school attendance may be enrolled in the first grade.

Students who move into the District from an accredited school shall be assigned to the same grade as they were attending in their previous school (mid-year transfers) or as they would have been assigned in their previous school. Private school students shall be evaluated by the District to determine their appropriate grade placement. Home school students enrolling or re-enrolling as a public school student shall be placed in accordance with the district’s policy on admittance of Home School students.

The district shall make no attempt to ascertain the immigration status, legal or illegal, of any student or his/her parent or legal guardian presenting for enrollment.

Prior to the child’s admission to a District school:

1. The parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis shall furnish the child’s social security number, or if they request, the district will assign the child a nine (9) digit number designated by the Division of Elementary and Secondary education.
2. The parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis shall provide the district with one (1) of the following documents indicating the child’s age:
 - a. A birth certificate;
 - b. A statement by the local registrar or a county recorder certifying the child’s date of birth;
 - c. An attested baptismal certificate;
 - d. A passport;
 - e. An affidavit of the date and place of birth by the child’s parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis; or
 - f. United States military identification;
 - g. Previous school records.

3. The parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis shall indicate on school registration forms whether the child has been expelled from school in any other school district or is a party to an expulsion proceeding. Any person who has been expelled from any other school district shall receive a hearing before the Board at the time the student is seeking enrollment in the District. The Board reserves the right, to not allow the enrollment of such students until the time of the person's expulsion has expired following the hearing before the Board.
4. In accordance with the district's Immunization policy, the child shall be age appropriately immunized or have an exemption issued by the Arkansas State Department of Health.

Uniformed Services Member's Children

For the purposes of this policy:

“Activated reserve components” means members of the reserve component of the uniformed services who have received a notice of intent to deploy or mobilize under Title 10 of the United States Code, Title 32 of the United States Code, or state mobilization to active duty.

“Active duty” means full-time duty status in the active, uniformed services of the United States, including without limitation members of The National Guard and Reserve on active duty orders under 10 U.S.C. §§ 1209, 1210, and 1211

“Deployment” means a period of time extending from six (6) months before a member of the uniformed services' departure from their home station on military orders through six (6) months after return to his or her home station.

"Dual status military technician" means a federal civilian employee who is:

- a. Employed under 5 U.S.C. § 3101 or 32 U.S.C. § 709(b);
- b. Required as a condition of his or her employment to maintain membership in the Selected Reserve; and
- c. Assigned to a civilian position as a technician in the organizing, administering, instructing, or training of the Selected Reserve or in the maintenance and repair of supplies or equipment issued to the Selected Reserve of the United States Armed Forces.

“Eligible child” means the children of:

- Active duty members of the uniformed services;
- Members of the active and activated reserve components of the uniformed services;
- Members or veterans of the uniformed services who are severely injured and medically discharged or retired for a period of one (1) year after medical discharge or retirement; and
- Members of the uniformed services who die on active duty or as a result of injuries sustained on active duty for a period of one (1) year after death.
- Dual status military technicians; and
- Traditional members of the National Guard and reserve components of the armed forces who are relocating to the state for employment or to serve as a member of an Arkansas-based reserve component unit.

"Traditional member of the National Guard or federal reserves" means an active member of the Selected Reserve subject to mobilization and deployment for which he or she attends monthly and annual training periods.

“Transition” means the:

- Formal and physical process of transitioning from public school to public school; or
- Period of time in which a student moves from a sending district to a receiving district.

“Uniformed services” means the United States Army, United States Navy, United States Air Force, United States Marine Corps, United States Space Force, United States Coast Guard, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps, the United States Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Services, and the state and federal reserve components of each of these bodies.

“Veteran” means an individual who served in the uniformed services and who was discharged or released from the

uniformed services under conditions other than dishonorable.

The superintendent shall designate an individual as the District's military education coordinator, who shall serve as the primary point of contact for an eligible child and for the eligible child's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the eligible child, or person standing in loco parentis. The individual the superintendent designates as the District's military education coordinator shall have specialized knowledge regarding the educational needs of children of military families and the obstacles that children of military families face in obtaining an education.

An eligible child as defined in this policy shall:

1. Be allowed to continue his/her enrollment at the grade level commensurate with his/her grade level he/she was in at the time of transition from his/her previous school, regardless of age;
2. Be eligible for enrollment in the next highest grade level, regardless of age if the student has satisfactorily completed the prerequisite grade level in his/her previous school;
3. Enter the District's school on the validated level from his/her previous accredited school when transferring into the District after the start of the school year;
4. Be enrolled in courses and programs the same as or similar to the ones the student was enrolled in his/her previous school to the extent that space is available. This does not prohibit the District from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement and continued enrollment of the student in the courses/and/or programs;
5. Be provided services comparable to those the student with disabilities received in his/her previous school based on his/her previous Individualized Education Program (IEP). This does not preclude the District school from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement of the student;
6. Make reasonable accommodations and modifications to address the needs of an incoming student with disabilities, subject to an existing 504 or Title II Plan, necessary to provide the student with equal access to education. This does not preclude the District school from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement of the student;
7. Be enrolled by an individual who has been given the special power of attorney for the student's guardianship. The individual shall have the power to take all other actions requiring parental participation and/or consent;
8. Be eligible to continue attending District schools if he/she has been placed under the legal guardianship of a noncustodial parent living outside the district by a custodial parent on active military duty.

Following the receipt of advanced notice of the enrollment of an eligible student from a military family, the District shall treat the notice as a provisional enrollment and provide the student with materials regarding:

- a. Academic courses;
- b. Electives;
- c. Sports; and
- d. Other relevant information regarding the public school.

In the event that official copies of an eligible child's education records are not available at the time the eligible child is transferring, then the District shall:

- Pre-register and place an eligible child based on the eligible child's unofficial education records pending receipt of the eligible child's official records; and
- Request the eligible child's official education records from the sending district.

To facilitate a smooth transition between the student's previous coursework and the curriculum best suited to ensure educational success in the student's new school, the District may enroll an inbound transitioning eligible student in digital coursework, if available, at the request of the military family.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-4-302
 A.C.A. § 6-15-504
 A.C.A. § 6-18-201 (c)
 A.C.A. § 6-18-207
 A.C.A. § 6-18-208
 A.C.A. § 6-18-510

A.C.A. § 6-18-702
A.C.A. § 6-28-101 et seq.
A.C.A. § 9-28-113
DESE Rules Governing Student Discipline and School Safety
Plyler v Doe 457 US 202,221 (1982)

RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Definitions:

“In loco parentis” means relating to the responsibility to undertake the care and control of another person in the absence of:

1. Supervision by the person's parent or legal guardian; and
2. Formal legal approval.

“Reside” means to be physically present and to maintain a permanent place of abode for an average of no fewer than four (4) calendar days and nights per week for a primary purpose other than school attendance.

“Resident” means a student whose parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis reside in the school district.

“Residential address” means the physical location where the student’s parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis reside. A student may use the residential address of a parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis only if the student resides at the same residential address and if the guardianship or other legal authority is not granted solely for educational needs or school attendance purposes.

The schools of the District shall be open and free through the completion of the secondary program to all persons between the ages of five (5) and twenty one (21) years whose parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis reside within the District¹ and to all persons between those ages who have been legally transferred to the District for educational purposes.

Any person eighteen (18) years of age or older may establish a residence separate and apart from his or her parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or a person standing in loco parentis for school attendance purposes.

In order for a person under the age of eighteen (18) years to establish a residence for the purpose of attending the District’s schools separate and apart from his or her parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or a person standing in loco parentis, the student is required to reside in the District for a primary purpose other than that of school attendance. However, a student previously enrolled in the district who is placed under the legal guardianship of a noncustodial parent living outside the district by a custodial parent on active military duty may continue to attend district schools.² A foster child who was previously enrolled in a District school and who has had a change in placement to a residence outside the District, may continue to remain enrolled in his/her current school unless the presiding court rules otherwise.³

Under instances prescribed in A.C.A. § 6-18-203, a child or ward of an employee of the district or of the education coop to which the district belongs may enroll in the district even though the employee and his/her child or ward reside outside the district.⁴

Children whose parent or legal guardian relocates within the state due to a mobilization, deployment, or available military housing while on active duty in or serving in the reserve component of a branch of the United States Armed Forces or National Guard may continue attending school in the school district the children were attending prior to the relocation or attend school in the school district where the children have relocated. A child may complete all remaining school years at the enrolled school district regardless of mobilization, deployment, or military status of the parent or guardian.

STUDENT TRANSFERS

The Pocahontas District shall review and accept or reject requests for transfers, both into and out of the district, on a case by case basis.

The District may reject a nonresident's application for admission if its acceptance would necessitate the addition of staff or classrooms, exceed the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or school building, or cause the District to provide educational services not currently provided in the affected school. The District shall reject applications that would cause it to be out of compliance with applicable laws and regulations regarding desegregation.

Any student transferring from a school accredited by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to a school in this district shall be placed into the same grade the student would have been in had the student remained at the former school. Any grades, course credits, and/or promotions received by a student while enrolled in the Division of Youth Services system of education shall be considered transferable in the same manner as those grades, course credits, and promotions from other accredited Arkansas public educational entities.

Any student transferring from or a school that is not accredited by the DESE to a District school shall be evaluated by District staff to determine the student's appropriate grade placement. A student transferring from home school will be placed in accordance with the district's policy on admittance of Home School students.

Any person who has been expelled from any other school district shall receive a hearing before the Board at the time the student is seeking enrollment in the District. The Board reserves the right to not allow the enrollment of such students until the time of the person's expulsion has expired following the hearing before the Board.

The responsibility for transportation of any nonresident student admitted to a school in this District shall be borne by the student or the student's parents. The District and the resident district may enter into a written agreement with the student or student's parents to provide transportation to or from the District, or both.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-15-504
 A.C.A. § 6-18-316
 A.C.A. § 6-18-317
 A.C.A. § 6-18-510
 A.C.A. § 9-28-113(b)(4)
 A.C.A. § 9-28-205

SCHOOL CHOICE

Standard School Choice

Exemption

The District is under an enforceable desegregation court order/court-approved desegregation plan that explicitly limits the transfer of students between school districts and has submitted the appropriate documentation to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). As a result of the desegregation order/desegregation plan, the District is exempt from the provisions of the Public School Choice Act of 2015 (Standard School Choice) and the Arkansas Opportunity Public School Choice Act (Opportunity School Choice). The District shall notify the superintendents of each of its geographically contiguous school districts of its exemption. The exemption prohibits the District from accepting any school choice applications from students wishing to transfer into or out of the District through standard School Choice or Opportunity School Choice.

Definition

"Sibling" means each of two (2) or more children having a parent in common by blood, adoption, marriage, or foster care.

Transfers into the District

Capacity Determination and Public Pronouncement

The Board of Directors will annually adopt a resolution containing the capacity standards for the District. The resolution will contain the acceptance determination criteria identified by academic program, class, grade level, and individual school. The school is not obligated to add any teachers, other staff, or classrooms to accommodate choice applications. The District may only deny a Standard School Choice application if the District has a lack of capacity by the District having reached ninety percent (90%) of the maximum student population in a program, class, grade level, or school building authorized by the Standards or other State/Federal law.

The District shall advertise in appropriate broadcast media and either print media or on the Internet to inform students and parents in adjoining districts of the range of possible openings available under the School Choice program. The public pronouncements shall state the application deadline; the requirements and procedures for participation in the program; and include contact information for the primary point of contact at the District for school choice questions. Such pronouncements shall be made in the spring, but in no case later than March 1.

Application Process

The student's parent shall submit a school choice application on a form approved by DESE to this District and the student's resident district. Except for students who have a parent or guardian who is an active-duty member of the military and who has been transferred to and resides on a military base, the transfer application must be postmarked, emailed, or hand delivered on or before May 1 of the year preceding the fall semester the applicant would begin school in the District. The District shall date and time stamp all applications the District receives as both the resident and nonresident district as they are received in the District's central office. Except for applications from students who have a parent or guardian who is an active-duty member of the military and who has been transferred to and resides on a military base, applications postmarked, emailed, or hand delivered on or after May 2 will not be accepted. Statutorily, preference is required to be given to siblings of students who are already enrolled in the District. Therefore, siblings whose applications fit the capacity standards approved by the Board of Directors may be approved ahead of an otherwise qualified non-sibling applicant who submitted an earlier application as identified by the application's date and time stamp.

Students who have a parent or guardian who is an active-duty member of the military and who has been transferred to and resides on a military base may submit an application and transfer at any time if the student's application:

1. Is filed with the nonresident school district within fifteen (15) days of the parent's or guardian's arrival on the military base;
2. Includes the parent's or guardian's military transfer orders; and
3. Includes the parent's or guardian's proof of residency on the military base.

The approval of any application for a choice transfer into the District is potentially limited by the applicant's resident district's statutory limitation of losing no more than three percent (3%) of its past year's student enrollment due to Standard School Choice. As such, any District approval of a choice application prior to July 1 is provisional pending a determination that the resident district's three percent (3%) cap has not been reached. The superintendent shall contact a student's resident district to determine if the resident district's three percent (3%) cap has been met.

No earlier than January 1 of each year, the Superintendent will consider all properly submitted applications for School Choice. By July 1, the Superintendent shall notify the parent and the student's resident district, in writing, of the decision to accept or reject the application.

Accepted Applications

Applications which fit within the District's stated capacity standards shall be provisionally accepted, in writing, with the notification letter stating a reasonable timeline by which the student shall enroll in the District by taking the steps detailed in the letter, including submission of all required documents. If the student fails to enroll within the stated timeline, or if all necessary steps to complete the enrollment are not taken, or examination of the documentation indicates the applicant does not meet the District's stated capacity standards, the acceptance shall be null and void.

A student, whose application has been accepted and who has enrolled in the District, is eligible to continue enrollment until completing his/her secondary education. Continued enrollment is conditioned upon the student meeting applicable statutory and District policy requirements. Any student who has been accepted under choice and who fails to initially enroll under the timelines and provisions provided in this policy; chooses to return to his/her resident district; or enrolls in a home school or private school voids the transfer and must reapply if, in the future, the student seeks another school choice transfer. A subsequent transfer application will be subject to the capacity standards applicable to the year in which the application is considered by the District.

A present or future sibling of a student who continues enrollment in this District may enroll in the District by submitting a Standard School Choice application. Applications of siblings of presently enrolled choice students are subject to the provisions of this policy including the capacity standards applicable to the year in which the sibling's application is considered by the District. A sibling who enrolls in the District through Standard School Choice is eligible to remain in the District until completing his/her secondary education.

Students whose applications have been accepted and who have enrolled in the district shall not be discriminated against on the basis of gender, national origin, race, ethnicity, religion, or disability.

Rejected Applications

The District may reject an application for a transfer into the District under Standard School Choice due to a lack of capacity. However, the decision to accept or reject an application may not be based on the student's previous academic achievement, athletic or other extracurricular ability, English proficiency level, or previous disciplinary proceedings other than a current expulsion.

An application may be provisionally rejected if it is for an opening that was included in the District's capacity resolution, but was provisionally filled by an earlier applicant. If the provisionally approved applicant subsequently does not enroll in the District, the provisionally rejected applicant could be provisionally approved and would have to meet the acceptance requirements to be eligible to enroll in the District.

An application may be provisionally rejected if the student's application was beyond the student's resident district's three percent (3%) cap. The student's resident district is responsible for notifying this District that it is no longer at its three percent (3%) cap. If a student's application was provisionally rejected due to the student's resident district having reached its three percent (3%) cap and the student's resident district notifies this District that it has dropped below its three percent (3%) cap prior to July 1, then the provisional rejection may be changed to a provisional acceptance and the student would have to meet the acceptance requirements to be eligible to enroll in the District.

Rejection of applications shall be in writing and shall state the reason(s) for the rejection. Unless the student's application was rejected due to the application not being timely received by both the resident and nonresident districts, a student whose application was rejected may request a hearing before the State Board of Education to reconsider the application. The request for a hearing must be submitted in writing to the State Board within ten (10) days of receiving the rejection letter from the District.

Any applications that are denied due to the student's resident district reaching the three percent (3%) limitation cap shall be given priority for a choice transfer the following year in the order that the District received the original applications.

Transfers Out of the District

All Standard School Choice applications shall be granted unless the approval would cause the District to have a net enrollment loss (students transferring out minus those transferring in) of more than three percent (3%) of the average daily membership on October 1 of the immediately preceding year. By December 15 of each year, DESE shall determine and notify the District of the net number of allowable choice transfers. Students are not counted for the purpose of determining the three percent (3%) cap if the student transfers:

- Through Opportunity School Choice due to the school receiving a rating of "F" or a district classified as in need of Level 5 Intensive Support under A.C.A. § 6-18-227;
- Due to the district's identification of Facilities Distress under A.C.A. § 6-21-812; or

- Through the Foster Child School Choice under A.C.A. § 6-18-233.

If, prior to July 1, the District receives sufficient copies of requests from other districts for its students to transfer to other districts to trigger the three percent (3%) cap, it shall notify each district the District received Standard School Choice applications from that it has tentatively reached the limitation cap. The District will use confirmations of approved choice applications from receiving districts to make a final determination of which applications it received that exceeded the limitation cap and notify each district that was the recipient of an application to that effect. The District shall immediately notify all receiving districts if it should drop back below its three percent (3%) cap prior to July 1.

When the last successful application requesting to transfer out of the District before the District's three percent (3%) cap was triggered belonged to an individual who was a member of a group of siblings who applied to transfer out of the District, the District shall allow all members of the individual's sibling group to transfer out of the District even though these applications are beyond the District's transfer cap.

Facilities Distress School Choice Applications

There are a few exceptions from the provisions of the rest of this policy that govern choice transfers triggered by facilities distress. Any student attending a school district that has been identified as being in facilities distress may transfer under the provisions of this policy, but with the following four (4) differences:

- The receiving district cannot be in facilities distress;
- The transfer is only available for the duration of the time the student's resident district remains in facilities distress;
- The student is not required to meet the May 1 application deadline; and
- The student's resident district is responsible for the cost of transporting the student to this District's school.

Opportunity School Choice

Transfers Into or Within the District

For the purposes of this section of the policy, a "lack of capacity" is defined as when the receiving school has reached the maximum student-to-teacher ratio allowed under federal or state law, the DESE Rules for the Standards for Accreditation, or other applicable rules. There is a lack of capacity if, as of the date of the application for Opportunity School Choice, ninety-five percent (95%) or more of the seats at the grade level at the nonresident school are filled.

Unless there is a lack of capacity at the District's school or the transfer conflicts with the provisions of a federal desegregation order applicable to the District, a student may transfer from the student's assigned school to another school in the District or from the student's resident district into the District if:

- Either:
 - The student's resident district has been classified by the state board as in need of Level 5 — intensive support; or
 - The student's assigned school has a rating of "F"; and
- The student's parent, guardian, or the student if the student is over eighteen (18) years of age has submitted an application of the student's request to transfer by no earlier than January 1 and no later than May 1 of the school year before the school year the student intends to transfer to both the sending and receiving school districts.:

A student is not required to meet the May 1 application deadline if the student has a parent or guardian who is an active-duty member of the military and who has been transferred to and resides on a military base. The student may transfer at any time if the student's application:

- a. Is filed with the nonresident school district within fifteen (15) days of the parent's or guardian's arrival on the military base;
- b. Includes the parent's or guardian's military transfer orders; and
- c. Includes the parent's or guardian's proof of residency on the military base.

Except for those students who are applying to transfer within the time permitted due to the student's parent or guardians' military service or seeking to transfer within the District, the Superintendent shall notify in writing the parent or guardian, or the student if the student is over eighteen (18) years of age, and the student's resident district whether the Opportunity School Choice application has been accepted or rejected by no later than July 1 of the school year the student is seeking to enroll. If the student is seeking a transfer due to the student's parent or guardian's military service or seeking a transfer within the District, the Superintendent shall notify in writing the parent or guardian, or the student if the student is over eighteen (18) years of age, whether the Opportunity School Choice application has been accepted or rejected within fifteen (15) days from receipt of the student's application. The notification shall be sent via First-Class Mail to the address on the application.

If the application is accepted, the notification letter shall state the deadline by which the student must enroll in the receiving school or the transfer will be null and void.

If the District rejects the application, the District shall state in the notification letter the specific reasons for the rejection. A parent or guardian, or the student if the student is over eighteen (18) years of age, may appeal the District's decision to deny the application to the State Board of Education. The appeal must be in writing to the State Board of Education via hand delivery or certified mail, return receipt requested, no later than ten (10) calendar days, excluding weekends and legal holidays, after the notice of rejection was received from the District.

A student's transfer under Opportunity School choice is effective at the beginning of the next school year and the student's enrollment is irrevocable for the duration of the school year and is renewable until the student completes high school or is beyond the legal age of enrollment. This provision for continuing eligibility under Opportunity School Choice does not negate the student's right to apply for transfer to a district other than the student's assigned school or resident district under the Standard School Choice provisions of this policy.

The District may, but is not obligated to provide transportation to and from the transferring district.

Transfers out of, or within, the District

If a District school receives a rating of "F" or the District has been classified by the State Board as in need of Level 5 Intensive Support, the District shall timely notify parents, guardians, or students, if over eighteen (18) years of age, as soon as practicable after the school or district designation is made of all options available under Opportunity School Choice. The District shall offer the parent or guardian, or the student if the student is over eighteen (18) years of age, an opportunity to submit an application to enroll the student in:

1. A school district that has not been classified by the State Board as in need of Level 5 Intensive Support; or
2. If there is more than one school within the District covering the grade level of the student seeking to transfer that does not have a rating of "F", a public school within the District that is nearest to the student's legal residence that does not have a rating of "F"; or
3. If there is not more than one school within the District covering the grade level of the student seeking to transfer that does not have a rating of "F", a public school that does not have a rating of "F" within a School district that has not been classified by the State Board as in need of Level 5 Intensive Support.

Additionally, the District shall request public service announcements to be made over the broadcast media and in the print media at such times and in such a manner as to inform parents or guardians of students in adjoining districts of the availability of the program, the application deadline, and the requirements and procedure for nonresident students to participate in the program.

Unsafe School Choice Program

Any student that becomes the victim of a violent criminal offense while in or on the grounds of a District school or who is attending a school classified by DESE as a persistently dangerous public school shall be allowed to attend a safe public school within the District.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-1-106

A.C.A. § 6-13-113
A.C.A. § 6-15-2915
A.C.A. § 6-18-227
A.C.A. § 6-18-233
A.C.A. §6-18-320
A.C.A. § 6-18-510
A.C.A. § 6-18-1901 et seq.
A.C.A. § 6-21-812
DESE Rules Governing Public School Choice

HOME SCHOOLING

Enrollment in Home School

Parents or legal guardians desiring to provide a home school for their children shall give written notice to the Superintendent of their intent to home school. The notice shall be given:

1. At the beginning of each school year, but no later than August 15;
2. Five (5) school days prior to withdrawing the child (provided the student is not currently under disciplinary action for violation of any written school policy, including, but not limited to, excessive absences) and at the beginning of each school year thereafter; or
3. Within thirty (30) calendar days of the parent or legal guardian establishing residency within the district during the school year.

Written notice of the parent or legal guardian's intent to home school shall be delivered to the Superintendent through any of the following methods:

- Electronically, including without limitation by:
 - Use of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) online system;
 - Email; or
 - Facsimile;
- By mail; or
- In person.

The notice shall include:

- a. The name, sex, date of birth, grade level, and the name and address of the school last attended, if any;
- b. The mailing address and telephone number of the home school;
- c. The name of the parent or legal guardian providing the home school;
- d. Indicate if the home-schooled student intends to participate in extracurricular activities during the school year;
- e. A statement of whether the home-schooled student plans to seek a high school equivalency diploma during the current school year;
- f. A statement that the parent or legal guardian agrees that the parent or legal guardian is responsible for the education of their children during the time the parents or legal guardians choose to home school; and
- g. A signature of the parent or legal guardian.

To aid the District in providing a free and appropriate public education to students in need of special education services, the parents or legal guardians home-schooling their children shall provide information that might indicate the need for special education services.

A student who has been temporarily issued items, resources, supplies, materials, or other property belonging to the District is eligible for enrollment in a home school during the school year after:

- The items, resources, supplies, materials, or other property belonging to the District have been returned to the District;
- The items, resources, supplies, materials, or other property belonging to the District have been paid for; or
- The semester has ended.

The superintendent or the board of directors may waive the required five (5) school day waiting period for a student's enrollment in home school during a semester if the superintendent or the board of directors is satisfied with the return of temporarily issued items, resources, supplies, materials, or other District property.

Enrollment or Re-Enrollment in Public School

A home-schooled student who wishes to enroll or re-enroll in a District school shall submit:

- A transcript listing all courses taken and semester grades from the home school;
- Score of at least the thirtieth percentile on a nationally recognized norm-referenced assessment taken in the past year; and
- A portfolio of indicators of the home-schooled student's academic progress, including without limitation:
 - Curricula used in the home school;
 - Tests taken and lessons completed by the home-schooled student; and
 - Other indicators of the home-schooled student's academic progress.

If a home-schooled student is unable to provide a nationally recognized norm-referenced score, the District may either assess the student using a nationally recognized norm-referenced assessment or waive the requirement for a nationally recognized norm-referenced assessment score.

A home-schooled student who enrolls or re-enrolls in the District will be placed at a grade level and academic course level equivalent to or higher than the home-schooled student's grade level and academic course level in the home school:

1. As indicated by the documentation submitted by the home-schooled student;
2. By mutual agreement between the public school and the home-schooled student's parent or legal guardian; or
3. If the home-schooled student fails to provide the documentation required by this policy, with the exception of the nationally recognized norm-referenced assessment score, the District may have sole authority to determine the home-schooled student's grade placement and course credits. The District will determine the home-schooled student's grade placement and course credits in the same manner the District uses when determining grade placement and course credits for students enrolling or re-enrolling in the District who attended another public or private school.

The District shall afford a home-schooled student who enrolls or re-enrolls in a public school the same rights and privileges enjoyed by the District's other students. The District shall not deny a home-schooled student who enrolls or re-enrolls in the District any of the following on the basis of the student having attended a home school:

- a. Award of course credits earned in the home school;
- b. Placement in the proper grade level and promotion to the next grade level;
- c. Participation in any academic or extracurricular activity;
- d. Membership in school-sponsored clubs, associations, or organizations;
- e. A diploma or graduation, so long as the student has enrolled or re-enrolled in the District to attend classes for at least the nine (9) months immediately prior to graduation; or
- f. Scholarships.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-15-503
 A.C.A. § 6-41-206
 DESE Rules Governing Home Schools

ACADEMIC COURSE ATTENDANCE BY PRIVATE SCHOOL AND HOME SCHOOLED STUDENTS

The District allows private school and home schooled students whose parents, legal guardians, or other responsible adult with whom the student resides are residents of the District to attend academic courses offered by the District. The District will place a list of courses that a private school or home schooled student may request to attend on its website by:

1. June 1 for courses to be offered during the Fall semester; and
2. November 1 for courses to be offered during the Spring semester.

A private school or home schooled student who desires to attend one or more of the available academic courses shall

submit a written request to attend the academic course(s) to the superintendent, or designee, no later than:

- a. August 1 for Fall semester courses; or
- b. December 1 for Spring semester courses.

The superintendent, or designee, is authorized to waive the application deadline on a case by case basis.

The District permits a private school or home schooled student to attend a maximum of six (6) courses per semester.

The District may reject a private school or home schooled student's request for attendance if the District's acceptance would:

- Require the addition of staff or classrooms;
- Exceed the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or school building;
- Cost the District more for the student to attend the academic course than the District receives for the student's attendance;
- Cause the District to provide educational services the District does not currently provide at a financial burden to the District; or
- Cause the District to be out of compliance with applicable laws and regulations regarding desegregation.

Requests to attend an academic course will be granted in the order the requests are received. Upon the receipt of a private or home schooled student's request to attend academic course(s), the District will date and time stamp the request for attendance. If a private school or home schooled student is denied attendance based on a lack of capacity and an opening in the requested course occurs prior to the start of the course, the District will use the date and time stamp on the request for attendance to determine the private school or home schooled student who will be notified of an opening in the requested course.

As part of the request to attend academic courses in the District, a private school or home schooled student shall:

- Indicate the course(s) the private school or home schooled student is interested in attending;
- If the course(s) the private school or home schooled student is interested in attending is being offered by the District in both a physical and a digital format, whether the private school or home schooled student intends to attend the physical course or the digital course;
 - Submit, along with the student's application, a copy of the student's transcript indicating that the student has received credit for the course(s), or equivalent course(s), that are a prerequisite to the course(s) the student desires to attend at the District;
- Agree to follow the District's discipline policies; and
- Submit immunization documentation required the Immunization policy.

A private school or home schooled student who fails to attend an academic course by the eleventh (11) day of class or who is absent without excuse for eleven (11) consecutive days during the semester shall be dropped from the course; however, a private school or home schooled student shall not be considered truant for unexcused absences from the course(s) the student is attending at the District.

Private school or home schooled students shall receive a final grade and transcript for each academic course the student completes.

The responsibility for transportation of any private school or home schooled student attending academic courses in the District shall be borne by the student or the student's parents.

The opportunity provided to home schooled students under this policy is in addition to the opportunity provided in policy EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY ELIGIBILITY FOR HOME SCHOOLED STUDENTS.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY ELIGIBILITY FOR HOME SCHOOLED STUDENTS

Home-schooled student means a student legally enrolled in an Arkansas home school and who meets or has met the criteria for being a home-schooled student, as established by A.C.A. § 6-15-503.

Interscholastic activity means an activity between schools subject to rules of the Arkansas Activities Association that is outside the regular curriculum of the school district, such as an athletic activity, fine arts program, or a special

interest group or club.

Each school in the District shall post on its website its schedule of interscholastic activities, including sign-up, tryout, and participation deadlines, at least one semester in advance of those activities. A hard copy of the schedule shall be available upon request.

Home-schooled students whose parents or guardians are legal residents of the school district will be permitted to pursue participation in an interscholastic activity in the student's resident school zone as permitted by this policy.

Home-schooled students whose parent or legal guardian are not residents of the school district will be permitted to pursue participation in an interscholastic activity in the District if the superintendent of the student's resident district and the superintendent of the District both agree in writing to allow the student to participate in interscholastic activities at the District.

Although not guaranteed participation in an interscholastic activity, home-school students who meet the provisions of this policy, AAA Rules, and applicable Arkansas statutes shall have an equal opportunity to try out and participate in an interscholastic activity without discrimination. The District shall provide a reasonable alternative to any prerequisite for eligibility to participate in an interscholastic activity that the home-schooled student is unable to meet because of his or her enrollment in a home school.

No student shall be required to pay for individual or group instruction in order to participate in an interscholastic activity.

To be eligible to try out and participate in interscholastic activities, the student or the parent of a student shall mail or hand deliver the student's request to participate to the student's school's principal before the signup, tryout or participation deadline established for traditional students. Additionally, the student shall demonstrate academic eligibility by obtaining a minimum test score of the 30th percentile or better in the previous 12 months on the Stanford Achievement Test Series, Tenth Edition; another nationally recognized norm-referenced test; or a minimum score on a test approved by the State Board of Education.

A student who meets the requirements for eligibility to participate in an interscholastic activity is required to register for no more than one course³ in the District's school where the student is intending to participate in an interscholastic activity.

The student shall regularly attend the class in which the student is registered beginning no later than the eleventh (11th) day of the semester in which the student's interscholastic activity participation is desired. The student must attend the practices for the interscholastic activity to the same extent as is required of traditional students.

A student and the parent or legal guardian of the student shall sign and return an acknowledgement of receipt and review of an information sheet regarding signs and symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest before the student may participate in an athletic activity and before each school year the student participates in an athletic activity.

A home-schooled student who has met the try out criteria; and who has been selected to participate in the interscholastic activity shall meet the following criteria that also apply to traditional students enrolled in the school:

- standards of behavior and codes of conduct;
- attend the practices for the interscholastic activity to the same extent as is required of traditional students;
- required drug testing;
- permission slips, waivers, physical exams; and
- participation or activity fees.

A home-schooled student who is not a resident of the District may begin participating in interscholastic activities:

- a. Immediately upon being approved for participation for all interscholastic activities other than athletic activities; and
- b. One (1) calendar year after being approved to participate in interscholastic activities that are athletic activities unless the approval is prior to July 1 of the school year the student would have been enrolled in seventh (7th) grade if the student were enrolled in public school.

A home-schooled student who is not a resident of the District and is prohibited under this policy from participating in an interscholastic activity that is an athletic activity for one (1) calendar year may immediately participate in rehearsals, tryouts, practices, auditions, classes, or other endeavors associated with the interscholastic activity.

Students who participate in extracurricular or athletic activities under this policy will be transported to and from the interscholastic activities on the same basis as other students are transported.

A student who withdraws from an Arkansas Activities Association member school to be home-schooled shall not participate in an interscholastic activity in the resident school district for a minimum of three hundred sixty-five days after the student withdraws from the member school.

ARKANSAS ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

In addition to the foregoing rules, the district shall abide by the rules and regulations of the Arkansas Activities Association (AAA) governing interscholastic activities. AAA provides catastrophic insurance coverage for students participating in extracurricular activities who are enrolled in school. As a matter of District policy, no student may participate in an extracurricular activity unless he or she is enrolled in a district school, to ensure all students are eligible for AAA catastrophic insurance.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

No student in the Pocahontas School District shall, on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity sponsored by the District. The District has a limited open forum granting equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other youth groups.

Inquiries on non-discrimination may be directed to the district's Title IX Coordinator, who may be reached at 870-892-4573.

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, to the Title IX Coordinator in person or by using the mailing address, telephone number, or email address provided above. A report may be made at any time, including during non-business hours, and may be on the individual's own behalf or on behalf of another individual who is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment.

For further information on notice of non-discrimination or to file a complaint, visit <http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm>; for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

STUDENTS WHO ARE FOSTER CHILDREN

The District will afford the same services and educational opportunities to foster children that are afforded other children and youth. The District shall work with the Department of Human Services ("DHS"), the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), and individuals involved with each foster child to ensure that the foster child is able to maintain his/her continuity of educational services to the fullest extent that is practical and reasonable.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall appoint an appropriate staff person to be the local educational liaison for foster children and youth whose responsibilities shall include ensuring the timely school enrollment of each foster child and assisting foster children who transfer between schools by expediting the transfer of relevant educational records.

The District, working with other individuals and agencies shall, unless the presiding court rules otherwise or DHS grants a request to transfer under Foster Child School Choice, ensure that the foster child remains in his/her school of origin, even if a change in the foster child's placement results in a residency that is outside the district. In such a situation, the District will work with DHS to arrange for transportation to and from school for the foster child to the extent it is reasonable and practical.

Upon notification to the District's foster care liaison by a foster child's caseworker that a foster child's school enrollment is being changed to one of the District's schools, the school receiving the child must immediately enroll him/her. Immediate enrollment is required even if a child lacks the required clothing, academic or medical records, or proof of residency.

A foster child's grades shall not be lowered due to absence from school that is caused by a change in the child's school enrollment, the child's attendance at dependency-neglect court proceedings, or other court-ordered counseling or treatment.

Any course work completed by the foster child prior to a school enrollment change shall be accepted as academic credit so long as the child has satisfactorily completed the appropriate academic placement assessment.

If a foster child was enrolled in a District school immediately prior to completing his/her graduation requirements while detained in a juvenile detention facility or while committed to the Division of Youth Services of DHS, the District shall issue the child a diploma.

Foster Child School Choice

If DHS approves a request from a foster parent, or the foster child if the foster child is eighteen (18) years of age, to transfer to another school in the District or into the district as being in the best interest of the foster child, the District shall allow the foster child to transfer to another school in the District or into the District if the foster parent, or the foster child if the foster child is eighteen (18) years of age, submits a request to transfer on a form approved by ADE that is postmarked by no later than May 1 of the year the student seeks to begin the fall semester at another school in the District or in the District.

By July 1 of the school year in which the student seeks to transfer under this section, the superintendent shall notify the foster parent, or the foster child if the foster child is eighteen (18) years of age, in writing whether the application has been accepted or rejected. If the application is accepted, the superintendent shall state in the notification letter a reasonable deadline for the foster child to enroll in the new school or the District and that failure to enroll by the date shall void the school choice acceptance. If the application is rejected, the superintendent shall state in the notification letter the reason for the rejection and that the foster parent, or the foster child if the foster child is eighteen (18) years of age, may submit a written appeal of the rejection to the State board within ten (10) days of receiving the notification letter.

The District shall only reject a Foster Child School Choice application if:

1. The public school or District has reached the maximum student-to-teacher ratio allowed under federal law; state law; the standards for accreditation; or other applicable State rule or Federal regulation; or
2. Approving the transfer would conflict with a provision of an enforceable desegregation court order or a public school district's court-approved desegregation plan regarding the effects of past racial segregation in student assignment.

A foster child whose application is rejected by the District may submit a written request within ten (10) days following the receipt of the rejection letter from the superintendent to the State Board of Education for the State Board to reconsider the transfer.

A Foster Child School Choice transfer shall remain in effect until the foster child:

- Graduates from high school; or
- Transfers to another school or school district under:
 - The Foster Child School Choice Act;
 - Opportunity Public School Choice Act of 2004;
 - The Public School Choice Act of 2015; or
 - Any other law that allows a transfer.

The District shall accept credits toward graduation that were awarded by another public school district.

When a foster child transfers from the foster child's school of origin to another school in the District or into the District,

the foster child or the foster parent is responsible for the foster child's transportation to and from the school the foster child transferred to. The District and the foster parent, or the foster child if the foster child is eighteen (18) years of age, may enter into a written agreement for the District to provide the transportation to and from the school the foster child transferred to.

PLACEMENT OF MULTIPLE BIRTH SIBLINGS

The parent, guardian or other person having charge or custody of multiple birth siblings in grades pre-K through 6 may request that the multiple birth siblings are placed in either the same or separate classrooms. The request shall be in writing not later than the 14th calendar day prior to the first day of classes at the beginning of the academic year. The school shall honor the request unless it would require the school to add an additional class to the sibling's grade level. If one parent of multiple birth siblings requests a placement that differs from that of the other parent of the same multiple birth siblings, the school shall determine the appropriate placement of the siblings.

The school may change the classroom placement of one or more of the multiple birth siblings if:

- There have been a minimum of 30 instructional days since the start of the school year; and
 - After consulting with each classroom teacher in which the siblings were placed, the school determines the parent's classroom placement request is:
 - Detrimental to the educational achievement of one or more of the siblings;
 - Disruptive to the siblings' assigned classroom learning environment; or
 - Disruptive to the school's educational or disciplinary environment.

If a parent believes the school has not followed the requirements of this policy, the parent may appeal the multiple birth siblings' classroom placement to the Superintendent. The Superintendent's decision regarding the appeal shall be final.

CONTACT WITH STUDENTS WHILE AT SCHOOL

Contact by Parents

Parents wishing to speak to their children during the school day shall register first with the office.

Contact by Non-Custodial Parents

If there is any question concerning the legal custody of the student, the custodial parent shall present documentation to the principal or the principal's designee establishing the parent's custody of the student. It shall be the responsibility of the custodial parent to make any court ordered "no contact" or other restrictions regarding the non-custodial parent known to the principal by presenting a copy of a file-marked court order. Without such a court order on file, the school will release the child to either of his/her parents. Non-custodial parents who file with the principal a date-stamped copy of current court orders granting unsupervised visitation may eat lunch, volunteer in their child's classroom, or otherwise have contact with their child during school hours and the prior approval of the school's principal.

Arkansas law provides that, in order to avoid continuing child custody controversies from involving school personnel and to avoid disruptions to the educational atmosphere in the District's schools, the transfer of a child between his/her custodial parent and non-custodial parent, when both parents are present, shall not take place on the school's property on normal school days during normal hours of school operation. The custodial or non-custodial parent may send to/drop off the student at school to be sent to/picked up by the other parent on predetermined days in accordance with any court order provided by the custodial parent or by a signed agreement between both the custodial and non-custodial parents that was witnessed by the student's building principal or the principal's designee, district employees shall not become involved in disputes concerning whether or not that parent was supposed to pick up the student on any given day.

Contact by Law Enforcement, Social Services, or by Court Order

State Law requires that Department of Human Services employees, local law enforcement, or agents of the Crimes Against Children Division of the Division of Arkansas State Police, may interview students without a court order for the purpose of investigating suspected child abuse. In instances where the interviewers deem it necessary, they may exercise a "72-hour hold" without first obtaining a court order. Except as provided below, other questioning of students by non-school personnel shall be

granted only with a court order directing such questioning, with permission of the parents of a student (or the student if above eighteen [18] years of age), or in response to a subpoena or arrest warrant.

If the District makes a report to any law enforcement agency concerning student misconduct or if access to a student is granted to a law enforcement agency due to a court order, the principal or the principal's designee shall make a good faith effort to contact the student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis. The principal or the principal's designee shall not attempt to make such contact if presented documentation by the investigator that notification is prohibited because a parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis is named as an alleged offender of the suspected child maltreatment. This exception applies only to interview requests made by a law enforcement officer, an investigator of the Crimes Against Children Division of the Division of Arkansas State Police, or an investigator or employee of the Department of Human Services.

In instances other than those related to cases of suspected child abuse, principals must release a student to either a police officer who presents a subpoena for the student, or a warrant for arrest, or to an agent of state social services or an agent of a court with jurisdiction over a child with a court order signed by a judge. Upon release of the student, the principal or designee shall give the student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis notice that the student has been taken into custody by law enforcement personnel or a state's social services agency. If the principal or designee is unable to reach the parent, he or she shall make a reasonable, good faith effort to get a message to the parent to call the principal or designee, and leave both a day and an after-hours telephone number.

Contact by Professional Licensure Standards Board Investigators

Investigators for the Professional Licensure Standards Board may meet with students during the school day to carry out the investigation of an ethics complaint.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-18-513
A.C.A. § 9-13-104
A.C.A. § 12-18-609, 610, 613
A.C.A. § 12-18-1001, 1005

Permanent Records

Permanent school records, as required by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), shall be maintained for each student enrolled in the District until the student receives a high school diploma or its equivalent or is beyond the age of compulsory school attendance¹. A copy of the student's permanent record shall be provided to the receiving school district within ten (10) school days after the date a request from the receiving school district is received².

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-18-901
A.C.A. § 6-28-107
DESE Rules Governing Student Permanent Records

PRIVACY OF STUDENTS' RECORDS/ DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Except when a court order regarding a student has been presented to the district to the contrary, all students' education records are available for inspection and copying by the parent of his/her student who is under the age of eighteen (18). A student's parent or the student, if over the age of 18, requesting to review the student's education records will be allowed to do so within no more than forty-five (45) days of the request. The district forwards education records, including disciplinary records, to schools that have requested them and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer.

The district shall receive written permission before releasing education records to any agency or individual not authorized by law to receive and/or view the education records without prior parental permission. The District shall

maintain a record of requests by such agencies or individuals for access to, and each disclosure of, personally identifiable information (hereinafter “PII”) from the education records of each student. Disclosure of education records is authorized by law to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A personal record kept by a school staff member is **not** considered an education record if it meets the following tests.

- it is in the sole possession of the individual who made it;
- it is used only as a personal memory aid; and
- information contained in it has never been revealed or made available to any other person, except the maker’s temporary substitute.

For the purposes of this policy a school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the school 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.

For the purposes of this policy 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, contracted duty, or duty of elected office.

In addition to releasing PII to school officials without permission, the District may disclose PII from the education records of students in foster care placement to the student’s caseworker or to the caseworker’s representative without getting prior consent of the parent (or the student if the student is over eighteen (18)). For the District to release the student’s PII without getting permission;

- The student must be in foster care;
- The individual to whom the PII will be released must have legal access to the student’s case plan; and
- The Arkansas Department of Human Services, or a sub-agency of the Department, must be legally responsible for the care and protection of the student.

The District discloses PII from an education record to appropriate parties, including parents, in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. The superintendent or designee shall determine who will have access to and the responsibility for disclosing information in emergency situations.

When deciding whether to release PII in a health or safety emergency, the District may take into account the totality of the circumstances pertaining to a threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals. If the District determines that there is an articulable and significant threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals, it may disclose information from education records to any person whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

For purposes of this policy, the Pocahontas School District does not distinguish between a custodial and non-custodial parent, or a non-parent such as a person acting in loco parentis or a foster parent with respect to gaining access to a student’s records. Unless a court order restricting such access has been presented to the district to the contrary, the fact of a person’s status as parent or guardian, alone, enables that parent or guardian to review and copy his child’s records.

If there exists a court order which directs that a parent not have access to a student or his records, the parent, guardian, person acting in loco parentis, or an agent of the Department of Human Services must present a file-marked copy of such order to the building principal and the Superintendent. The school will make good-faith efforts to act in accordance with such court order, but the failure to do so does not impose legal liability upon the school. The actual responsibility for enforcement of such court orders rests with the parents or guardians, their attorneys and the court which issued the order.

A parent or guardian does not have the right to remove any material from a student’s records, but such parent or guardian may challenge the accuracy of a record. The right to challenge the accuracy of a record does not include the right to dispute a grade, disciplinary rulings, disability placements, or other such determinations, which must be done only through the appropriate teacher and/or administrator, the decision of whom is final. A challenge to the accuracy of material contained in a student’s file must be initiated with the building principal, with an appeal

available to the Superintendent or his designee. The challenge shall clearly identify the part of the student's record the parent wants changed and specify why he/she believes it is inaccurate or misleading. If the school determines not to amend the record as requested, the school will notify the requesting parent or student of the decision and inform them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amending the record. The parent or eligible student will be provided information regarding the hearing procedure when notified of the right to a hearing.

Unless the parent or guardian of a student (or student, if above the age of eighteen [18]) objects, directory information about a student may be made available to the public, military recruiters, post-secondary educational institutions, prospective employers of those students, as well as school publications such as annual yearbooks, and graduation announcements. "Directory information" includes, but is not limited to, a student's name, address, telephone number, electronic mail address, photograph, date and place of birth, dates of attendance, his/her placement on the honor roll (or the receipt of other types of honors), as well as his/her participation in school clubs and extracurricular activities, among others. If the student participates in inherently public activities (for example, basketball, football, or other interscholastic activities), the publication of such information will be beyond the control of the District. "Directory information" also includes a student identification (ID) number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used by a student for purposes of accessing or communicating in electronic systems and a student ID number or other unique personal identifier that is displayed on a student's ID badge, provided the ID cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a personal identification number (PIN), password or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user,

A student's name and photograph will only be displayed on the district or school's web page(s) after receiving the written permission from the student's parent or student if over the age of 18.

The form for objecting to making directory information available is located in the principal's office and must be completed and signed by the parent or age-eligible student and filed with the building principal's office no later than ten (10) school days after the beginning of each school year or the date the student is enrolled for school. Failure to file an objection by that time is considered a specific grant of permission. The district is required to continue to honor any signed-opt out form for any student no longer in attendance at the district.

The right to opt out of the disclosure of directory information under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) does not prevent the District from disclosing or requiring a student to disclose the student's name, identifier, or institutional email address in a class in which the student is enrolled.⁶

Parents and students over the age of 18 who believe the district has failed to comply with the requirements for the lawful release of student records may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education at

Student Privacy Policy Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 9-28-113(b)(6)
20 U.S.C. § 1232g
20 U.S.C. § 7908
34 CFR 99.3, 99.7, 99.21, 99.22, 99.30, 99.31, 99.32, 99.33, 99.34, 99.35, 99.36, 99.37,
99.63, 99.64

VISITORS

Non-adult: Visiting students are not permitted. Children who are not old enough to attend school may not visit school with older brothers and sisters.

Adult: Parents or other adults are encouraged to visit the school and consult with teachers about the progress of their child. Teachers are available for this purpose but an appointment should first be made through the principal's office. Parents and visitors may not go to classrooms without first clearing through the principal's office. The teacher shall ask any parent or

visitor to report to the principal's office if they have not first reported to the office. Under no conditions are classes to be interrupted to call students to the phone unless an emergency exists.

Parents may leave lunch money, books and other items that the child has forgotten at the office. The office personnel will see that this is given to the child when it does not interrupt the class.

ATTENDANCE

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Every parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the child, or person standing in loco parentis of any child age five (5) through seventeen (17) years on or before August 1 of that year who resides, as defined by policy (4.1—RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS), within the District shall enroll the child and ensure the attendance of the child at a District school with the following exceptions:

1. The child is enrolled in private or parochial school.
2. The child is being home-schooled and the conditions of policy (HOME SCHOOLING) have been met.
3. The child will not be age six (6) on or before August 1 of that particular school year and the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the child, or person standing in loco parentis of the child elects not to have him/her attend kindergarten. A kindergarten waiver form prescribed by regulation of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education must be signed and on file with the District administrative office.
4. The child has received a high school diploma or its equivalent as determined by the State Board of Education.
5. The child is age sixteen (16) or above and is enrolled in a post-secondary vocational-technical institution, a community college, or a two-year or four-year institution of higher education.
6. The child is age sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) and has met the requirements to enroll in an adult education program as defined by A.C.A. § 6-18-201 (b).

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-18-201
 A.C.A. § 6-18-207

ABSENCES

If any student's Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan conflicts with this policy, the requirements of the student's IEP or 504 Plan take precedence.

Education is more than the grades students receive in their courses. Important as that is, students' regular attendance at school, whether in person or digitally, is essential to their social and cultural development and helps prepare them to accept responsibilities they will face as an adult. Interactions with other students and participation in the instruction within the classroom enrich the learning environment and promote a continuity of instruction which results in higher student achievement.

Absences for students enrolled in synchronous digital courses shall be determined in the same manner as for District students attending courses in person.

Excused Absences

Excused absences are those where the student was on official school business or when the absence was due to one of the following reasons:

1. The student's illness or when attendance could jeopardize the health of other students. A maximum of six (6) such days are allowed per semester unless the condition(s) causing such absences is of a chronic or recurring nature, is medically documented, and approved by the principal.
2. Death or serious illness in their immediate family;
3. Observance of recognized holidays observed by the student's faith;
4. Attendance at an appointment with a government agency;
5. Attendance at a medical appointment;

6. Exceptional circumstances with prior approval of the principal; or
7. Participation in an FFA, FHA, or 4-H sanctioned activity;
8. Participation in the election poll workers program for high school students.
9. Absences granted to allow a student to visit his/her parent or legal guardian who is a member of the military and been called to active duty, is on leave from active duty, or has returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting. The number of additional excused absences shall be at the discretion of the superintendent or designee.
10. Absences granted, at the Superintendent's discretion, to seventeen (17) year-old students who join the Arkansas National Guard while in eleventh grade to complete basic combat training between grades eleven (11) and (12).
11. Absences for students excluded from school by the Arkansas Department of Health during a disease outbreak because the student has an immunization waiver or whose immunizations are not up to date.

Students who serve as pages for a member of the General Assembly shall be considered on instructional assignment and shall not be considered absent from school for the day the student is serving as a page.

In order for the absence to be considered excused, the student must:

- a. Bring a written statement to the principal or designee upon the student's return to school from the student's parent or legal guardian stating the reason for the student's absence; or
- b. If the student is attending the District's courses digitally, upload a written statement from the student's parent or legal guardian stating the reason for the student's absence through the District's digital course management platform for review by the principal or designee.

A written statement presented or uploaded for an absence having occurred more than five (5) school days prior to its presentation or upload will not be accepted.

Unexcused Absences

Absences that are not defined above do not have an accompanying note from the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student; or person standing in loco parentis, or have an accompanying note that is not presented or uploaded within the timeline required by this policy, shall be considered as unexcused absences. Students with 6 unexcused absences in a course in a semester shall not receive credit for that course. At the discretion of the principal after consultation with persons having knowledge of the circumstances of the unexcused absences, the student may be denied promotion or graduation. Excessive absences shall not be a reason for expulsion or dismissal of a student.

When a student has 3 unexcused absences, his/her parents, legal guardians, persons with lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis shall be notified. Notification shall be by telephone by the end of the school day in which such absence occurred or by regular mail with a return address sent no later than the following school day.

Whenever a student exceeds 6 unexcused absences in a semester, the District may notify the prosecuting authority and the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis shall be subject to a civil penalty as prescribed by law.

It is the Arkansas General Assembly's intention that students having excessive absences be given assistance in obtaining credit for their courses. Therefore, at any time prior to when a student exceeds the number of unexcused absences permitted by this policy, the student, or his/her parent, legal guardian, person with lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis may petition the school or district's administration for special arrangements to address the student's unexcused absences. If formal arrangements are granted, they shall be formalized into a written agreement which will include the conditions of the agreement and the consequences for failing to fulfill the agreement's requirements. The agreement shall be signed by the student, the student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis, and the school or district administrator or designee.

Students who attend in-school suspension shall not be counted absent for those days.

The District shall notify the Department of Finance and Administration whenever a student fourteen (14) years of age or older is no longer in school. The Department of Finance and Administration is required to suspend the former student's operator's license unless he/she meets certain requirements specified in the statute.

Students who exceed 6 unexcused absences in a course in a semester shall not receive credit for that course. If the student fails to receive credit for a sufficient number of courses and at the discretion of the principal after consultation with persons having knowledge of the circumstances of the absences, the student may be denied promotion or graduation. A grade of “NC” will be placed on the student’s transcript if credit is denied based on the student’s excessive unexcused absences. Excessive absences, however, shall not be a reason for expulsion or dismissal of a student.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-4-302
 A.C.A. § 6-18-209
 A.C.A. § 6-18-213
 A.C.A. § 6-18-220
 A.C.A. § 6-18-222
 A.C.A. § 6-18-229
 A.C.A. § 6-18-231
 A.C.A. § 6-18-507(g)
 A.C.A. § 6-18-702
 A.C.A. § 6-28-114
 A.C.A. § 7-4-116
 A.C.A. § 9-28-113(f)
 A.C.A. § 27-16-701
 Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Rules Governing Distance and Digital Learning

TARDIES

Promptness is an important character trait that District staff is encouraged to model and help develop in our schools’ students. At the same time, promptness is the responsibility of each student. Students who are late to class show a disregard for both the teacher and their classmates which compromises potential student achievement.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The Pocahontas Board of Education has a responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the District’s students and employees. To help maintain a safe environment conducive to high student achievement, the Board establishes policies necessary to regulate student behavior to promote an orderly school environment that is respectful of the rights of others and ensures the uniform enforcement of student discipline. Students are responsible for their conduct that occurs:

- At any time on the school grounds;
- Off school grounds at a school sponsored function, activity, or event;
- Going to and from school or a school activity.

The District’s administrators may also take disciplinary action against a student for off-campus conduct occurring at any time that would have a detrimental impact on school discipline, the educational environment, or the welfare of the students and/or staff. A student who has committed a criminal act while off campus and whose presence on campus could cause a substantial disruption to school or endanger the welfare of other students or staff is subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Such acts could include, but are not limited to: a felony or an act that would be considered a felony if committed by an adult; an assault or battery; drug law violations; or sexual misconduct of a serious nature. Any disciplinary action pursued by the District shall be in accordance with the student’s appropriate due process rights.

The District shall incorporate the District’s implementation of positive behavioral supports in accordance with the Student Behavioral Intervention and Restraint policy in the application of student discipline.

The District’s personnel policy committees shall annually review the District’s student discipline policies and may recommend changes in the policies to the Pocahontas School Board. The Board has the responsibility of determining whether to approve any recommended changes to student discipline policies.

The District's student discipline policies shall be distributed to each student during the first week of school each year and to new students upon their enrollment. Each student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis shall sign and return to the school an acknowledgement form documenting that they have received the policies.

The District shall develop and provide programs, measures, or alternative means and methods for continued student engagement and educational access during periods of suspension or expulsion.

The superintendent is authorized to modify the penalties set forth in the District's student discipline policies on a case-by-case basis.

It is required by law that the principal or the person in charge report to the police any incidents the person has personal knowledge of or has received information leading to a reasonable belief that a person has committed or threatened to commit an act of violence or any crime involving a deadly weapon on school property or while under school supervision. If the person making the report is not the Superintendent, that person shall also inform the Superintendent of the incident. Additionally, the principal shall inform any school employee or other person who initially reported the incident that a report has been made to the appropriate law enforcement agency. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the Board of Directors of any such report made to law enforcement.

The superintendent shall make a report annually to the Board of Directors on student discipline data, which shall include, without limitation: the number of incidents of bullying reported and the actions taken regarding the reported incidents of bullying.

Students who violate the rules and regulations may be assigned a minimum up to a maximum punishment. The punishment will be decided by the principal or his assistant in charge. The minimum penalty for any misbehavior is counseling while the maximum penalty for any misbehavior is expulsion. Other punishments may include but are not limited to corporal punishment, in school suspension, detention, retaining after school hours, Saturday school, suspension and expulsion.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-17-113
 A.C.A. § 6-18-502
 A.C.A. § 6-18-514
 A.C.A. § 6-18-2301 et seq.
 DESE Rules Governing Student Discipline and School Safety

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Students and staff require a safe and orderly learning environment that is conducive to high student achievement. Certain student behaviors/activities are unacceptable in such an environment and are hereby prohibited by the Board. Prohibited behaviors/activities include, but shall not be limited to the following:

1. Disrespect for school employees and failing to comply with their reasonable directions or otherwise demonstrating insubordination;
2. Disruptive behavior that interferes with orderly school operations;
3. Willfully and intentionally assaulting or threatening to assault or physically abusing any student or school employee;
4. Possession of any weapon that can reasonably be considered capable of causing bodily harm to another individual;
5. Possession or use of tobacco in any form on any property owned or leased by any public school;
6. Willfully or intentionally damaging, destroying, or stealing school property;
7. Possession of any paging device, beeper, or similar electronic communication devices on the school campus during normal school hours unless specifically exempted by the administration for health or other compelling reasons;
8. Possession, selling, distributing, or being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, any illegal drug, unauthorized inhalants, or the inappropriate use or sharing of prescription or over the counter drugs, or other intoxicants, or anything represented to be a drug;

9. Sharing, diverting, transferring, applying to others (such as needles or lancets), or in any way misusing medication or any medical supplies in their possession;
10. Inappropriate public displays of affection;
11. Cheating, copying, or claiming another person's work to be his/her own;
12. Gambling;
13. Inappropriate student dress;
14. Use of vulgar, profane, or obscene language or gestures;
15. Truancy;
16. Excessive tardiness;
17. Engaging in behavior designed to taunt, degrade, or ridicule another person on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability;
18. Possess, view, distribute or electronically transmit sexually explicit or vulgar images or representations, whether electronically, on a data storage device, or in hard copy form;
19. Hazing, or aiding in the hazing of another student;
20. Gangs or gang-related activities, including belonging to secret societies of any kind, are forbidden on school property. Gang insignias, clothing, "throwing signs" or other gestures associated with gangs are prohibited;
21. Sexual harassment;
22. Bullying;
23. Operating a vehicle on school grounds while using a wireless communication device; and
24. Theft of another individual's personal property.

The Board directs each school in the District to develop implementation regulations for prohibited student conduct consistent with applicable Board policy, State and Federal laws, and judicial decisions.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-5-201
 A.C.A. § 6-15-1005
 A.C.A. § 6-18-222
 A.C.A. § 6-18-502
 A.C.A. § 6-18-514
 A.C.A. § 6-18-707
 A.C.A. § 6-21-609
 A.C.A. § 27-51-1602
 A.C.A. § 27-51-1603
 A.C.A. § 27-51-1609
 DESE Rules Governing Student Discipline and School Safety

Weapons and Dangerous Instruments

Definitions

"Firearm" means any device designed, made, or adapted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or any device readily convertible to that use.

"Possession" means having a weapon on the student's body or in an area under the student's control.

"Weapon" means any:

- Firearm;
- Knife;
- Razor;
- Ice pick;
- Dirk;
- Box cutter;
- Nunchucks;
- Pepper spray, mace, or other noxious spray;

- Explosive;
- Taser or other instrument that uses electrical current to cause neuromuscular incapacitation; or
- Any other instrument or substance capable of causing bodily harm.

No student, except for Military personnel (such as ROTC cadets) acting in the course of their official duties or as otherwise expressly permitted by this policy, shall possess a weapon, display what appears to be a weapon, or threaten to use a weapon before or after school while:

- In a school building;
- On or about school property;
- At any school sponsored activity or event;
- On route to or from school or any school sponsored activity; or
- Off the school grounds at any school bus stop.

If a student discovers prior to any questioning or search by any school personnel that he/she has accidentally brought a weapon, other than a firearm, to school on his/her person, in a book bag/purse, or his/her vehicle on school grounds, and the student informs the principal or a staff person immediately, the student will not be considered to be in possession of a weapon unless it is a firearm. The weapon shall be confiscated and held in the office until such time as the student's parent/legal guardian shall pick up the weapon from the school's office. Repeated offenses are unacceptable and shall be grounds for disciplinary action against the student as otherwise provided for in this policy.

Except as permitted in this policy, students found to be in possession on the school campus of a firearm shall be recommended for expulsion for a period of (1) one year. The Superintendent shall have the discretion to modify such expulsion recommendation for a student on a case-by-case basis.

Parents or legal guardians of students expelled under this policy shall be given a copy of the current laws regarding the possibility of parental responsibility for allowing a child to possess a firearm on school property. Parents or legal guardians shall sign a statement acknowledging that they have read and understand said laws prior to readmitting the student. Parents or legal guardians of a student enrolling from another school after the expiration of an expulsion period for a firearm policy violation shall also be given a copy of the current laws regarding the possibility of parental responsibility for allowing a child to possess a firearm on school property. The parents or legal guardians shall sign a statement acknowledging that they have read and understand said laws prior to the student being enrolled in school.

The mandatory expulsion requirement for possession of a firearm does not apply to a firearm brought to school for the purpose of participating in activities approved and authorized by the district that include the use of firearms. Such activities may include ROTC programs, hunting safety or military education, or before or after-school hunting or rifle clubs. Firearms brought to school for such purposes shall be brought to the school employee designated to receive such firearms. The designated employee shall store the firearms in a secure location until they are removed for use in the approved activity.

The district shall report any student who brings a firearm to school to the criminal justice system or juvenile delinquency system by notifying local law enforcement.

Legal References:

- A.C.A. § 5-4-201
- A.C.A. § 5-4-401
- A.C.A. § 5-27-210
- A.C.A. § 5-73-119(b)(e)(8)(9)(10)
- A.C.A. § 5-73-133
- A.C.A. § 6-18-502
- A.C.A. § 6-18-507
- A.C.A. § 6-21-608
- DESE Rules Governing Student Discipline and School Safety
- 20 USC §7961

Student Assault or Battery

A student shall not threaten, physically abuse, or attempt to physically abuse, or behave in such a way as to be perceived to

threaten bodily harm to any other person (student, school employee, or school visitor). Any gestures, vulgar, abusive or insulting language, taunting, threatening, harassing, or intimidating remarks by a student toward another person that threatens their well-being is strictly forbidden. This includes, but is not limited to, fighting, racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual slurs.

Furthermore, it is unlawful, during regular school hours, and in a place where a public school employee is required to be in the course of his or her duties, for any person to address a public school employee using language which, in its common understanding, is calculated to:

- a. Cause a breach of the peace;
- b. Materially and substantially interfere with the operation of the school; or
- c. Arouse the person to whom it is addressed to anger, to the extent likely to cause imminent retaliation.

Students guilty of such an offense may be subject to legal proceedings in addition to student disciplinary measures.

Legal References A.C.A. § 6-17-106
 DESE Rules Governing Student Discipline and School Safety

Laser Pointers

Students shall not possess any hand held laser pointer while in school; on or about school property, before or after school; in attendance at school or any school-sponsored activity; en route to or from school or any school-sponsored activity; off the school grounds at any school bus stop or at any school-sponsored activity or event. School personnel shall seize any laser pointer from the student possessing it and the student may reclaim it at the close of the school year, or when the student is no longer enrolled in the District.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-18-512
 DESE Rules Governing Student Discipline and School Safety

Possession and Use of Cell Phones, and Other Electronic Devices

Students are responsible for conducting themselves in a manner that respects the rights of others. Possession and use of any electronic device, whether district or student owned, that interferes with a positive, orderly classroom environment does not respect the rights of others and is expressly forbidden.

To protect the security of statewide assessments, no electronic device, as defined in this policy, shall be accessible by a student at any time during assessment administration unless specifically permitted by a student's individualized education program (IEP) or individual health plan; this means that when a student is taking an AESAA assessment, the student shall not have his/her electronic device in his/her possession. Any student violating this provision shall be subject to this policy's disciplinary provisions. The prohibition in this policy does not extend to the electronic device the District provides the student for the student's use during assessment administration to the extent the student is using the District provided device to complete the assessment.

As used in this policy, "electronic devices" means anything that can be used to transmit or capture images, sound, or data.

Misuse of electronic devices includes, but is not limited to:

1. Using electronic devices during class time in any manner other than specifically permitted by the classroom instructor;
2. Permitting any audible sound to come from the device when not being used for reason #1 above;
3. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, or wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores;
4. Using the device to record audio or video or to take photographs in areas where a general expectation of personal privacy exists, including but not limited to locker rooms and bathrooms;
5. Creating, sending, sharing, viewing, receiving, or possessing an indecent visual depiction of oneself or another person.

Use of an electronic device is permitted to the extent it is approved in a student's IEP or it is needed in an emergency that threatens the safety of students, staff, or other individuals.

Before and after normal school hours, possession of electronic devices is permitted on the school campus. The use of such devices at school sponsored functions outside the regular school day is permitted to the extent and within the limitations allowed by the event or activity the student is attending.

A parent shall obtain approval from the student's building principal before operating a student-tracking safety device at school or at a school-sponsored event if the device has recording or listen-in capability. The District requires the device's recording and listen-in technology to be disabled while the device is on the campus or at the school-sponsored event because of student privacy concerns. The District prohibits unauthorized audio or visual recordings or transmission of audio or images of other students. The student's parent shall agree in writing to the requirement for the device's recording and listening-in technology to be disabled and that the District may prohibit future use of the device on campus or at a school-sponsored activity if it is determined that the device's recording or listening-in capabilities were used in violation of this policy before the student safety tracking device may be on campus or at a school-sponsored event.

The student and/or the student's parents or guardians expressly assume any risk associated with students owning or possessing electronic devices. Students misusing electronic devices shall have them confiscated. Confiscated devices may be picked up at the school's administration office by the student's parents or guardians. Students have no right of privacy as to the content contained on any electronic devices that have been confiscated. A search of a confiscated device shall meet the reasonable individualized suspicion requirements of Policy SEARCH, SEIZURE, AND INTERROGATIONS.

Students who use school issued cell phones and/or computers for non-school purposes, except as permitted by the district's Internet/computer use policy, shall be subject to discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion. Students are forbidden from using school issued cell phones while driving any vehicle at any time. Violation may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

No student shall use any wireless communication device for the purposes of browsing the internet; composing or reading emails and text messages; or making or answering phone calls while driving a motor vehicle that is in motion and on school property. Violation may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension.⁵

Arson

- a) Intentionally setting fire to a school building or property.

Drugs and Alcohol

An orderly and safe school environment that is conducive to promoting student achievement requires a student population free from the deleterious effects of alcohol and drugs. Their use is illegal, disruptive to the educational environment, and diminishes the capacity of students to learn and function properly in our schools.

Therefore, no student in the Pocahontas School District shall possess, attempt to possess, consume, use, distribute, sell, attempt to sell, give to any person, or be under the influence of any substance as defined in this policy, or what the student represents or believes to be any substance as defined in this policy. This policy applies to any student who; is on or about school property; is in attendance at school or any school sponsored activity; has left the school campus for any reason and returns to the campus; is en route to or from school or any school sponsored activity.

Prohibited substances shall include, but are not limited to, alcohol, or any alcoholic beverage, inhalants that alter a student's ability to act, think, or respond, LSD, or any other hallucinogen, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, or any other narcotic drug, PCP, amphetamines, steroids, "designer drugs," look-alike drugs, or any controlled substance. Prohibited substances also include any substance which a person claims to be a controlled substance whether the claim is valid or not (fake drugs). Selling, distributing, or attempting to sell or distribute, or using over-the-counter or prescription drugs is also prohibited.

The sale, distribution, or attempted sale or distribution of over-the-counter (OTC) medications, dietary supplement or other perceived health remedy not regulated by the US Food and Drug Administration, or prescription drugs is prohibited. The possession or use of OTC medications, dietary supplement or other perceived health remedy not regulated by the US Food and Drug Administration, or prescription drugs is prohibited except as permitted under the district's STUDENT MEDICATIONS Policy.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-18-502
DESE Rules Governing Student Discipline and School Safety

Tobacco, Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems, and Related Products

Smoking or use of tobacco or products containing tobacco in any form (including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, and snuff) in or on any real property owned or leased by a District school, including school buses owned or leased by the district, is prohibited. Students who violate this policy may be subject to legal proceedings in addition to student disciplinary measures.

With the exception of recognized tobacco cessation products, this policy's prohibition includes any tobacco or nicotine delivery system or product. Specifically, the prohibition includes any product that is manufactured, distributed, marketed, or sold as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pips, or under any other name or descriptor.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-21-609

Lack of Cleanliness

Habitual uncleanliness that presents health and safety hazards or causes disruption of the educational process.

Gambling or Wagering

Students shall not participate in any activity which may be termed gambling or wagering where the stakes are objects of value.

Reckless Driving

- a. Students must drive in accordance with the laws of the State of Arkansas.
- b. Students will follow administrative procedures established to regulate the bringing and parking of private vehicles on school property.

Inappropriate Behavior

Students shall abstain from indecent and immoral acts and inappropriate public displays of affection.

Abuse Directed Toward Athletic Officials

Act 355 of 1987 declares that any person who shall strike or otherwise physically abuse an athletic official immediately prior to, during, or immediately after an athletic contest shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

Cheating

Cheating, copying, or claiming another person's work to be his/her own.

Disrespect For School Employees

Disrespect for school employees and failing to comply with their reasonable direction or otherwise demonstrating insubordination.

Truancy

Being absent without permission

Excessive Tardiness

Students who are late to class

Disruption of School

No student shall by the use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or any other conduct, intentionally cause the disruption of any lawful mission, process, or function of the school, or engage in any such conduct for the purpose of causing disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process, or function. Nor shall any student encourage any other student to engage in such activities.

Disorderly activities by any student or group of students that adversely affect the school's orderly educational environment shall not be tolerated at any time on school grounds. Teachers may remove from class and send to the principal or principal's designee office a student whose behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with the teacher's ability to teach the students, the class, or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn. Students who refuse to leave the classroom voluntarily will be escorted from the classroom by the school administration.

Legal References A.C.A. § 6-18-511
 DESE Rules Governing Student Discipline and School Safety

Gangs and Gang Activity

The Board is committed to ensuring a safe school environment conducive to promoting a learning environment where students and staff can excel. An orderly environment cannot exist where unlawful acts occur causing fear, intimidation, or physical harm to students or school staff. Gangs and their activities create such an atmosphere and shall not be allowed on school grounds or at school functions.

The following actions are prohibited by students on school property or at school functions:

1. Wearing or possessing any clothing, bandanas, jewelry, symbol, or other sign associated with membership in, or representative of, any gang;
2. Engaging in any verbal or nonverbal act such as throwing signs, gestures, or handshakes representative of membership in any gang;
3. Recruiting, soliciting, or encouraging any person through duress or intimidation to become or remain a member of any gang; and/or
4. Extorting payment from any individual in return for protection from harm from any gang.

Students found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Students arrested for gang related activities occurring off school grounds shall be subject to the same disciplinary actions as if they had occurred on school grounds.

Student Sexual Harassment

The Pocahontas School District is committed to providing an academic environment that treats all students with respect and dignity. Student achievement is best attained in an atmosphere of equal educational opportunity that is free of discrimination. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination that undermines the integrity of the educational environment and will not be tolerated.

The District believes the best policy to create an educational environment free from sexual harassment is prevention; therefore, the District shall provide informational materials and training to students, parents/legal guardians/other responsible adults, and employees on sexual harassment. The informational materials and training on sexual harassment shall be age appropriate and, when necessary, provided in a language other than English or in an accessible format. The informational materials and training shall include, but are not limited to:

- the nature of sexual harassment;
- The District's written procedures governing the formal complaint grievance process;
- The process for submitting a formal complaint of sexual harassment;
- That the district does not tolerate sexual harassment;
- That students can report inappropriate behavior of a sexual nature without fear of adverse consequences;
- The supports that are available to individuals suffering sexual harassment; and
- The potential discipline for perpetrating sexual harassment.

Definitions

“Complainant” means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

“Education program or activity” includes locations, events, or circumstances where the District exercised substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs.

“Formal complaint” means a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting an investigation of the allegation of sexual harassment.

“Respondent” means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

“Sexual harassment” means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. A District employee:
 - a. Conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the District on an individual's participation in sexual conduct;² or
 - b. Uses the rejection of sexual conduct as the basis for academic decisions affecting that individual;²
2. The conduct is:
 - a. Unwelcome; and
 - b. Determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the District's education program or activity; or
 - c. Constitutes:
 - d. Sexual assault;
 - e. Dating violence
 - f. Domestic violence; or
 - g. Stalking.

“Supportive measures” means individualized services that are offered to the complainant or the respondent designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party. The supportive measures must be non-disciplinary and non-punitive in nature; offered before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed; and offered to either party as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge. Examples of supportive measures include, but are not limited to: measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the District's educational environment, or deter sexual harassment; counseling; extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments; modifications of work or class schedules; campus escort services; mutual restrictions on contact between the parties; changes in work or class locations; leaves of absence; and increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus.

Within the educational environment, sexual harassment is prohibited between any of the following: students; employees and students; and non-employees and students.

Actionable sexual harassment is generally established when an individual is exposed to a pattern of objectionable behaviors or when a single, serious act is committed. What is, or is not, sexual harassment will depend upon all of

the surrounding circumstances and may occur regardless of the sex(es) of the individuals involved. Depending upon such circumstances, examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Making sexual propositions or pressuring for sexual activities;
- Unwelcome touching;
- Writing graffiti of a sexual nature;
- Displaying or distributing sexually explicit drawings, pictures, or written materials;
- Performing sexual gestures or touching oneself sexually in front of others;
- Telling sexual or crude jokes;
- Spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities;
- Discussions of sexual experiences;
- Rating other students as to sexual activity or performance;
- Circulating or showing e-mails or Web sites of a sexual nature;
- Intimidation by words, actions, insults, or name calling; and
- Teasing or name-calling related to sexual characteristics or the belief or perception that an individual is not conforming to expected gender roles or conduct or is homosexual, regardless of whether or not the student self-identifies as homosexual or transgender.

Students who believe they have been subjected to sexual harassment, or the parent/legal guardian/other responsible adult of a student who believes their student has been subjected to sexual harassment, are encouraged to bring their concerns to **any** District staff member, including a counselor, teacher, Title IX coordinator, or administrator. If the District staff member who received a report of alleged sexual harassment is not the Title IX Coordinator, then the District staff person shall inform the Title IX Coordinator of the alleged sexual harassment. As soon as reasonably possible after receiving a report of alleged sexual harassment from another District staff member or after receiving a report directly through any means, the Title IX Coordinator shall contact the complainant to:

- Discuss the availability of supportive measures;
- Consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures;
- Inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint; and
- explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint.

Supportive Measures

The District shall offer supportive measures to both the complainant and respondent that are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. The District shall provide the individualized supportive measures to the complainant unless declined in writing by the complainant and shall provide individualized supportive measures that are non-disciplinary and non-punitive to the respondent. A complainant who initially declined the District's offer of supportive measures may request supportive measures at a later time and the District shall provide individualized supportive measures based on the circumstances when the subsequent request is received.

Formal Complaint

A formal complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by email. Upon receipt of a formal complaint, a District shall simultaneously provide the following written notice to the parties who are known:

- Notice of the District's grievance process and a copy of the procedures governing the grievance process;
- Notice of the allegations of sexual harassment including sufficient details known at the time and with sufficient time to prepare a response before any initial interview. Sufficient details include:
 - ✚ The identities of the parties involved in the incident, if known;
 - ✚ The conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment; and
 - ✚ The date and location of the alleged incident, if known;
- A statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process;
- That the parties may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney;
- That the parties may inspect and review evidence relevant to the complaint of sexual harassment; and
- That the District's code of conduct prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.

If, in the course of an investigation, the District decides to investigate allegations about the complainant or respondent that are not included in the previous notice, the District shall simultaneously provide notice of the additional allegations to the parties whose identities are known.

The District may consolidate formal complaints of allegations of sexual harassment where the allegations of sexual harassment arise out of the same facts or circumstances and the formal complaints are against more than one respondent; or by more than one complainant against one or more respondents; or by one party against the other party. When the District has consolidated formal complaints so that the grievance process involves more than one complainant or more than one respondent, references to the singular “party”, “complainant”, or “respondent” include the plural, as applicable.

When investigating a formal complaint and throughout the grievance process, a District shall:

- Ensure that the burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility rest on the District and not on the parties;
- Not require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use questions or evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure of, information protected under a legally recognized privilege or access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party’s records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional’s or paraprofessional’s capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the party unless the District obtains the parent, legal guardian, or other responsible adult of that party’s voluntary, written consent or that party’s voluntary, written consent if the party is over the age of eighteen (18) to do so for the grievance process;
- Provide an equal opportunity for the parties to present witnesses, including fact and expert witnesses, and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence;
- Not restrict the ability of either party to discuss the allegations under investigation or to gather and present relevant evidence;
- Provide the parties with the same opportunities to have others present during any grievance proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by the advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney, and not limit the choice or presence of advisor for either the complainant or respondent in any meeting or grievance proceeding;
- Provide, to a party whose participation is invited or expected, written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of all hearings, investigative interviews, or other meetings, with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate;
- Provide both parties an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in the formal complaint so that each party can meaningfully respond to the evidence prior to the conclusion of the investigation; this includes evidence:
 - Whether obtained from a party or other source;
 - The District does not intend to rely upon in reaching a determination regarding responsibility; and
 - That is either Inculpatory or exculpatory; and
- Create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence.

At least ten (10) days prior to completion of the investigative report, the District shall send to each party and the party’s advisor, if any, the evidence subject to inspection and review in an electronic format or a hard copy. The parties shall have at least ten (10)³ days to submit a written response to the evidence. The investigator will consider the written responses prior to completion of the investigative report. All evidence subject to inspection and review shall be available for the parties’ inspection and review at any meeting to give each party equal opportunity to refer to such evidence during the meeting.

After the investigative report is sent to the parties, the decision-maker shall:

- Provide each party the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness;
- Provide each party with the answers;
- Allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party; and
- Provide an explanation to the party proposing the questions any decision to exclude a question as not relevant. Specifically, questions and evidence about the complainant’s sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not

relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent.

Following the completion of the investigation period, the decision-maker, who cannot be the same person as the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator, shall issue a written determination regarding responsibility. The written determination shall include—

1. Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment;
2. A description of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the formal complaint through the determination, including:
 - a. Any notifications to the parties;
 - b. Interviews with parties and witnesses;
 - c. site visits;
 - d. Methods used to gather other evidence; and
 - e. Hearings held;
3. Findings of fact supporting the determination;
4. Conclusions regarding the application of the District's code of conduct to the facts;
5. A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including:
 - a. A determination regarding responsibility;
 - b. Any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent; and
 - c. Whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity will be provided by the District to the complainant; and
6. The procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal.

The written determination shall be provided to the parties simultaneously. The determination regarding responsibility shall become final on the earlier of:

- If an appeal is not filed, the day after the period for an appeal to be filed expires; or
- If an appeal is filed, the date the written determination of the result of the appeal is provided to the parties.

The District shall investigate the allegations in a formal complaint. If the conduct alleged in the formal complaint would not constitute sexual harassment as defined in this policy even if proved; did not occur in the District's education program or activity; or did not occur against a person in the United States, then the District shall dismiss the complaint as not meeting the definition of sexual harassment under this policy. A dismissal for these reasons does not preclude action under another provision of the District's code of conduct.

The District may dismiss the formal complaint or any allegations therein, if at any time during the grievance process:

- The complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant would like to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations therein;
- The respondent is no longer enrolled at the District; or
- Specific circumstances prevent the District from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein.

Upon the dismissal of a formal complaint for any reason, the District shall promptly send written notice of the dismissal and reason(s) for the dismissal simultaneously to the parties.

The District may hire an individual or individuals to conduct the investigation or to act as the determination-maker when necessary.

Appeals

Either party may appeal a determination regarding responsibility or from a dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegations therein, on the following bases:

- a. The existence of a procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
- b. Discovery of new evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter;

- c. The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decision-maker had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter; or
- d. An appeal of the disciplinary sanctions from the initial determination.

For all appeals, the District shall:

1. Notify the other party in writing when an appeal is filed;
2. Simultaneously Provide all parties a written copy of the District’s procedures governing the appeal process;
3. Implement appeal procedures equally for both parties;
4. Ensure that the decision-maker for the appeal is not the same person as the decision-maker that reached the original determination regarding responsibility or dismissal, the investigator, or the Title IX Coordinator;
5. Provide all parties a reasonable, equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome;
6. Issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result; and
7. Provide the written decision simultaneously to both parties.

Confidentiality

Reports of sexual harassment, both informal reports and formal complaints, will be treated in a confidential manner to the extent possible. Limited disclosure may be provided to:

- individuals who are responsible for handling the District’s investigation and determination of responsibility to the extent necessary to complete the District’s grievance process;
- Submit a report to the child maltreatment hotline;
- Submit a report to the Professional Licensure Standards Board for reports alleging sexual harassment by an employee towards a student; or
- The extent necessary to provide either party due process during the grievance process.

Except as listed above, the District shall keep confidential the identity of:

- ✚ Any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination;
- ✚ Any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment;
- ✚ Any complainant;
- ✚ Any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination;
- ✚ Any respondent; and
- ✚ Any witness.

Any supportive measures provided to the complainant or respondent shall be kept confidential to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality does not impair the ability of the District to provide the supportive measures.

Emergency removal

The District may remove a respondent from the District’s education program or activity on an emergency basis only after the completion of an individualized safety and risk analysis that determines that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal. A removed student will be provided with notice and an opportunity to challenge the removal decision immediately following the removal.

Retaliation Prohibited

Students, or the parents/legal guardians/ other responsible adult of a student, who submit a report or file a formal complaint of sexual harassment, testified; assisted; or participate or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing on sexual harassment shall not be subjected to retaliation or reprisal in any form, including threats; intimidation; coercion; discrimination; or charges for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or formal complaint of sex discrimination, and are made for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege under this policy. The District shall take steps to prevent retaliation and shall take immediate action if any form of retaliation occurs regardless of whether the retaliatory acts are by District officials, students, or third parties.

Disciplinary Sanctions

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to be subjected to, or to subject another person to, sexual

harassment. Following the completion of the District's grievance process, any student who is found by the evidence to more likely than not have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, expulsion. No disciplinary sanction or other action that is not a supportive measure may be taken against a respondent until the conclusion of the grievance process.

Students who knowingly fabricate allegations of sexual harassment or purposely provide inaccurate facts shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. A determination that the allegations do not rise to the level of sexual harassment alone is not sufficient to conclude that any party made a false allegation or materially false statement in bad faith.

Records

The District shall maintain the following records for a minimum of seven (7) years:

- Each sexual harassment investigation including;
- Any determination regarding responsibility;
- any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent;
- Any remedies provided to the complainant designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity;
- Any appeal and the result therefrom;
- All materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, investigators, and decision-makers;
- Any actions, including any supportive measures, taken in response to a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, which must include:
 - The basis for the District's conclusion that its response was not deliberately indifferent; and
 - Document:
 - If supportive measures were provided to the complainant, the supportive measures taken designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity; or
 - If no supportive measures were provided to a complainant, document the reasons why such a response was not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

Legal References: 20 USC 1681 et seq.
 34 C.F.R. Part 106
 A.C.A. § 6-15-1005
 A.C.A. § 6-18-502
 A.C.A. § 12-18-102

Bullying

Definitions

“Attribute” means an actual or perceived personal characteristic including without limitation race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, socioeconomic status, academic status, disability, gender, gender identity, physical appearance, health condition, or sexual orientation;

“Bullying” means the intentional harassment, intimidation, humiliation, ridicule, defamation, or threat or incitement of violence by a student against another student or public school employee by a written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that may address an attribute of the other student, public school employee, or person with whom the other student or public school employee is associated and that causes or creates actual or reasonably foreseeable:

- Physical harm to a public school employee or student or damage to the public school employee's or student's property;
- Substantial interference with a student's education or with a public school employee's role in education;
- A hostile educational environment for one (1) or more students or public school employees due to the severity, persistence, or pervasiveness of the act; or
- Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment;

Examples of "Bullying" include, but are not limited to, a pattern of behavior involving one or more of the following:

1. Cyberbullying;
2. Sarcastic comments "compliments" about another student's personal appearance or actual or perceived

attributes,

3. Pointed questions intended to embarrass or humiliate,
4. Mocking, taunting or belittling,
5. Non-verbal threats and/or intimidation such as “fronting” or “chesting” a person,
6. Demeaning humor relating to a student’s actual or perceived attributes,
7. Blackmail, extortion, demands for protection money or other involuntary donations or loans,
8. Blocking access to school property or facilities,
9. Deliberate physical contact or injury to person or property,
10. Stealing or hiding books or belongings,
11. Threats of harm to student(s), possessions, or others,
12. Sexual harassment, as governed by policy 4.27, is also a form of bullying, and/or
13. Teasing or name-calling related to sexual characteristics or the belief or perception that an individual is not conforming to expected gender roles or conduct or is homosexual, regardless of whether the student self-identifies as homosexual or transgender (Examples: “Slut”, “You are so gay.”, “Fag”, “Queer”).

"Cyberbullying" means any form of communication by electronic act that is sent with the purpose to:

- Harass, intimidate, humiliate, ridicule, defame, or threaten a student, school employee, or person with whom the other student or school employee is associated; or
- Incite violence towards a student, school employee, or person with whom the other student or school employee is associated.

Cyberbullying of School Employees includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Building a fake profile or website of the employee;
- b. Posting or encouraging others to post on the Internet private, personal, or sexual information pertaining to a school employee;
- c. Posting an original or edited image of the school employee on the Internet;
- d. Accessing, altering, or erasing any computer network, computer data program, or computer software, including breaking into a password-protected account or stealing or otherwise accessing passwords of a school employee;
- e. Making repeated, continuing, or sustained electronic communications, including electronic mail or transmission, to a school employee;
- f. Making, or causing to be made, and disseminating an unauthorized copy of data pertaining to a school employee in any form, including without limitation the printed or electronic form of computer data, computer programs, or computer software residing in, communicated by, or produced by a computer or computer network;
- g. Signing up a school employee for a pornographic Internet site; or
- h. Without authorization of the school employee, signing up a school employee for electronic mailing lists or to receive junk electronic messages and instant messages.

Cyberbullying is prohibited whether or not the cyberbullying originated on school property or with school equipment, if the cyberbullying results in the substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment or is directed specifically at students or school personnel and maliciously intended for the purpose of disrupting school and has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

“Harassment” means a pattern of unwelcome verbal or physical conduct relating to another person's constitutionally or statutorily protected status that causes, or reasonably should be expected to cause, substantial interference with the other's performance in the school environment; and

“Substantial disruption” means without limitation that any one or more of the following occur as a result of the bullying:

- Necessary cessation of instruction or educational activities;
- Inability of students or educational staff to focus on learning or function as an educational unit because of a hostile environment;
- Severe or repetitive disciplinary measures are needed in the classroom or during educational activities; or
- Exhibition of other behaviors by students or educational staff that substantially interfere with the learning environment.

Respect for the dignity of others is a cornerstone of civil society. Bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, robs a person of his/her dignity, detracts from the safe environment necessary to promote student learning, and will not be tolerated by the Board of Directors. Students who bully another person shall be held accountable for their actions whether they occur on school equipment or property; off school property at a school sponsored or approved function, activity, or event; going to or from school or a school activity in a school vehicle or school bus; or at designated school bus stops.

Students are encouraged to report behavior they consider to be bullying, including a single action which if allowed to continue would constitute bullying, to their teacher or the building principal. The report may be made anonymously. Teachers and other school employees who have witnessed, or are reliably informed that, a student has been a victim of behavior they consider to be bullying, including a single action which if allowed to continue would constitute bullying, shall report the incident(s) to the building principal, or designee, as soon as possible. Parents or legal guardians may submit written reports of incidents they feel constitute bullying, or if allowed to continue would constitute bullying, to the building principal, or designee.

The person or persons reporting behavior they consider to be bullying shall not be subject to retaliation or reprisal in any form.

A building principal, or designee, who receives a credible report or complaint of bullying shall:

1. As soon as reasonably practicable, but by no later than the end of the school day following the receipt of the credible report of bullying:
 - a. Report to a parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of a student, or person standing in loco parentis of a student that their student is the victim in a credible report of bullying; and
 - b. Prepare a written report of the alleged incident of bullying;
2. Promptly investigate the credible report or complaint of bullying, which shall be completed by no later than the fifth (5th) school day following the completion of the written report.
3. Notify within five (5) days following the completion of the investigation the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of a student, or person standing in loco parentis of a student who was the alleged victim in a credible report of bullying whether the investigation found the credible report or complaint of bullying to be true and the availability of counseling and other intervention services.
4. Notify within five (5) days following the completion of the investigation the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person acting in loco parentis of the student who is alleged to have been the perpetrator of the incident of bullying:
 - a. That a credible report or complaint of bullying against their student exists;
 - b. Whether the investigation found the credible report or complaint of bullying to be true;
 - c. Whether action was taken against their student upon the conclusion of the investigation of the alleged incident of bullying; and
 - d. Information regarding the reporting of another alleged incident of bullying, including potential consequences of continued incidents of bullying;
5. Make a written record of the investigation, which shall include:
 - a. A detailed description of the alleged incident of bullying, including without limitation a detailed summary of the statements from all material witnesses to the alleged incident of bullying;
 - b. Any action taken as a result of the investigation; and
6. Discuss, as appropriate, the availability of counseling and other intervention services with students involved in the incident of bullying.

Students found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, consideration may be given to other violations of the student handbook which may have simultaneously occurred. In addition to any disciplinary actions, the District shall take appropriate steps to remedy the effects resulting from bullying.

Notice of what constitutes bullying, the District's prohibition against bullying, and the consequences for students who bully shall be conspicuously posted in every classroom, cafeteria, restroom, gymnasium, auditorium, and school bus. Parents, legal guardians, person having lawful control of a student, persons standing in loco parentis, students, school volunteers, and employees shall be given copies of the notice annually.

The superintendent shall make a report annually to the Board of Directors on student discipline data, which shall include, without limitation, the number of incidents of bullying reported and the actions taken regarding the reported incidents of bullying.

Copies of this policy shall be available upon request.

Video Surveillance

The board has a responsibility to maintain discipline, protect the safety, security, and welfare of its students, staff, and visitors while at the same time safeguarding district facilities, vehicles, and equipment. As part of fulfilling this responsibility, the board authorizes the use of video/audio surveillance cameras in any district building, on district property, and in district buses and vehicles. Video recorder placements shall be based on the presumption and belief that students, staff, and visitors have no reasonable expectation of privacy in areas or at events that occur in plain view of other students, staff, or visitors.

Signs shall be posted on campus buildings and in district vehicles to notify students, staff, and visitors that video cameras may be in use. Parents and students shall also be notified through the student handbook that cameras may be in use in school buildings, on school grounds and in school vehicles. Students will be held responsible for any violations of school discipline rules caught by the cameras.

The district shall retain copies of video recordings until they are erased which may be accomplished by either deletion or copying over with a new recording.

Videos containing evidence of a violation of student conduct rules and/or state or federal law shall be retained until the issue of the misconduct is no longer subject to review or appeal as determined by board policy or student handbook; any release or viewing of such records shall be in accordance with current law.

Students who vandalize, damage, disable, or render inoperable surveillance cameras and equipment shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action and referral to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Operating a Vehicle on School Grounds While Using a Wireless Communication Device

In accordance with state statute, individuals are not allowed to use a wireless communication device while operating a vehicle on school grounds.

Behavior Not Covered

The Pocahontas School District reserves the right to punish behavior which is not conducive to good order and discipline in the schools, even though such behavior is not specified in the written rules.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Suspension From School

Students who are not present at school cannot benefit from the educational opportunities the school environment affords. Administrators, therefore, shall strive to find ways to keep students in school as participants in the educational process. There are instances, however, when the needs of the other students or the interests of the orderly learning environment require the removal of a student from school. The Board authorizes school principals or their designees to suspend students for disciplinary reasons for a period of time not to exceed ten (10) school days, including the day upon which the suspension is imposed. The suspension may be in school or out of school. Students are responsible for their conduct that occurs:

- At any time on the school grounds;
- Off school grounds at a school-sponsored function, activity, or event;
- Going to and from school or a school activity.

A student may be suspended for behavior including, but not limited to that which:

1. Is in violation of school policies, rules, or regulations;
2. Substantially interferes with the safe and orderly educational environment;
3. School administrators believe will result in the substantial interference with the safe and orderly educational environment; and/or
4. Is insubordinate, incorrigible, violent, or involves moral turpitude.

Out-of-school suspension (OSS) shall not be used to discipline a student in kindergarten through fifth (5th) grade unless the student's behavior:

- a. Poses a physical risk to himself or herself or to others;
- b. Causes a serious disruption that cannot be addressed through other means; or
- c. Is the act of bringing a firearm on school campus.

OSS shall not be used to discipline a student for skipping class, excessive absences, or other forms of truancy.

The school principal or designee shall proceed as follows in deciding whether or not to suspend a student:

1. The student shall be given written notice or advised orally of the charges against him/her;
2. If the student denies the charges, he/she shall be given an explanation of the evidence against him/her and be allowed to present his/her version of the facts;
3. If the principal finds the student guilty of the misconduct, he/she may be suspended.

When possible, notice of the suspension, its duration, and any stipulations for the student's re-admittance to class will be given to the parent(s), legal guardian(s), person(s) with lawful control of the student, person(s) standing in loco parentis, or to the student if age eighteen (18) or older prior to the suspension. Such notice shall be handed to the parent(s), legal guardian(s), person(s) having lawful control of the student, person(s) standing in loco parentis, or to the student if age eighteen (18) or older or mailed to the last address reflected in the records of the school district.

Generally, notice and hearing should precede the student's removal from school, but if prior notice and hearing are not feasible, as where the student's presence endangers persons or property or threatens disruption of the academic process, thus justifying immediate removal from school, the necessary notice and hearing should follow as soon as practicable.

It is the responsibility of a student's parents, legal guardians, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis to provide current contact information to the district, which the school shall use to immediately notify the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of a student, or person standing in loco parentis upon the suspension of a student. The notification shall be by one of the following means, listed in order of priority:

- A primary call number
 - The contact may be by voice, voice mail, or text message
- An email address
- A regular first class letter to the last known mailing address

The district shall keep a log of contacts attempted and made to the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis.

The District shall establish programs, measures, or alternative means and methods to continue student engagement and access to education during a student's period of OSS.

In-school suspension shall be treated as if the student was present at school. The student shall not attend any school-sponsored activities during the imposed suspension nor shall the student participate in any school-sponsored activities.

Students suspended from school for disciplinary reasons may be allowed to make up school work at a time and place designated by the principal. Failure to do so at the specified time will result in loss of credit for the work. Students suspended more than once during the year will not be allowed to make up work. Students will not be allowed to make up work for an out-of-school suspension if the student is suspended because of his/her refusal to accept the

original punishment. (Example; refusal of in-school suspension or Saturday school). Subsequent refusal may result in a FINS petition being filed with the Randolph County juvenile officer.

Suspensions initiated by the principal or his/her designee may be appealed to the Superintendent, but not to the Board.

Suspensions initiated by the Superintendent may be appealed to the Board.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-18-507
 DESE Rules Governing Student Discipline and School Safety
 Goss v Lopez, 419 U.S. 565 (1975)

Expulsion

The Board of Education may expel a student for a period longer than ten (10) school days for violation of the District's written discipline policies. The Superintendent may make a recommendation of expulsion to the Board of Education for student conduct

- Deemed to be of such gravity that suspension would be inappropriate;
- Where the student's continued attendance at school would disrupt the orderly learning environment; or
- Would pose an unreasonable danger to the welfare of other students or staff.

Expulsion shall not be used to discipline a student in kindergarten through fifth (5th) grade unless the student's behavior:

- a. Poses a physical risk to himself or herself or to others;
- b. Causes a serious disruption that cannot be addressed through other means; or
- c. Is the act of bringing a firearm on school campus.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall give written notice to the parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis (mailed to the address reflected on the District's records) that he/she will recommend to the Board of Education that the student be expelled for the specified length of time and state the reasons for the recommendation to expel. The notice shall give the date, hour, and place where the Board of Education will consider and dispose of the recommendation.

The hearing shall be conducted not later than ten (10) school days following the date of the notice, except that representatives of the Board and student may agree in writing to a date not conforming to this limitation.

The President of the Board, Board attorney, or other designated Board member shall preside at the hearing. The student may choose to be represented by legal counsel. Both the district administration and School Board also may be represented by legal counsel. The hearing shall be conducted in open session of the Board unless the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, person standing in loco parentis, or student if age eighteen (18) or older, requests that the hearing be conducted in executive session. Any action taken by the Board shall be in open session.

During the hearing, the Superintendent will present evidence, including the calling of witnesses, that gave rise to the recommendation of expulsion. The student, or his/her representative, may then present evidence including statements from persons with personal knowledge of the events or circumstances relevant to the charges against the student. Formal cross-examination will not be permitted. However, any member of the Board, the Superintendent, or designee, the student, or his/her representative may question anyone making a statement and/or the student. The presiding officer shall decide questions concerning the appropriateness or relevance of any questions asked during the hearing.

The Superintendent shall recommend the expulsion of any student for a period of one (1) year for possession of any firearm or other weapon prohibited on school campus by law. The Superintendent shall, however, have the discretion to modify the expulsion recommendation for a student on a case-by-case basis. Parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of a student, or persons standing in loco parentis of a student enrolling from another

school after the expiration of an expulsion period for a weapons policy violation shall be given a copy of the current laws regarding the possibility of parental responsibility for allowing a child to possess a weapon on school property. The parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis shall sign a statement acknowledging that they have read and understand said laws prior to the student being enrolled in school.

The Superintendent and the Board of Education shall complete the expulsion process of any student that was initiated because the student possessed a firearm or other prohibited weapon on school property regardless of the enrollment status of the student.

The District shall establish programs, measures, or alternative means and methods to continue student engagement and access to education during a student's period of expulsion. The District's program shall include offering an expelled student an opportunity for enrollment in digital learning courses or other alternative educational courses that result in the receipt of academic credit that is at least equal to credit the expelled student may have received from the District if the student had not been expelled.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-15-1406
A.C.A. § 6-18-502
A.C.A. § 6-18-507
DESE Rules Governing Student Discipline and School Safety

Students Expelled From Other School Districts

Pocahontas Public Schools, acting under authority of Act 472, has adopted the following policy:

After a hearing before the board, any person who has been expelled as a student from any other school district may be prohibited from enrolling as a student in this district until the time of the persons expulsion has expired.

ACT 574 requires as regular procedure for all students that prior to any student's admission to an Arkansas public school, the parent, guardian, or other responsible person shall indicate on school registration forms whether the student has been expelled from school in any other district or is a party to an expulsion proceeding.

Student Liability

The parent or guardian of a minor shall be liable to the school district for all property belonging to the school district loaned to the minor and not returned upon demand of an employee of the district authorized to make the demand.

Use of Reasonable Force in Correcting a Student

Corporal Punishment Guidelines

The Pocahontas School Board hereby authorizes the use of corporal punishment not to exceed five licks with a paddle furnished or approved by the school for the purpose to maintain discipline and order in the school. Corporal punishment shall not be administered unless some means other than corporal punishment has been made to modify the pupil's behavior. In addition, the student must be warned that the misbehavior will not be tolerated.

When corporal punishment is to be administered, the following actions must take place:

1. The pupil has been given an explanation for the reason of corporal punishment in the presence of the witness.
2. The pupil has been given an opportunity to explain the reason for his/her actions or the deny the charge(s).
3. The punishment must be administered by a teacher or a school administrator.
4. A school administrator or his designee, who shall be a teacher or administrator employed by the school district, must be present when corporal punishment is administered.
5. A written report of the corporal punishment must be filed in the student's folder. This report should include a statement of the reason(s) for the action, the names of the student(s) involved, the names of any witnesses and a signature of the school employee administering the action. This report of corporal

punishment shall be filed in the principal's office immediately following the punishment.

Search, Seizure, and Interrogations

The District respects the rights of its students against arbitrary intrusion of their person and property. At the same time, it is the responsibility of school officials to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all students enrolled in the District in order to promote an environment conducive to student learning. The Superintendent, principals, and their designees have the right to inspect and search school property and equipment. They may also search students and their personal property in which the student has a reasonable expectation of privacy, when there is reasonable and individualized suspicion to believe such student or property contains illegal items or other items in violation of Board policy or dangerous to the school community. School authorities may seize evidence found in the search and disciplinary action may be taken. Evidence found which appears to be in violation of the law shall be reported to the appropriate authority.

School property shall include, but not be limited to, lockers, desks, and parking lots, as well as personal effects left there by students. When possible, prior notice will be given and the student will be allowed to be present along with an adult witness, however, searches may be done at any time with or without notice or the student's consent. A personal search must not be excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction.

The Superintendent, principals, and their designees may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to help conduct searches. Such searches may include the use of specially trained dogs.

A school official of the same sex shall conduct personal searches with an adult witness of the same sex present.

State Law requires that Department of Human Services employees, local law enforcement, or agents of the Crimes Against Children Division of the Department of Arkansas State Police, may interview students without a court order for the purpose of investigating suspected child abuse. In instances where the interviewers deem it necessary, they may exercise a "72-hour hold" without first obtaining a court order. Other questioning of students by non-school personnel shall be granted as follows:

1. A court order directing such questioning; or
2. In response to a subpoena; or
3. Arrest warrant; or
4. A social worker with extensive authority investigating a case of suspected child abuse (A.C.A. 12-12-504).

If the District makes a report to any law enforcement agency concerning student misconduct or if access to a student is granted to a law enforcement agency or state social worker, the principal or principal's designee shall make a good faith effort to contact the student's parent, legal guardian, or other person having lawful control by court order, or person acting in loco parentis on student enrollment forms. The principal or the principal's designee shall not attempt to make such contact if presented documentation by the investigator that notification is prohibited because a parent, guardian, custodian, or person standing in loco parentis is named as an alleged offender of the suspected child maltreatment. This exception applies only to interview requests made by a law enforcement officer, an investigator of the Crimes Against Children Division of the Department of Arkansas State Police, or an investigator or employee of the Department of Human Services. Outside social workers with investigate powers must secure written parental approval before student contact is made.

In instances other than those related to cases of suspected child abuse, principals must release a student to either a police officer who presents a subpoena for the student, or a warrant for arrest, or to an agent of state social services or an agent of a court with jurisdiction over a child with a court order signed by a judge. Upon release of the student, the principal or designee shall give the student's parent, legal guardian, or other person having lawful control by court order, or person acting in loco parentis notice that the student has been taken into custody by law enforcement personnel or a state's social services agency. If the principal or designee is unable to reach the parent, he or she shall make a reasonable, good faith effort to get a message to the parent to call the principal or designee, and leave both a day and an after-hours telephone number.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-18-513

A.C.A. § 12-12-509, 510 and 516

A.C.A. § 9-13-104

TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING REGULATIONS

Conduct To and From School and Transportation Eligibility

The District's Student Code of conduct applies to students while traveling to and from school or to and from a school activity to the same extent as if the students were on school grounds. Appropriate disciplinary actions may be taken against commuting students who violate the District's Student Code of Conduct.

The preceding paragraph also applies to student conduct while on school buses. Students shall be instructed in safe riding practices. The driver of a school bus shall not operate the school bus until every passenger is seated. In addition to other disciplinary measures provided for violations of the District's Student Code of Conduct, the student's bus transportation privileges may be suspended or terminated for violations of the Student Code of Conduct related to bus behavior.

Students are eligible to receive district bus transportation if they meet the following requirements. The transportation to and from school of students who have lost their bus transportation privileges is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 5-60-122

A.C.A. § 6-19-119 (b)

Ark. Division of Academic Facilities and Transportation Rules Governing Maintenance and Operations of Ark. Public School Buses and Physical Examinations of School Bus Drivers 4.0

Policies for Students Riding School Buses

1. Be at the bus stop at the scheduled time. Stand back about ten feet from the bus stop and wait until the door is opened before moving closer to the bus. Do not play on the highway or road. If you miss the bus, do not attempt to hitchhike a ride or walk to or from school.
2. While loading or unloading, enter or leave the bus orderly and quickly.
3. While riding the bus, students are under the supervision of the driver and must obey the driver at all times. The principal has the authority to temporarily suspend a student from riding the bus.
4. Students are not to distract the attention of their driver or disturb other riders on the bus (which includes keeping your hands to yourself; attend to your own matter; let other pupils alone and be reasonably quiet).
5. No knives or sharp objects of any kind are allowed--neither firearms upon any school bus or at a designated bus stop, pets, nor other living animals, etc.
6. You are not to tamper with any of the safety devices such as door latches, fire extinguishers, etc. Pupils must keep seated while the bus is in motion and must not ever move while it is stopped except as the driver directs. Pupils are not to put their hands, arms, heads, or bodies out of the windows. Do not yell at anyone outside the bus.
7. Students are not to deface the bus or any school property. Do not write on the bus or damage seats, etc. Do not throw paper, food, or other objects on the floor of the bus. Do not eat on the bus. Keep aisle of the bus clear from books, lunches, coats, etc. Do not put feet in the aisles.
8. Act 729 of 1977 of State Legislature makes it illegal to smoke on school buses. The penalty for violating this law is a fine ranging from \$10.00 to \$100.00.
9. ACT 814 of 1977 makes it unlawful to threaten, curse, or use abusive language to a school bus driver in the presence of students in this state. Any person who violates this ACT shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction, shall be punished by a fine of no less than \$25.00 or more than \$100.00.
10. The driver will handle routine things in the manner he thinks best. In the event that a student will not behave, the driver will report the student to his principal. The first time the principal will either counsel the student, request a parental conference, or suspend the student for three days from riding the bus, depending on the severity of the incident. The second time a student is sent to the office by the bus driver for misconduct, a parent conference is mandatory and the student may be paddled or may be suspended from riding the bus for 5 days, depending on the incident. The third time a student is sent to the office by a bus driver for misconduct, a parent conference is required and the student may be suspended for 15 school

days. A fourth report to the office by the driver for misconduct, a parent conference is required and the student may be suspended from riding the bus for 30 school days. A fifth report to the office by the driver may result in expulsion of the student from the bus for the remainder of the school year. Transporting students to and from school who have lost their transportation privileges shall become the responsibility of the student's parent or legal guardian.

11. Do not ask the driver to let you off the bus uptown, at the store, to get mail out of the box, or any place except your regular stop.
12. If you must cross the road or highway to enter the bus, try always to be on the right side of the road waiting on the bus. If you should arrive at the stop just as the bus approaches the stop, wait until the bus has come to a complete stop and the driver has signaled for you to cross in front of the bus. (Unless the driver directs you differently).
13. Pupils who cross the road after leaving the bus in the afternoon must go to a point on the shoulder of the road ten feet in front of the bus. Cross the road only after the driver or the student patrol has signaled you to do so.
14. Pupils cannot ride any bus except their own. Visitors are not allowed except in case of an emergency. Permission must be secured from the Principal.

This is not intended to cover all the "do's and don'ts" but it is a very specific guide. The driver may find it necessary to interpret these policies in light of his or her own bus needs.

IT SHOULD BE REGARDED AS A PRIVILEGE TO RIDE TO SCHOOL ON A BUS!

Field Trips

Field trips may be planned in consultation with the principal under the following conditions:

1. Trips will provide definite educational benefits.
2. Written permission from the parents has been secured for out-of-town trips.
3. The teacher has worked out a schedule with the place to be visited.
4. Students going to and from school sponsored events:
 - a. The school will provide transportation to and from all scheduled events for the teams, to and from all conventions, contests and festivals for any organizations that have secured approval of the principal for participation and for the trip.
 - b. The students ride the school transportation to and from the approved event unless authorized per board policy as listed below.

A student will be released to ride home with their parent/guardian upon request by the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian will be asked to verify the request, in writing, through a sign-out sheet provided by the sponsor.

A parent/guardian may request that their child return from an event with another adult, rather than ride school transportation, if the child has received written authorization from a school administrator. The administrator will only give approval if a written request has been received from the parent/guardian and if the child will be released to an adult at the event. The administrator must authorize the written request prior to the child leaving the school event. The child must then present the request to the approved school district sponsor, of the event, in the presence of the adult who will be taking the child from the event. The note of authorization will be kept on file for five- (5) school days.

Automobile and Parking Regulations

1. Students must register and obtain a parking permit for all motor vehicles. Only students with a valid driver's license are eligible to apply. Parking permits are to be placed on the rear view mirror so that the permit number is clearly visible from the exterior of the vehicle.
2. As a condition for obtaining a permit to park a vehicle on the school grounds, a student and the student's parents, if they are owners of the vehicle, must agree, in writing, to allow school officials to search his/her vehicle upon request. School officials, if they so desire, may request assistance from law enforcement personnel in performing such a search. Following notice of intent to search, the vehicle will not be permitted to leave the premises without permission.
3. All motor vehicles parked on school grounds shall have a valid registration as required by the state of

Arkansas.

4. Student motor vehicles are to be parked in the appropriate parking area immediately upon entering the school campus and are not to be moved or otherwise used during the school day without permission from the school office.
5. Students parking their vehicles on school grounds shall park in designated parking areas only. To facilitate identification, vehicles are to be parked front end first.
6. Students should not sit in nor congregate around motor vehicles at any time during the school day. Students shall not visit their vehicle during the school day without prior permission from the school office.
7. Student vehicles are subject to a 20-MPH campus speed limit before, during and after school hours.
8. The regulations for student parking and use of vehicles on school campus are strictly enforced. Violations of these regulations may result in, but not be limited to, the following disciplinary actions; detention, suspension of driving privileges, towing of vehicles, and/or suspension from school.
9. Additional regulations for the control of the use of motor vehicles by students may be made by the principal, or his/her designee, as deemed necessary to maintain proper control.
10. Students applying for and receiving parking permits fully understand that the Pocahontas Public School District is in no way responsible for his/her vehicle or its contents and that it is the student's responsibility to follow all regulations pertaining to student parking and the use of vehicles on campus.

It is understood that there is no expectation of privacy in vehicles in parking areas. Drivers of vehicles parked on a school campus will be held accountable for illegal substances or any other item prohibited by District policy found in their vehicle.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

School Organizations

Pocahontas Public School has numerous social, sports and academic activities to promote initiative, leadership, school spirit and pride. The main objective of these activities is to instill in students responsibility and respect for fellow students through club participation. All school organizations are approved and regulated by the building principal or assistant in charge. Activities should be limited with controlled interruptions of instructional time in the classroom. It is advised to control the number of absences for such activities. The guidelines for school organizations are as follows:

- a. Students are not restricted from membership on the basis of race, sex, national origin or arbitrary criteria.
- b. Students may, however, be restricted to membership on the basis of their sex, but only if the organization is entitled to Title IX exemption under the Bayh Amendment. This amendment gives exemption to organizations that are:
 1. Voluntary youth service organizations;
 2. Tax exempt under Section 501 (a) of the 1954 Internal Revenue Code (religious and charitable organizations);
 3. Single sex by tradition; or
 4. Principally composed of members under the age of 19.
- c. School fraternities and secret societies are banned in Arkansas public schools. (See Chapter 20 of The School Laws of Arkansas, Act 171, 1929.

Requirements for Participation

The following guidelines are to be used for participation in extra-curricular activities.

1. Students participating in extracurricular activities are required to meet Arkansas Activities Association regulations.
2. Student clubs may establish a minimum G.P.A. and/or other criteria for membership.
3. A student may hold two major and two minor club or organization offices during the school year.
4. A student having a G.P.A. below 3.00 may belong to a maximum of four clubs or organizations during the school year. (Athletics and music are excluded from this restriction.)
5. A student with five or more unexcused absences in a class or classes during a semester will not be excused from the

class or classes to take part in an extra-curricular activity. Excused absences will be defined as those absences related to illness or when attendance could jeopardize the health of other students, death or serious illness in the immediate family, observance of an appointment with a government agency, attendance at a medical appointment, exceptional circumstances with prior approval of the principal or participation in an FFA, FHA, or 4-H sanctioned activity.

6. All clubs and organizations are to have a constitution and by-laws. The constitution is to be revised and updated every five years.
7. A list of club and organization members and their officers are to be submitted to the principal's office each year. (This is to be done as near to the beginning of school as possible.)

All students in Grades K-12 are eligible for extracurricular activities unless specifically denied eligibility on the basis of criteria outlined in this policy.

Student Organizations/Equal Access

Non-curriculum-related secondary school student organizations wishing to conduct meetings on school premises during non-instructional time shall not be denied equal access on the basis of the religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the speech at such meetings. Such meetings must meet the following criteria.

1. The meeting is to be voluntary and student initiated;
2. There is no sponsorship of the meeting by the school, the government, or its agents or employees;
3. The meeting must occur during non-instructional time;
4. Employees or agents of the school are present at religious meetings only in a non-participatory capacity;
5. The meeting does not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school; and
6. Non-school persons may not direct, conduct, control, or regularly attend activities of student groups.

All meetings held on school premises must be scheduled and approved by the principal. The school, its agents, and employees retain the authority to maintain order and discipline, to protect the well-being of students and faculty, and to assure that attendance of students at meetings is voluntary.

Fraternities, sororities, and secret societies are forbidden in the District's schools. Membership to student organizations shall not be by a vote of the organization's members, nor be restricted by the student's race, religion, sex, national origin, or other arbitrary criteria. Hazing, as defined by law, is forbidden in connection with initiation into, or affiliation with, any student organization, extracurricular activity or sport program. Students who are convicted of participation in hazing or the failure to report hazing shall be expelled.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-21-204
 20 U.S.C. 4071 Equal Access Act
 Board of Education of the Westside Community Schools v. Mergens, 496 U.S. 226 1990)
 A.C.A. § 6-18-601 et seq.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES - ELEMENTARY

Definitions

“Extracurricular activities” are defined as: any school sponsored program where students from one or more schools meet, work, perform, practice under supervision outside of regular class time, or are competing for the purpose of receiving an award, rating, recognition, or criticism, or qualification for additional competition. Examples include, but are not limited to, inter/intrascholastic athletics, cheerleading, band, choral, math, or science competitions, field trips, and club activities.

“Field Trips” are when individual students or groups of students are invited to programs or events when there is no competition and the students are not interacting with each other for the purpose of planning, qualifying, or arranging for future programs or for the purpose of receiving recognition.

“Interscholastic Activities” means athletic or non-athletic/academic activities where students compete on a school vs. school basis.

“Intrascholastic Activities” means athletic or non-athletic/academic activities where students compete with students from within the same school.

Extracurricular Eligibility

The Board believes in providing opportunities for students to participate in extracurricular activities that can help enrich the student’s educational experience. At the same time, the Board believes that a student’s participation in extracurricular activities cannot come at the expense of his/her classroom academic achievement. Interruptions of instructional time in the classroom are to be minimal and absences from class to participate in extracurricular activities shall not exceed one per week per extracurricular activity¹ (tournaments or other similar events excepted with approval of the principal or their designee. All students are eligible for extracurricular activities unless specifically denied eligibility on the basis of criteria outlined in this policy.

A student may lose his/her eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities when, in the opinion of the school’s administration, the student’s participation in such an activity may adversely jeopardize his/her academic achievement. Students may also be denied permission to participate in extracurricular activities as a consequence of disciplinary action taken by the administration for inappropriate behavior.

A student who enrolls in the district and meets all eligibility requirements shall be eligible to tryout for an extracurricular activity regardless of the date the student enrolls in the District so long as the student meets all other eligibility requirements and the extracurricular activity is still ongoing.

No student shall be required to pay for individual or group instruction in order to participate in an extracurricular activity.

A student and the parent or legal guardian of the student shall sign and return an acknowledgement of receipt and review of an information sheet regarding signs and symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest before the student may participate in an athletic activity and before each school year the student participates in an athletic activity.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-4-302
 A.C.A. § 6-15-2907
 A.C.A. § 6-16-151
 A.C.A. § 6-18-713
 A.C.A. § 6-28-108
 Commissioner’s Memo LS-18-015

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Definitions:

“Academic Courses” are those courses for which class time is scheduled, which can be credited to meet the minimum requirements for graduation, which is taught by a teacher required to have State licensure in the course or is otherwise qualified under Arkansas statute, and has a course content guide which has been approved by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Any of the courses for which concurrent high school credit is earned may be from an institution of higher education recognized by DESE. If a student passes an academic course offered on a block schedule, the course can be counted twice toward meeting the requirement for students to pass four (4) academic courses per semester as required by this policy.

“Extracurricular activities” are defined as: any school sponsored program where students from one or more schools meet, work, perform, practice under supervision outside of regular class time, or are competing for the purpose of receiving an award, rating, recognition, or criticism, or qualification for additional competition. Examples include, but are not limited to, inter/intrascholastic athletics, cheerleading, band, choral, math, or science competitions, field trips, and club activities.

“Field Trips” are when individual students or groups of students are invited to programs or events when there is no competition and the students are not interacting with each other for the purpose of planning, qualifying, or arranging

for future programs or for the purpose of receiving recognition.

“Interscholastic Activities” means athletic or non-athletic/academic activities where students compete on a school vs. school basis.¹

“Intrascholastic Activities” means athletic or non-athletic/academic activities where students compete with students from within the same school.¹

“Supplemental Improvement Program (SIP)” is an additional instructional opportunity for identified students outside of their regular classroom and meets the criteria outlined in the current Arkansas Activities Association (AAA) Handbook.

Extracurricular Eligibility

The Board believes in providing opportunities for students to participate in extracurricular activities that can help enrich the student’s educational experience. At the same time, the Board believes that a student’s participation in extracurricular activities cannot come at the expense of his/her classroom academic achievement. Additionally, a student’s participation in, and the District’s operation of, extracurricular activities shall be subject to the following policy. All students are eligible for extracurricular activities unless specifically denied eligibility on the basis of criteria outlined in this policy.

A student who enrolls in the district and meets all eligibility requirements shall be eligible to tryout for an extracurricular activity regardless of the date the student enrolls in the District so long as the student meets all other eligibility requirements and the extracurricular activity is still ongoing.

A student and the parent or legal guardian of the student shall sign and return an acknowledgement of receipt and review of an information sheet regarding signs and symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest before the student may participate in an athletic activity and before each school year the student participates in an athletic activity.

No student shall be required to pay for individual or group instruction in order to participate in an extracurricular activity.

Interscholastic Activities

Each school in the District shall post on its website its schedule of interscholastic activities, including sign-up, tryout, and participation deadlines, at least one semester in advance of those activities. A hard copy of the schedule shall be available upon request.⁵

Academic Requirements: Junior High

A student promoted from the sixth to the seventh grade automatically meets scholarship requirements. A student promoted from the seventh to the eighth grade automatically meets scholarship requirements for the first semester. The second semester eighth-grade student meets the scholarship requirements for junior high if he/she has successfully passed four (4) academic courses the previous semester.

The first semester ninth-grade student meets the scholarship requirements for junior high if he/she has successfully passed four (4) academic courses the previous semester.

The second semester ninth-grade student meets the scholarship requirements for junior high if he/she has successfully passed (4) academic courses the previous semester which count toward his/her high school graduation requirements.

Ninth-grade students must meet the requirements of the senior high scholarship rule by the end of the second semester in the ninth grade in order to be eligible to participate the fall semester of their tenth-grade year.

Academic Requirements: Senior High

In order to remain eligible for competitive interscholastic activity, a student must have passed (4) academic courses the previous semester and either:

- Have earned a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 from all academic courses the previous semester; or
- If the student has passed four (4) academic courses the previous semester but does not have a 2.0 GPA the student must be enrolled and successfully participating in an SIP to maintain their competitive interscholastic extracurricular eligibility.

Students with an Individual Education Program

In order to be considered eligible to participate in competitive interscholastic activities, students with disabilities must pass at least four (4) courses per semester as required by their individual education program (IEP).

Arkansas Activities Association

In addition to the foregoing rules, the district shall abide by the rules of AAA governing interscholastic activities. AAA provides catastrophic insurance coverage for students participating in AAA governed extracurricular activities who are enrolled in school. As a matter of District policy, no student may participate in a AAA governed extracurricular activity unless he or she is enrolled in a district school, to ensure all students are eligible for AAA catastrophic insurance.⁶

Intrascholastic Activities

AAA Governed Activities

Students participating in intrascholastic extracurricular activities that would be governed by AAA if they were to occur between students of different schools shall meet all interscholastic activity eligibility requirements to be eligible to participate in the comparable intrascholastic activity. The District will abide by the AAA Handbook for such activities to ensure District students are not disqualified from participating in interscholastic activities.⁷

Non-AAA Governed Activities

Unless made ineligible by District policies, all students shall be eligible to participate in non-AAA governed intrascholastic extracurricular activities. Intrascholastic activities designed for a particular grade(s) or course(s) shall require the student to be enrolled in the grade(s) or course(s).

Legal References: Arkansas Activities Association Handbook
 A.C.A. § 6-4-302
 A.C.A. § 6-15-2907
 A.C.A. § 6-16-151
 A.C.A. § 6-18-713
 A.C.A. § 6-28-108
 Commissioner's Memo COM-18-009
 Commissioner's Memo LS-18-015

HOMEWORK AND INDEPENDENT STUDY SKILLS POLICY

Philosophy

Homework is assigned to students by the teacher as a meaningful activity extended beyond the classroom. This activity should be given for the purpose of student practice based on previously introduced subjects or concepts. The completion time and difficulty level of the assigned work should be based on the performance level of the class.

Student Guidelines

1. Students are encouraged to write down homework assignments.
2. Students should complete all homework assignments.
3. Students having difficulty with assignments are encouraged to ask the teacher for additional help.
4. Students who consistently fail to complete and/or turn in homework assignments may be subject to disciplinary action until their work habits improve.
5. Lack of effort on homework assignments will not be tolerated.

Parent Guidelines

1. Parents should provide a quiet place for study.
2. Parents are encouraged to help develop a routine for study (study time should be established).
3. Parents should actively encourage their children to study and to do their homework.
4. Parents should request a parent/teacher conference if needed.

Suggested Homework Policies

Amount and Sequence:

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Kindergarten | Very little or no homework assigned. |
| 1st grade | Occasional homework (not to exceed ½ hour, 3 nights weekly). |
| 2nd grade | Occasional homework (not to exceed 45 min. 3 nights weekly). |
| 3rd grade | Occasional homework (not to exceed 1 hour, 3 nights weekly). |
| 4th - 7th grades | More frequent homework *. |
| 8th - 12th grades | Homework assignments, as needed *. |

* Completion time should be based on the difficulty level of the assignments, keeping in mind that the average student is taking a number of different classes per day.

Holidays:

Homework should not be assigned, if at all possible, over a holiday vacation period.

Study Habits:

Instruction in proper study habits will be given by each teacher during the first nine weeks of each school year.

Parents shall be notified of this policy at the beginning of each school year.

Make-up Work

Students who miss school due to an excused absence shall be allowed to make up the work they missed during their absence under the following rules:

1. Students are responsible for asking the teachers of the classes they missed what assignments they need to make up.
2. Teachers are responsible for providing the missed assignments when asked by a returning student.
3. Students are required to ask for their assignments on their first day back at school or their first class day after their return.
4. Make-up tests are to be rescheduled at the discretion of the teacher, but must be aligned with the schedule of the missed work to be made up.
5. Students shall have one class day to make up their work for each class day they are absent.
6. Make-up work which is not turned in within the make-up schedule for that assignment shall receive a zero.
7. Students are responsible for turning in their make-up work without the teacher having to ask for it.
8. Students who are absent on the day their make-up work is due must turn in their work the day they return to school whether or not the class for which the work is due meets the day of their return.
9. As required/permitted by the student's Individual Education Program or 504 Plan.

Work may not be made up for credit for unexcused absences **unless** the unexcused absences are part of a signed agreement as permitted by policy ABSENCES.

Work for students serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion shall be in accordance with the District's programs, measures, or alternative means and methods to continue student engagement and access to education during the student's period of suspension or expulsion, including offering an expelled student an opportunity for enrollment in digital learning courses or other alternative educational courses that result in the receipt of academic credit that is at least equal to credit the expelled student may have received from the District if the student had not been expelled.

In lieu of the timeline above, assignments for students who are excluded from school by the Arkansas Department of Health during a disease outbreak are to be made up as set forth in Policy IMMUNIZATIONS.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-16-1406
 A.C.A. § 6-18-502
 DESE Rules Governing Student Discipline and School Safety

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Grading Scale for Students Attending Pocahontas Public Schools

Grades assigned to students for performance in a course shall reflect only the extent to which a student has achieved the expressed academic objectives of the course. Grades that reflect other educational objectives such as those contained in the learner outcomes and curriculum framework may also be given.

Academic grades assigned to kindergarten students will be based on a Mastery Skills checklist.

Academic grades assigned to students in the first through twelfth grade are to follow the grading scale listed below:

A = 90% - 100%
B = 80% - 89%
C = 70% - 79%
D = 60% - 69%
F = 0% - 59%

For the purpose of determining grade point averages, the numeric value of each letter grade shall be:

A = 4 points
B = 3 points
C = 2 points
D = 1 point
F = 0 points

The grade point values for AP courses shall be one point greater than for regular courses with the exception that an F shall still be worth 0 points.

Transfer Students

Transfer students must meet the Arkansas Department of Education residency requirements. Once residency is confirmed, then records will be requested from the previous school. Every effort is made to match an incoming student's course program when transferring. Grades will be interpreted on the previous district's grading scale and converted to letter grades.

Student Promotion and Retention

A disservice is done to students through social promotion and is prohibited by state law. The district shall, at a minimum, evaluate each student annually in an effort to help each student who is not performing at grade level. Each school in the Pocahontas School District shall include in the student handbook, the criteria for promotion of students to the next grade as well as the criteria for being required to retake a course, if applicable. Parents or guardians shall be kept informed concerning the progress of their student(s).of a student's possible retention or required retaking of a course shall be included with the student's grades sent home to each parent/guardian or the student if 18 or older. Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged and may be held as necessary in an effort to improve a student's academic success.

At least once each semester, the parents and teacher(s) of a student in kindergarten through eighth (8th) grade shall be notified in writing of the student's independent grade-level-equivalency in reading.

Any grades, course credits, and/or promotions received by a student while enrolled in the Division of Youth Services system of education shall be considered transferable in the same manner as those grades, course credits, and promotions from other accredited Arkansas public educational entities.

Promotion or retention of students, or their required retaking of a course shall be primarily based on the following criteria. If there is doubt concerning the promotion or retention of a student, or their required retaking of a course, a conference shall be held before a final decision is made that includes the following individuals;

- a. The building principal or designee;
- b. The student's teacher(s);
- c. School counselor
- d. A 504/special education representative (if applicable); and
- e. The student's parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of student, or persons standing in loco parentis.

The conference shall be held at a time and place that best accommodates those participating in the conference. The school shall document participation or non-participation in required conferences. If the conference attendees fail to agree concerning the student's placement, the final decision to promote or retain shall rest with the principal or his/her designee.

Each student shall have a student success plan (SSP) developed by school personnel in collaboration with the student's parents and the student that is reviewed and updated annually. A student's SSP shall use multiple academic measures to personalize learning in order for students to achieve their grade-level expectations and individual growth. The SSP will identify if the student is in need of additional support or acceleration. Academic measures to be used in creating and updating a student's SSP shall include, but are not limited to:

- Statewide student assessment results;
- Subject grades;
- Student work samples; and
- Local assessment scores.

By the end of grade eight (8), the student's SSP shall:

- Guide the student along pathways to graduation;
- Address accelerated learning opportunities;
- Address academic deficits and interventions; and
- Include college and career planning components.

Based on a student's score on the college and career assessment:

- The student's SSP will be updated in order to assist the student with college and career readiness skills, course selection in high school, and improved academic achievement; and
- Provide a basis for counseling concerning postsecondary preparatory programs.

An SSP shall be created:

1. By no later than the end of the school year for a student in grade eight (8) or below who enrolls in the District during the school year; or
2. As soon as reasonably possible for a student in grade nine (9) or above who enrolls in the District at the

beginning or during the school year.

A student's individualized education program (IEP) may act in the place of the student's SSP if the IEP addresses academic deficits and interventions for the student's failure to meet standards-based academic goals at an expected rate or level and includes a transition plan that addresses college and career planning components. Promotion or retention of students with an IEP shall be based on their successful attainment of the goals set forth in their IEP.

Students who either refuse to sit for a Statewide assessment or attempt to boycott a Statewide assessment by failing to put forth a good faith effort on the assessment as determined by the assessment administrator/proctor, or whose parents do not send their student to school on the dates the assessments are originally administered or scheduled as make-up days shall not be permitted to participate in any non-curriculum related extracurricular activity, including school dances, prom, homecoming, senior events, and may be prevented from walking or participating in graduation exercises. The student shall remain ineligible to participate until the student takes the same or a following Statewide assessment, as applicable. The Superintendent or designee may waive this paragraph's provisions when the student's failure was due to exceptional or extraordinary circumstances. Students falling under the provisions of this paragraph shall be permitted to attend curriculum related field trips occurring during the school day.

Honors Program Policies

Top 10% Class Rank students in the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades will be determined by the class rank listings at the time of the spring Honors Program. All students named to the top 10% list must be in the process of completing the requirements for the Pocahontas High School Honors Diploma or Student of Distinction.

STATE MINIMUM GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

According to the Statutes of the State of Arkansas, students earning a minimum of 22 credits according to the specified criteria below will be eligible for a diploma from Pocahontas High School. Students that do not meet diploma requirements within a specific time period will be given a Certificate of Attendance and may participate in the Fifth Year Senior Program. Students will be awarded their diploma upon completion of the Regular Diploma requirements.

Pocahontas Public Schools Diploma Options:

Pocahontas Public Schools offer the following diploma options for students which are aligned to the state's requirements.

SMART CORE CURRICULUM AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CLASSES OF 2022, 2023, 2024, AND 2025

All students are required to participate in the Smart Core curriculum unless their parents or guardians, or the students if they are eighteen (18) years of age or older, sign a *Smart Core Waiver Form* to not participate. While Smart Core is the default option, a *Smart Core Information Sheet* and a *Smart Core Waiver Form*¹ will be sent home with students prior to their enrolling in seventh (7th) grade, or when a seventh (7th) through twelfth (12th) grade student enrolls in the district for the first time and there is not a signed waiver form in the student's permanent record. This policy is to be included in student handbooks for grades six (6) through twelve (12) and both students and parents must sign an acknowledgement they have received the policy. Those students not participating in the Smart Core curriculum will be required to fulfill the Core curriculum or the Alternate Pathway to Graduation when required by their IEP to be eligible for graduation. Counseling by trained personnel shall be available to students and their parents or legal guardians prior to the deadline for them to sign and return the waiver form.

While there are similarities between the two curriculums, following the Core curriculum may not qualify students for some scholarships and admission to certain colleges could be jeopardized. Students initially choosing the Core curriculum may subsequently change to the Smart Core curriculum **providing** they would be able to complete the required course of study by the end of their senior year. Students wishing to change their choice of curriculums must consult with their counselor to determine the feasibility of changing paths.

This policy, the Smart Core curriculum, and the courses necessary for graduation shall be reviewed by staff, students, and parents as part of the annual school district support plan development process determine if changes need to be made to better serve the needs of the district's students. The superintendent, or his/her designee, shall select the composition of the review panel.

Sufficient information relating to Smart Core and the district's graduation requirements shall be communicated to parents and students to ensure their informed understanding of each. This may be accomplished through any or all of the following means:

- Inclusion in the student handbook of the Smart Core curriculum and graduation requirements;
- Discussion of the Smart Core curriculum and graduation requirements at the school's annual public meeting, PTA meetings, or a meeting held specifically for the purpose of informing the public on this matter;
- Discussions held by the school's counselors with students and their parents; and/or
- Distribution of a newsletter(s) to parents or guardians of the district's students.

Administrators, or their designees, shall train newly hired employees, required to be licensed as a condition of their employment, regarding this policy. The district's annual professional development shall include the training required by this paragraph.

To the best of its ability, the District shall follow the requirements covering the transfer of course credit and graduation set forth in the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children and the Arkansas Military Child School Transitions Act of 2021 for all students who meet the definition of "eligible child" in Policy ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS including the waiving of specific courses that are required for graduation if similar coursework has been satisfactorily completed.

Graduation Requirements

The number of units students must earn to be eligible for high school graduation is to be earned from the categories listed below. A minimum of twenty-two (22) units is required for graduation for a student participating in either the Smart Core or Core curriculum. There are some distinctions made between Smart Core units and Graduation units. Not all units earned toward graduation necessarily apply to Smart Core requirements.

All students must receive a passing score on the Arkansas Civics Exam.

Students shall be trained in quality psychomotor skill bases in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of automated external defibrillators in order to graduate.

Digital Learning Courses

The District shall offer one or more digital learning course(s) through one or more District approved provider(s) as either a primary or supplementary method of instruction. The courses may be in a blended learning, online-based, or other technology-based format.⁷ In addition to the other graduation requirements contained in this policy, students are required to take at least one (1) digital learning course for credit while in high school.

Personal and Family Finance

All students shall receive credit in a course covering the Personal and Family Finance Standards in order to graduate.

SMART CORE: Sixteen (16) units

English: four (4) units – 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th

Oral Communications: one-half (½) unit

Mathematics: four (4) units (all students under Smart Core must take a mathematics course in grade 11 or 12 and

complete Algebra II.)

- 1) Algebra I or Algebra A & B* which may be taken in grades 7-8 or 8-9;
- 2) Geometry or Geometry A & B* which may be taken in grades 8-9 or 9-10;

*A two-year algebra equivalent or a two-year geometry equivalent may each be counted as two units of the four-unit requirement for the purpose of meeting the **graduation** requirement, but only serve as one unit each toward fulfilling the **Smart Core** requirement.

- 3) Algebra II; and
- 4) The fourth unit may be either:
 - A math unit approved by DESE beyond Algebra II; or
 - A computer science flex credit may be taken in the place of a fourth math credit.

Natural Science: three (3) units

- a. DESE approved biology – 1 credit;
- b. DESE approved physical science– 1 credit; and
- c. A third unit that is either:
 - An additional science credit approved by DESE; or
 - A computer science flex credit may be taken in the place of a third science credit.

Social Studies: three (3) units

- Civics one-half (1/2) unit
- World History - one unit
- American History - one unit
- Other social studies—one-half (1/2) unit

Physical Education: one-half (1/2) unit

Note: While one-half (1/2) unit is required for graduation, no more than one (1) unit may be applied toward fulfilling the necessary units to graduate.

Health and Safety: one-half (1/2) unit

Economics – one half (1/2) unit – dependent upon the licensure of the teacher teaching the course, this can count toward the required three (3) social studies credits or the six (6) required Career Focus elective credits.⁹

Fine Arts: one-half (1/2) unit

CAREER FOCUS: - Six (6) units

All career focus unit requirements shall be established through guidance and counseling based on the student's contemplated work aspirations. Career focus courses shall conform to the curriculum policy of the district and reflect state curriculum frameworks through course sequencing and career course concentrations where appropriate.

A student who enlists in a branch of the United States Armed Forces or the National Guard through the military delayed entry program, the National Guard Split Training Option, or other similar early entry program and completes basic training before graduating from high school shall receive two (2) units of the Career Focus graduation requirements.

A student who completes at least seventy-five (75) clock hours of documented community service in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) at any certified service agency or a part of a service-learning school program shall receive one (1) Career Focus credit.

CORE: Sixteen (16) units

English: four (4) units – 9th 10th 11th and 12th

Oral Communications: one-half (1/2) unit

Mathematics: four (4) units

- Algebra or its equivalent* - 1 unit
- Geometry or its equivalent* - 1 unit
- All math units must build on the base of algebra and geometry knowledge and skills.
- (Comparable concurrent credit college courses may be substituted where applicable)
- A computer science flex credit may be taken in the place of a math credit beyond Algebra I and Geometry

*A two-year algebra equivalent or a two-year geometry equivalent may each be counted as two units of the four (4) unit requirement.

Science: three (3) units

- a. DESE approved biology – 1 credit;
- b. DESE approved physical science– 1 credit; and
- c. A third unit that is either:
 - An additional science credit approved by DESE; or
 - A computer science flex credit may be taken in the place of a third science credit.

Social Studies: three (3) units

- Civics one-half (½) unit
- World history, one (1) unit
- American History, one (1) unit
- Other social studies—one-half (1/2) unit

Physical Education: one-half (½) unit

Note: While one-half (½) unit is required for graduation, no more than one (1) unit may be applied toward fulfilling the necessary units to graduate.

Health and Safety: one-half (½) unit

Economics – one half (½) unit – dependent upon the licensure of the teacher teaching the course, this can count toward the required three (3) social studies credits or the six (6) required Career Focus elective credits.⁹

Fine Arts: one-half (½) unit

CAREER FOCUS: - Six (6) units

All career focus unit requirements shall be established through guidance and counseling based on the student's contemplated work aspirations. Career focus courses shall conform to the curriculum policy of the district and reflect state curriculum frameworks through course sequencing and career course concentrations where appropriate. A student who enlists in a branch of the United States Armed Forces or the National Guard through the military delayed entry program, the National Guard Split Training Option, or other similar early entry program and completes basic training before graduating from high school shall receive two (2) units of the Career Focus graduation requirements.

A student who completes at least seventy-five (75) clock hours of documented community service in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) at any certified service agency or a part of a service-learning school program shall receive one (1) Career Focus credit.

Legal References: Standards for Accreditation 1-C.2, 1-C.2.1, 1-C.2.2, 1-C.2.3
DESE Guidelines for the Development of Smart Core Curriculum Policy
DESE Rules Governing Distance and Digital Learning
Smart Core Information Sheet
Smart Core Waiver Form
Commissioner's Memo LS-18-082
A.C.A. § 6-4-302
A.C.A. § 6-16-122
A.C.A. § 6-16-143

A.C.A. § 6-16-149
A.C.A. § 6-16-150
A.C.A. § 6-16-1406
A.C.A. § 6-28-115

SMART CORE CURRICULUM AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CLASS OF 2026 AND THEREAFTER

All students are required to participate in the Smart Core curriculum unless their parents or guardians, or the students if they are eighteen (18) years of age or older, sign a *Smart Core Waiver Form* to not participate. While Smart Core is the default option, a *Smart Core Information Sheet* and a *Smart Core Waiver Form*¹ will be sent home with students prior to their enrolling in seventh (7th) grade, or when a seventh (7th) through twelfth (12th) grade student enrolls in the district for the first time and there is not a signed waiver form in the student's permanent record. This policy is to be included in student handbooks for grades six (6) through twelve (12) and both students and parents must sign an acknowledgement they have received the policy. Those students not participating in the Smart Core curriculum will be required to fulfill the Core curriculum or the Alternate Pathway to Graduation when required by their IEP to be eligible for graduation. Counseling by trained personnel shall be available to students and their parents or legal guardians prior to the deadline for them to sign and return the waiver form.

While there are similarities between the two curriculums, following the Core curriculum may not qualify students for some scholarships and admission to certain colleges could be jeopardized. Students initially choosing the Core curriculum may subsequently change to the Smart Core curriculum **providing** they would be able to complete the required course of study by the end of their senior year.² Students wishing to change their choice of curriculums must consult with their counselor to determine the feasibility of changing paths.

This policy, the Smart Core curriculum, and the courses necessary for graduation shall be reviewed by staff, students, and parents as part of the annual school district support plan development process³ to determine if changes need to be made to better serve the needs of the district's students. The superintendent, or his/her designee, shall select the composition of the review panel.

Sufficient information relating to Smart Core and the district's graduation requirements shall be communicated to parents and students to ensure their informed understanding of each. This may be accomplished through any or all of the following means:⁴

- Inclusion in the student handbook of the Smart Core curriculum and graduation requirements;
- Discussion of the Smart Core curriculum and graduation requirements at the school's annual public meeting, PTA meetings, or a meeting held specifically for the purpose of informing the public on this matter;
- Discussions held by the school's counselors with students and their parents; and/or
- Distribution of a newsletter(s) to parents or guardians of the district's students.

Administrators, or their designees, shall train newly hired employees, required to be licensed as a condition of their employment, regarding this policy. The district's annual professional development shall include the training required by this paragraph.⁵

To the best of its ability, the District shall follow the requirements covering the transfer of course credit and graduation set forth in the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children and the Arkansas Military Child School Transitions Act of 2021 for all students who meet the definition of "eligible child" in Policy 4.2—ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS including the waiving of specific courses that are required for graduation if similar coursework has been satisfactorily completed.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The number of units students must earn to be eligible for high school graduation is to be earned from the categories listed below. A minimum of twenty-two (22) units is required for graduation for a student participating in either the Smart Core or Core curriculum. In addition to the twenty-two (22) units required for graduation by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the district requires an additional ___ units to graduate for a total of ___ units. The additional required units may be taken from any electives offered by the district.⁶ There are some

distinctions made between Smart Core units and Graduation units. Not all units earned toward graduation necessarily apply to Smart Core requirements.

All students must receive a passing score on the Arkansas Civics Exam in order to graduate.

Students shall be trained in quality psychomotor skill bases in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of automated external defibrillators in order to graduate.

Digital Learning Courses

The District shall offer one or more digital learning course(s) through one or more District approved provider(s) as either a primary or supplementary method of instruction. The courses may be in a blended learning, online-based, or other technology-based format.⁷ In addition to the other graduation requirements contained in this policy, students are required to take at least one (1) digital learning course for credit while in high school.

Personal and Family Finance

All students shall receive credit in a course covering the Personal and Family Finance Standards in order to graduate.

Computer Science

All students shall earn one (1) unit of credit in a computer science course in order to graduate.

SMART CORE: Sixteen (16) units

English: four (4) units – 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th

Oral Communications: one-half (½) unit

Mathematics: four (4) units (all students under Smart Core must take a mathematics course in grade 11 or 12 and complete Algebra II.)

1. Algebra I or Algebra A & B* which may be taken in grades 7-8 or 8-9;

2. Geometry or Geometry A & B* which may be taken in grades 8-9 or 9-10;

* A two-year algebra equivalent or a two-year geometry equivalent may each be counted as two units of the four-unit requirement for the purpose of meeting the **graduation** requirement, but only serve as one unit each toward fulfilling the **Smart Core** requirement.

3. Algebra II; and

4. The fourth unit may be either:

- A math unit approved by DESE beyond Algebra II; or
- A computer science flex credit may be taken in the place of a fourth math credit.

Natural Science: three (3) units

a. DESE approved biology – 1 credit;

b. DESE approved physical science – 1 credit; and

c. A third unit that is either:

- An additional science credit approved by DESE; or
- A computer science flex credit may be taken in the place of a third science credit.

Social Studies: three (3) units

- Civics - one-half (½) unit
- World History - one unit
- American History - one unit
- Other social studies – one-half (½) Unit

Physical Education: one-half (½) unit

Note: While one-half (½) unit is required for graduation, no more than one (1) unit may be applied toward fulfilling the necessary units to graduate.

Health and Safety: one-half (½) unit

Economics – one half (½) unit – dependent upon the licensure of the teacher teaching the course, this can count toward the required three (3) social studies credits or the six (6) required Career Focus elective credits.⁸

Fine Arts: one-half (½) unit

CAREER FOCUS: - Six (6) units

All career focus unit requirements shall be established through guidance and counseling based on the student's contemplated work aspirations. Career focus courses shall conform to the curriculum policy of the district and reflect state curriculum frameworks through course sequencing and career course concentrations where appropriate.

A student who enlists in a branch of the United States Armed Forces or the National Guard through the military delayed entry program, the National Guard Split Training Option, or other similar early entry program and completes basic training before graduating from high school shall receive two (2) units of the Career Focus graduation requirements.

a student who completes at least seventy-five (75) clock hours of documented community service in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) at any certified service agency or a part of a service-learning school program shall receive one (1) Career Focus credit.⁹

CORE: Sixteen (16) units

English: four (4) units – 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th

Oral Communications: one-half (½) unit

Mathematics: four (4) units

- Algebra or its equivalent* - 1 unit
 - Geometry or its equivalent* - 1 unit
 - All math units must build on the base of algebra and geometry knowledge and skills.
 - (Comparable concurrent credit college courses may be substituted where applicable)
 - A computer science flex credit may be taken in the place of a math credit beyond Algebra I and Geometry
- * A two-year algebra equivalent or a two-year geometry equivalent may each be counted as two units of the four (4) unit requirement.

Science: three (3) units

- a. DESE approved biology – 1 credit;
- b. DESE approved physical science – 1 credit; and
- c. A third unit that is either:
 - An additional science credit approved by DESE; or
 - A computer science flex credit may be taken in the place of a third science credit.

Social Studies: three (3) units

- Civics one-half (½) unit
- World history, one (1) unit
- American History, one (1) unit
- Other social studies – one-half (½) unit

Physical Education: one-half (½) unit

Note: While one-half (½) unit is required for graduation, no more than one (1) unit may be applied toward fulfilling the necessary units to graduate.

Health and Safety: one-half (½) unit

Economics – one half (½) unit – dependent upon the licensure of the teacher teaching the course, this can count toward the required three (3) social studies credits or the six (6) required Career Focus elective credits.⁸

Fine Arts: one-half (½) unit

CAREER FOCUS: - Six (6) units

All career focus unit requirements shall be established through guidance and counseling based on the student’s contemplated work aspirations. Career focus courses shall conform to the curriculum policy of the district and reflect state curriculum frameworks through course sequencing and career course concentrations where appropriate.

A student who enlists in a branch of the United States Armed Forces or the National Guard through the military delayed entry program, the National Guard Split Training Option, or other similar early entry program and completes basic training before graduating from high school shall receive two (2) units of the Career Focus graduation requirements.

a student who completes at least seventy-five (75) clock hours of documented community service in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) at any certified service agency or a part of a service-learning school program shall receive one (1) Career Focus credit.⁹

- Legal References:
- Standards for Accreditation 1-C.2, 1-C.2.1, 1-C.2.2, 1-C.2.3
 - DESE Guidelines for the Development of Smart Core Curriculum Policy
 - DESE Rules Governing Distance and Digital Learning
 - Smart Core Information Sheet
 - Smart Core Waiver Form
 - Commissioner’s Memo LS-18-082
 - A.C.A. § 6-4-302
 - A.C.A. § 6-16-122
 - A.C.A. § 6-16-143
 - A.C.A. § 6-16-149
 - A.C.A. § 6-16-150
 - A.C.A. § 6-16-152
 - A.C.A. § 6-16-1406
 - A.C.A. § 6-28-115

Pocahontas High School Diploma Requirements

PHS graduates will have three diploma options from which to choose.

CORE DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

Graduates must have at least a 1.50 cumulative grade point average using the 4.00 scale and 22 credits upon graduation.

4 Credits English:

- English 9, or Pre-AP English 9
- English 10, or Pre-AP English 10
- English 11, or AP English Grammar and Composition
- English 12, AP English Literature

4 Credits Mathematics:

- | <u>Option 1</u> | <u>Option 2</u> | <u>Option 3</u> |
|-----------------|-----------------|---|
| *Algebra “A” | Algebra I | Algebra I |
| *Algebra “B” | Geometry | Geometry |
| *Geometry “A” | Algebra II | Algebra II |
| *Geometry “B” | Advanced Topics | 4th Level of math (above Algebra II) |

****One unit of computer science chosen from Computer Science with Programming/Coding Emphasis Levels I & II or other options approved by ADE may be substituted for a math credit beyond Algebra II.**

3 Credits Science:

****1 credit of Physical Science or Pre-AP Physical Science**

****1 credit of Biology or Pre-AP Biology**

****1 credit of Environmental Science or Chemistry or Pre-AP Chemistry or Physics**

****One unit of computer science chosen from ADE Essentials of Computer Programming, ADE Computer Science and Mathematics, AP Computer Science, IB Computer Science, or other options approved by ADE may substitute for either the Physical Science, Chemistry or Physics requirement.**

3 Credits of Social Studies:

1/2 credit of Civics

1 credit of World History

1 credit of American History

1/2 Credit of Economics

1/2 Credit of Physical Education

1/2 Credit of Health

1/2 Credit of Fine Art

1/2 Credit of Oral Communication (The one-year course, Oral Communication 1, will substitute for Oral Communication)

6 Credits of Electives: (Possible electives are courses in Agriculture, Business, Family & Consumer Science, Foreign Language, Instrumental Music, Vocal Music, Art, Driver Ed, Approved College Courses or additional English, Math, Science, Social Studies)

A student who enlists in a branch of the United States Armed Forces or the National Guard through the military delayed entry program, the National Guard Split Training Option, or other similar early entry program and completes basic training before graduating from high school shall receive two (2) units of the Career Focus graduation requirements.

A student who completes at least seventy-five (75) clock hours of documented community service in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) at any certified service agency or a part of a service-learning school program shall receive one (1) Career Focus credit.

***This diploma aligns with the Core Curriculum. Algebra A and Algebra B may be substituted for Algebra I ; Geometry A and Geometry B may be substituted for Geometry and count as 2 credits each in the core curriculum only.**

****Science credits must include lab experience.**

SMART CORE DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

A student receiving a College Prep Diploma must have at least a 2.50 cumulative grade point average using the 4.00 scale and 22 credits upon graduation.

4 Credits English:

English 9, or Pre-AP English 9

English 10, or Pre-AP English 10

English 11, or AP English Grammar and Composition

English 12 or AP English Literature

4 Credits Mathematics:

Algebra I, or (*Algebra "A" & Algebra "B" which count as only 1 credit under this diploma)

Geometry or (Geometry "A" & "B" which count as only 1 credit under this diploma)

Algebra II

Advanced Topics, Algebra III or Pre-Calculus, AP Calculus AB

****One unit of computer science chosen from Computer Science with Programming/Coding Emphasis Levels I & II or other options approved by ADE may be substituted for a math credit beyond Algebra II.**

3 Credits Science:

*1 credit of Physical Science or Pre-AP Physical Science

*1 credit of Biology or Pre-AP Biology

*1 credit Chemistry or Pre-AP Chemistry or Physics or Advanced Physics

****One unit of computer science chosen from ADE Essentials of Computer Programming, ADE Computer Science and Mathematics, AP Computer Science, IB Computer Science, or other options approved by ADE may**

substitute for either the Physical Science, Chemistry or Physics requirement.

3 Credits of Social Studies:

- ½ Credit of Civics
- 1/2 credit of Economics
- 1 credit of World History
- 1 credit of American History

½ Credit of Physical Education

½ Credit of Health

½ Credit of Fine Art

1/2 Credit of Oral Communication (The one-year course, Oral Communication 1, will substitute for Oral Communication)

6 Credits of Electives: (Possible electives are courses in Agriculture, Business, Family & Consumer Science, Foreign Language, Instrumental Music, Vocal Music, Art, Driver Ed, Approved College Courses or additional English, Math, Science, Social Studies)

A student who enlists in a branch of the United States Armed Forces or the National Guard through the military delayed entry program, the National Guard Split Training Option, or other similar early entry program and completes basic training before graduating from high school shall receive two (2) units of the Career Focus graduation requirements.

A student who completes at least seventy-five (75) clock hours of documented community service in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) at any certified service agency or a part of a service-learning school program shall receive one (1) Career Focus credit.

This diploma is designed to align with the Smart Core Curriculum. Algebra A and B count as only 1 math credit under the Smart Core Curriculum.

***Science credits must include lab experience.**

****Beginning with the graduating class of 2014, students must take a semester of Economics for this diploma for this diploma to meet the requirements for Smart Core, the default curriculum for the class of 2010 and thereafter. Prior to 2014, students must take a full year of Civics or a full year Civics/Am Govt. for Smart Core**

HONORS DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

The Honor Graduate must have at least a 3.00 cumulative grade point average using the 4.00 scale and earn a total of 24 credits upon graduation, which include the Smart Core Curriculum Requirements plus 2 units of a foreign language and a minimum number of Advanced Placement courses. Students meeting the requirements for an Honors Diploma also meet the curriculum requirements for the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship. The

following criteria further outlines the requirements for the honors diploma:

- *Successfully complete the required 24 units of credit (Smart Core plus 2 credits of foreign language) with at least 2 Advanced Placement Courses with a GPA of 3.0 or higher to be named a graduate with “Honors”
- *Students who successfully complete the required 24 units of credit (Smart Core plus 2 credits of foreign language) with at least 3 Advanced Placement Courses and have a GPA of 3.5 or higher will receive a designation of “High Honors.”
- *Students who successfully complete the required 24 units of credit (Smart Core plus 2 credits of foreign language) with at least 4 AP courses and earn a GPA of 3.75 or higher will receive a designation of “Highest Honors.”

Only students who meet the “highest honors” criteria will be eligible for the distinction of Valedictorian or Salutatorian, with the students earning the highest GPAs being named. the purpose of determining the Valedictorian and Salutatorian, the grade points of the graduates meeting the criteria for “Highest Honors” will be calculated using twenty-four (24) units of credit. Any semester grade or grades less than an “A” will be included in the twenty-four (24) units of credit used to compute the student’s cumulative grade point average. The student(s) with the highest GPA will be named as Valedictorian. The student(s) with the second highest GPA will be named Salutatorian. Credits earned for eligible high school courses taken prior to the 9th grade will be calculated in the GPA.

Digital Learning Courses

The District shall offer one or more digital learning course(s) through one or more District approved provider(s) as either a primary or supplementary method of instruction. The courses may be in a blended learning, online-based, or other technology-based format.⁷ In addition to the other graduation requirements contained in this policy, students, are required to take at least one (1) digital learning course for credit while in high school.

Personal and Family Finance Standards

In addition to other graduation requirements contained in this policy, for students entering ninth grade in 2017-2018 to, at some point between entering 10th grade and graduating, cover the personal and family finance standards to graduate.

Civics Portion of Citizenship Test

In addition to the other graduation requirements contained in this policy, students are required to pass a test similar to the civics portion of the citizenship test to graduate.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT, INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE, and HONORS COURSES

Students in grades 7-12 who take advanced placement courses, International Baccalaureate courses, or honors or concurrent credit college courses approved for weighted credit by the Arkansas Department of Education shall be graded according to the following schedule.

A = 100 – 90
B = 89 – 80
C = 79 - 70
D = 69-60
F = 59 - 0

For the purpose of determining grade point averages, the numeric value of each letter grade shall be

A = 5 points
B = 4 points
C = 3 points
D = 2 point
F = 0 points

For a student to be eligible to receive weighted credit for an AP, or IB course, the student's course must have been taught by an Arkansas licensed teacher who has received the appropriate training required by Arkansas statute and ADE Rule or, for an AP teacher, is in the process of completing an Additional Training Plan.

Additionally, for students taking AP or International Baccalaureate courses to receive weighted credit they must take the applicable AP or IB examination after completing the entire course. Credit shall be given for each grading period during the course of the year, but shall be retroactively removed from a student's grade for any course in which the student fails to take the applicable AP exam. Students who do not take the AP exam shall receive the same numeric value for the grade he/she receives in the course as if it were a non-AP course.

"Honors Courses" are those courses that have been approved by a Department of Education Committee as honors courses. Honors courses must stress higher order learning and be offered in addition to curriculum offerings required by the Standards for Accreditation, Arkansas Public Schools.

Students who transfer into the district will be given weighted credit for the Advanced Placement courses, International Baccalaureate courses, honors courses approved by the Arkansas Department of Education, and concurrent college courses taken for weighted credit at his/her previous school(s) according to the preceding scale.

Grade Point Averages and Class Ranks

Grade point averages are determined by the counselors at the end of each semester for all students in grades 9-12.

The following scale is used in determining the cumulative average and includes all grades listed on the students transcript: A=4 B=3 C=2 D=1 F=0.

Students enrolled in AP (Advanced Placement) courses will be awarded weighted credit based on the following scale: A=5 B=4 C=3 D=2 F=0. Weighted credits will be used in calculating GPA and class rank.

Class ranks are determined beginning in the 9th grade. Ranks are listed in descending order, with the student having the highest GPA average being ranked first.

Concurrent College Enrollment Programs

A ninth (9th) through twelfth (12th) grade student who successfully completes a college course(s) from an institution approved by the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) shall be given credit toward high school grades and graduation at the rate of one (1) high school credit for each three (3) semester hours of college credit. Unless approved by the school's principal, **prior to enrolling for the course**, the concurrent credit shall be applied toward the student's graduation requirements as an elective.

As permitted by the ADE Rules Governing Concurrent College and High School Credit, a student who takes a three (3) -semester hour remedial/developmental education course, shall receive a half (1/2) credit for a high school career focus elective. The remedial/developmental education course cannot be used to meet the core subject area/unit requirements in English and mathematics.

Participation in the concurrent high school and college credit program must be documented by a written agreement between:

- The student,
- The student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) if the student is under the age of eighteen (18);
- The District; and
- The publicly supported community college, technical college, four-year college or university, or private institution the student attends to take the concurrent credit course.

Pocahontas High School offers courses through Black River Technical College, by agreement, as outlined by ADE rules and regulations governing Concurrent College and High School Credit.

Participation is offered in several ways. "On-campus" concurrent classes are offered by high school teachers who meet the requirements outlined in ADE Rules and Regulations and approved by BRTC. courses are offered to students at a reduced rate of cost. In addition, students have the opportunity to take courses on the BRTC campus. Currently, these courses are not offered at a reduced rate of cost. , students may enroll in online course offerings with the college per guidelines within the district's concurrent enrollment agreement with BRTC. , there is no reduction in cost(s) associated with online offerings.

Concurrent credit will be awarded as either "elective" credit or "replacement" credit per the following definitions and guidelines.

Definitions:

"Elective credit" - the credit will be granted as either a "career focus" credit, per Arkansas Department of Education minimum graduation requirements as outlined in the district's "SMART Core / CORE" Graduation Policy, or local credit above the minimum graduation requirements of 22 credits.

"Replacement credit" - the credit will be granted as a replacement to one of the required sixteen (16) core requirements per the Arkansas Department of Education minimum graduation requirements as outlined in the district's "SMART Core / CORE" Graduation Policy and in accordance with the district's approved course replacement schedule.

Unless approved by the school's principal, **prior to enrolling for the course**, the concurrent credit shall be applied toward the student's graduation requirements as an "elective" *. Replacement credit will only be granted with prior approval of the building principal.

Students shall adhere to the Pocahontas High School's guidelines, when adding or dropping classes, for both the high school and college classes for purposes on the public school campus. to *"Repeating a Class to Improve Grades", "Exceptions" Items 1- 4.*

Students are responsible for having the transcript for the concurrent (college) courses they have taken sent to their school in order to receive credit for the course(s). for concurrent (college) courses will not be given until a transcript is received. student *may not receive credit for the course(s) they took, or the credit may be delayed, if the transcripts are not received at all or in a timely manner; this may jeopardize students' eligibility for extracurricular activities, graduation, etc.*

Students will retain credit earned through the concurrent credit program that was applied toward a course required for high school graduation from a previously attended, accredited, public school.

A student eligible to receive free or reduced price meals shall not be responsible for any of the costs for the student's first six (6) concurrent credit hours so long as the concurrent credit courses are taught on the District grounds and by a teacher employed by the District.² Any and all costs of concurrent credit courses beyond the six (6) hours permitted, that are not taught on the District's campus, or are not taught by a teacher employed by the District are the responsibility of the student. Students who are not eligible to receive free or reduced price meals are responsible for any and all costs associated with concurrent credit courses.

Correspondence Courses

Students interested in earning credit through correspondence offerings should first consult with the high school counselor and then receive prior approval from the principal before enrolling in a correspondence course.

Repeating a Class to Improve Grades

Any student who receives an unsatisfactory grade in an academic course may retake the course one time to improve the grade. PHS policy is to place on the student transcript the highest semester grade. The following stipulations for retaking a course (s) apply:

1. The enrollment in the classroom does not exceed Department of Education's Guidelines.
2. The course title or the course content has not changed significantly since the course was taken by the student.
3. The student must retake the course within one school year after receiving the unsatisfactory grade.

Exceptions:

Students needing a course to meet minimum graduation standards will be allowed to take or retake a course with the approval of the principal.

Withdrawal From A Course

Once enrolled in courses for the school year, students must adhere to Arkansas Department of Education guidelines requiring minimum attendance and participation in academic courses. Withdrawal from individual courses will be governed by the following policy;

1. Students must complete a withdrawal request in writing through the principal's office
2. Students who withdraw from a course for "No-Credit" receiving a "NC" grade will be allowed to retake the course based on the outlined rules stated above.
3. Students who withdraw from a course will have a "NC" no-credit designation placed on his or her transcript if the withdrawal from the course is completed by the end of Week 10 of semester 1 or semester 2. Students who withdraw from a course after week 10 of either semester will have a grade of "F" placed on his or her transcript.

4. Administrative approval to withdraw from a course for “no-credit”, and decisions will be based on compliance with the Department of Education’s Guidelines regarding Standards of Accreditation for Schools which require a minimum enrollment participation by all students. Students who do not meet minimum requirements will not be allowed to withdraw from a course.

GRADUATION PLANS

Certificate of Attendance

Students who have satisfactory attendance for eight (8) semesters of high school work but do not meet the academic requirements for graduation may receive a Certificate of Attendance. These students may participate in all senior activities and take part in commencement exercises. Students who exercise this option will not be prevented from returning to school and completing graduation requirements for being awarded a diploma. *Note: Persons 21 years of age or older will not be allowed to attend Pocahontas High School.*

Fifth Year Senior (Part-Time Program)

This program is designed to accommodate students who have already completed four (4) years of high school but have not met the requirements to receive a diploma.

A fifth year high school student may enroll in the number of courses needed to receive a diploma. The student will attend school during those hours that the student is in class or assigned to school related activities, per principal’s approval, if the student would experience a proven financial hardship by attending a full school day.

Participation in this program is subject to approval of the principal based on available space in class and disciplinary considerations.

Assistance in Vocational Programs

Pocahontas Public Schools makes all students in Junior High and Senior High aware of the availability and descriptions of its vocational programs. This begins with the eighth grade and Career Orientation, and through counseling and special announcements. By no later than the beginning of the ninth grade all students will be advised of educational opportunities in Vocational Agriculture, Vocational Home Economics, and Vocational Business Education. This includes information on eligibility, enrollment procedures, information to parents, and how the school can provide assistance in completion of programs when students meet specific criteria.

In addition, students are encouraged to consider taking nontraditional courses in the vocational areas. Guidance and assistance will be provided to help parents and students plan their careers in high school and beyond.

Students and parents who have questions or desire more detailed information are encouraged to consult the school counselor or principal at their earliest opportunity.

Academic Planning and Advising

All 8th graders are required to take Career Orientation. In this class a Four-Year Plan is completed. If a student decides to drop a class, or add a class in the middle of the year, he/she should discuss that change with a counselor. Career choice information, as well as information on colleges, vocational-technical institutes, technical colleges, proprietary schools, and options with the military, is available to any student in the Guidance Office. Additional sources of information are available on the Internet and through the media center. Check the current year’s class schedule to see which classes are scheduled.

Student Acceleration

The Board believes that acceleration is an effective and research-based intervention for the academic growth of students who are ready for an advanced or faster-paced curriculum. Acceleration can allow a student to move

through the traditional educational setting more rapidly, based on assessed readiness, capability and motivation. At the same time, the Board understands that acceleration is not a replacement for gifted education services or programs.

Generally, acceleration can occur through one of two broad categories: content based and grade based. Grade based acceleration shortens the number of years a student would otherwise spend in K-12 education, while content based acceleration occurs within the normal K-12 time span. Either form of acceleration can be triggered by either a parent/guardian, student, or community member's request or by the referral of school personnel. In either case, the process of determining the appropriateness of the request shall be under the direction of the district/school Gifted and Talented Program Coordinator. The district/school Gifted and Talented Program Coordinator shall convene the Acceleration Placement Committee and communicate with the individuals necessary for the Acceleration Placement Committee to make an informed decision, which shall include the student's parents or guardians.

While the needs of the student should dictate when acceleration decisions are considered, the Board believes the optimal time for referrals is in the spring, which gives adequate time for working through the determination process and for preparing those concerned for a smooth transition to the acceleration beginning in the following school-year.

The District's Gifted and Talented (GT) Program Coordinator will create a written format to govern the referral and determination process which shall be made available to any parent or staff member upon request.

The parents/guardians of any student whose request for acceleration has been denied may appeal the decision, in writing to the District's GT Coordinator. The District's GT Coordinator and the Acceleration Placement Committee will again thoroughly review the case study that was completed on the student. Upon completion of the review, the Committee will either request additional new testing be conducted to help the Committee make its determination or it will uphold the initial decision. The Committee's decision may not be further appealed.

Graduation Costs

Caps and gowns will be worn by the graduating class and fees for the same will be borne by the student.

Communication with Parents Concerning Student's Performance

In an effort to improve communication between teachers and parents, the teacher will be available to discuss the student's academic progress or behavioral problems with parent(s) during the school year. At least two parent/teacher conferences will be held during the school year to discuss student progress. In addition to the conferences, student progress reports will be sent to parent(s) by the teacher anytime the teacher deems it necessary to discuss the student's academic and/or behavioral problem. However, when a student is failing a course, a progress report will be sent to the parent at the end of the 4th week of any 9 week period.

In the event that a student is to be retained at any grade level, notice of retention and the reasons for retention will be communicated promptly asking the parent(s)/guardian(s) for a personal conference. If the parent is unable to attend the conference, written notice of retention will be mailed to the parent(s) or guardian(s).

Report Cards

Report cards are used to reflect the individual student's academic and citizenship achievement for each class during a given grading period. The report cards are provided for the parent(s)/guardian(s) at the end of each nine-week period. They are usually sent out on Thursday following the end of the attendance quarter.

Citizenship Grades

Citizenship is based on school rules and student's conduct. The grade represents the student's rating in the class in such factors as conformity to classroom rules and regulations, cooperation, self-control, attitude, dependability, courtesy, respect for rights of others and promptness in completing work. Citizenship grades are as follows:

A - Student is above average in characteristics and in general considered a very good citizen.

- B - Student is normal and average in citizenship characteristics.
- C - Student is below average in citizenship characteristics and needs improvement.
- D or F- Student must improve citizenship characteristics at once. A conference with the teacher is advised.

Honor Roll

The school district is always ready to recognize the efforts to excel on the part of any of its pupils. Each school has what is known as the following honor rolls:

- The "A" honor roll consists of no academic grade below "A-" and no citizenship grade below "A-".
- The A/B honor roll consists of no academic grade below "B-" and no citizenship grade below "B-".

It is a great honor to have earned this distinction. The honor rolls will be printed in the local newspaper after each grading period.

Progress Report

A progress report is a notice that is sent to parent(s)/guardian(s) by the teacher anytime the teacher deems it is necessary to discuss the student's academic and/or low citizenship grade. Progress reports are generally sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s) during the 4th week of each 9-week period.

Interpretive Comments

Arkansas needs a greater proportion of its young people to attend institutions of higher education. These recommendations are presented to provide students and parents with information on preparation and to encourage students to attend. It is not intended that applicants without these courses will be refused admission and, indeed, open admission on at least a conditional basis is expected at many state institutions. However, students entering universities or two-year institutions to begin bachelor's degree programs should expect to need the background provided by the minimum core, and they should expect to take additional course work to develop that background if it is not accomplished in high school.

The social studies recommendation provides high school students the alternative of either a full unit or a half unit of civics or American government.

These recommendations are made by the State Board of Higher Education in Consultation with the State Board of Education as provided by Act 98 of 1989. The legislation requires the State Board to communicate this information at least once each year to all public school students in grades seven through twelve.

GENERAL INFORMATION AND REGULATIONS

Student Media and the Distribution of Literature

The Superintendent and the student media advisors(s)¹ shall jointly develop administrative regulations for the implementation of this policy. The regulations shall include definitions of terms and the time(s), place(s), and manner(s) of the dissemination of student media, which shall include timelines for the review of materials.

Definitions

“School-sponsored media” means all student media that are:

- Supported financially by the school;
- Supported by the use of school facilities; or
- Produced in conjunction with a class.

“Student journalist” means a student who gathers, writes, edits, photographs, records, video tapes, or prepares information for dissemination in student media.

“Student media” means any means of communication that are:

- Prepared, substantially written, published, or broadcasted by a student;
- Distributed or generally made available, either free of charge or for a fee, to members of the student body; and
- Prepared under the direction of a student media advisor.

“Student media” does not include media that is intended for distribution or transmission solely in the classroom in which it is produced.

“Student media advisor” means an individual who is employed, appointed, or designated by the District to supervise or provide instruction with respect to student media.

Student Media

While the District recognizes a student’s right of expression under the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, school-sponsored media does not provide an open public forum for public expression. Student media, as well as the content of student expression in school-sponsored activities, shall be subject to the editorial review of the District’s administration, whose actions shall be reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns and adhere to the following limitations:

1. Advertising may be accepted for media that does not condone or promote products that are inappropriate for the age and maturity of the audience or that endorses such things as tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.
2. Media may be regulated to prohibit communications determined by the appropriate teacher, student media advisor, and/or administrator to be ungrammatical; poorly written; inadequately researched; biased or prejudiced; vulgar or profane; or unsuitable for immature audiences.
3. Media may be regulated to prohibit the dissemination of material that may reasonably be perceived to advocate drug or alcohol use; irresponsible sex; conduct that is otherwise inconsistent with the shared values of a civilized social order; or to associate the school with any position other than neutrality on matters of political controversy.
4. Prohibited media includes those that:
 - a. Are obscene as to minors;
 - b. Are libelous or slanderous, including material containing defamatory falsehoods about public figures or governmental officials, and made with knowledge of their falsity or a reckless disregard of the truth;
 - c. Constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy as defined by state law;
 - d. Suggest or urge the commission of unlawful acts on the school premises;
 - e. Suggest or urge the violation of lawful school regulations;
 - f. Scurrilously attacks ethnic, religious, or racial groups; or
 - g. Harass, threaten, or intimidate a student.

Student Media on School Web Pages

Student media displayed on school web pages shall follow the same guidelines as listed above and shall also:

1. Not contain any non-educational advertisements;
2. Adhere to the restrictions regarding use of Directory Information as prescribed in Policy 4.13 including not using a student’s photograph when associated with the student’s name unless written permission has been received from the student’s parent or student if over the age of eighteen (18);
3. State that the views expressed are not necessarily those of the School Board or the employees of the district.

Student Distribution of Non-school Literature, Publications, and Materials

A student or group of students who distribute ten (10) or fewer copies of the same non-school-sponsored literature, publications, or materials shall do so in a time, place, and manner that does not cause a substantial disruption of the orderly education environment. A student or group of students wishing to distribute more than ten (10) copies of non-school-sponsored materials shall have school authorities review their non-school-sponsored materials at least three (3) school days in advance of their desired time of dissemination. School authorities shall review the non-school-sponsored materials, prior to their distribution and will bar from distribution those non-school-sponsored materials that are obscene, libelous, pervasively indecent, or advertise unlawful products or services. Material may

also be barred from distribution if there is evidence that reasonably supports a forecast that a substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment will likely result from the distribution. Concerns related to any denial of distribution by the principal shall be heard by the superintendent, whose decision shall be final.

The school principal or designee shall establish reasonable regulations governing the time, place, and manner of student distribution of non-school-sponsored materials. The regulations shall:

1. Be narrowly drawn to promote orderly administration of school activities by preventing disruption and may not be designed to stifle expression;
2. Be uniformly applied to all forms of non-school-sponsored materials;
3. Allow no interference with classes or school activities;
4. Specify times, places, and manner where distribution may and may not occur; and
5. Not inhibit a person's right to accept or reject any literature distributed in accordance with the regulations.

Students shall be responsible for the removal of excess literature that is left at the distribution point for more than 5 days.

Computer Use Policy

The Pocahontas School District makes computers and/or computer Internet access available to students, to permit students to perform research and to allow students to learn how to use computer technology. Use of district computers is for educational and/or instructional purposes only. It is the policy of this school district to equip each computer with Internet filtering software designed to prevent users from accessing material that is harmful to minors. For purposes of this policy, "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that: a) taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion; b) depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and c) taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors. No student will be granted Internet access until and unless a computer-use agreement, signed by both the student and the parent or legal guardian (if the student is under the age of eighteen [18]) is on file. The current version of the computer use agreement is incorporated by reference into board policy and is considered part of the student handbook.

Students are advised that they enjoy no expectation of privacy in any aspect of their computer use, including email, and that monitoring of student computer use is continuous. Students who misuse district-owned computers or Internet access in any way, including using computers except as directed or assigned by staff or teachers, using computers to violate any other policy or contrary to the computer use agreement, attempting to defeat or bypass Internet filtering software, or using the computers to access or create sexually explicit or pornographic text or graphics, will face disciplinary action, as specified in the student handbook** and/or computer use agreement.

The District is dedicated to ensuring that students are capable of using the Internet in a safe and responsible manner. The District uses technology protection measures to aid in student safety and shall also educate students on appropriate online behavior and Internet use including but not limited to:

- Interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms;
- Cyberbullying awareness; and
- Cyberbullying response.

*The designated District Technology Administrator or designee may authorize the disabling of the filter to enable access by an adult for a bona fide research or other lawful purpose.

Legal References: 20 USC 6801 et seq. (Children's Internet Protection Act; PL 106-554)
A.C.A. § 6-21-107
A.C.A. § 6-21-111

Consequences for failure to abide by computer requirements are as follows:

1st offense - Loss of access to any computer account(s) the student might have. The time period for loss will be decided at each grade level. Students must retain notice of the date of reinstatement in order to have privileges restored.

2nd offense - Loss of access to any computer account(s) the student might have for the remainder of the school year. A letter will be sent home to parents informing them of the loss of access.

Network administration in cooperation with local school administration will determine any disciplinary action taken. Infractions involving malicious intent or illegalities will incur more serious consequences and may result in information turned over to the proper authorities. Other punishments may include but are not limited to corporal punishment, in-school suspension, detention, retaining after school hours, suspension, and expulsion.

Student Dress and Grooming

The Pocahontas Board of Education recognizes that dress can be a matter of personal taste and preference. At the same time, the District has a responsibility to promote an environment conducive to student learning. This requires limitations to student dress and grooming that could be disruptive to the educational process because they are immodest, disruptive, unsanitary, unsafe, could cause property damage, or are offensive to common standards of decency. (Ex. Clothing that bears writing or slogans that may be considered profane, indecent, or promotes illegal products and shirts or blouses that expose a person's midriff).

Student Services Program

Pocahontas Public Schools comply with Act 908 (1991) by coordinating student services within the district into a Student Services Program (SSP). This includes such services as guidance/counseling, psychological services, conflict resolution, health services, school suicide/crisis plans, at-risk/student dropout planning, and referral and alternative services. The appropriate staff members follow specific plans and procedures in their professional area.

Wellness Policy

The health and physical well-being of our students directly affects their ability to learn. Childhood obesity increases the incidence of adult diseases occurring in children and adolescents such as heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes. The increased risk carries forward into their adulthood. Research indicates that a healthy diet and regular physical activity can help prevent obesity and the diseases resulting from it. It is understood that the eating habits and exercise patterns of students cannot be magically changed overnight, but at the same time, the board of directors believes it is necessary to strive to create a culture in our schools that consistently promotes good nutrition and physical activity.

The problem of obesity and inactivity is a public health issue. The board is keenly aware that it has taken years for this problem to reach its present level and will similarly take years to correct. The responsibility for addressing the problem lies not only with the schools and the Department of Education, but with the community and its residents, organizations and agencies. Therefore, the district shall enlist the support of the larger community to find solutions which improve the health and physical activity of our students.

Goals

In its efforts to improve the school nutrition environment, promote student health, and reduce childhood obesity, the district will adhere to the Arkansas Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards in Arkansas Public Schools. Adhering to these Rules will include, but is not limited to district efforts to:

1. Appoint a district school health coordinator who shall be responsible for ensuring that each school fulfills the requirements of this policy;
2. Implement a grade appropriate nutrition education program that will develop an awareness of and appreciation for nutrition and physical activity throughout the curriculum;
3. Enforce existing physical education requirements and engage students in healthy levels of vigorous physical activity;
4. Strive to improve the quality of physical education curricula and increase the training of physical education teachers;
5. Follow the Arkansas Physical Education and Health Education Frameworks in grades K-12;
6. Not use food or beverages as rewards for academic, classroom, or sports performances;

7. Ensure that drinking water is available without charge to all students;
8. Establish class schedules, and bus routes that don't directly or indirectly restrict meal access;
9. Provide students with ample time to eat their meals in pleasant cafeteria and dining areas;
10. Establish no more than nine (9) school wide events which permit exceptions to the food and beverage limitations established by Rule. The schedule of the events shall be by school, approved by the principal.
11. Abide by the current allowable food and beverage portion standards;
12. Meet or exceed the more stringent of Arkansas' or the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Nutrition Standards for reimbursable meals and a la' carte foods served in the cafeteria;
13. Restrict access to vended foods, competitive foods, and foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) as required by law and Rule;
14. Conform new and/or renewed vending contracts to the content restrictions contained in the Rules and reduce district dependence on profits from the sale of FMNV.
15. Provide professional development to all district staff on the topics of nutrition and/or physical activity;
16. Utilize the School Health Index available from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to assess how well the district is doing at implementing this wellness policy and at promoting a healthy environment for its students;
17. Analyze the district's annual BMI results at the Arkansas Center for Health Improvement webpage to draw conclusions from trend data and identify at-risk grade levels or subpopulations;
18. Establish and maintain a wellness committee (meeting at least quarterly) made up of parents, students, school food authority, school board member, school administrator, school health professional, physical education teacher, other community representative, and other interested teachers;
19. Inform and update the public about the content and implementation of the local wellness policy including a triennial assessment of the committee's compliance with the policy.

Advisory Committee

To enhance the district's efforts to improve the health of our students, a School Nutrition and Physical Activity Advisory Committee (SNPAAC) shall be formed. It shall be structured in a way that ensures age-appropriate recommendations are made which correlate to our district's grade configurations. The SNPAAC shall have the powers and responsibilities delegated to it by statute and Rule. The overarching goal of the committee shall be to promote student wellness by monitoring how well the district is doing at implementing this policy. The SNPAAC shall use modules 1, 2, 3, 4, 10 and 11 of the CDC's School Health Index as a basis for assessing each school's progress toward meeting the requirements of this policy. The results of the annual assessment shall be included in each school's ACSIP, provided to each school's principal, and reported to the board.

Legal References: Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act 42 U.S.C. § 1751 et seq.
 Child Nutrition Act of 1966 42 U.S.C. § 1771 et seq.
 A.C.A. §§ 20-17-133, 134, and 135
 ADE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards in Arkansas Public Schools
 Allowable Competitive Foods/Beverages - Maximum Portion Size List for Middle, Junior High, and High School
 Nutrition Standards for Arkansas Public Schools (Commissioner's Memo FIN-06-106)

Immunization Policy

Definitions

"In process" means the student has received at least one dose of the required immunizations and is waiting the minimum time interval to receive the additional dose(s).

"Serologic testing" refers to a medical procedure used to determine an individual's immunity to Hepatitis B, Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella.

General Requirements

Unless otherwise provided by law or this policy, no student shall be admitted to attend classes in the District who has not been age appropriately immunized against¹:

- Poliomyelitis;
- Diphtheria;
- Tetanus;
- Pertussis;
- Red (rubeola) measles;
- Rubella;
- Mumps;
- Hepatitis A;
- Hepatitis B;
- Meningococcal disease;
- Varicella (chickenpox); and
- Any other immunization required by the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH).

The District administration has the responsibility to evaluate the immunization status of District students. The District shall maintain a list of all students who are not fully age appropriately immunized or who have an exemption provided by ADH to the immunization requirements based on medical, religious, or philosophical grounds. Students who are not fully age appropriately immunized when seeking admittance shall be referred to a medical authority for consultation.

The only types of proof of immunization the District will accept are immunization records provided by a:

- A. Licensed physician;
- B. Health department;
- C. Military service; or
- D. Official record from another educational institution in Arkansas.
- E. An immunization record printed off of the statewide immunization registry with the Official Seal of the State of Arkansas.

The proof of immunization must include the vaccine type and dates of vaccine administration. Documents stating “up-to-date”, “complete”, “adequate”, and the like will not be accepted as proof of immunization. No self or parental history of varicella disease will be accepted as a history of varicella disease must be documented by a licensed physician, advanced practice nurse, doctor of osteopathy, or physician assistant. Valid proof of immunization and of immunity based on serological testing shall be entered into the student’s record.

In order to continue attending classes in the District, the student must have submitted:

- 1) Proof of immunization showing the student to be fully age appropriately vaccinated;
- 2) Written documentation by a public health nurse or private physician of proof the student is in process of being age appropriately immunized, which includes a schedule of the student’s next immunization;
- 3) A copy of a letter from ADH indicating immunity based on serologic testing; and/or
- 4) A copy of the letter from ADH exempting the student from the immunization requirements for the current school year, or a copy of the application for an exemption for the current school year if the exemption letter has not yet arrived.

Students whose immunization records or serology results are lost or unavailable are required to receive all age appropriate vaccinations or submit number 4 above.

Temporary Admittance

While students who are not fully age appropriately immunized or have not yet submitted an immunization waiver may be enrolled to attend school, such students shall be allowed to attend school on a temporary basis only. Students admitted on a temporary basis may be admitted for a maximum of thirty (30) days (or until October 1st of the current school year for the tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, and meningococcal vaccinations required at ages eleven

(11) and sixteen (16) respectively if October 1st is later in the current school year than the thirty (30) days following the student's admittance). No student shall be withdrawn and readmitted in order to extend the thirty (30) day period. Students may be allowed to continue attending beyond the thirty (30) day period if the student submits a copy of either number 2 or number 4 above.

Students who are in process shall be required to adhere to the submitted schedule. Failure of the student to submit written documentation from a public health nurse or private physician demonstrating the student received the vaccinations set forth in the schedule may lead to the revocation of the student's temporary admittance; such students shall be excluded from school until the documentation is provided.

The District will not accept copies of applications requesting an exemption for the current school year that are older than two (2) weeks based on the date on the application. Students who submit a copy of an application to receive an exemption from the immunization requirements for the current year to gain temporary admittance have thirty (30) days from the admission date to submit either a letter from ADH granting the exemption or documentation demonstrating the student is in process and a copy of the immunization schedule. Failure to submit the necessary documentation by the close of the thirty (30) days will result in the student being excluded until the documentation is submitted.

Exclusion From School

In the event of an outbreak, students who are not fully age appropriately immunized, are in process, or are exempt from the immunization requirements may be required to be excluded from school in order to protect the student. ADH shall determine if it is necessary for students to be excluded in the event of an outbreak. Students may be excluded for n fewer than twenty-one (21) days or even longer depending on the outbreak. No student excluded due to an outbreak shall be allowed to return to school until the District receives approval from ADH.

Students who are excluded from school are not eligible to receive homebound instruction unless the excluded student had a pre-existing IEP or 504 Plan and the IEP/504 team determines homebound instruction to be in the best interest of the student. To the extent possible, the student's teacher(s) shall place in the principal's office a copy of the student's assignments:

- for the remainder of the week by the end of the initial school day of the student's exclusion; and
- by the end of each school's calendar week for the upcoming week until the student returns to school.

It is the responsibility of the student or the student's parent/legal guardian to make sure that the student's assignments are collected.

Students excluded from school shall have five (5) school days from the day the student returns to school to submit any homework and to make up any examinations. State mandated assessments are not included in "examinations" and the District has no control over administering state mandated make-up assessments outside of the state's schedule. Students shall receive a grade of zero for any assignment or examination not completed or submitted on time.

Annually by December 1, the District shall create, maintain, and post to the District's website a report that includes the following for each disease requiring an immunization under this policy:

- The number of students in the District that were granted an exemption by the Department of Health from an immunization;
- The percentage of students in the District that were granted an exemption by the Department of Health from an immunization;
- The number of students within the District who have failed to provide to the public school proof of the vaccinations required and have not obtained an exemption from ADH;
- The percentage of students within the District who have failed to provide to the public school proof of the vaccinations required and have not obtained an exemption from ADH; and
- The percentage of a population that must receive an immunization for herd immunity to exist.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-4-302

A.C.A. § 6-18-702
A.C.A. § 6-28-110
DESE Rules Governing Immunization Requirements in Arkansas Public Schools
ADH Rules Pertaining to Immunization Requirements

Medication Policy

Prior to the administration of any medication, including any dietary supplement or other perceived health remedy not regulated by the US Food and Drug Administration, to any student under the age of eighteen (18), written parental consent is required. The consent form shall include authorization to administer the medication and relieve the Board and its employees of civil liability for damages or injuries resulting from the administration of medication to students in accordance with this policy. All signed medication consent forms are to be maintained by the school nurse.

Unless authorized to self-administer or otherwise authorized by this policy, students are not allowed to carry any medications, including over-the-counter (OTC) medications or any dietary supplement or other perceived health remedy not regulated by the US Food and Drug Administration while at school. The parent or legal guardian shall bring the student's medication to the school nurse. The student may bring the medication if accompanied by a written authorization from the parent or legal guardian. When medications are brought to the school nurse, the nurse shall document, in the presence of the parent, the quantity of the medication(s). If the medications are brought by a student, the school nurse shall ask another school employee to verify, in the presence of the student, the quantity of the medication(s). Each person present shall sign a form verifying the quantity of the medication(s).

Medications, including those for self-administration, must be in the original container and be properly labeled with the student's name, the ordering provider's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, frequency, and instructions for the administration of the medication (including times). Additional information accompanying the medication shall state the purpose for the medication, its possible side effects, and any other pertinent instructions (such as special storage requirements) or warnings. Schedule II medications that are permitted by this policy to be brought to school shall be stored in a double locked cabinet.

Students with an individualized health plan (IHP) may be given OTC medications to the extent giving such medications are included in the student's IHP.

The district's supervising registered nurse is responsible for creating procedures for the administration of medications on and off campus.

The school shall not keep outdated medications or any medications past the end of the school year. Parents shall be notified ten (10) days in advance of the school's intention to dispose of any medication. Medications not picked up by the parents or legal guardians within the ten (10) day period shall be disposed of by the school nurse in accordance with current law and rules.¹

Schedule II Medications²

Option 1: The only Schedule II medications that shall be allowed to be brought to the school are methylphenidate (e.g. Ritalin or closely related medications as determined by the school nurse), dextroamphetamine (Dexedrine), and amphetamine sulfate (e.g. Adderall or closely related medications as determined by the school nurse).

For the student's safety, no student will be allowed to attend school if the student is currently taking any other Schedule II medication than permitted by this policy.³ Students who are taking Schedule II medications which are not allowed to be brought to school shall be eligible for homebound instruction if provided for in their IEP or 504 plans.⁴

Option 2: Students taking Schedule II medications methylphenidate (e.g. Ritalin or closely related medications as determined by the school nurse), dextroamphetamine (Dexedrine), and amphetamine sulfate (e.g. Adderall or closely related medications as determined by the school nurse) shall be allowed to attend school.

Students taking Schedule II medications not included in the previous sentence³ shall be allowed to bring them to school under the provisions of this policy and shall be permitted to attend and participate in classes **only** to the extent the student's doctor has specifically authorized such attendance and participation.⁵ A doctor's prescription for a student's Schedule II medication is **not** an authorization. Attendance authorization shall specifically state the degree and potential danger of physical exertion the student is permitted to undertake in the student's classes and extracurricular activities. Without a doctor's written authorization, a student taking Schedule II medications, other than those specifically authorized in this policy, shall **not** be eligible to attend classes, but shall be eligible for homebound instruction if provided for in their IEP or 504 plans.⁴

Self-Administration of Medication

Students who have written permission from their parent or guardian and a licensed health care practitioner on file with the District may:

1. Self-administer either a rescue inhaler or auto-injectable epinephrine;
2. Perform his/her own blood glucose checks;
3. Administer insulin through the insulin delivery system the student uses;
4. Treat the student's own hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia; or
5. Possess on his or her person:
 - a. A rescue inhaler or auto-injectable epinephrine; or
 - b. the necessary supplies and equipment to perform his/her own diabetes monitoring and treatment functions.

A student may be authorized to self-administer a stress dose medication to treat the student's adrenal insufficiency with:

1. The written authorization of the student's parent, legal guardian, or person standing in loco parentis; and
2. A written order from the student's treating physician stating that the student:
 - a. Is capable of completing the proper method of self-administration of the stress dose medication; and
 - b. Has been instructed on the details of the student's medical condition and the events that may lead to an adrenal crisis.

The parent, legal guardian, or person standing in loco parentis of a student who is authorized to self-administer a stress dose medication shall sign an IHP developed by the school nurse for the school where the student is enrolled. The IHP shall include a requirement for the notification of appropriate staff following the self-administration of a stress dose medication, which shall include the school nurse, teacher of the classroom where the stress dose medication was administered, and a school administrator.

Students who have a current consent form on file shall be allowed to carry and self-administer such medication while:

- In school;
- At an on-site school sponsored activity;
- While traveling to or from school; or
- At an off-site school sponsored activity.

A student is prohibited from sharing, transferring, or in any way diverting his/her medications to any other person. The fact that a student with a completed consent form on file is allowed to carry a rescue inhaler, auto-injectable epinephrine, diabetes medication, stress dose medication, or combination does not require the student to have such on the student's person. The parent or guardian of a student who qualifies under this policy to self-carry a rescue inhaler, auto-injectable epinephrine, diabetes medication, stress dose medication, or any combination on the student's person shall provide the school with the appropriate medication, which shall be immediately available to the student in an emergency.

Students may possess and use a topical sunscreen that is approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for OTC use to avoid overexposure to the sun without written authorization from a parent, legal guardian, or healthcare professional while the student is on school property or at a school-related event or activity. The parent or guardian of a student may provide written documentation authorizing specifically named District employee(s), in addition to the school nurse, to assist a student in the application of sunscreen. The District employee(s) named in the parent or legal guardian's written authorization shall not be required to assist the student in the application of sunscreen.

Emergency Administration of Glucagon and Insulin

Students may be administered Glucagon, insulin, or both in emergency situations by the school nurse or, in the absence of the school nurse, a trained volunteer school employee designated as a care provider, provided the student has:

1. An IHP that provides for the administration of Glucagon, insulin, or both in emergency situations; and
2. A current, valid consent form on file from their parent or guardian.

When the nurse is unavailable, the trained volunteer school employee who is responsible for a student shall be released from other duties during:

- A. The time scheduled for a dose of insulin in the student's IHP; and
- B. Glucagon or non-scheduled insulin administration once other staff have relieved him/her from other duties until a parent, guardian, other responsible adult, or medical personnel has arrived.

A student shall have access to a private area to perform diabetes monitoring and treatment functions as outlined in the student's IHP.

Emergency Administration of Epinephrine

The school nurse or other school employees designated by the school nurse as a care provider who have been trained⁶ and certified by a licensed physician may administer an epinephrine auto-injector in emergency situations to students who have an IHP that provides for the administration of an epinephrine auto-injector in emergency situations.

The parent of a student who has an authorizing IHP, or the student if over the age of eighteen (18), shall annually complete and sign a written consent form provided by the student's school nurse authorizing the nurse or other school employee(s) certified to administer auto-injector epinephrine to administer auto-injector epinephrine to the student when the employee believes the student is having a life-threatening anaphylactic reaction.

Students with an order from a licensed health care provider to self-administer auto-injectable epinephrine and who have written permission from their parent or guardian shall provide the school nurse an epinephrine auto-injector. This epinephrine will be used in the event the school nurse, or other school employee certified to administer auto-injector epinephrine, in good faith professionally believes the student is having a life-threatening anaphylactic reaction and the student is either not self-carrying his/her /epinephrine auto-injector or the nurse is unable to locate it.

The school nurse for each District school shall keep epinephrine auto-injectors on hand that are suitable for the students the school serves. The school nurse or other school employee designated by the school nurse as a care provider who has been trained⁶ and certified by a licensed physician may administer auto-injector epinephrine to those students who the school nurse, or other school employee certified to administer auto-injector epinephrine, in good faith professionally believes is having a life-threatening anaphylactic reaction.

Emergency Administration of Albuterol

The school nurse or other school employees designated by the school nurse as a care provider who have been trained⁶ and certified by a licensed physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant may administer albuterol in emergency situations to students who have an IHP that provides for the administration of albuterol in emergency situations.

The parent of a student who has an authorizing IHP, or the student if over the age of eighteen (18), shall annually complete and sign a written consent form provided by the student's school nurse authorizing the nurse or other school employee(s) certified to administer albuterol to administer albuterol to the student when the employee believes the student is in perceived respiratory distress.

The school nurse for each District school shall keep albuterol on hand. The school nurse or other school employee designated by the school nurse as a care provider who has been trained⁶ and certified by a licensed physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant may administer albuterol to those students who the school nurse, or other school employee certified to administer albuterol, in good faith professionally believes is in perceived respiratory distress.

Emergency Administration of Anti-opioid

The school nurse for each District school shall keep anti-opioid injectors on hand. The school nurse, other school employee, volunteer, or student may administer anti-opioid in accordance with the District's procedures to a student who the school nurse, or other observer, in good faith believes is having an opioid overdose.

Emergency Administration of Emergency Adrenal Insufficiency Medication

The school nurse or other school employees designated by the school nurse as a care provider who have been trained⁶ and certified by a licensed physician may administer an injectable emergency dose medication in emergency situations to students who have an IHP that provides for the administration of an injectable emergency dose medication in emergency situations.

The parent of a student who has an authorizing IHP, or the student if over the age of eighteen (18), shall annually complete and sign a written consent form provided by the student's school nurse authorizing the nurse or other school employee(s) certified to administer an injectable emergency dose medication to administer an injectable emergency dose medication to the student when the employee believes the student is having an adrenal crisis due to adrenal insufficiency.

Students who have met the requirements to be authorized to self-administer a stress dose medication under this policy shall provide the school nurse an emergency injectable dose of the student's medication. This emergency injectable dose will be used in the event the school nurse, or other school employee certified to administer an injectable emergency dose medication, in good faith professionally believes the student is having an adrenal crisis due to adrenal insufficiency.

Legal References: Ark. State Board of Nursing: School Nurse Roles and Responsibilities
Division of Elementary and Secondary Education and Arkansas State Board of Nursing
Rules Governing the Administration of Insulin and Glucagon to Arkansas Public School
Students with Diabetes
A.C.A. § 6-18-701
A.C.A. § 6-18-707
A.C.A. § 6-18-711
A.C.A. § 6-18-714
A.C.A. § 6-18-717
A.C.A. § 17-87-103 (11) and (14)
A.C.A. § 20-13-405

Chemical Screen Policy For Pocahontas Schools

It is the mission of Pocahontas Schools to educate all students to the highest practical extent of our abilities, and to provide for the physical, mental and emotional needs through the development of a safe, non-threatening environment with minimum interruptions which provide for a positive learning climate.

The Pocahontas School District recognizes that chemical abuse or misuse is a significant health and safety problem for students, detrimentally affecting overall health, behavior, learning ability, reflexes and the total development of each individual. The Pocahontas Board of Education is committed to its Mission Statement and is determined to help students by providing another option for them to refrain from the use of drugs. Chemical abuse includes, but is not limited to, the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, and misuse of legal drugs and medications.

Purpose of a Chemical Abuse Policy:

1. To demonstrate the district's commitment to the well-being of its students, and to provide additional resources to students who may be having problems related to the use of controlled substances.
2. To allow the district to demonstrate concerns for the health and safety of students in our care, including the long-term physical and mental effects of chemical abuse.
3. To confirm and support state laws which restrict the use of such mood-altering and other illegal chemicals.
4. To assist students of Pocahontas Schools to resist the peer pressure that directs them toward the abuse or misuse of chemical substances.
5. To establish standards of conduct for students of Pocahontas Schools who are considered leaders and standards bearers among their peers.
6. To work cooperatively with the parents by assisting them in keeping their children free from mood altering and other illegal chemicals.
7. To provide referrals for students who need evaluation regarding their use of mood altering and other illegal chemicals.
8. To deter chemical abuse or misuse by all students through the use of random drug testing.

Scope

The provisions of this policy apply to all students in Pocahontas Schools in grades seven through twelve, who sign, and whose parent/guardian sign the required Consent Form(s) of the Chemical Screen Policy. Students who wish to participate in extracurricular activities as defined in this policy and/or those who are registered to park vehicles at Pocahontas Public Schools must sign the required Consent Form(s) and will be subject to random testing.

The use or possession of illegal drugs during school activities or prior to school activities where the illegal drug has the possibility of affecting the participant is a violation of this policy.

General Provisions and Definitions:

Pocahontas School District shall randomly require selected students in grades seven through twelve of Pocahontas Schools to provide a urine specimen for urinalysis testing.

Illegal Drugs are defined as drugs, or the synthetic or generic equivalent or derivative or drugs, which are illegal under federal, state, or local laws including, but not limited to, marijuana, heroine, hashish, cocaine, hallucinogens, depressants, and stimulants not prescribed by a physician or are prescribed by a physician and not used as authorized by the doctor or the manufacturer of the substance.

Extra-Curricular Activities are defined as school activities, as governed by the Arkansas Activities Association, Arkansas Department of Education, and/or other Pocahontas School District club activities other than regular classroom instruction.

Alcohol is defined as ethyl or any beverage containing ethyl alcohol.

Refusal to Submit to Testing: Any participant who refuses to submit to a random drug testing shall remain at the testing site until the school officials have made proper contact with parent or guardian. Refusal to submit to testing will be considered the same as a positive screening.

Consent Form

No student shall be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activity or be granted vehicle parking privileges at Pocahontas Public Schools until the consent form has been signed by both student and custodial parent/legal guardian and returned to the principal. All students and custodial parents/guardians will be strongly encouraged to sign a consent form for random testing during the year.

Cost

The cost of the test given during random selection will be paid by the District. Follow up tests for those students testing positive will be paid by the District. Any test requested by the parent(s) or student challenging the validity of the initial test results will be at the parent's expense. If that test proves negative, the district will pay for the retest.

Grievances

The procedure for appealing is found in *The Pocahontas School District Student Policy Book*.

Procedures

Type of Testing: The District shall randomly require selected students of Pocahontas Schools in grades seven through twelve to provide a urine specimen for urinalysis testing. Each chain of custody (CCF) will have a number on it, which will be assigned to a participant's name. The samples submitted by the students will be tested by an FDA approved instant device and if needed sealed and sent to the lab for additional testing. All students randomly selected must report to the designated location for providing urine samples to be taken at Pocahontas Schools. Urinalysis will be the method utilized to test for the presence of chemicals in the body. A breathalyzer will be used to determine alcohol content in the body.

Selection Process: Students enrolled at Pocahontas Junior and Senior High will be subject to random selection for chemical testing. Students will be divided into a pool for students in grades seven (7) through nine (9) and another pool for students in grades ten (10) through twelve (12). Each student will be assigned a number. The testing agency will select days for random testing: these days will not be known by the school officials. A minimum of ten test days will be set per year for each pool. The amount of aggregate numbers drawn will be a minimum of 10 and maximum of 20 per session with no less than (5%) or no greater than (25%) of the students in grades seven through twelve annually who have the required Consent Form(s) signed. If any student whose number is drawn is absent on that day, the selection process will continue until the number (5%-20%) of students selected for testing equals the number of specified for that day's random testing.

Consequences Of A Positive Test: Upon receipt of a positive test result for any student, a student may request a retest at his/her expense within a 24-hour period of a positive result. The specimen used for the second testing will be from the original split sample taken during the random sampling. The original sample taken at the testing site will be divided into two separate containers and sealed at the collection site.

The following **sanctions will be imposed for any student testing positive to a drug test for the first time**. The Superintendent or designee shall notify the student's custodial parent/legal guardian. The Superintendent or designee shall schedule a conference with the student's custodial parent/legal guardian to explain the results. Initial counseling including referrals, resources and information on chemical abuse will be available from the District. Further outside counseling/rehabilitation for the student will be strongly recommended for the student who tests positive. The additional counseling/rehabilitation will be at the expense of the student. The student shall be placed on probationary participation for one calendar year and will be retested during each testing session of the probationary period. The probation will be lifted after one calendar year provided all test results are negative. The school district will not be responsible for injury or other health problems due to the students misuse or abuse of the drug while the student is involved in school activities, therefore the parent/legal guardian must sign a waiver allowing the student to participate in those activities.

If a student test positive to a drug test for the **second time within two calendar years** the Superintendent or designee shall notify the student's custodial parent/legal guardian. The Superintendent or designee shall schedule a conference with the student's custodial parent/legal guardian to explain the results. Initial counseling including referrals, resources and information on chemical abuse will be available from the District. Further outside

counseling/rehabilitation for the student will be strongly recommended for the student who tests positive. The additional counseling/rehabilitation will be at the expense of the student. Upon notice by the proper school official the student shall immediately be suspended from practices, contests, driving, and any other related activities for one calendar year. Retesting shall be required at each subsequent random testing regime for one calendar year from the date of the receipt of the test results. For reinstatement into the school activity the student must receive a negative test result in each testing.

If a student tests positive to a drug test for the **third time within two calendar years** the Superintendent or designee shall notify the student's custodial parent/legal guardian. The Superintendent or designee shall schedule a conference with the student's custodial parent/legal guardian to explain the results. Upon notification by the proper school officials the student shall be immediately removed from participating in activities/programs for the remainder of the student's high school career.

Exception: Certain chemicals that take more than thirty days to leave the student's system will be considered differently if the Third Party Administrator written opinion details the said residual effect of that particular substance.

Testing Procedure:

Analysis of Urine Specimens: The initial urinalysis method shall be an immunoassay screen. If a specimen tests positive for any substance being checked, a GC/MS or LC/MS confirmation test will be performed. If the parent/guardian questions the validity or reliability of the testing agency's results, the sample from the split specimen in the second sealed vial will be used for the parent-requested follow up test. The parents may choose a laboratory of choice so long as the Department of Health and Human Services certify it. Gas chromatography/mass spectrometry GC/MS or LC/MS shall be conducted on the specimen. If the result of the GC/MS or LC/MS test is confirmed, the student shall be considered to have had a positive result. If the results of the GC/MS are not confirmed for the suspected substance or substances, the student shall be considered to have had a cancelled result. The schools will be responsible for paying for the requested test if the results prove to be cancelled.

All test results from the laboratory shall be communicated to the Superintendent or designee. To ensure proper testing procedures, United States Department of Health and Human Services Standards as defined by the National Institute of Drug Abuse certified laboratories will be followed.

All initial urine specimens will be taken at the designated location determined by the Principal or designee. Any student who is requested to provide a urine specimen shall be directed to the collection site where the student will complete the necessary forms. Students selected as part of the random test will be required to provide additional information for the testing agency.

The following precautions will be taken, as appropriate, at the collection site:

1. Collector and/or administrator shall positively identify the examinee.
2. The collector and/or administrator shall ask the individual to remove any unnecessary outer garments (i.e. coat, jacket) that might conceal items or substances that could be used to tamper with or adulterate the urine specimen. All personal belongings (i.e. purse, briefcase, etc.) must remain with the outer garments. The agent and/or administrator shall note any unusual behavior or appearance. In Arkansas, it's unlawful to adulterate a urine sample, or possess or distribute adulterates for the purpose of defrauding or causing deceitful results in a drug screening test (Act 750, 2003).
3. The student shall be instructed to wash and dry his/or her hands prior to providing the specimen. After washing his/her hands, the student shall not be outside of the presence of the agent and/or administrator and not have access to water fountains, faucets, soap dispensers, or cleaning agents until after the specimen has been provided and sealed. Only one student will be allowed at a time in the washroom and process area.
4. The female student will be allowed to provide the specimen in a stall or partitioned area that allows for individual privacy. The male student may be required to provide the specimen while using a urinal. After

the specimen has been provided for the agent, the female student should leave the stall, and the male student should leave the urinal or stall. Extra specimen containers should not be left in the res rooms.

5. At the collection site, toilet bluing agents shall be placed in the toilet tanks, whenever possible. No other source of water shall be available in the immediate area where the urination occurs.
6. After the specimen has been provided to the agent, the agent will continue with chain of custody procedures and will determine whether the specimen contains at least 45 milliliters of urine. If there is not at least 45 milliliters, additional urine shall be collected. The student may be given reasonable amounts of water for drinking. If a student fails for any reason to provide the necessary amount of specimen, the agent and/or administrator shall contact the Superintendent or designee for guidance.
7. Immediately after collection, the testing agent shall check the temperature of the specimen and inspect the specimen for color and signs of contaminants. Freshly filled specimen containers should be warm. If the specimen is not between 90 and 100 degrees, the student will be required to provide another specimen of urine within two hours of the original collection.
8. Both the collector and/or administration and the student being tested shall keep the specimen in view at all times prior to its being, tested and if needed sealed and labeled.
9. The student shall observe the collector conduct the instant test.
10. **If pending:** The identification label on the specimen container shall contain:
(This information is filled out on the vials)
** The date
**The CCF number
**The student's initials
**The student's name is not to be on the samples
11. **If negative:** The student will sign the CCF and return to class.
12. The student and the collector will sign the chain of custody form and student will return to class.

Ethyl Alcohol will be tested by using a breathalyzer. The cutoff level of ethyl alcohol will be four-hundredths of one percent (0.4%) by weight of alcohol in the student's breath. Cut off levels used are determined by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

TPA will review and verify all positive test results, report said results, check for chain of custody compliance and determine false positives.

RESULTS AND NOTIFICATION

Test results shall be reported to the Superintendent or designee within a specified number of days after the lab's receipt of the specimens. All reports shall be in writing. All specimens testing negative on the initial test or negative on the confirmation test shall be reported as negative. Only specimens confirmed as positive shall be reported as positive for a specific drug(s).

Substances Tested

The specific drugs in the drug screen may be selected at the beginning of each school year, and may be amended any time throughout the year. The substances for which students may be tested include, but not limited to:

- **Barbiturates:** Amobarbital, Butabarbital, Phenobarbital, Pentobarbital, Secobarbital, Trizolam
- **Amphetamines:** Amphetamine, Methamphetamine
- **Benzodiazepines:** Alprazolam, Chlordiazepoxide, Clorazepate, Diazepam, Halazepam, Prazepam
- **Opiates:** Codeine, Heroin
- **Cocaine Metabolites**

- **Propoxyphenes**
- **Phencyclidine PCP**
- **Qualitative THC**
- **Ethyl Alcohol**

The cut off levels for initial screens shall be 20 nanograms per milliliter (ng/ml) for marijuana metabolites (THC), 300 ng/ml for cocaine metabolites and opiates, 25 ng/ml for phencyclidine, and 1000 ng/ml for amphetamines. The cut off level for ethyl alcohol shall be four one-hundredths of one percent (.04%) by weight of alcohol in the student's breath. Cut off levels used are determined by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

The cut off levels for confirmation tests shall be 15 ng/ml for marijuana metabolites, 150 ng/ml for cocaine metabolites, 300 ng/ml for opiates, 500 ng/ml for amphetamines, and 25ng/ml for phencyclidines.

Physical Examinations or Screenings

The district conducts routine health screenings such as hearing, vision, and scoliosis due to the importance these health factors play in the ability of a student to succeed in school. The intent of the exams or screenings is to detect defects in hearing, vision, or other elements of health that would adversely affect the student's ability to achieve to his/her full potential.

The rights provided to parents under this policy transfer to the student when he/she turns 18 years old.

Except in instances where a student is suspected of having a contagious or infectious disease, parents shall have the right to opt their student out of the exams or screenings by using form 4.41F or by providing certification from a physician that he/she has recently examined the student. A copy of form 4.41F may be obtained in the school's administration office.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND PARASITES

Students with communicable diseases or with human host parasites that are transmittable in a school environment shall demonstrate respect for other students by not attending school while they are capable of transmitting their condition to others. Students whom school nurse determines are unwell or unfit for school attendance or who are believed to have a communicable disease or condition will be required to be picked up by their parent or guardian. Specific examples include, but are not limited to: Varicella (chicken pox), measles, scabies, conjunctivitis (Pink Eye), impetigo/MRSA (Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus), streptococcal and staphylococcal infections, ringworm, mononucleosis, Hepatitis A, B, or C, mumps, vomiting, diarrhea, and fever (100.4 F when taken orally). A student who has been sent home by the school nurse will be subsequently readmitted, at the discretion of the school nurse, when the student is no longer a transmission risk. In some instances, a letter from a health care provider may be required prior to the student being readmitted to the school.

To help control the possible spread of communicable diseases, school personnel shall follow the District's exposure control plan when dealing with any blood borne, foodborne, and airborne pathogens exposures. Standard precautions shall be followed relating to the handling, disposal, and cleanup of blood and other potentially infectious materials such as all body fluids, secretions and excretions (except sweat).

The District shall maintain a copy of each student's immunization record and a list of individuals with exemptions from immunization. That policy provides this information may be disclosed to appropriate parties in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

A student enrolled in the District who has an immunization exemption may be removed from school at the discretion of the Arkansas Department of Health during an outbreak of the disease for which the student is not vaccinated. The student may not return to the school until the outbreak has been resolved and the student's return to school is approved by the Arkansas Department of Health.

The parents or legal guardians of students found to have live human host parasites that are transmittable in a school

environment will be asked to pick their child up at the end of the school day. The parents or legal guardians will be given information concerning the eradication and control of human host parasites. A student may be readmitted after the school nurse or designee has determined the student no longer has live human host parasites that are transmittable in a school environment.

Each school may conduct screenings of students for human host parasites that are transmittable in a school environment as needed. The screenings shall be conducted in a manner that respects the privacy and confidentiality of each student.

Accidents or Illness at School

If a student becomes too ill to remain in class and/or could be contagious to other students, the principal or designee will attempt to notify the student's parent or legal guardian. The student will remain in the school's health room or a place where he/she can be supervised until the end of the school day or until the parent/legal guardian can check the student out of school.

If a student becomes seriously ill or is injured while at school and the parent/legal guardian cannot be contacted, the failure to make such contact shall not unreasonably delay the school's expeditious transport of the student to an appropriate medical care facility. The school assumes no responsibility for treatment of the student. When available, current, and applicable, the student's emergency contact numbers and medical information will be utilized. Parents are strongly encouraged to keep this information up to date.

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act

This is to inform the parents, teachers, legal guardians, and school employees that the AHERA Inspection & Management Plan for the Pocahontas Public Schools is located in the administrative office of the district and can be reviewed during the normal business hours.

Emergency Drills

All schools in the District shall conduct fire drills at least monthly. Tornado Drills shall also be conducted not fewer than three-(3) times per year. Students who ride in school buses, shall also participate in emergency evacuation drills at least twice each school year.

The District shall annually conduct a lockdown drill at all schools in the District in collaboration with local law enforcement and emergency management personnel. The lockdown drill training will include use of the District's emergency communication method with law enforcement. Students will be included in the drills to the extent that is developmentally appropriate for the age of both the students and grade configuration of the school.

Drills may be conducted during the instructional day or during non-instructional time periods.

Other types of emergency drills may also be conducted to test the implementation of the District's emergency plans in the event of violence, terrorist attack, natural disaster, other emergency, or the District's emergency communication with law enforcement method. Students shall be included in the drills to the extent practicable.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 12-13-109
 A.C.A. § 6-10-110
 A.C.A. § 6-10-121
 A.C.A. § 6-15-1302
 A.C.A. § 6-15-1303
 A.C.A. § 6-15-1304
 Ark. Division of Academic Facilities and Transportation Rules Governing Maintenance and Operations of Ark. Public School Buses and Physical Examinations of School Bus Drivers 4.03.1

National Anthem

Each school in the District shall broadcast The Star-Spangled Banner at:

- The commencement of each school-sanctioned sporting event; however, if two (2) or more school-sanctioned sporting events occur on the same day at the same school, then the broadcast of The Star-Spangled Banner may be performed at only one (1) of the events; and
- At least one (1) time each week during school hours.

The broadcast of The Star-Spangled Banner shall be selected from any recording that adheres to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Rules, or, when appropriate, performed from original sheet music that adheres to DESE rules by:

- A school-sanctioned band program;
- A school-sanctioned chorale program, vocal group, or vocalist; or
- The attendees of a school-sanctioned event led by a vocalist selected by the principal of the school hosting the school-sanctioned event.

Students shall not be compelled to participate in the performance of The Star-Spangled Banner, but students who choose not to participate in the performance of The Star-Spangled Banner shall not disrupt those students choosing to participate in the performance of The Star-Spangled Banner. Students choosing not to participate in the performance of The Star-Spangled Banner who do not disrupt the participation of performance of The Star-Spangled Banner shall not be subject to any comments, retaliation, or disciplinary action.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-10-135

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

The Pledge of Allegiance shall be recited:

1. During the first class period of each school day;
2. At the commencement of each school-sanctioned after-school assembly; and
3. At the commencement of each school-sanctioned sporting event; however, if two (2) or more school-sanctioned sporting events occur on the same day at the same school, then the Pledge may be recited at only one (1) of the school-sanctioned sporting events.

Students choosing to participate in the recitation of the Pledge shall do so by facing the flag with their right hands over their hearts, or in an appropriate salute if in uniform, while reciting the Pledge. Students choosing not to participate shall either stand or sit quietly while the other students recite the Pledge.

Students shall not be compelled to recite the Pledge, but students who choose not to recite the Pledge shall not disrupt those students choosing to recite the Pledge. Students choosing not to recite the Pledge who do not disrupt those students who choose to recite the Pledge shall not be subject to any comments, retaliation, or disciplinary action.

Following the recitation of the Pledge, there shall be an observance of one (1) minute of silence. During the one (1) minute of silence, each student may reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity that is not likely to interfere with or distract another student. Students who do not disrupt the one (1) minute of silence shall not be subject to any comments, retaliation, or disciplinary action.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-10-115
 A.C.A. § 6-16-108

SCHOOL MEAL MODIFICATIONS

The district only provides modified meal components on menus to accommodate students with a disability. A parent/guardian wishing to request dietary accommodations for their student with a disability must submit to the district's Director of Child Nutrition¹ a medical statement completed by a State licensed healthcare professional, which includes:²

Physicians, including those licensed by:

The Arkansas State Medical Board;

The Arkansas State Board of Chiropractic Examiners (Chiropractors);

The Arkansas Board of Podiatric Medicine (Podiatrists);

Nurse Practitioners (APRNs in family or pediatric practice with prescriptive authority);

Physician Assistants (PAs who work in collaborative practice with a physician); and

Dentists.

The medical statement should include:

A description of the student's disability that is sufficient to understand how the disability restricts the student's diet;

An explanation of what must be done to accommodate the disability, which may include:

Food(s) to avoid or restrict;

Food(s) to substitute;

Caloric modifications; or

The substitution of a liquid nutritive formula.

If the information provided in the medical statement is unclear, or lacks sufficient detail, the district's Director of Child Nutrition¹ shall request additional information so that a proper and safe meal can be provided.

When choosing an appropriate approach to accommodate a student's disability, the District will consider the expense and efficiency of the requested accommodations. The District will offer a reasonable modification that effectively accommodates the child's disability and provides equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from the program, which may include a generic version of a product.

Parents may file a grievance regarding the request for accommodations with the District's 504 Coordinator³, who will schedule a hearing on the grievance to be held as soon as possible. The 504 coordinator shall provide a copy of the procedures governing the hearing, including that the parent has the right to be accompanied by counsel, and the appeal process upon request.

The district will not prepare meals outside the normal menu to accommodate a family's religious or personal health beliefs.

Legal References: Commissioner's Memo FIN-09-044
7 CFR 210.10(g)

Food Sharing and Its Removal from Food Service Area

Food Sharing Table

In an effort to reduce wasted food and to provide students access to healthy foods when possible, the District shall have in the district cafeteria a food sharing table located at the end of the service line. Prior to leaving the service line, students may place on or retrieve items from the table, at no additional charge, any of the following:

- Raw whole fruit traditionally eaten without the peel (e.g. bananas and oranges);
- Raw whole fruit traditionally eaten with the peel provided the fruit is wrapped to prevent contamination (e.g. apples and grapes);
- Raw whole vegetables provided the vegetable is wrapped to prevent contamination (e.g. carrot sticks);
- Milk; and Juice.

Fruit and vegetables to be shared are to be placed into a designated container on the table.³ Milk and juice to be shared are to be placed in an ice-filled cooler. Milk and juice may not be taken by another student unless the carton is unopened and was completely covered by ice while in the cooler. A student may not return to the table to place an item for sharing after the student has left the service line.

At all times, the sharing table will be under the supervision of the food service staff. Remaining items should be discarded at the end of the meal period, and no item may remain on the table for longer than four (4) hours.

Removing Food Items From the Food Service Area

At the end of the meal period, a student may leave the cafeteria with school provided whole fruit or whole vegetable food items. Students may not remove from the cafeteria milk, juice, or any other item requiring a temperature controlled environment. This restriction does not apply to secondary students who take food to the student centers to eat during the lunch period(s).

Except for food service workers as required by their job duties, District employees may only remove school provided food items from the food service area when required by a 504 plan or a student's IEP.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

In accordance with the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans With Disabilities Act, and Arkansas Statutes, the district shall provide a free appropriate public education and necessary related services to all children with disabilities who reside:

- Within the district boundaries; or
- Outside of the District boundaries but are enrolled in the District.

It is the intent of the district to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated and provided with appropriate educational services. Students may be disabled within the meaning of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act even though they do not require services pursuant to the IDEA.

For students eligible for services under IDEA, the District shall follow procedures for identification, evaluation, placement, and delivery of services to children with disabilities provided in the state and federal statutes governing special education. Implementation of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) in accordance with the IDEA satisfies the district's obligation to provide a free and appropriate education under Section 504.

The Board directs the superintendent to ensure procedures are in place for the implementation of special education services and that programs are developed to conform to the requirements of state and federal legislation. The superintendent is responsible for appointing a district coordinator for overseeing district fulfillment of its responsibilities regarding students with disabilities.¹ Among the coordinator's responsibilities shall be ensuring district enforcement of the due process rights of students with disabilities and their parents.

STUDENT BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION AND RESTRAINT

Definitions

"Aversive behavioral intervention" means a physical or sensory intervention program that is intended to modify behavior through the use of a substance or stimulus that the intervention implementer knows will cause physical trauma, emotional trauma, or both, to a student, even when the substance or stimulus appears to be pleasant or neutral to others.

Examples of aversive behavioral interventions include, but are not limited to:

- Hitting;
- Pinching;
- Slapping;
- Using a water spray;
- Using noxious fumes;
- Requiring extreme physical exercise;
- Using loud auditory stimulus;
- Withholding meals; and
- Denying reasonable access to toileting facilities.

"Behavioral intervention" means the implementation of a service, support, or strategy to teach and increase appropriate behavior or substantially decrease or eliminate behavior that is dangerous, inappropriate, or otherwise

impedes the learning of a student.

"Behavior Intervention Plan" (BIP) means a written plan that:

- Is developed by a problem-solving and intervention team and delineates emotional, social, or behavioral goals for a student and the steps that the school, student, parent of the student, and others will take to positively support the progress of the student towards the student's emotional, social, or behavioral goals;
- Is comprised of practical and specific strategies to increase or reduce a defined behavior or one (1) or more patterns of behavior exhibited by a student; and
- Includes the following at a minimum:
 - A definition or description of the desired target behavior or outcome in specific measurable terms;
 - A plan for preventing and eliminating inappropriate student behavior by changing a condition that is triggering, motivating, underlying, or supporting that behavior as determined through a FBA;
 - A plan for teaching a student to demonstrate appropriate social, emotional, or behavioral self-management, or a new method to address or meet the student's needs;
 - A description of how a specific incentive or consequence will be used as needed to decrease or eliminate inappropriate student behavior and increase appropriate behavior;
 - A plan for managing a crisis situation;
 - A system to collect, analyze, and evaluate data about the student;
 - The school personnel, resources, and training needed before implementation of the BIP; and
 - The timeline for implementing different facets of an intervention, including without limitation when the intervention will be formally reviewed.

"Chemical restraint" means the use of a drug or medication to control the behavior of a student or restrict the free movement of the student; however, chemical restraint does not include the use of medication that is prescribed by a licensed physician, or other qualified health professional acting within the scope of the individual's professional authority under state law, for the standard treatment of a medical or psychiatric condition of a student and is administered as prescribed by the licensed physician or other qualified health professional acting within the scope of the individual's professional authority under state law.

"Crisis" means a situation in which a student engages in a behavior that threatens the health and safety of the student or others and includes without limitation a situation in which the student becomes aggressive or violent at school and is unable to regain self-control without posing a danger of injury to himself or herself or others.

"Crisis intervention" means the implementation of a service, support, or strategy to immediately stabilize a crisis and prevent the crisis from reoccurring after the crisis ends.

"Dangerous behavior" means the behavior of a student that presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others; however, dangerous behavior does not include the following:

- Disrespect;
- Noncompliance;
- Insubordination; or
- Destruction of property that does not create an imminent danger.

"De-escalation" means the use of a behavior management technique that helps a student increase the student's control over the student's emotions and behavior and results in a reduction of a present or potential level of danger that in turn reduces the level of imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others.

"Emergency" means a serious and unexpected situation that requires immediate action and which may be dangerous.

"Functional Behavior Assessment" (FBA) means a problem analysis step that:

- Occurs within the context of data-based problem-solving and involves:
 - The review of existing records and other sources of information;
 - Diagnostic or historical interviews;
 - Structured academic or behavioral observations; and
 - Authentic, criterion-referenced, or norm-referenced tests; and

- Is performed with the goal of determining why a specific problem or situation is occurring in order to directly link a strategic intervention to an assessment and solve or resolve the specific problem or situation.

"Imminent danger" means an existing dangerous situation that could reasonably be expected to immediately cause death or serious physical harm.

"Mechanical restraint" means the use of a device or equipment to restrict the free movement of a student; however, mechanical restraint does not include a device that is used by trained school personnel or a student for a specific and approved therapeutic purpose or safety purpose for which the device was designed or prescribed or a vehicle safety restraint that is appropriately used in the manner for which it was designed during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle.

"Physical escort" means a temporary touching or holding of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back of a student for the purpose of redirecting or inducing the student to move to a safe location.

"Physical restraint" means a personal restriction that immobilizes or reduces the ability of a student to move the student's torso, arm, leg, or head freely; however, physical restraint does not include a physical escort.

"Positive behavioral support" means the application of behavior analysis that:

- Is used to achieve socially important behavior change;
- Occurs at the:
 - Prevention level for all students in a school;
 - Strategic intervention level for a student who is not responding, from a social-emotional and behavioral perspective, to the prevention level; and
 - Intensive service or crisis-management level for a student who needs multifaceted or comprehensive behavioral or mental health services; and
- Involves a planned and collaborative school-wide approach that is implemented with a goal:
 - Of establishing a positive and supportive school environment that:
 - Teaches and reinforces prosocial behavior in a student;
 - Holds a student positively accountable for meeting an established behavioral expectation; and
 - Maintains a level of consistency throughout the implementation process; and
 - That is accomplished by using positive behavioral programs, strategies, or approaches.

"Prone restraint" means restraining a student in a face-down position on the floor or another surface and applying physical pressure to the body of the student to keep the student in the prone position.

"Serious physical harm" means bodily injury that involves a substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.

"Supine restraint" means the restraint of a student in a face-up position on the student's back on the floor or another surface and with physical pressure applied to the body of the student to keep the student in the supine position.

Positive Behavioral Supports

The District shall implement positive behavioral supports to be used at the:

1. Prevention level for each student in a school;
2. Strategic intervention level for a student who is not responding, from a social, emotional, or behavioral perspective, to the prevention level; and
3. Intensive service or crisis-management level for a student who needs multifaceted or comprehensive behavioral or mental health services.

The District's positive behavioral support shall include:

- a. The teaching and reinforcing of interpersonal, social, problem solving, conflict resolution, and coping skills to a student;
- b. Holding a student positively accountable for meeting an established behavioral expectation;

- c. Maintaining a high level of consistency through the implementation of the positive behavioral support process; and
- d. The following interrelated activities:
 - Providing a school-wide approach to the discipline and safety of each student rather than an approach to only the behavior problem of a single student;
 - Focusing on preventing the development and occurrence of problem behavior;
 - Regularly reviewing behavior data to adapt the District's procedures to meet the needs of every student; and
 - Providing a multitiered approach to academic and behavioral services and support to meet the academic and behavioral achievement needs of each student.

The following principles shall form the basis of the District's positive behavioral support system and conflict resolution or de-escalation approach:

1. A student has the right to be treated with dignity;
2. A student should receive necessary academic, social, emotional, and behavioral support that is provided in a safe and least-restrictive environment possible;
3. Positive and appropriate academic, social, emotional, or behavioral intervention, as well as mental health support, should be provided routinely to each student who needs the intervention or support;
4. Behavioral intervention should emphasize prevention as part of the District's system of positive behavioral support; and
5. Each student who exhibits an ongoing behavior that interferes with the student's learning or the learning of others, and who is nonresponsive to effectively implemented classroom or administrative intervention, should receive additional intensive behavioral intervention that is based on a FBA and data-based problem solving.

Problem Solving and Intervention Team

A problem-solving and intervention team shall be established for each student who exhibits social, emotional, or behavioral difficulty that may escalate, if not addressed, to potentially dangerous behavior. The problem-solving and intervention team shall include at least one (1) member who is an academic and behavioral assessment and intervention professional.

A student's problem-solving and intervention team shall:

- a. Work with the teachers of a student to complete a FBA of the student and an assessment of any problematic situations involving the student;
- b. Consider the need for a BIP with the goal of preventing or resolving the social, emotional, or behavioral difficulty of the student and developing a response that will de-escalate and stabilize a potential emergency situation that approaches the danger level; and
- c. Regularly review the data on incidents involving the use of physical restraint on the student and adjust, as necessary, the procedures concerning the use of physical restraint on the student.

Special education procedures shall be followed if a student is suspected of having a disability that relates to behavioral concerns.

Physical Restraint

Except in the case of a clearly unavoidable emergency situation in which a trained member of school personnel is not immediately available due to the unforeseeable nature of the emergency situation, the physical restraint of a student shall only be used by a member of school personnel who is appropriately trained to administer physical restraint.

When using physical restraint on a student, school personnel shall:

- use the least restrictive technique necessary to end imminent danger or serious physical harm to a student and others;
- Use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation;

- Consider the health and safety of a student, including without limitation whether the student has an existing medical condition that makes the use of physical restraint inadvisable;
- Not restrict the ability of a student to communicate unless the use of a less restrictive technique will not prevent imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others;
- Use only the amount of force that is reasonably necessary to protect a student or others from imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others;
- Not verbally abuse, ridicule, humiliate, taunt, or engage in any other similar action towards the student; and
- continuously and visually observe and monitor the student while the student is under physical restraint.

Physical restraint of a student shall only be used for a limited period of time and shall not be used:

- When imminent danger or serious physical harm to the student or others dissipates;
- If a medical condition occurs that puts the student at risk of harm;
- Unless the behavior of the student poses an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others;
- After the threat of imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others dissipates; or
- In the following manner:
 - To punish or discipline the student;
 - To coerce the student;
 - To force the student to comply;
 - To retaliate against the student;
 - To replace the use of an appropriate educational or behavioral support;
 - As a routine safety measure;
 - As a planned behavioral intervention in response to behavior of the student that does not pose an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others;
 - As a convenience for school personnel; or
 - To prevent property damage unless the act of damaging property committed by the student poses an imminent danger or serious physical harm to the student and others.

Even in an emergency, supine restraint shall not be used on a student except by a staff person who has been certified by a crisis intervention training program and the certified staff person determines that supine restraint is required to provide safety for the student and others.

At no time shall school personnel use the following on a student:

- Mechanical restraint;
- Chemical restraint;
- Aversive behavioral interventions that compromise health and safety;
- Physical restraint that is life-threatening or medically contraindicated; or
- Prone restraint or other restraint that restricts the breathing of a student.

Following the first incident of physical restraint used on a student, an FBA shall be conducted unless a previous FBA was conducted for the same behavior that was at issue when the physical restraint was used.

The use of physical restraint on a student as a planned behavioral intervention shall not be included in a student's IEP, 504 Plan, BIP, individual safety plan, or other individual planning document but may be considered as a crisis intervention if appropriate for the student. A student's IEP team or 504 Plan team shall consider whether an FBA should be performed; if a BIP should be developed for the student or if a student's existing BIP should be revised; and if additional behavioral goals and interventions should be included in the student's existing IEP or 504 Plan.

Parents may submit complaints regarding an incident involving the use of physical restraint on their student. A complaint shall be referred for review to the appropriate school personnel:

- The student's problem-solving and intervention team;
- The student's IEP team; or
- The student's 504 Plan team.

A complaint by a parent shall be handled by the appropriate District staff in the same manner as a debrief following the use of physical restraint on a student.¹

Use of a physical restraint technique that is abusive shall be reported to the Child Abuse Hotline and law enforcement.

Reports and Debriefing

After the occurrence of an incident involving physical restraint of a student, the building principal, or the principal's designee, shall be notified of the incident as soon as possible but by no later than the end of the school day when the incident occurred.

The student's parent shall be notified of the incident of the use of physical restraint via verbal or electronic communication as soon as possible but by no later than the end of the school day when the incident occurred. In the event the student's parent is unable to be notified via verbal or electronic communication within twenty-four (24) hours after the incident occurred, then the parent shall be mailed written notification of the incident within forty-eight (48) hours after the incident occurred.

school personnel involved in the incident shall document the incident in a written report, which is to be completed within twenty-four (24) hours after the incident occurred. The written report of the incident shall:

1. Include all information contained in the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Physical Restraint or Seclusion Incident Record and Debriefing Report;
2. Be maintained in the student's education record; and
3. Be provided to the student's parent within one (1) school day of the completion of the report.

A debriefing meeting shall be held within two (2) school days after the incident occurred. The following school personnel shall be present at the debriefing meeting:²

- a. A member of school personnel who was present during the incident;
- b. A member of school personnel who was in the proximity of the student on whom physical restraint was used immediately before and during the time of the incident;
- c. A school administrator; and
- d. Any other member of school personnel determined to be appropriate by the District.

The purpose of the debriefing meeting shall be to:

- Determine whether the procedures used during the incident were necessary;
- Evaluate the use of any behavioral supports and de-escalation techniques by school personnel before and during the incident;
- Evaluate the school district's positive behavioral supports system and prevention techniques in order to minimize future use of physical restraint; and
- If a trained member of school personnel was not immediately available due to the unforeseeable nature of the emergency situation when the incident occurred:
 - Reevaluate the training needs of school personnel;
 - Reevaluate the physical restraint policy and practices; and
 - Develop a plan to prevent a future incident.

At a debriefing meeting, school personnel shall:

1. Consider relevant information in the student's education record, including without limitation:
 - a. The concerns of the student's parent;
 - b. The student's social and medical history;
 - c. The student's FBA, if one exists; and
 - d. The student's BIP, if one exists;
2. Consider relevant information from the teachers, parents, and other District professionals;
3. Discuss whether positive behavior supports were appropriately implemented;
4. Discuss the duration and frequency of the use of physical restraint on the student;
5. Discuss appropriate action that may be taken to prevent and reduce the need for physical restraint;
6. Consider whether additional intervention and support is necessary for the student;
7. Consider whether additional intervention and support is necessary for school personnel; and
8. Consider how and when to debrief a person who was not present at the debriefing meeting, including without limitation:

- a. The student;
- b. The student's parent; and
- c. Other school personnel or students who witnessed the incident.

DESE's Physical Restraint or Seclusion Incident Record and Debriefing Report, or an alternative report that includes the same information, shall be completed during the debriefing meeting. A copy of the report shall be:

- Submitted to the building principal;³
- Mailed to the student's parent within two (2) days of the date on which the debriefing meeting was held; and
- Maintained as part of the student's education record along with other documents consulted during the debriefing meeting.

Specific Learning Disability (SLD)

Definition of Specific Learning Disability:

The Arkansas Department of Education defines a Specific Learning Disability (SLD) as:

A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.

Determining Eligibility:

It is the policy of Pocahontas School District to use a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement as a factor in the process of determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, the severe discrepancy must be in one or more of the following areas: oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills, reading fluency skills, reading comprehension, mathematics calculation, mathematics problems solving.

District policy regarding Specific Learning Disability determination requires that a discrepancy must be documented. It is required that discrepancies be determined by use of regression analysis. This method requires the use of a standard score comparison, meaning that achievement and intellectual functioning scores must be converted to the same standard score scale so that they can be directly compared. Age-based standard scores must be used.

A severe discrepancy is considered to exist between a student's intellectual ability and achievement when the level of severity is equal to or greater than 1.75 or more standard deviations (S.D.) at the fifty percent (50%) or above level of probability as determined by regression analysis.

The establishment of a 1.75 S.D. will allow the evaluation process to account for possible error that might result due to inaccuracies within the testing and performance comparison process.

HOMELESS STUDENTS

The Pocahontas School District will afford the same services and educational opportunities to homeless children as are afforded to non-homeless children. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall appoint an appropriate staff person to be the local educational agency (LEA) liaison for homeless children and youth whose responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to:

- Receive appropriate time and training in order to carry out the duties required by law and this policy;
- Coordinate and collaborate with the State Coordinator, community, and school personnel responsible for education and related services to homeless children and youths;
- Ensure that school personnel receive professional development and other support regarding their duties and responsibilities for homeless youths;
- Ensure that unaccompanied homeless youths:

- Are enrolled in school;
- Have opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic standards as other children and youths; and
- Are informed of their status as independent students under the Higher Education Act of 1965 and that they may obtain assistance from the LEA liaison to receive verification of such status for purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid;
- Ensure that public notice of the educational rights of the homeless children and youths is disseminated in locations frequented by parents or guardians of such youth, and unaccompanied homeless youths, including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens, in a manner and form that is easily understandable.

To the extent possible, the LEA liaison and the building principal shall work together to ensure no homeless child or youth is harmed due to conflicts with District policies solely because of the homeless child or youth's living situation; this is especially true for District policies governing fees, fines, and absences.

The District shall be responsible for providing transportation for a homeless child, at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the Liaison), to and from the child's school of origin to the degree required by federal and/or state law.

For the purposes of this policy, students shall be considered homeless if they lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and

- a. are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
- b. have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- c. are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and includes
- d. are migratory children who are living in circumstances described in clauses (a) through (c).

Child Nutrition USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, and reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Person with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, and American Sign Language) should contact the responsible State or local Agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202)720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800)877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which can be obtained online, at <https://www.ascr.usda.gov/sites/default/files/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866)632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

Mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Office of the Asst. Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

FAX:

(833)256-1665 or (202)690-7442

Email:

Program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Meal Charges

It is the belief of the Pocahontas School District that no child should go without breakfast and/or lunch during the school day., a la carte, or other food and beverage items may be purchased by either providing payment for the items at the time of receipt or by having a prepaid account with the district that may be charged for the items. , or students choosing to do so, may pay in advance for meals, a la carte, or other food and beverage items through any of the following methods:

- Submitting cash or check payments at the time of service,
- Depositing funds through the district’s online service,

In addition, a student may charge for the cost of the meal at the time of service in the event that the student does not have available cash or check to make payment at the time of service and there are no funds available on a prepaid account for the student. No a la carte items may be charged.

A student’s parents will be contacted by authorized district personnel regarding a student’s prepaid account balance and/or charges in the event that they enter into a negative balance. Parents will be notified of meal charges by letter, text, phone call, or payment reminder that may be set up in their student meal payment app. In accordance with federal and/or audit requirements of the district’s food service program, all accounts must be zeroed out by the end of the respective school year. district will work with parents to set up a payment plan to zero out a balance, if needed.

Parent Involvement Plan

The Pocahontas School District Parent Involvement Plan(s) is a comprehensive plan that will help develop a meaningful partnership that meets the needs of the families, school communities involved and incorporates ideas that benefit the involvement of the parents. The Parent Involvement Plan can be found on our district website under the “Parent” tab.

Student Handbook

It shall be the policy of the Pocahontas School District that the most recently adopted version of the Student Handbook be incorporated by reference into the policies of this district. In the event that there is a conflict between the student handbook and a general board policy or policies, the more recently adopted language will be considered binding and controlling on the matter provided the parent(s) of the student, or the student if 18 years of age or older have acknowledged receipt of the controlling language.

Notice of District Policies

It shall be the policy of the Pocahontas School Board to notify the parents and students of existence of these district policies requiring notice of receipt forms signed by parents/guardians and students and including this policy in the student handbook.