

Dear Parents,

The Cotter Public Schools exist solely for the benefit of education for our children. The employees, buildings, and textbooks are provided for their educational, moral, and social needs.

The mission of Amanda Gist Elementary School is to provide an environment conducive to the emotional, intellectual, and physical growth of each child. Cotter Elementary School will provide its students with the skills necessary to acquire, assimilate, and analyze information. We will strive to develop each child's fullest potential by promoting a positive self-concept and meeting individual needs.

We believe that education should be a major priority of both school and community and will work toward this goal by involving parents and community to the fullest extent possible.

We greatly encourage parent and community involvement within our school. We welcome you to visit our school and attend our school's special programs. In order to protect the safety of our students and teachers and to prevent unnecessary disruption of our school programs, we do require all visitors to report to the principal's office before going to other parts of the building or premises.

This booklet has been prepared to better acquaint you with the school your children attend. It also contains planned vacation dates and general information. If you have questions or suggestions that are not answered in this booklet, do not hesitate to call the principal. We are always looking for ways that will enable the school to better serve your children.

We on the Cotter Public School's staff are looking forward to working with you to make this coming year a valuable and enjoyable one for your children.

Sincerely,

Airl Cheek

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## COTTER SCHOOL DISTRICT CALENDAR 2025-2026

August 4 - 6 Teacher In-Service (PD)  
August 7 Teacher Work Day / PLC 1pm-5pm (CT)  
District Open House 5pm-7pm (CT)  
August 8 Teacher In-Service (PD)  
August 11 Teacher In-Service / Flex Day 1 (PD)  
August 12 Teacher In-Service / Flex Day 2 (PD)  
August 13 First Day of School  
September 1 Labor Day (No School for Students)  
September 25 Early Dismissal for Students 1:30pm  
September 25 Parent / Teacher Conferences 1:30 pm-7:30 pm (CT)  
September 26 No School for Students (Teacher In-Service / Flex Day 3-PD)  
October 14 End of Quarter 1 (43 Days)  
October 20 No School for Students (Teacher Work Day / PLC 8am-3pm)  
November 24-28 Thanksgiving Break (No School for Staff or Students)  
December 19 Early Dismissal for Students 12:30pm (Teacher PLC / Work Time (No Students) 12:30pm-3:30pm)  
End of Quarter 2 (41.5 Days)-First Semester Student Hours = 530.1  
Dec 22- Jan 2 Christmas Break (No School for Staff or Students)  
January 5 Teacher In-Service (PD)  
January 6 Students Return  
February 19 Early Dismissal for Students 1:30pm (Parent / Teacher Conferences 1:30pm-7:30pm)  
February 20 No School for Students (Teacher In-Service / Flex Day 4-PD)  
March 12 End of Quarter 3 (47 Days)  
March 23-27 Spring Break (No School for Staff or Students)  
May 21 Last Day for Students Early Dismissal 12:30pm (Teacher PLC / Work Time (No Students) 12:30pm-3:30pm)  
End of Quarter 4 (45.5 Days)- Second Semester Student Hours = 574.08

Six student snow days are banked into the calendar. In the event more snow days are needed, these days will be used from May 22 until completion of the school year.  
Total student hours = 1,104.18  
State minimum required = 1,068  
 $1,104.18 - 1,068 = 36.18$  hours excess  
This calendar is based on 6.28 hours (377 minutes) of instruction per day.  
Total teacher contracted days = 190 (176 student interaction + 14 contract)  
P/T conference days = 2 Teacher PD / PLC / work days = 12 (4 flex days indicated on calendar)  
Inclement weather or other closures may be made up on the snow days listed, using early release times, or extra hours built into the calendar. The superintendent and school board shall have the authority to amend the calendar in the event of excessive days missed.

### **FIRST DAYS**

Entering school for the first time is an entirely new experience for the beginner, and we want it to be a happy one. It is important that you, as parents, and we, as teachers, do all we can to make him/her happy in his/her new surroundings and see that he/she gets off to a good start. Your child will have a better chance for success if he/she comes to school regularly and arrives on time. He/She should be able to take off and put on his/her wraps, to hang up his/her wraps where they belong, to tie his/her shoelaces, and to go to the restroom by himself/herself. We encourage parents to bring their child to school on the first day to meet the teacher and to help the child become familiar with the building. After the first day parents should NOT accompany their child to the building. To do so creates a traffic hazard and possibly an unhealthy dependence for the child to the parent. Your cooperation in this matter will be beneficial to your child and appreciated by your child's teacher.

### **HOME AND SCHOOL RELATIONS**

Attitudes Toward School

Parents may help the child develop desirable attitudes in the following ways:

BY showing confidence in the school and the teacher.

BY coming to school to clear up any misunderstandings.

BY examining the work the child brings home and praising him/her in his/her efforts.

BY remembering that at all times the school NEEDS the help of the home and depends upon the full cooperation of the parents.

Lastly, we ask you to encourage your child to do their best. Reach out and hug him or her. At this age they need to be needed, especially by Mom and Dad. Instill that sense of worth and significance in each one of them; provide a warm, comfortable and supportive environment for your child; give your child that security he/she needs at home and we'll do our best to do the same here at Cotter Elementary School.

If you have some time and would like to volunteer, we welcome you; Give us a call, 435-6655.

### **THE SCHOOL DAY**

Cotter Elementary School opens at 7:30 a.m. The doors will be unlocked at this time. All elementary students are to report to the cafeteria where they may eat breakfast or visit with their friends. Staff will be on duty to dismiss them to their classrooms by 7:50 a.m.

WALKERS AND CAR RIDERS SHOULD NOT ARRIVE AT SCHOOL PRIOR TO 7:20 A.M. IF NOT PARTICIPATING IN THE BEFORE SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM. AS IT MAKES THE DAY EXTREMELY LONG, NO SUPERVISION IS AVAILABLE AND THE SCHOOL CANNOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR SAFETY.

Students may enter their classrooms at 7:50a.m. Students are considered tardy after 7:55 a.m.

Students will be dismissed as follows unless you are notified otherwise: Grades K-6 at 3:10 p.m. If your child does not arrive home soon after school, please call the school office at 435-6655 so that we may assist you in locating them.

### **ATTENDANCE**

#### **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 eight excused or unexcused 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 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.

12. 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;<sup>5</sup>

- Absences due to conditions related to pregnancy or parenting, including without limitation:
  - Labor, delivery, and recovery;
  - Prenatal and postnatal medical appointments and other medically necessary, pregnancy-related absences;
  - The illness or medical appointment of a child belonging to a parent who is enrolled at a District school;
  - A legal appointment related to pregnancy or parenting, including without limitation:
  - Adoption;
  - Custody; and
  - Visitation;
  - A reasonable amount of time to accommodate a lactating student's need to express breast milk or to breastfeed the student's child on the District's campus; and
  - At least ten (10) school days of absences for both a parenting mother and a parenting father after the birth of a child.<sup>6</sup>

13. Absences for a student who is the child of a fallen service member or fallen first responder:

- Due to a mental health concern; or
- To attend an event from a sponsoring organization that provides support to families of fallen service members or first responders or provides support for traumatic loss, grief, or resiliency.

14. Upon the written consent of a student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis to the student, the District shall grant an excused absence for the following purposes:

- Social or public policy advocacy; or
- Attempts to influence legislation or other governmental policy-making at the local, state, or federal level.

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.

- c. Provide documentation as proof of a student's participation in an activity or program scheduled and approved by the 4-H program that is provided by a 4-H county extension agent, 4-H educator, or other appropriate entity associated with the 4-H activity or program; or

- The student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis to the student provides written documentation that the student's absence is to attend an event from a sponsoring organization that:
  - Provides support to families of fallen service members or first responders or provides support for traumatic loss, grief, or resiliency; and;
  - May be verified as an organization that provides support to the military and first responder community by reviewing the Resources Page for Military Family Engagement on the Department of Education website.

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.

Student shall not be eligible to receive an excused absence for #13 above if:

- The student is not in good academic standing;
- The student does not have a prior record of good attendance; or
- The absence occurs during a date on which standardized testing is administered.

The District shall annually provide a report by June 30 to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education that contains the following:

- The number of absences requested under number 14;
- The number of absences granted under number 14; and
- The stated purposes of the absence.

Additional excused absences shall be granted to allow a student to visit his/her parent or legal guardian who is a member of the military and has been called to active duty, is on leave from active duty, or has returned from deployment to combat zone or combat support posting. The number of additional excused absences shall be at the discretion of the superintendent or designee. Students who come to school after 7:55 a.m. but before 9:00 a.m. will be marked as tardy. Students signed out of school after 2:00 will be marked with a check out. Three tardies and/or checkouts constitute one day of absence. Students must attend the school day for at least two hours to be credited with one-half day of attendance.

#### **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 eight (8) excused or 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 of graduation. Excessive absences shall not be a reason for expulsion or dismissal of a student.

When a student has four (4) excused or unexcused absences, his/her parents, guardians, or persons 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 eight (8) excused or unexcused absences in a semester, the District shall notify the prosecuting authority and the parent, guardian, or persons 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 excused or unexcused absences permitted by this policy, the student, or his/her parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis may petition the school or district's administration for special arrangements to address the student's excused and/or 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, guardian, or person 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.

Days missed due to out-of-school suspension or expulsion shall be unexcused absences.

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 the former student meets certain requirements specified in the statute.

Applicants for an instruction permit or for a driver's license by persons less than eighteen (18) years old on October 1 of any year are required to provide proof of a high school diploma or enrollment and regular attendance in an adult education program or a public, private, or parochial school prior to receiving an instruction permit. To be issued a driver's license, a student enrolled in school shall present proof of a "C" average for the previous semester or similar equivalent grading period for which grades are reported as part of the student's permanent record.

#### **Additional Absences**

Additional absences that are not charged against the allowable number of absences are those where the student was on official school business or when the absence was due to one of the following reasons and the student brings a written statement upon his/her return to school from the parent, guardian, person in loco parentis, or appropriate government agency stating such reason.

1. To participate in FFA, FHA, or 4-H sanctioned activity;
2. To participate in the election poll workers program for high school students;
3. To serve as a page for a member of the General Assembly;
4. 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; and
5. For purposes pre-approved by the school administration such as visiting prospective colleges, to obey a subpoena, or to attend an appointment with a government agency;
6. Due to the student having been sent home from school due to illness.

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 code.

### **Tardiness**

Tardiness is a bad habit we should teach our children to avoid. A child who comes to school late not only misses part of the day's work but also disrupts class work by late entrance. Having your child at school on time will be beneficial to him/her and greatly appreciated by the school. Parents will be contacted if a child is repeatedly tardy. Tardy students should report to the office with the adult bringing them to school to sign them in. Any more than 8 tardies in one semester shall be reported to the Prosecuting Attorney.

Students who come to school after 7:55 a.m. but before 9:00 a.m. will be marked as tardy. Students signed out of school after 2:00 p.m. will be marked with a check out. Three tardies and/or checkouts constitute one day absence. Students must attend the school day for at least two hours to be credited with one-half day of attendance.

### **Make-Up Work**

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

1. Students will be provided the missed assignments upon their return to school.
2. 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.
3. Students shall have one class day to make up their work for each class day they are absent.
4. Make-up work which is not turned in within the make-up schedule for the assignment shall receive a zero.
5. Students are responsible for turning in their make-up work.
6. 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.
7. 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 in policy 4.7-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.

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 4.57-IMMUNIZATIONS.

In addition to the make-up work process above, at the conclusion of a pregnancy-related or parenting-related period of absences, a student may choose from various options to make up missed work, including without limitation:

- a. Retaking a semester at the District school where the student is enrolled;
- b. Participating in an online course credit recovery program;
- c. Being granted six (6) weeks to continue at the same pace and finish the semester at a later date, provided that the student may:
  - Complete the student's coursework within the current school year; or
  - Attend previously scheduled summer school classes made available by the District where the student is enrolled; and
- d. Receiving home-based instruction services.

### **STUDENT MEDIA AND THE DISTURBANCE OF LITERATURE**

If the forum is a scheduled event with designated student speakers, the building principal shall have an opportunity to review pre-written remarks prior to the student's presentations at the scheduled forum. The principal may require the student to amend the student's remarks to the extent necessary to address any proportions that are determined to be inappropriate. A student's refusal to amend the remarks that were determined to be inappropriate may be prohibited from participation in the forum. A student who diverts from the approved pre-written remarks during a speech in such a manner that is determined to be inappropriate by the building principal or another present District staff member may be asked to return to the approved remarks. If a student refuses to return to the approved remarks or continues to divert from the approved remarks in a manner that is determined to be inappropriate may be escorted from the forum and disciplined in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct.

If the timing or format of the forum does not provide for pre-written remarks to be reviewed, then the building principal or other District staff shall have the authority to address a student whose remarks are determined to be inappropriate. The building principal or District staff member shall initially ask the student to cease the inappropriate remarks. If the student refuses or makes additional inappropriate remarks after being

directed to cease such remarks, Then the building principal or District staff member may escort the student from the forum and the student may be disciplined in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct.

There shall be a disclaimer that a student speaker's speech does not reflect the endorsement, sponsorship, position, or expression, of the District. The disclaimer shall be provided at all forums where students speak and at all graduation ceremonies. The disclaimer shall be provided orally or in writing as most appropriately fits the format of the forum.

Information on how to participate in a student forum shall be provided to all students.

In addition to the salutatorian and valedictorian selection process in Policy 5.17- HONOR ROLL AND HONOR ROLL GRADUATES, the following student may speak during the District's graduation ceremony.

Cross References: 4.14 STUDENT MEDIA AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE

Legal References:

#### **CHANGE IN LEAVING SCHOOL**

For the safety of the children, parents must check their child out in the office.

Unless the court has indicated otherwise by custody papers, we will release a student only to the parent(s) or their designee.

- a. The school must have on file a court order before we may prevent a restricted parent from taking his or her child from school.
- b. We cannot accept the word of one parent over the other without legal authority. People, other than parents, must have a certificate of guardianship on file in the office for children to attend here.

Students will not be allowed to leave school with anyone other than their parent unless there is parent permission stating with whom the child is to leave.

#### **AFTERSCHOOL DAYCARE**

The Cotter Afterschool School Daycare program is intended to provide childcare for parents and guardians who are unable to provide supervision for their children at the regular school arrival time. The program is designed and staffed in such a way that it requires students to function within a group of students with overall adult supervision. Students who do not follow the school and/or afterschool daycare rules during that time are subject to disciplinary action including possible suspension or dismissal from the program.

#### **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. Noncustodial parents who file with the principal a date-stamped copy of current court orders granting unsupervised visitation may, to extend authorized by the court order, eat lunch, volunteer in the child's classroom, or otherwise have contact with their child during school hours and the prior approval of the school's principal. Such contact is subject to the limitations outlined in Policy 4.16, Policy 6.5, and any other policies that may apply. The District shall not act as a supervisor for non-custodial parent visitation purposes under any circumstances.

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 signed agreement between both the custodial and non-custodial parents that was witnessed by the student's building principal. Unless a valid no-contact order has been filed with the student's 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. 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 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, or other person having lawful control by court order, or person acting in loco parentis identified 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, 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.

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.

#### **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.

#### **STUDENT VISITORS**

The board strongly believes that the purpose of school is for learning. Social visitors, generally, disrupt the classroom and interfere with learning that should be taking place. Therefore, visiting with students at school is strongly discouraged, unless approved by the principal and scheduled in advance. This includes visits made by former students, friends, and/or relatives of teachers or students. Any visitation to the classroom shall be allowed only with the permission of the school principal and all visitors must first register at the office.

The District has the right to ask disruptive visitors to leave its school campuses. Principals are authorized to seek the assistance of law enforcement officers in removing any disruptive visitors who refuse to leave school property when requested to do so.

#### **CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL**

Usually school will not be in session when weather makes it dangerous for school buses to run.

Please listen to the local radio stations for the closing of school during severe weather. DO NOT CALL THE STATIONS OR THE SCHOOL FOR THIS INFORMATION. The radio will broadcast the information as soon as they receive it. The information is also available on the website at [www.cotterschools.net](http://www.cotterschools.net).

In the event that emergencies arise that might affect the school system, such as excessive snow, the Superintendent is empowered to declare an emergency and close the school. School closings will be announced on local radio stations. A Remind message will be sent to parents regarding early dismissal. AGAIN, PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE STATIONS OR THE SCHOOL FOR THIS INFORMATION!

Children who do not ride buses will be dismissed as soon as parents request.

#### **EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY**

No student in the Cotter School District shall be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity sponsored by the District on the basis of color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability. 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 Airl Cheek, who may be reached at 870-435-6655.

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 <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html>; for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

#### **ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS**

To enroll in a school in the District, the child must be a resident of the District as defined in District policy (4.1-RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS) or meet the criteria outlined in policy 4.40-HOMELESS STUDENTS or in policy 4.52-STUDENTS WHO ARE FOSTER CHILDREN, be accepted as a transfer student under the provisions of policy 4.4, or participate under a school choice option and submit the required paperwork as required by the choice option under Policy 4.5.

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 at the request of the child's parent or legal guardian 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 (6) years of age 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 six (6) years of age during the school year in which the student 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 policy 4.6-HOME SCHOOLING.

The district shall make no attempt to ascertain the immigration status, legal or illegal, of any student or the student's parent or legal guardian present 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 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 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;
- 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 Policy 4.57-IMMUNIZATIONS, the child shall be age appropriately immunized or have exemption issued by the Arkansas Department of Health.

Exemptions are also possible on an annual basis for religious reasons from the Arkansas Department of Health. (See number 4) To continue such exemptions, they must be renewed at the beginning of each school year. A child enrolling in a district school and living in the household of a person active military duty has 30 days to receive his/her initial required immunizations and 12 months to be up to date on the required immunizations for the student's age.

#### **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 or 42 U.S.C § 204.

"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 the Uniformed Service Member's 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.

"Active duty members of the uniformed services" includes members of the National Guard and Reserve on active duty orders pursuant to 10 U.S.C. Section 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.

"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;
- Veterans of the uniformed services who are injured in the line of duty and medically separated or retired;
- Members of the uniformed services who die on active duty or as a result of injuries sustained on active duty;
- 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 the member attends monthly and annual training periods.

"Transition" means the:

- o Formal and physical process of transitioning from public school to public school; or
- o 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 possess specialized knowledge regarding the educational needs and unique challenges faced by children of uniformed service families.<sup>5</sup>

An eligible child as defined in this policy shall:

1. Be allowed to continue the student's enrollment at the grade level commensurate with the student's grade level the student was in at the time of transition from the student's 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 the student's previous school;
3. Enter the District's school on the validated level from the student's 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 the student's previous school to 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 the student's previous school based on the student's previous Individualized Education Program (IEP). This does not preclude 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 the student 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 and an enrollment application of an eligible student from a military family, the District shall;

- Provisionally enroll, provide placement for, and enter academic course requests on behalf of the incoming student based on the student's education record provided by the student's family or the sending district;
- Provide the uniformed services family with information regarding:<sup>6</sup>
  - a. Career-ready pathways and other academic or education programs offered;
  - b. Required academic courses for each curriculum and elective course options;
  - c. School and community-sponsored extracurricular activities, including without limitation individual and team sports, clubs, junior reserve officer training corps opportunities, and Purple Star School program ambassadors; and
  - d. Contact information for the designated military family education coordinator and the Purple Star School program military family education facilitator, if applicable; and
  - e. Other relevant information regarding the District.

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.

The District shall not deny the enrollment of a Uniformed Service Member dependent unless the District has reached the maximum student-to-teacher ratio allowed under federal law; state law; the Standards for Accreditation for Public Schools and School Districts; state rules; or other applicable federal regulations, and the District timely notifies the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis of the lack of capacity.

The District shall notify a prospective student's family in writing regarding whether the student's enrollment has been accepted or rejected within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving the student's enrollment application and supporting documentation. 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.

The district may request a waiver from the State Board as necessary to accommodate an eligible student.

#### **INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE STUDENTS**

"Host family" means the individual or family with whom an international exchange student is placed by an international student exchange visitor placement organization under the International Student Exchange Visitor Placement Organization Registration Act, § 6-18-1701 et seq.

"International exchange student" means a student who is placed with a host family by an international student exchange visitor placement organization under the International Student Exchange Visitor Placement Organization Registration Act § 6-18-1701 et seq.

Before and international exchange student may attend a District school, the District requires all international student exchange visitor placement organizations that are placing international exchange students within the District to:

- Be certified by the Council on Standards for International Education Travel;
- Provide documented proof on the international exchange student's English proficiency; and
- Notify the District at least three (3) weeks before the beginning of the academic semester the international exchange student plans to enroll in the District.

The District shall admit for enrollment and attendance an international exchange student who has been placed with a host family who resides within the District boundaries. The international exchange student shall attend the school in the District based on the attendance zone where the host family resides.<sup>8</sup>

Upon an international exchange student's arrival, the international exchange student may be required to submit to quarantine to prevent the spread of infectious diseases as may be necessary, which shall not exceed seven (7) days unless otherwise recommended by the Arkansas Department of Health or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

International exchange students are expected to follow the District handbook and student code of conduct as the District has the authority to expel a student for violations of the school district's written student discipline policies or if the international exchange student presents a danger to the District's students or employees.

Statewide assessment results achieved by an international exchange student enrolled in the District shall be included in the District's results on the statewide assessments.

The district shall provide English-language services to international exchange students as necessary.<sup>9</sup>

Children whose parent or 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 of attending school in the school district where the children have relocated. A child may complete all remaining school years at the enrolled district regardless of mobilization, deployment, or military status of the parent or guardian.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

### **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 doses(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 District who has not been age appropriately immunized against:

- \* Poliomyelitis;
- \* Diphtheria;
- \* Tetanus;
- \* Pertussis;
- \* Red (Rubella) 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.

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. 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 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 DH 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 record 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 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year for the tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, and meningococcal vaccinations required at ages eleven (11) and sixteen (16) respectively if October 1<sup>st</sup> is later in the current school year than 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 the 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 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 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 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 twenty-one (21) days or 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 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 for any assignment or examination not completed or submitted on time.

#### **STUDENT ACCELERATION**

The school acceleration policy is found in the G/T policy handbook.

#### **RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS**

"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.

#### **Definitions:**

"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 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 District 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 whose parents move the student into another district or who placed under the legal guardianship of non-custodial parent living outside the district by a custodial parent on active military duty may continue to attend district school. 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.

Under instances prescribed in A.C.A. § 6-18-203, a child or ward of an employee of the district or of the education co-op to which the district belongs may enroll in the district even though the employee and the employee's child or ward reside outside the district.

Children whose parent or legal guardian relocates within the state due to 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.

The children or wards of any person who is at least a half-time employee of this district but reside in another district are eligible to enroll in District schools.

#### **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 (4.6—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 the child 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, G.E.D., 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).

#### **PHYSICAL**

State law requires all students to have a medical physical before enrolling in Kindergarten.

#### **STUDENT ILLNESS/ACCIDENT**

If a student becomes too ill to remain in class and/or could be contagious to the 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.

#### **SAFETY**

In order to assure your child's safety in going to and from school, it is helpful if he/she learns the following:

1. The safest way to and from school
2. His or her own full name, address, telephone number, his/her father's name and his/her mother's name.
3. The dangers of throwing rocks, glass and dirt.
4. Not to accept rides with strangers.
5. Understand the need to come straight to school and not stop and play.
6. Understand the need to cross the streets at street corners.

7. Understand the need to obey traffic signals.

Please instruct your child in the proper way to cross streets and intersections to assist us in assuring a safe and accident free year for your child.

#### **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 with at least one each in the months of September, January, and February. Students who ride 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, medical professionals, fire department officials, and emergency management personnel. The lockdown drill training will include use of the District's emergency communications 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 methods. Students shall be included in the drills to the extent practicable.

#### **TORNADO**

When conditions are favorable for a tornado or some other disaster, the school's plan for student safety will be exercised.

#### **OTHER**

Students will be trained and expected to follow directions given by the teacher, or any adult in charge, in any emergency situation.

#### **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.<sup>1</sup> Among the coordinator's responsibilities shall be ensuring district enforcement of the due process rights of students with disabilities and their parents.

#### **STUDENTS WHO TRANSFER INTO COTTER SCHOOL DISTRICT WITH AN IEP**

##### **IEPs for children who transfer public agencies in the same state:**

If a child with a disability (who had an IEP that was in effect in a previous public agency in the same state) transfers to and enrolls in Cotter School District within the same school year, Cotter School District (in consultation with the parents) must provide FAPE to the child including services comparable to those described in the child's IEP from the previous public agency, until Cotter School District either-

- A. Adopts the child's IEP from the previous public agency; or
- B. Develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP that meets the applicable requirements in 34 CFR 300.320 through 300.324.

##### **IEPs for students who transfer from another state:**

If a child with a disability (who had an IEP that was in effect in a previous public agency in another state) transfers and enrolls in Cotter School District, within the same school year, Cotter School District (in consultation with the parents) must provide the child with FAPE (including services comparable to those described in the child's IEP from the previous public agency), until Cotter School District-

- A. Conducts an evaluation pursuant to 34 CFR 300.304 through 300.306 (if determined to be necessary by Cotter School District) and;
- B. Develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP, if appropriate, that meets the applicable requirements in 34 CFR 300.320 through 300.24.



### **COUNSELING PROGRAM**

Cotter School District employs an elementary counselor to assist students with their emotional, social, personal, and academic concerns. The counselor has a primary concern for the individual student as a person whose feelings, values, goals, and success are important for maximum growth and development.

### **ROLE OF COUNSELOR**

The primary function of the Elementary Counselor is to provide a comprehensive guidance and counseling program for all children in grades K-6, consult with teachers, parents, and staff to enhance their effectiveness in helping children's educational, personal, social and career development; and provide support to other elementary educational programs.

### **LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER**

Our school library media center is well equipped and vital to the quality of our educational program. Pupils are encouraged to use all materials and to check out books.

In order to maintain an adequate collection, pupils, teachers, and parents must cooperate to see that these are returned in good condition. Marking in books will result in the student having to pay for the damaged book. The students are held responsible for books on the date due. If materials are not returned, a charge equal to the current replacement price is made. The average price of a book is twenty-five dollars. Talking in the library should be kept at a minimum.

### **SELECTION OF LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER MATERIALS**

The ultimate authority for the selection and retention of materials for the schools' media centers rests with the Board of Education which shall serve as a final arbiter in resolving a challenge to any media center materials. Licensed media center personnel shall make the initial selections in consultation with school and district licensed staff. Materials selected shall be in accordance with the guidelines of this policy.

The purpose of the schools' libraries/media centers is to supplement and enrich the curriculum and instruction offered by the District. Promoting the dialogue characteristic of a healthy democracy necessitates the maintenance of a broad range of materials and information representing varied points of view on current and historical issues. In the selection of the materials and resources to be available in each library/media center consideration will be given to their age appropriateness. Materials should be available to challenge the different interests, learning styles, and reading levels of the school's students and that will help them attain the District's educational goals.

### **Selection Criteria**

The criteria used in the selection of media center materials shall be that the materials:

- a) Support and enhance the curricular and educational goals of the district;
- b) Are appropriate for the ages, learning styles, interests, and maturity of the schools' students, or parents in the case of parenting literature;
- c) Contribute to the examination of issues from varying points of view and help to broaden students understanding of their rights and responsibilities in our society;
- d) Help develop critical thinking skills;
- e) Are factually and/or historically accurate, in the case of non-fiction works and/or serve a pedagogical purpose;
- f) Have literary merit as perceived by the educational community; and
- g) Are technically well produced, physically sound (to the extent appropriate), and represent a reasonably sound economic value.

### **Retention and Continuous Evaluation**

Media center materials shall be reviewed regularly to ensure the continued appropriateness of the center's collection to the school's curriculum and to maintain the collection in good repair. Those materials no longer meeting the selection criteria, have not been used for a long period of time, or are too worn to be economically repaired shall be withdrawn from the collection and disposed of. A record of withdrawn media materials including the manner of their disposal shall be maintained for a period of three (3) years.

### **Gifts**

Gifts to the media centers shall be evaluated to determine their appropriateness before they are placed in any media center. The evaluation shall use the same criteria as for all other materials considered for inclusion in the media centers. Any items determined to be unacceptable shall be returned to the donor or disposed of at the discretion of the media specialist. The media centers shall have a list of desired items to give to prospective donors to aid them in their selection of materials to donate.

### **Kindergarten Through Grade Five (K-5) Libraries**

The library media center located in a District elementary school that serves students in kindergarten through grade five (K-5) shall store non-age-appropriate sexual content, including without limitation a book or other resource that is located in the library media center that is available to the public, in a locked compartment.

For purposes of this policy, "non-age-appropriate sexual content" means any materials that include explicit instruction, promotion, or advocacy of sexual ideology, behaviors, or orientations that are not developmentally appropriate for kindergarten through grade five (K-5) students.

A student enrolled in the school shall not view or check out a book or other resource that concerns non-age-appropriate sexual content without the prior written approval from the student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis to the student.

District staff who are found to have knowingly violated the provisions of this section of the policy shall be disciplined in accordance with A.C.A. 6-25-107.

#### **Challenges**

The parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of a student, or person acting in loco parentis of a student affected by a media selection, or a District employee may formally challenge the appropriateness of a media center selection by following the procedure outlined in this policy. The challenged material shall remain available throughout the challenge process.

Before any formal challenge can be filed, the individual contesting (hereinafter complainant) the appropriateness of the specified item shall request a conference through the principal's office with a licensed media center employee. The complainant shall be given a copy of this policy and the Request for Formal Reconsideration Form prior to the conference. The meeting shall take place at the earliest possible time of mutual convenience, but in no case later than five (5) working days from the date of the request unless it is by the choice of the complainant.

In the meeting, the media specialist shall explain the selection criteria and how the challenged material fits the criteria. The complainant shall explain the complainant's reasons for objecting to the selected material. If, at the completion of the meeting, the complainant wishes to make a formal challenge to the selected material, the complainant may do so by completing the Request for Formal Reconsideration Form and submitting it to the principal's office.

To review the contested media, the principal shall select a committee of five (5) or seven (7) licensed personnel consisting of the principal as chair and at least one media specialist. The remaining committee members shall be licensed personnel with curriculum knowledge appropriate for the material being contested and representative of diverse viewpoints. The task of the committee shall be to determine if the challenged material meets the criteria of selection. No material shall be withdrawn solely for the viewpoints expressed within it and shall be reviewed in its entirety and not selected portions taken out of context.

The principal shall convene a meeting after a reasonable time for the committee members to adequately review the contested material and the Request for Formal Reconsideration Form submitted by the complainant. All meetings of the committee shall be open to the public. The complainant shall be allowed to present the complaint to the committee after which time the committee shall meet to discuss the material. The committee shall vote to determine whether the contested material shall be relocated within the media center's collection to an area that is not accessible to minors. A member from the voting majority shall write a summary of the reasons for their decision. A notice of the committee's decision and the summary shall be given (by hand or certified mail) to the complainant.

If the decision is to not relocate the material, the complainant may appeal the committee's decision to the district Board of Directors by filing a written appeal to the Superintendent within five (5) working days of the committee's decision or of written receipt of the decision. The Superintendent shall present the original complaint and the committee's decision along with the summary of its reasons for its position plus a recommendation of the administration, if so desired, to the Board within fifteen (15) days of the committee's decision. The Board shall review the material submitted to them by the Superintendent and make a decision within thirty (30) days of receipt of the information. The Board's decision is final.

#### **INTERNET SAFETY and ELECTRONIC DEVICE USE POLICY**

##### **Definition**

For the purposes of this policy, "electronic device" means anything that can be used to transmit or capture images, sound, or data.

The District makes electronic device(s) and/or electronic device Internet access available to students, to permit students to perform research and to allow students to learn how to use electronic device technology. Use of district electronic devices is for educational and/or instructional purposes only. Student use of electronic device(s) shall only be as directed or assigned by staff or teachers; students are advised that they enjoy no expectation of privacy in any aspect of their electronic device use, including email, and that monitoring of student electronic device use is continuous.

No student will be granted Internet access until and unless an Internet and electronic device 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 Internet and electronic device use agreement is incorporated by reference into board policy and is considered part of the student handbook.

##### **Technology Protection Measures**

The District is dedicated to protecting students from materials on the Internet or world wide web that are inappropriate, obscene, or otherwise harmful to minors; therefore, it is the policy of the District to protect each electronic device with Internet filtering software that is designed to prevent students from accessing such materials. For purpose 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 lewd interest in inappropriate content;
- (B) depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors.

(C) taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

#### **Internet Use and Safety**

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.

#### **Misuse of Internet**

The opportunity to use the District's technology to access the Internet is a privilege and not a right. Students who misuse electronic devices or Internet access in any way will face disciplinary action, as specified in the student handbook and/or Internet safety and electronic device use agreement. Misuse of the Internet includes:

- The disabling or bypassing of security procedures, compromising, attempting to compromise, or defeating the district's technology network security or Internet filtering software;
- The altering of data without authorization;
- Disclosing, using, or disseminating passwords, whether the passwords are the student's own or those of another student/faculty/community member, to other students;
- Divulging personally identifying information about himself/herself or anyone else either on the Internet or in an email unless it is necessary and integral part of the student's academic endeavor. Personally identifying information includes full names, addresses, and phone numbers.
- Using electronic devices for any illegal activity, including electronic device hacking and copyright or intellectual property law violations;
- Using electronic devices to access or create sexually explicit or pornographic text or graphics;
- Using electronic devices to violate any other policy or is contrary to the Internet safety and electronic device use agreement.

#### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECURITY**

The superintendent shall be responsible for ensuring the district has the necessary components in place to meet the district's needs and the state's requirements for information technology (IT) security. The district shall appoint an information technology security officer (ISO) who, along with other IT staff, the superintendent and district management appointed by the superintendent shall develop the necessary procedures to create a district-wide information technology security system meeting the requirements of this policy and the standards prescribed by the Arkansas Department of Education.

The IT security system shall contain the necessary components designed to accomplish the following.

1. Sensitive information shall be protected from improper denial, disclosure, or modification.
2. Physical access to computer facilities, data rooms, systems, networks and data will be limited to those authorized personnel who require access to perform assigned duties.
3. Traffic between internal (district) resources and external (Internet) entities will be regulated by network perimeter controls. To the extent technologically feasible, network transmission of sensitive data should enforce encryption.
4. User access to the district's technology system and its applications shall be based on the least amount of access to data and programs necessary to perform the user's job duties.
5. Student or financial applications software developed for or by the district will be tested prior to implementation to ensure data security through proper segregation of programs.
6. Monitoring of internal and external networks and systems will be designed to provide early notification of events and rapid response and recovery from IT related incidents and/or attacks.
7. Continuity of critical IT services will be ensured through the development of a disaster recovery plan appropriate for the size and complexity of the district's IT operations.
8. Software protection of servers and workstations will be deployed to identify and eradicate malicious software attacks such as viruses, spyware, and malware.

#### **FOOD SERVICE**

Breakfast and lunch are served daily in the cafeteria. Meals are planned by the district's Food Service Supervisor and all meals must meet the federal requirements for school lunch and breakfast. Cotter Schools participate in the Community Eligibility Program which makes available breakfast and lunch to all students at no charge. Milk and juice are available to purchase by students. As a courtesy, elementary students can

charge for milk and juice with a \$10.00 charge limit. After the limit is reached, no charging is allowed for these items. Students may not charge second trays or other a la carte items. Parents are encouraged to deposit money into their children's accounts so they may purchase these items as needed. Charge slips will go out at the end of each month to inform parents of any charges that their children have. All charges need to be paid two weeks prior to the end of the school year. No charging for any items will be allowed the last two weeks of school. Prepared food must not be taken from the lunchroom. Students who wish to have food brought to them at school must have it done by a parent/guardian/family member. Parents and students may not bring outside food to other students.

\*No canned soda or bottled drinks

\*No energy drinks – example: Red Bull, etc.

#### **SCHOOL MEAL MODIFICATIONS**

Except for requests to receive "lactose free" milk, the district only provides modified meal components on menus to accommodate students with a disability. A parent/guardian wishing to request such dietary accommodations for their student with a disability must submit to the district's Director of Child Nutrition a medical statement completed by a State licensed healthcare professional, which includes:

\*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:

1. A description of the student's disability that is sufficient to understand how the disability restricts the student's diet;
2. An explanation of what must be done to accommodate the disability, which may include:
  - a. Food(s) to avoid or restrict;
  - b. Food(s) to substitute;
  - c. Caloric modifications; or
  - d. 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 Nutrition 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 submit a written request to their student to be provided "lactose free" milk. The parent's request is not required to be accompanied by a medical statement in order for it to be granted.

Parents may file a grievance regarding the request for modifications with the District's 504 Coordinator, 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.

Except for requests to receive "lactose free"milk, the district will not prepare meals outside the normal menu to accommodate a family's religious or personal health beliefs.

A Registered Dietitian Nutritionist may make recommendations for alternate foods for children whose disability restricts their diet, but the medical statement must be signed by one of the professionals listed in this policy.

#### **TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPLIES**

Textbooks are furnished free. Textbooks lost or considerably damaged will be charged the full replacement price.

The school will furnish certain supplies to your child but there will be other materials, which you will need to buy. Each teacher will send home a list of supplies your child should have.

Textbooks, workbooks, library books, and desks must be kept in good order or damage fines may be assessed.

#### **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) 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 email;
- \*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 if the home-school student plans to see a driver's license during the current school year.
- g. 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
- h. A signature of the parent or legal guardian, which must be notarized if the home-schooled student plans to seek a driver's license during the school year.

To aid the District in providing a free and appropriate public education to students in need of special education services, the parent 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:

- o The items, resources, supplies, materials, or other property belonging to the District have been returned to the District;
- o The items, resources, supplies, materials, or other property belonging to the District have been paid for; or
- o 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 grade 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 in the same manner the District uses when determining grade placement and course credits for students enrolling or re-enrolling in the District that 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.

## **GRADING**

Parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of a student, or persons standing in loco parentis shall be kept informed concerning the progress of their student. Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged and may be requested by parents, guardians, persons having lawful control of a student, persons standing in loco parentis, or teachers. If the progress of a student is unsatisfactory in a subject, the teacher shall attempt to schedule a parent-teacher conference. In the conference, the teacher shall explain the reasons for difficulties and shall develop, cooperatively with the parents, a plan for remediation, which may enhance the probability of the student succeeding. The school shall also send timely progress reports and issue grades for each nine (9) week grading period<sup>1</sup> to keep parents/guardians informed of their student's progress.

The evaluation of each student's performance on a regular basis serves to give the parents/guardians, students, and the school necessary information to help effect academic improvement. Students' grades shall reflect only the extent to which a student has achieved the expressed educational objectives of the course.

The grades of a child in foster care shall not be lowered due to an absence from school due to:

- A change in the child's school enrollment;
- The child's attendance at a dependency-neglect court proceeding; or
- The child's attendance at court-ordered counseling or treatment.

The grading scale for all schools in the district shall be as follows:

A = 100 – 90

B = 89 – 80

C = 79 – 70

D = 69 – 60

F = 59 and below

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 accelerated learning courses and other approved courses for weighted credit, shall be one (1) point greater than for regular courses with the exception that an F shall still be worth zero (0) points.

The final grades of students who transfer in for part of a semester will be determined by blending the grades earned in the district with those earned outside the district. Each final grade will be the sum of the percentage of days in the grading period transferred from outside the district times the transferred grade from outside the district plus the percentage of days in the grading period while in the district times the grade earned in the district.

For example: The grading period had forty (40) days. A student transferred in with a grade of eighty-three percent (83%) earned in ten (10) days at the previous school. The student had a grade of seventy-five percent (75%) in our district's school earned in the remaining thirty (30) days of the grading period. Ten (10) days is twenty-five percent (25%) of forty (40) days while thirty (30) days is seventy-five percent (75%) of forty (40) days. Thus the final grade would be  $(0.25 \times 83) + (0.75 \times 75) = 77\%$ .

## **REPORT CARDS**

Information on the educational progress of children will be reported to parents on a regular basis.

1. Report cards will be issued every nine-week period. Parents are asked to sign these reports and return them to school.
2. Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled twice during the school year. On the days when conferences are held there will be no classes during conference time.
3. Students will be issued progress reports at the end of the fifth week of each nine weeks period. These reports need to be signed and returned to school so we will know they have been received.
4. Other conferences throughout the year are encouraged and will be arranged as needed or upon request.
5. Conferences will also be arranged as early as feasible concerning possible student retention.

### **Grading Systems**

The kindergarten will use the following grading system.

Mastery-Skill completed 80% of the time

Satisfactory Progress Shown - Child is improving in the skill

Needs more Time - Skill has been introduced, reinforcement needed

Does Not Apply - Skill has not been taught in small group instruction

The following will be used in grading first & second grade students, with 80% being considered mastery level:

O = Outstanding

S+ = Above Average

S = Average

S- = Below Average

N = Needs Improvement

The following will be used in grading elementary school students in grades 3-6:

A	Superior	90-100
B	Above Average	80-89
C	Average	70-79
D	Below Average	60-69
F	Failure	0-59
I	Incomplete	

Grades assigned to students reflect only educational objectives. Students in grades 3-6 receiving two or more "F's" for final grades in core subjects or first grade and second grade students receiving two or more "N's" for final grades in core subjects may be retained at that grade level. Kindergarten students will be assessed during the school year with a committee of school staff designated by the principal in determining which students will be retained in Kindergarten.

#### **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. Parents or guardians shall be kept informed concerning the progress of their student(s). Notice 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.

Students who miss either (8) or more days in excused or unexcused absences without prior clearance through the office may be subject to be retained or required to attend summer school in order to be promoted to the next grade level.

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.

Promotion or retention of students, or their required retaking of a course shall be primarily based on the following criteria: students in grades 3-6 receiving two or more "F's" for final grades in core subjects or first and second grade students receiving two or more "N's" for final grades in core subjects may be retained at that grade level. Kindergarten students will be assessed during the school year with a committee of school staff designated by the principal in determining which students will be retained in Kindergarten. If there is doubt concerning the promotion or retention of a student or his/her 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.

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 or receipt of course credit, the final decision shall rest with the principal or the principal's 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.

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 students 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 the paragraph shall be permitted to attend curriculum related field trips occurring during the school day.

#### **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 attendance. 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 received.

#### **ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT PLANS**

An Academic Improvement Plan (AIP) will be developed by school personnel and the parents of students who fail to achieve at the proficient level on state mandated criterion referenced tests (Benchmark Exams, End-of-Course Exams, and Eleventh grade Literacy Exam.) Students will be retained if they fail to participate in their AIP as required in the plan developed by the committee. Questions regarding a student's AIP should be addressed to the Principal.

#### **TEACHER CONFERENCES**

All elementary teachers are required to communicate with the parents or guardians of each student at least once a semester through a parent-teacher conference, telephone conference, or home visit. Teachers shall communicate more often with parents/guardians of students performing below grade level.

Parent-Teacher conferences are encouraged and may be requested by parents or guardians when they feel they need to discuss their child's progress with his/her teacher. Conferences shall be scheduled at a time and place to best accommodate those participating in the conference.

Many times it is necessary for you to discuss something with a teacher by telephone such as an immediate problem or the scheduling of a conference. At such times, call the school office during the school day, if possible, and arrange to have the teacher call you at a convenient time. A conference with your child's teacher may be arranged by phone or letter.

Other methods of informing parents are Bulletins, Programs, Exhibits, and Open House. Also, samples of the student's work will be sent home from time to time. Your child's teacher will explain the method by which they will send these papers home.

#### **COMPLAINTS**

It is a goal of the Board and the District to be responsive to the community it serves and to continuously improve the educational program offered in its schools. The Board or the District welcomes constructive criticism when it is offered with the intent of improving the quality of the system's educational program or the delivery of the District's services.

The Board formulates and adopts policies to achieve the District's vision and elects a Superintendent to implement its policies. The administrative functions of the District are delegated to the Superintendent who is responsible for the effective administration and supervision of the District.

Individuals with complaints concerning personnel, curriculum, discipline, coaching, or the day to day management of the schools need to address those complaints according to the following sequence:

1. Teacher, coach or other staff member against whom the complaint is directed
2. Principal
3. Superintendent

Other than in the few instances where statutorily allowed or required, student discipline and personnel matters may not be discussed in Board meetings. Individuals with complaints regarding such matters need to follow the sequence outlined above.

Unless authorized by the Board as a whole for a specific purpose, no individual Board member has any authority when acting alone. District constituents are reminded that the Board serves as jury in matters regarding student suspensions initiated by the Superintendent, expulsions, and personnel discipline.



### **HOMESTUDY**

The Cotter School District believes that homework and independent study skills should be a positive experience and provide students the opportunity to:

1. reinforce skill development.
2. manage learning time away from the school setting.
3. communicate to parents learning activities provided during the school day.

Homework will be assigned to students at Cotter School based upon any or a combination of these criteria:

1. A reinforcement of on-going class work.
2. A continuation of work started in a specific class but impossible to complete within the given classroom time allotment.
3. An extension of classroom activities which uses community resources – a practical application to the real world.
4. Advance preparation for an upcoming classroom activity, discussion, unit of study, test, etc.
5. An enrichment activity.
6. Make-up work for class absence.

Homework time allotments will vary according to the student's level. It will be kept within a reasonable time limit. Each teacher will develop appropriate consequences for uncompleted homework.

It will be the student's responsibility to complete homework. It will be the parent's responsibility to support this portion of the educational program by encouragement and involvement with the student. It will be the teacher's responsibility to evaluate homework assignments so as to help students complete the learning experience.

Each teacher will explain his/her homework policy at the beginning of each school year. Parents shall be notified of these policies.

### **MEDICAL PROBLEMS**

It is important for parents to bring to the school's attention any medical problems or allergies the student has. The teacher can modify activities or excuses from activities as needed.

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE 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 the school nurse determines are unwell or unfit for school attendance or who are believed to have 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 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 bloodborne, 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).

In accordance with 4.57- IMMUNIZATIONS the District shall maintain a copy of each student's immunization record and a list of individuals with exemptions from immunization which shall be education records as defined in policy 4.13. That policy provides that an education record 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 outbreak of the disease for which the student is not vaccinated. The student may not return to 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 from school. 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.

### **RASH**

A child will be sent home if the rash is of unknown origin or appears contagious. Children will be sent home if the itching is so severe it interferes with their concentration.

#### **HIV/AIDS POLICY**

Decisions about any changes in the education program of a student who is infected with HIV shall be made on a case-by-case basis, relying on the best available scientific evidence and medical advice. The school shall provide a sanitary environment and adhere to established routines for handling body fluids that are recommended by the "Center for Disease Control". The "Infectious Disease Guidelines" are found in the "Arkansas School Guideline Manual", published by the Arkansas Department of Education and the Arkansas Department of Health. The manual is located in the school nurse's office and in the superintendent's office.

The school shall administer a program of ongoing education about HIV for students, their families, and all school employees (full-time, part-time, and temporary professional and support staff) to ensure that all are informed in a consistent manner about:

1. the nature of HIV infection, including mode of transmission, according to current scientific evidence;
2. school district policies and procedures related to employees and students with diseases such as HIV infection;
3. resources within the school district and elsewhere for obtaining additional information or assistance;
4. procedures to prevent the spread of all communicable diseases at school.

When the superintendent or the principal has been notified that a student or staff member is infected with HIV, he/she shall follow the reporting procedure recommended by the Arkansas State Board of Education. This is to ensure the safety of persons in the school setting and to plan to support the person with the illness.

When a person with HIV/AIDS has been identified, the current procedures will be followed:

1. The superintendent or contact person must notify the Director of the Arkansas Department of Education before any action is taken by the local school district.
2. The Director of ADE will notify the Chairperson of the Arkansas AIDS Advisory Board. The Director will give all pertinent information to the Chairperson.
3. The Chairperson of the AIDS Advisory Board will convene the Board when necessary. The Board consists of members from the ADE, Arkansas Department of Health, and medical and legal representatives.
4. The Advisory Board will interact directly with the local school administrators to develop a plan of action, which maintains confidentiality. In the case of HIV, the superintendent shall determine whether the person who is infected with HIV has a secondary infection, such as tuberculosis, that constitutes a recognized risk of transmission in the school setting. In order to make a proper decision, the superintendent will consult with the infected person's physician for ways that the school may anticipate and meet the needs of the infected student. If an individually tailored plan is necessary, it shall have a minimal impact on education. It must be medically, legally, educationally, and ethically sound. The superintendent will establish guidelines for periodic review of the case and will oversee implementation of the plan in accordance with local, state, and federal laws, including due process and appeal.

Appeals should be submitted in writing to the superintendent when necessary supporting information for the appeal. The superintendent, upon appeal, will evaluate the information provided in the appeal, previous data, and will consult with necessary legal and medical representatives before rendering a final decision. Utmost confidentiality shall be observed throughout this process.

#### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The people mentioned in the preceding section in reference to making decisions affecting an infected individual will determine what additional persons need to know that the infected individual attends or works at school. The additional person will not know the name of the infected person without the consent of the infected person and, if a minor, the minor's parent/guardian. Depending on the circumstances of the case, the following persons may be given information about the infected person, but not their identity - the school nurse and the principal or designee. Additional persons may be notified if the "decision Makers" feel that this is essential to protect the health of the infected student/staff member, or if additional persons are needed to periodically evaluate or monitor the situation. Consent for notifying these additional persons in writing must be given by the infected person - if a minor, permission must also be given by the parent/guardian. All persons shall treat all information as highly confidential. No information shall be divulged, directly or indirectly, to any other individuals or groups. All medical information and written conversations, proceedings, and meetings shall be kept by the superintendent in a locked file. Access to this file will be granted only to those persons who have the written consent of the infected person or in the case of a minor, the student's parent/guardian.

To further protect confidentiality, names will not be used in documents except when this is essential. Any document containing the name or any other information that would reveal the identity of the infected person will not be shared with any person - not even for the purpose of word processing or reproduction.

#### **EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

The school must always be informed as to a work telephone number or emergency number in the event your child becomes ill or is injured at school and requires your presence. If we cannot reach a parent or designated responsible party, the child has to remain at school and go home by bus even though he/she is ill.

If both parents are to be out of town, please call the school and give the name of the persons to be notified in case your child becomes ill or injured. Should there be an emergency involving an accident and we cannot reach you, the child will be taken to Baxter County Regional Hospital emergency room, at the Parent's expense, and the doctor on call will be used for emergency treatment. Please remember to notify the school of any change of address or telephone number. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT!

#### **INSURANCE**

An accident insurance program is provided as a service for district students. This insurance covers only expenses for accidents that occur at school and are not covered by any other insurance. The insurance may not cover all expenses related to a covered accident. Any additional expenses are the responsibility of the family.

### **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 students to succeed in school. The intent of the exams of screening is to detect defects in hearing, vision, or other elements of health that would adversely affect the student's ability to achieve 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.

### **COTTER SCHOOL MEDICATION POLICY**

Prior to 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 and type 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 and type of the medication(s).

Medication, including those for self-administration, must be in the original container and labeled with the student's name, the ordering health care 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 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 that 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.

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 sentence 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. 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 their IEP or 504 plans.

The district's supervising registered nurse shall be responsible for creating both on campus and off campus procedures for administering medications.

### **SELF ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINE**

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

- 1) Self-administer either a:
  - a. Rescue inhaler; or
  - b. Auto-injectable or nasal spray epinephrine
- 2) Perform the student's 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 the student's person;
  - a. A rescue inhaler;
  - b. Auto-injectable or nasal spray epinephrine; or
  - c. the necessary supplies and equipment to perform the student's 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.
  - c.

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 the student's 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 or nasal spray 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 or nasal spray epinephrine, diabetes medication, stress dose medication, or any combination on the student's person shall provide the school with the appropriate medications, which shall be immediately available to the student in an emergency.

#### **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.

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 trained school employees designated by the school nurse as a care provider who have been certified by a licensed physician may administer epinephrine, either through an auto-injector or nasal spray, in emergency situations to students who have IHP that provides for the administration of epinephrine 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 trained school employees certified to administer epinephrine to administer auto-injector or nasal spray 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 epinephrine, either through an auto injector or nasal spray, and who have written permission from their parent or guardian shall provide the school nurse either an auto-injector or nasal spray epinephrine. This epinephrine will be used in the event the school nurse, or other school employee certified to administer epinephrine, in good faith professionally believes the student is having a life-threatening anaphylactic reaction and the student is either not self-carrying epinephrine or the nurse is unable to locate it.

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

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 ANTI-OPIOD**

The school nurse for each District school shall keep anti-opioid injectors on hand and the schools nurse and school resource officer shall possess an anti-opioid at all times when on duty. 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.

An anti-opioid overdose rescue kit shall be placed within all storage locations in the District high school buildings that currently contain an automated external defibrillator for public use. The opioid overdose rescue kits shall be located where it is readily available to the public, be visually free of advertisement, and contain an anti-opioid.

#### **EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATION OF EMERGENCY ADRENAL INSUFFICIENCY MEDICATION**

The school nurse or other trained school employees designated by the school nurse as a care provider who have been 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 trained 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.

#### **SEIZURE DISORDER MEDICATIONS**

Students who have been diagnosed with seizure disorder shall have an action plan that shall be a written IHP designed to acknowledge and prepare for the healthcare needs of the student. The student's seizure action plan shall be created in collaboration between District staff and the student's parents, legal guardians, and persons having lawful control of the student, or persons acting in loco parentis or the student if over eighteen (18). As part of the creation of the student's seizure action plan, the student's parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or persons acting in loco to parentis shall:

1. Provide the school with written authorization to administer the seizure medication at school;
2. Provide a written statement from the student's healthcare provider that shall contain the following information:
  - The student's name;
  - The name and purpose of the medication;
  - The prescribed dosage;
  - The route of administration;
  - The frequency that the medication should be administered;
3. Provide the prescribed medication to the school in its unopened, sealed packed with the label affixed by the dispensing pharmacy intact, which shall be stored in a safe and secure location accessible only by District personnel or volunteers with training to administer seizure medication. The written authorization, written statement, and seizure action plan shall be kept on file in the office of the school nurse or school administrator and distributed to any school personnel or volunteers responsible for the supervision or care of the student.

#### **LOST AND FOUND ARTICLES**

Every effort will be made to find and return all articles lost at school to their owners. Children should make inquiries concerning them as soon as possible after they are lost.

Coats, caps, sweaters, and lunch boxes should be marked with the child's name to facilitate their return in case they are lost. Articles not claimed within the semester or school year will be discarded.

## **POSSESSION AND USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

### **Definitions**

"Emergency" means a serious, unexpected, and dangerous situation that requires immediate action, including without limitation:

- An active fire;
- An active tornado or earthquake;
- An active shooter;
- An evacuation of school grounds; or
- A medical emergency

"Personal electronic device" means without limitation a:

- Cellular telephone;
- Paging device;
- Beeper;
- Mobile telephone that offers advanced computing and internet accessibility;
- Digital media player;
- Portable game console;
- Tablet, notebook, or laptop computer;
- Digital camera;
- Digital video or audio recorder;
- Smart watch; and
- Device that can connect and transmit data through Bluetooth technology.

"School day" means from the time students are required to be at school until the time students are dismissed from school.

### **Possession of Personal Electronic Device**

Except as permitted under this policy, a student shall not be in possession of a personal electronic device during the school day. A student may possess a personal electronic device during the school day if:

- The personal electronic device is required by the student's individual education plan (IEP), 504 Plan, or Individual Health Plan for health reasons;<sup>1</sup>
- The possession of the personal electronic device is during an emergency as defined by this policy;
- The personal electronic device is issued by the District for the student's use during the school day; or
- The possession of the personal electronic device is during a special event during the school day.

A student shall be deemed to not be in possession of a personal electronic device if:<sup>2</sup>

### **Use Of Personal Electronic Device**

Except as permitted by this policy, a student shall not use a personal electronic device during the school day. A student may use a personal electronic device during the school day if:

- The personal electronic device is required by the student's individual education plan (IEP), 504 Plan, or Individual Health Plan for health reasons;<sup>1</sup>
- The use of the personal electronic device is during an emergency as defined by this policy;
- The personal electronic device is issued by the District for the student's use during the school day; or
- The use of the personal electronic device is during a special event during the school day.

A student may possess and use a personal electronic device at a special school event for the purpose of taking photographs. The District shall inform the students and students' parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, and persons standing in loco parentis the following before a special school event takes place:

- When and where the special school event will take place;
- Whether or not personal electronic devices shall be allowed at the special school event; and
- Where personal electronic devices may be used at the special school event.

The use of personal electronic 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.

### **Misuse of Personal Electronic Devices**

Even if a student is allowed to possess or use a personal electronic device under this policy, the misuse of a personal electronic device is prohibited. Misuse of personal electronic devices includes, but is not limited to:

- Using personal electronic devices issued by the District during class time in any manner other than specifically permitted by the classroom instructor;
- Permitting any audible sound to come from the personal electronic device when not being used for reason #1 above;
- Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, or wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores;
- Using the personal electronic 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;
- Creating, sending, sharing, viewing, receiving, or possessing an indecent visual depiction of oneself or another person regardless of whether the image is real or created through the use of artificial intelligence;
- Using a personal electronic device issued by the District in a manner that violates the Electronic Device and Internet Use Agreement regardless of whether the violation occurred on or off campus;
- Using a personal electronic device at an event during the school day that was not designated as a special school event or in a manner or location that was not authorized as part of the special school event;
- Using personal electronic devices issued by the District while driving any vehicle at any time;<sup>3</sup> or
- Using a personal electronic 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.<sup>4</sup>

### **Discipline**

A student may have a personal electronic device confiscated if:

- The student is found to possess or use a personal electronic device when the use or possession is not authorized by this policy and the personal electronic device was not issued by the District;
- The student misuses a personal electronic device as defined by this policy; or
- The student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis uses the remote recording or listening capabilities of a personal electronic device, either through an app installed on the personal electronic device or the built-in capacity of the personal electronic device, except when authorized by the District.<sup>1,5</sup>

Confiscated personal electronic devices may be picked up at the school's administration office by the student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis.<sup>2</sup> Students have no right of privacy as to the content contained on any personal electronic devices that have been confiscated.<sup>3</sup> A search of a confiscated device shall meet the reasonable individualized suspicion requirements of Policy 4.32—SEARCH, SEIZURE, AND INTERROGATIONS.<sup>6</sup>

A student and the student's parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis expressly assume any risk associated with a student's possession or use of a student's personal electronic device that is not issued by the District. The District shall not be liable for a personal electronic device that is confiscated if the personal electronic device is lost, stolen, or damaged.

In addition to the confiscation of a personal electronic device for a violation of this policy, a student may be subject to the following discipline:<sup>7</sup> To protect the integrity of the administration of the assessments under the Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Act, a student who is found to be in possession of or to use a personal electronic device during the administration of a statewide assessment that is not required by the student's IEP, 504 Plan, or issued by the District shall have the discipline the student is subject to increased by an additional level.

### **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

#### **Definitions**

"Artificial Intelligence (AI)" means a machine-based system that can, based on a given set of human-defined objectives, make predictions, recommendations, or decisions influencing a real or virtual environment.

"AI Tools" means Software, hardware, or cloud-based applications that use AI to aid in tasks like content creation, data analysis, and personalized learning. For purposes of this policy, AI tools does not include items such as spell check or grammar check.

"Automated decision tool" means an AI tool that has been specifically developed and marketed, or specifically modified, to make or to be a controlling factor in making consequential decisions.

The Cotter School District Board of Directors desires to provide guidance for the appropriate use of AI technologies in curriculum development, instruction, and related educational activities that is aligned with the Arkansas Academic Standards and safeguards student data and privacy while encouraging innovation.

Any AI tools or programs utilized by the District must adhere to State and federal laws; State rules; and Federal regulations governing data use, privacy, and security. Any AI tool used must comply with the District's policies on data privacy and security, especially concerning student information.

The superintendent shall establish a committee who shall be in charge of reviewing and approving any AI tools, including automated decision tools, before they may be used. The committee shall establish the procedures the committee shall use for approving AI tool selection. The District shall provide resources to support the integration of approved AI tools.

All curriculum and instructional materials that were created with AI tools shall align with the Arkansas Academic Standards and District educational goals.

Staff shall document the extent and manner AI tools were used in the creation of curriculum or instructional materials. Staff shall ensure the content created with the assistance of AI tools is accurate and free from bias.

The District shall regularly review the impact AI tools have on the District's educational outcomes and shall update this policy as necessary following the review.

#### **THE TELEPHONE**

The school telephone is for business calls only. Children are not called to the telephone except in case of an emergency. Please make arrangements for your children in advance in the event of an unexpected early closing of school. If you wish to speak to a teacher, leave your name and number, and she/he will return your call as soon as possible.

#### **FIELD TRIPS**

School sponsored trips and special activities will be supervised by teachers and parents. Permission from parents for their child to participate will be required. Notice will be given to parents in advance about student dress, money requirements and any other relevant information about child safety and personal welfare.

Students whose misbehavior has reached the point of requiring an Individualized Discipline Plan may be denied field trip privileges or the guardians of that student may be required to accompany the student.

#### **MONEY SENT TO SCHOOL**

All money sent to school with children should be sealed and properly marked with the first and last name as well as the amount. It is helpful if the exact amount needed is sent. The elementary office does not keep additional cash/change. The school is not responsible for replacing lost or stolen money.

#### **GIFTS**

Gifts from students to teachers are discouraged. However, we realize that some children want to do something for their teacher at Christmas or at the end of the school year. For this reason, individual gifts are not prohibited. However, the gift should be very inexpensive and preferably something that the child has made. The gift should be given to the teacher in private so that the other children will not feel obligated to do the same thing.

#### **PARTIES**

Classroom parties are justified during school hours only if they have considerable educational value. All classes will have two parties per year (Christmas and Valentines). Room mothers will be called upon to assist with these parties. Birthday parties are prohibited because of the amount of class time taken, difficulty in bringing treats and because control of prepared refreshments is difficult. Birthday parties are encouraged in the home. Other parties may be held if the principal approves them. Carbonated soft drinks may only be brought to school on designated party days. The school will not receive deliveries for Valentine's Day (flowers, gifts, candy, balloons, etc).

### **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 qualifications for additional competition. Examples include, but are not limited to inter/intra scholastic 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.

"Interscholastic Activities" means athletic or non-athletic/academic activities where students compete with students from within the same school.



Students who are assigned OSS or ISS are not eligible to participate or attend school activities or events on those days.

#### **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 the student's 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 (1) per week per extracurricular activity (tournaments or other similar events excepted with approval of the principal). 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.

Any student who refuses to sit for a Statewide assessment or attempts 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 administered or scheduled as make-up days shall not be permitted to participate in any non-curriculum related extracurricular activity. 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.

A student who enrolls in the district and meets the definition of "eligible child" in Policy 4.2-ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS shall be eligible to try out 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.

#### **EXTRACURRICULAR AND NON- INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES**

The Cotter Elementary School recognizes the needs and advantages that activities outside the regular classroom offer to all students. Extracurricular activities will be scheduled to limit the amount of classroom interruptions. To be eligible to participate in extracurricular and non-instructional activities, students will be required to be in school attendance on the day of the extracurricular activity. In the event that an extracurricular activity is held on the weekend, the student will be required to be in attendance on the Friday before the activity. These specific guidelines will be established for the following extracurricular activities:

1. Field trips, school sponsored trips and special activities will be supervised by teachers and parents. Permission from parents for their child to participate will be required. Notice will be given to parents in advance about student dress, money requirements and any other relevant information about child safety and personal welfare. Students not riding the school bus to a field trip may only ride in a vehicle with their legal guardian.
2. Parties on campus will be held to a minimum. Teachers planning parties plan to have them after lunch has been served. The principal must approve all parties.
3. Athletics (basketball, cheerleading, etc.) – To be eligible to try out or participate in athletics, students will be required to have a minimum GPA of 2.0 with no F's. The school may impose the minimum GPA 2.0 with no F's rule at any time during a semester to suspend a player from participation until he/she raises his/her grades to an acceptable level. Students who rode the school bus to a game location must ride the bus back to our school unless signed out by their legal guardian.

#### **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.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> 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; or
- The student's resident school does not offer the interscholastic activity and the superintendent of the non-resident district agrees to allow the student to enroll in the interscholastic activity.

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 interscholastic activities 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 the student's 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 30<sup>th</sup> 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 non-academic course<sup>3</sup> in the District's school where the student is intending to participate in an interscholastic activity that coincides with the interscholastic activity in which the homeschooled student participates and shall be required to be at school only when participation in the interscholastic activity requires other students who participate in the interscholastic activity to be at school.

The student shall regularly attend the class in which the student is registered beginning no later than the eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) 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;<sup>4</sup>
- permission slips, waivers, physical exams; and
- participation or activity fees.

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 home schooled student may begin participating in an interscholastic activity immediately upon being approved to participate by the District if:

- The home schooled student has not withdrawn from an Arkansas Activities Association member school; or
- The student has withdrawn from an AAA member school and enrolled in a home school but did not participate in an interscholastic activity that is a varsity sport at the student's resident district prior to the student's withdrawal from the AAA member school.

A home schooled student shall not be eligible to participate for up to three hundred sixty-five (365) days if:

- The District is the home schooled student's resident district and the home schooled student is not approved to participate in an interscholastic activity at the District by June 1 of the school year the student will be enrolled in grade seven (7), eight (8), nine (9), or ten (10);
- The District is not the home schooled student's resident district and the home schooled student is not approved to participate in an interscholastic activity that is a varsity athletic activity at the District by June 1 of the school year the student will be enrolled in grade seven (7), eight (8), nine (9), or ten (10); or
- The home schooled student withdrew from an AAA member school and participated in an interscholastic activity that is a varsity athletic activity at the student's resident district during the previous three hundred sixty-five (365) days and is seeking to participate in an interscholastic activity that is a varsity athletic activity in the District.

A student who is prohibited from participation in an interscholastic activity due to number 1 shall not become eligible to participate in any interscholastic activity until the completion of the three hundred sixty-five (365) day period. A student who is prohibited from participation in an interscholastic activity that is a varsity athletic activity due to numbers 2 or 3 shall not be eligible for full participation in an interscholastic activity that is a varsity athletic activity until the completion of the three hundred sixty-five (365) day period. A student who is not eligible for full participation may participate in tryouts, practices, classes, or other endeavors associated with the interscholastic activity until the completion of the three hundred sixty-five (365) day period.

#### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY ELIGIBILITY FOR PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENTS**

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.

"Private school" means a nonpublic elementary or secondary school that is a registered nonprofit and accredited or licensed by an accrediting association recognized by the State Board of Education.

"Private school student" means a student attending a private school.

Each school in the District shall post on its website its schedule of interscholastic activities, including signup, tryout, and participation deadlines, at least one semester in advance of those activities. A hard copy of the schedule shall be available upon request.<sup>1</sup>

Private school students whose parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis are legal residents of the school district will be permitted to pursue participation in an interscholastic activity in the student's resident school zone<sup>2</sup> if the private school the student attends does not offer the interscholastic activity.

Although not guaranteed participation in an interscholastic activity, private 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 interscholastic activities without discrimination. The District shall provide a reasonable alternative to any prerequisite for eligibility to participate in an interscholastic activity that the private school student is unable to meet because of his or her enrollment in a private 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.

A student who meets the requirements for eligibility to participate in an interscholastic activity is required to register for no more than one non-academic course<sup>3</sup> in the District's school where the student is intending to participate in an interscholastic activity that coincides with the interscholastic activity in which the private school student participates and shall be required to be at school only when participation in the interscholastic activity requires other students who participate in the interscholastic activity to be at school.

The student shall regularly attend the class in which the student is registered beginning no later than the eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) 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 private school student who has met the tryout 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;<sup>4</sup>
- Permission slips, waivers, physical exams; and
- Participation or activity fees.

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.

#### **PLANNING FOR EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT**

Each school in the district, in collaboration with administrators, teachers, other school staff, parents, the community, and students, shall develop a school-level improvement plan (SLIP) to:

- Establish goals or anticipated outcomes based on an analysis of students' needs;
- Identify student supports and evidence-based interventions and practices to be implemented;
- Describe the professional learning necessary for adults to deliver the supports or interventions;
- Describe the implementation timeline for monitoring of the interventions and practices for effectiveness;
- Describe the timeline and procedures for evaluation of the interventions and practices for effectiveness; and
- Evaluate and modify a parent, family, and community engagement plan.<sup>1</sup>

Each SLIP shall include a literacy plan that includes a curriculum program and a professional development program that is aligned with the schools' literacy needs and is based on the science of reading.

Some of the data that shall be considered when developing the SLIP includes, but is not limited to:<sup>2</sup>

- Statewide assessment results;
- Interim assessment results;
- Similarly situated school's SLIPs; and
- Evaluation(s), including staff, student, and community feedback, of the existing SLIP.

The SLIP is to be reviewed on an ongoing basis with reports to the board on the implementation progress of the SLIP throughout the year of implementation. By May 1 of each year, the SLIP to be implemented in the upcoming school year shall be presented to the District Board of Directors for review and approval.<sup>3</sup> The District will post the District's SLIP(s) to the District's website under State-Required Information by August 1 of each year.

The District shall annually submit a District Strategic Plan (DSP) to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education by June 30 for review for the upcoming school year. The DSP shall include, without limitation:

- A literacy and mathematics plan that addresses student supports and acceleration opportunities based on student data and outcomes;
- Information regarding the prioritization and intended use of funding, including, without limitation, Enhanced Student Achievement Funding;
- The support the District will provide to the District's schools identified as in need of targeted support, comprehensive support, or both; and
- Health and wellness goals.

The District shall post the District's DSP to the District's website under State-Required Information, including any updates to the District's DSP.<sup>5</sup>

The District's Board of Directors shall hold a meeting annually to provide a report that systematically explains the District's policies, programs, and goals to the community. The District's report shall detail the progress of the District and the District's schools toward accomplishing program goals, accreditation standards, and proposals to correct any deficiencies. The report shall be made available to the public, including by posting a copy on the District's website under State-Required Information no later than ten (10) days following the meeting, with the most recent annual report posted by September 1 of each year. The meeting shall provide parents and other members of the community the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions concerning the District's program.

#### **ENHANCED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT FUNDING EXPENDITURES**

Funding received from the state based on the number of students eligible for free and reduced-priced meals under the National Student Lunch Act shall be expended in accordance with guidelines outlined in the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding.

Using District specific data, the District shall conduct the DESE developed needs assessment to identify areas where Enhanced Student Achievement (ESA) funds need to be directed. The District shall include the use of the District's ESA funds in the District's District Strategic Plan.

#### **WELLNESS POLICY**

The health and physical well-being of 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 of Directors 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 Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), but with the community and its residents, organizations and agencies. Therefore, the District shall enlist the support of the larger community to find solutions that improve the health and physical activity of our students.

#### **Wellness Committee**

To enhance the district's efforts to improve the health of our students, a wellness committee shall be formed. It shall be structured in a way to ensure age-appropriate recommendations are made that correlate to the District's grade configurations.<sup>1</sup> The wellness committee shall have the powers and responsibilities delegated to it by statute and Rule and are incorporated into this policy by reference.<sup>2</sup> The overarching goal of the wellness committee shall be to promote student wellness by monitoring how well the District is doing at implementing this policy. The wellness committee shall use modules 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, and 11 of the Centers For Disease Control' (CDC) School Health Index as a basis for annually assessing each school's progress toward meeting the requirements of this policy. The results of the annual assessment shall be included in the District's district strategic plan (DSP), provided to each school's principal, and reported to the board. Goals and objectives for nutrition and physical activity shall also be included in the SDSP.

The wellness committee shall be made up of Individuals from the following groups to the extent interested persons from each group desire to be included in the development, implementation, and periodic review of the District's wellness policy.<sup>3</sup>

- Members of the District's Board of Directors;
- School administrators;
- School nutrition personnel;
- Teacher organizations;
- Teachers of physical education;
- Parents;
- Students;
- Professional groups (such as nurses);
- School health professionals (such as school nurses, school counselors, and social workers); and
- Community members.

The wellness committee shall provide written recommendations to the District's Child Nutrition Director concerning menus and other foods sold in the school cafeteria. Such recommendations shall be based, at least in part, on the information the Committee receives from the District on the requirements and standards of the National School Lunch Program and from menus for the National School Lunch Program and other food sold in the school cafeteria on a quarterly basis.<sup>4</sup>

The wellness committee will meet at least quarterly. Meeting dates for the wellness committee will be placed on the District's calendar.

#### **School Health Coordinator**

To assist the wellness committee in ensuring that the District fulfills the requirements of this policy, a District level School Health Coordinator (Designated District Official) shall be appointed. In addition, a school level School Health Coordinator shall be appointed who shall be responsible for assisting the District level School Health Coordinator in ensuring that each school fulfills the requirements of this policy.<sup>5</sup>

## Goals

In its efforts to improve the school nutrition environment, promote student health, and reduce childhood obesity, the District will adhere to the DESE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards And Body Mass Index For Age Assessment Protocols. To promote nutrition, physical activity, and other school based activities that will improve student wellness, the District, working with the wellness committee, has established the following goals:<sup>5</sup>

- Implement a grade appropriate nutrition education program that will develop an awareness of and appreciation for nutrition and physical activity throughout the curriculum;
- Engage students in healthy levels of vigorous physical activity;
- Strive to improve the quality of physical education curricula and increase the training of physical education teachers;
- Follow the Arkansas Physical Education and Health Education Frameworks in grades K-12;
- Not use food or beverages as rewards for academic, classroom, or sports performances;
- Establish class schedules and bus routes that do not directly or indirectly restrict meal access;
- Provide students with ample time to eat their meals in pleasant cafeteria and dining areas;
- Abide by the current allowable food and beverage portion standards;
- Meet or exceed the more stringent of Arkansas' or the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Nutrition Standards for reimbursable meals and a la' carte foods served in the cafeteria;<sup>7</sup>
- Restrict access to competitive foods as required by law and rule;
- 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 competitive foods;
- Provide professional development to all district staff on the topics of nutrition and/or physical activity;<sup>8</sup>
- Utilize the School Health Index available from the CDC to assess how well the district is doing at implementing this wellness policy and at promoting a healthy environment for its students.

## Food and Beverages Outside of the District's Food Service Programs

The District will ensure that drinking water is available without charge to all students throughout the school including, but not limited to, in the District's food service areas.

All food and beverages sold to students on school campus during the school day by school administrators or school non-licensed or licensed staff (principals, coaches, teachers, club sponsors, etc.); students or student groups; parents or parent groups; or another person, company, or organization associated with the school shall meet the Federal Smart Snacks requirements and Arkansas Nutrition Standards at a minimum.<sup>9</sup> These restrictions include, but are not limited to, food and beverages sold in vending venues (machines, ice chests, cabinets) in school stores or as part of school fundraisers.

All food and beverages provided, but not sold, to students on the school campus during the school day by school administrators or school non-licensed or licensed staff (principals, coaches, teachers, club sponsors, etc.); students or student groups; parents or parent groups; or another person, company, or organization associated with the school shall meet the Federal Smart Snacks requirements and Arkansas Nutrition Standards at a minimum.<sup>9</sup> These restrictions include, but are not limited to, food and beverages provided in vending venues (machines, ice chests, cabinets) in school stores or as part of school fundraisers.

Up to a maximum of nine (9)<sup>10</sup> times per school year, school administration may schedule school wide events where food and beverages provided to students are not required to meet the Federal Smart Snacks standards during the scheduled time. The schedule of the events shall be by school, approved by the principal, and shall be part of the annual school calendar.

Food and beverages outside of the District's food service programs may not be sold, served, or provided to students in the District's food service areas during meal times.

Elementary students shall not have in-school access to vending machines.

The District does not place nutrition restrictions on food or beverages brought from home that are intended for personal consumption only.<sup>9</sup>

## Advertising

In accordance with the USDA regulations, oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product that are made by the producer, manufacturer, seller, or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product shall only be permitted on school campus during the school day if they meet or exceed the Federal Smart Snacks standards.<sup>11</sup> This restriction does not apply to:

- Materials used for educational purposes in the classroom, including, but not limited to:
- The use of advertisements as a media education tool; or
- Designing and implementing the health or nutrition curriculum;
- Clothing, apparel, or other personal items used by students and staff;
- The packaging of products brought from home for personal consumption; and
- Currently existing advertisements on school property, including but not limited to, the exterior of vending machines, posters, menu boards, coolers, trash cans, cups used for beverage dispensing, and other food service equipment; however, all future contracts and replacement items shall meet the Federal Smart Snacks standards.

## Adoption Awareness Instruction

The District shall provide any information provided to students on the District's adoption awareness instruction that was in written form to the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis to a pregnant student who is enrolled in the District.

**Breast Feeding**

In addition to providing age-appropriate education for students regarding the nutritional benefits of breastmilk and breastfeeding practices, the District shall provide:

- Space in the District's school facilities for District employees, students, and volunteers who are breastfeeding mothers that is a private, secure, and sanitary room or other location, other than a toilet stall, that contains Access to a power source for a breast pump or any other equipment used to express breast milk where an employee, student, or volunteer can express breast milk;
- Space in the District's school facilities for District students who are breastfeeding mothers that is a private, secure, and sanitary room or other location, other than a toilet stall, where a student can breastfeed the student's child;
- Permission to bring a breast pump and any other equipment used to express breast milk to school;
- Access to a place to safely store breast milk, which shall include, but not be limited to, a refrigerator or cooler in:
- A nurse's office;
- A teachers' lounge; or
- Another private location or location with limited accessibility in which the breast milk may be safely secured;
- Access to a location to clean a breast pump and any other equipment used to express breast milk at school.
- Break time:
- To an employee or volunteer for the purpose of expressing breast milk that, to the extent possible, shall run concurrently with existing break times; and
- To a student that is a reasonable amount of time to accommodate the student's need to express breast milk or to breastfeed the student's child on the District's campus;
- That a student shall not incur an academic penalty for expressing breast milk or for breastfeeding the student's child on the District's campus; and
- A student has the opportunity to make up any work missed due to expressing breast milk or for breastfeeding the student's child on the District's campus.

**Child Care**

The District shall provide student mothers and fathers information regarding available child care services.<sup>12</sup>

**Community Engagement**

The District will work with the wellness committee to:

- Encourage participation in extracurricular programs that support physical activity, such as walk-to-school programs, biking clubs, after-school walking etc.;
- Encourage the implementation of developmentally appropriate physical activity in after-school childcare programs for participating children;
- Promote the reduction of time youth spend engaged in sedentary activities such as watching television and playing video games; and
- Encourage the development of and participation in family-oriented community-based physical activity programs.

The District will annually inform the public:

- Of the web address where the policy is located;
- Of any changes made to this policy since the previous year;
- Of the health and wellness priority goals in the District's SDSP;
- That a printed copy of the policy may be picked up at the District's central office; and
- The amounts and specific sources of funds received and expenditures made from competitive food and beverage contracts.

**Assessment of District's Wellness Policy**

At least once every three years,<sup>13</sup> with input from the SNPACC, the District shall assess both the District as a whole and individual schools' status in regards to the implementation and compliance of the goals of this policy, including the health and wellness goals in the District's SDSP. The assessment shall be based, at least in part, on:

- The extent to which District schools are in compliance with this policy;
- The extent to which this policy compares to other model local school wellness policies;
- The annual reviews of this policy based on modules 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, and 11 of the CDC's School Health Index; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of this policy.

On the years the assessment occurs, the assessment results shall be reported to the public, including parents, students, and other members of the community as part of the District's annual report to the public.

The District will update the wellness policy based on the results from the three (3) year<sup>13</sup> assessment.

**District Website**

The District will place on its website:

- The name, District phone number, and District email address for the District Level School Health Coordinator;
- The names, district phone numbers, and district email addresses for the School Level School Health Coordinators;<sup>5</sup>
- The names of the members of the wellness committee;
- Meeting dates for the wellness committee;

- Information on how community members may get involved with the wellness committee;
- A copy of this policy;
- A copy of the annual review of this policy based on modules 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, and 11 of the CDC's School Health Index; and
- A copy of the most recent three (3) year<sup>1</sup> assessment of this policy.

#### ARKANSAS COURSE CHOICE PROGRAM

District students in grades six through twelve (6-12) are eligible to take courses through the Arkansas Course Choice Program (ACCP) if the student is:

- Seeking to take a course not offered by the District; or
- Attending a District school that received a school letter grade of C, D, or F and the course is required for graduation.<sup>1</sup>

The ACCP course catalog shall be made available to all students during student course selection.<sup>2</sup> The District shall not actively discourage, intimidate, or threaten a student during course selection to not take a course through the ACCP.

A student attending courses through the ACCP shall enroll in at least one (1) course at the District, which may be either in person or a digital course offered by the District.

A District student attending courses through the ACCP is entitled to the following services as if the student were attending courses at the District:

- Required assessments, including without limitation:
- Statewide assessments;
- Advanced Placement; and
- International Baccalaureate;
- Participation in extracurricular or cocurricular activities; and
- Special education services pursuant to the student's individualized education program.

Credits earned through the ACCP shall appear on a student's official transcript and count fully towards the student's graduation requirements.

#### DISTRICT WEBSITE

The Cotter School District shall maintain a web page to provide information about its schools, students, and activities to the community. This policy is adopted to promote continuity between the different pages on the district website by establishing guidelines for their construction and operation.

The Cotter School District website shall be used for educational purposes only. It shall not create either a public or a limited public forum. Any link from any page on the District's site may only be to another educational site.<sup>1</sup> The website shall not use "cookies" to collect or retain identifying information about visitors to its website nor shall any such information be given to "third parties." Any data collected shall be used solely for the purpose of monitoring site activity to help the district improve the usefulness of the site to its visitors.<sup>2</sup>

Each school's web page shall be under the supervision of the school's Web Master and the District's website shall be under the supervision of the District's Web Master. They shall have the responsibility for ensuring that web pages meet appropriate levels of academic standards and are in compliance with these guidelines and any additional administrative regulations. To this end, the District and School Web Masters shall have the authority to review and edit any proposed changes to web pages to ensure their compliance with this policy. All such editing shall be viewpoint neutral.

District and school web pages shall also conform to the following guidelines:

- All pages on the District's website may contain advertising and links only to educational sources.
- The District's home page shall contain links to existing individual school's web pages and the school home pages shall link back to the District's home page. The District's home page may also include links to educational extracurricular organization's web pages, which shall also link back to the District's home page.
- Photos along with the student's name shall only be posted on web pages after receiving written permission from the student's parents or the student if the student is over the age of eighteen (18).<sup>3</sup>
- The District's web server shall host the Cotter District's website.<sup>4</sup>
- No web page on the District website may contain public message boards or chat rooms.
- All web pages on the District website shall be constructed to download in a reasonable length of time.
- The District's home page shall contain a link to a privacy policy notice, which must be placed in a clear and prominent place and manner.<sup>5</sup>
- With the exception of students who may retain the copyright of material they have created that is displayed on a District web page, all materials displayed on the District web site are owned by the District.
- The District shall include the following information on its website through a link located on the District's homepage titled "State Required Information":<sup>6</sup>
- Local and state revenue sources;
- Administrator and teacher salary and benefit expenditure data;
- District balances, including legal balances and building fund balances;
- Minutes of regular, emergency, and special meetings of the school board;<sup>7</sup>
- The district's budget for the ensuing year;
- A financial breakdown of monthly expenditures of the district;

- The salary schedule for all employees including extended contract and supplementary pay amounts;
- Current contract information (not including social security numbers, telephone numbers, personal addresses or signatures) for all district employees;
- The district's annual budget;
- The annual statistical report of the district;
- Agenda of regular, emergency, and special meetings of the District board of directors;<sup>8</sup>
- The names, email addresses,<sup>9</sup> position (including zones), and terms of office for all members of the school district board of directors;
- The district's personnel policies;
- The annual School Performance Report;<sup>10</sup>
- School-Level Improvement Plans;<sup>11</sup>
- The District Strategic Plan;<sup>11</sup>
- Student discipline policies;
- Comprehensive School Counseling Plan;
- The District financial policies;
- Student handbooks;<sup>12</sup>
- The Annual Report to the Public;
- The parent, family, and community engagement plan;
- The Immunization waiver report from Policy 4.57—IMMUNIZATIONS;
- School District Calendar;
- List of statutory, rule, or Standards for Accreditation waivers the District has received under A.C.A. § 6-15-103;
- The total amount of State funds used for teacher salaries;
- The District's policy addressing the selection, relocation, retention and challenging of materials that are physically present in the library and available to the public;

The information and data required for items A through N in 9 above shall be the actual data for the previous two (2) school-years and the projected data for the current school-year.

Before July 15 of each year, the District shall post on its website the following information:<sup>13</sup>

- The dyslexia intervention programs used during the previous school year that were specifically responsive to assisting students with dyslexia;
- The number of students during the previous school year who received dyslexia intervention; and
- The total number of students identified with dyslexia during the previous school year.

If the District's reading curriculum is not taken from the DESE list of approved curricula, the District shall post the reading curriculum the District uses and a statement that the curriculum is not on the list of DESE approved curricula.

The District shall include the following information on its website that may be accessed through a link located on the District's homepage titled "Title IX/Sex Discrimination":<sup>14</sup>

- Contact information for the District's Title IX Coordinator;
- A statement that 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. 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;
- Copies of the District's sexual harassment policies;
- Copies of the District's Procedures governing the grievance and appeal process;
- The process for filing a formal complaint of sexual harassment; and
- Direct links to or copies of the materials used to train the District's Title IX Coordinators, investigators, and decision-makers.

The District shall include the following information on its website that may be accessed through a link located on the District's homepage titled "Military Families":<sup>15</sup>

- The student enrollment application process;
- Career-ready pathways and other academic or education programs offered;
- Required academic courses for each curriculum and elective course options;
- School and community-sponsored extracurricular activities, including without limitation individual and team sports, clubs, junior reserve officer training corps opportunities, and Purple Star School program ambassadors;
- Notable District and District school Purple Star School Programs;
- The District military family education coordinator contact information; and
- The District schools' military family education facilitator contact information.

The District shall post the following on the District website that may be accessed through a link titled "Antisemitism/Title VI":

- The District's definition of antisemitism;
- A statement that antisemitism is prohibited in the District's educational programs and activities;
- A statement that complaints of discrimination or harassment based on antisemitism may be filed with the Title VI Coordinator;
- Contact information for the District's Title VI Coordinator; and
- Information on how to file a complaint of antisemitism with the Title VI Coordinator at the Arkansas Department of Education.

The District and school webmasters are responsible for ensuring all District webpages meet required standards to be accessible to individuals with disabilities.



## ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

The District shall provide an eligible alternative learning environment (ALE) for each eligible ALE student enrolled in a District school. The ALE shall be part of an intervention program designed to provide guidance, counseling, and academic support to students who are experiencing emotional, social, or academic problems. Placement of a student in an ALE shall not be punitive in nature.

The superintendent or designee shall appoint an Alternative Education Placement Team which shall have the responsibility of determining student placement in the ALE. A student may be enrolled in an ALE only on the referral of the Alternative Education Placement Team. The team's placement decision is final and may not be appealed.<sup>1</sup>

The team is to be comprised of the following:

- a school counselor from the referring school;
- the ALE administrator and/or ALE teacher;
- the building principal or assistant principal from the referring school;
- a parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis (if they choose to participate);
- The District shall document its efforts to contact the student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis to schedule a meeting or a phone call for a placement meeting at the convenience of the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis, and maintain such documentation in the student's Student Action Plan (SAP).
- LEA special education/504 representative (if applicable);
- at least one (1) of the student's regular classroom teacher(s); and
- if the District so chooses, the student.

Students who are placed in the ALE shall exhibit at least two (2) of the following characteristics:

- Ongoing, persistent lack of attaining proficiency levels in literacy and mathematics;
- Abuse: physical, mental, or sexual;
- Frequent relocation of residency;
- Homelessness;
- Inadequate emotional support;
- Mental/physical health problems;
- Pregnancy;
- Being a single parent;
- Personal or family problems or situations;
- Recurring absenteeism;
- Dropping out from school; or
- Disruptive behavior.

Before or upon entry into the ALE, the ALE program shall assess the student in order to provide intervention services designed to address the student's specific educational and behavioral needs, with the focus for behavioral needs on long-term improvement of the student's ability to control the student's behavior.

No later than five (5) school days after a student begins alternative education interventions, the Alternative Education Placement Team shall develop a signed agreement between the ALE; the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis (if they choose to participate); and the student, outlining the responsibility of the ALE; parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis; and the student to provide assurance that the plan for each student is successful.

No later than one (1) week after a student begins alternative education interventions, the Alternative Education Placement Team shall assess the student's current functioning abilities and all relevant social, emotional, academic, career, and behavioral information and develop an SAP outlining the intervention services to be provided to the student. The SAP may be revised from time to time by the ALE placement team. The SAP shall contain at a minimum:

- A plan of intervention services to be provided to address the student's specific educational needs and, if appropriate, the student's behavioral needs;
- Goals and objectives necessary to achieve positive reintegration into the regular educational environment;
- Exit criteria on which to base a student's return to the regular educational environment;
- Documentation of the presence of the characteristics listed above that were the reason for the student's referral to the ALE program;
- Documentation of the specific ALE programming and supports that will address each identified characteristic or situation causing a barrier to the student's success; and
- A positive behavior or transitional plan prior to a student's return to the regular educational environment.

The district's ALE program shall follow class size, staffing, curriculum, and expenditure requirements identified in the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Rules.

## ALE PROGRAM EVALUATION

The ALE program shall be evaluated at least annually to determine its overall effectiveness at providing a non-punitive environment that is conducive to learning, that eliminates traditional barriers to learning, and at compliance with the Division of Elementary and Secondary

Education Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding. The evaluation shall specifically address how the use of ALE funds is in alignment with the district's district strategic plan in addressing identified achievement gaps and student performance deficiencies.

#### **ENGLISH LEARNERS**

The district shall utilize the special needs funding it receives for identified English Learners (EL) on activities, and materials listed in the DESE Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding.

The expenditures of EL supplemental funding shall be evaluated at least annually to determine their overall effectiveness. The evaluation shall specifically address how the use of EL funds is in alignment with the district's district strategic plan in addressing identified achievement gaps and student performance deficiencies.

#### **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). The school may impose the eligibility requirement at any time to suspend a player from participating until the student raises their grades to the acceptable level.

#### **HOMELESS STUDENTS**

Students who are determined to be experiencing homelessness by the school's homeless LEA shall be eligible for participation in intrascholastic activities.

#### **NEWSPAPER & UPDATE PHOTOGRAPHS**

Pictures of students involved in school activities are often submitted to the school's Update newsletter or newspapers for publication. If you object to your child's photo being submitted, please contact the school office.

#### **WITHDRAWING A CHILD FROM SCHOOL**

If your child is to be withdrawn from school, send a note to the teacher stating the last day your child will be in attendance, or call the office with this information. The child will take his report card and personal belongings when leaving school. If the new school wants information from permanent records, they will write to our school and it will be mailed to them provided the proper authorities have signed a release form for records.

#### **SCHOOL CHOICE TRANSFERS**

A student who transfers under a legal school choice option shall not be denied participation in an extracurricular activity where the student based exclusively on the student's decision to transfer. A student who transfers after June 1 of the year the student enters grades seven through ten (7-10) shall complete a Changing Schools/Athletic Participation form as defined by AAA, which must be signed by the:

- Superintendent of the student's resident school district;
- Superintendent of the nonresident school district to which the student transfers; and
- Parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, person standing in loco parentis to the student.

The completed Changing Schools/Athletic Participation form shall be filed with the non-resident district where the student transfers and the AAA. The Changing Schools/Athletic Participation form shall be signed by the superintendent of a student's resident school district and the superintendent of the nonresident school district to which a student transfers unless there is demonstrable evidence of recruiting by the receiving school district personnel or that the student is transferring to the nonresident school district solely for athletic purposes.

A student who transfers into the District and is enrolled in the District by June 1 of the school year the transfer student will be enrolled in grade seven (7), eight (8), nine (9), or ten (10) shall be immediately eligible to participate in an extracurricular activity that is an athletic activity. If a transfer student is not enrolled in the District by June 1 of the school year the student will be enrolled in grade seven (7), eight (8), nine (9), or ten (10), then the transfer student shall not be eligible to participate in an extracurricular activity that is a varsity athletic activity for up to three hundred sixty-five (365) days.

#### **PACKAGES, LUNCHES, ETC., TO STUDENTS**

Any time you have something to give your child, rather than going to the room and interrupting the teacher, it would help if you would bring the items to the elementary office, and we will see that they are given to your child. Floral arrangements, balloons, and other like items are not accepted on major holidays like Valentine's Day, Christmas, etc.

#### **BICYCLES**

Students wishing to ride bicycles to school must obtain authorization from the office.

#### **STUDENT DRESS, APPEARANCE, AND GROOMING**

Primarily, the parents are responsible for seeing that their child is prepared properly for school. There are, however, some rules, which we require of students.

1. No bare backs, bare midriffs, "muscle shirts", or spaghetti straps smaller than the width of a dollar bill.
  2. No shoes with cleats.
  3. No bare feet. No flip-flops. No Roller Shoes. Footwear must be appropriate for Physical Activity Time.
  4. Shorts must be of a reasonable length and fit and may not hang down from the waist. In general, this means shorts at least to mid-thigh and not so tight that they could tear during normal activity.
  5. Students should wear appropriate clothing in respect to changing weather conditions.
  6. Teachers with administrative approval have the option of restricting hats and caps being worn in their classroom.
  7. Clothing made of spandex or other skin-tight materials is permitted only when worn underneath other clothing.
  8. Dress or appearance including hair styles which may serve as an educational distraction will not be permitted.
  9. Students in violation of the dress code, in grades 4-6, will be given an oversized t-shirt to wear for the remainder of the school day.
  10. Students may not wear facial or tongue body piercing jewelry, wires or straws, including studs (except for earrings in the ears will be allowed).
  11. Students are prohibited from wearing, while on the school grounds during the school day and at school sponsored events, clothing that exposes underwear, buttocks, or the breast of a female.
- A student shall not be disciplined or discriminated against based upon the student's natural, protective, or cultural hairstyle. A student's natural, protective, or cultural hairstyle includes without limitation afros, dreadlocks, twists, locs, braids, cornrow braids, Bantu knots, curls, and hair styled to protect hair texture or for cultural significance.

#### **STUDENT CONDUCT**

A pupil attends school so that he/she may develop his/her own individual capacities to their fullest. There are several things which a person must do to be a good citizen. They include:

1. Being responsible for your own actions.
2. Be serious about your studies and do the best you can.
3. Be prepared daily and don't let yourself get behind on your class work.
4. Respect other people's rights and property.
5. Build people up: eliminate "Put Downs" from your mind.
6. Dress appropriately and practice good habits of hygiene.
7. Be proud of your school and speak well of its teachers and your classmates.
8. Be a responsible student by doing your homework daily and your make-up work promptly.
9. Be an influence upon others: be happy, respectful and courteous and you will receive the same from others.
10. Do not write or mark on yourself.

#### **CONDUCT IN BUILDING & ON SCHOOL GROUNDS**

Students should:

1. Keep the school building attractive by refraining from marking on walls and by keeping paper off the floor and campus.
2. Show respect for property at all times.
3. Respect the rights of others whether in the hall, the classroom or on the school grounds.
4. Walk quietly and orderly in straight lines in the halls.
5. Wait their turn orderly and quietly at the drinking fountains.

The following behavior will not be tolerated:

1. Continued willful disobedience.
2. Damaging or defacing school property.
3. Fighting.
4. Defiance or disrespect for the authority of a school employee.
5. The use of profanity or vulgarity in language or actions.
6. Stealing
7. Repeated truancy.
8. Throwing rocks or other objects on school grounds or at bus stops.
9. Pushing and shoving.
10. Gum chewing or eating in class.
11. Carrying or using tobacco products.

Each teacher has established specific rules for their classrooms. These rules contribute to the learning environment of all students. Any distraction may prevent someone from learning and will be dealt with by the classroom teacher.

Students will be allowed to use restrooms, with permission, before school and at assigned times. Restrooms should be kept clean and ready for the next class.

Students on their way to and from school are under the jurisdiction of the school and their conduct should be in line with school standards.

Trading cards, radios, tape players, games and toys, unless requested by the teacher, should be left at home. Loss or damage to such items is the responsibility of the student bringing them to school.

Dangerous items, such as knives, cinnamon oil, fireworks, matches, etc., are not to be brought to school.

Stay at least 10 feet away from the buses unless you are getting on or off.

If a student damages or breaks school property because he/she failed to follow our class and school rules, he/she is expected to pay for the loss.

Accidental breakage in the course of proper use would not be charged to the student.

When lining up for buses, your place is at the end of the line. Books and friends do not save places.

For willful acts of vandalism, a student and his/her parents may be brought to court to pay double the amount of the damage and the law for criminal behavior may further prosecute the student.

## **DISRUPTION OF SCHOOL**

### **Definitions**

"Appropriate interim learning environment" means an appropriate learning environment that is used for a period of time not to exceed ten (10) days.

"Appropriate learning environment" means a setting within the District that provides a similar structure to the following, without limitation:

- A classroom; or
- In-school suspension.

"Violent or abusive behavior" means, without limitation:

- Using threatening language;
- Throwing an item that risks or causes:
- Harm to another individual;
- Injury to another individual; or
- Damage to property;
- Physically abusing a teacher or another student; or
- Any other similar action that presents a physical danger or a threat of physical danger to a teacher or another student.

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.

A teacher may, but is not required to, remove a student from class:

- Who has been documented by the teacher as repeatedly interfering with the teacher's ability to teach the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn; or
- Whose behavior is so unruly, disruptive, violent, 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.

A student who is removed from class shall:

- Be sent to the office of the principal or the principal's designee;
- Be escorted from the classroom by the school administration if the student refuses to leave the classroom voluntarily;
- Not be returned to the teacher's class until a conference is held; and
- Be placed in another appropriate classroom learning environment until the conference is completed.

The conference shall be held for the purpose of:

- Determining the causes of the problem that led to the student's removal and possible solutions;
- Serving as a manifestation determination review if the student removed from the class is a student with a disability;
- Determining if a behavioral threat assessment is necessary for the student who was removed from the class due to violent behavior.

The following individuals shall be present at the conference:

- The principal or the principal's designee;
- The teacher;
- The school counselor;
- A 504/special education representative (if applicable);
- The parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis; and
- The student, if appropriate.

The failure of the parents, legal guardians, persons having lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis to attend the conference shall not prevent the conference from being held nor prevent any action from being taken as a result of that conference.

Following the conclusion of the conference, the principal or the principal's designee may take any of the following actions against a student who was removed from class:

- Place the student into another appropriate learning environment or into in-school suspension;
- Except for a student who was removed for violent or abusive behavior, return the student to the class; or
- Take other appropriate action consistent with the District's discipline policy, state law, and federal law.

A student who is removed from class three (3) times during the same school year shall be placed in another appropriate learning environment for the remainder of the school year.

The District shall follow all requirements under the IDEA and 504 for students with a disability, including those surrounding a change in placement.

### **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; enroute 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.

### **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 threatens to use a weapon before or after school while:

- o In a school building;
- o On or about school property;
- o At any school sponsored activity or event;
- o On route to or from school or any school sponsored activity; or
- o 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 not less than 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 weapons 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.

### **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TIME (P.A.T.)**

All children participate in daily P.A.T. activities unless the teacher receives a written statement from you or your family doctor to excuse him/her from play.

If a student has been ill and should not go outside during P.A.T., a note will be required from the parents. Children may be taken outside even in cold weather. However, in some cases, P.A.T. may be shortened or held inside the school.

Children are always supervised when they are on the playground. Teachers make every effort to protect your child while he/she is on the playground. He/She is encouraged however to gain independence in taking care of himself/herself in a group of children his/her own age. Playground policies will be discussed by the teacher periodically and revised when necessary

#### **P.A.T. RULES**

1. Every student will go out unless they have a note from their guardian or a medical professional. Those students staying in will be given quiet work to do.
2. Students must receive permission to re-enter the building during P.A.T..
3. When the bell rings to come in, all games will stop and students will line up orderly.
4. All equipment taken to the playground must be returned to its appropriate place.
5. Good sportsmanship will govern all games. Any conflict or disagreement should be handled by the supervising teacher.
6. Contact sports, such as tackle football and King of the Mountain are prohibited.
7. Students displaying unsportsmanlike conduct will be disciplined.
8. Rainy day P.A.T. will be limited to classroom games. No running or throwing permitted.
9. Do not climb trees, fences or fence posts.
10. No running around the playground equipment.
11. Remember to let others have a turn on the equipment.
12. No baseball bats are allowed at P.A.T.
13. No toys are allowed at school.
14. No purses are allowed on the playground
15. No candy may be eaten during P.A.T.

#### **PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT RULES**

SLIDE – Walk up the steps and always slide sitting down. Go up the steps of the slides.

SWINGS – Swing straight and not too high. Do not stand in the swings. Sit in upright position. One person in each swing – NO swinging double. No pushing swings by others (except a teacher). Do not jump out of the swing while swinging. No wrapping chains around the top of the swing seat.

MONKEY BARS – Stay under the bars.

TETHERBALL – Players should stand back while waiting in line. Be sure everyone has a chance to play. Arguments between players will result in players being excluded from playing tetherball. Do not pull on the tetherball or you will not be allowed to play. Do not swing on tetherball poles. Off limits for first graders.

HORIZONTAL LADDER – Do not climb on top of ladder.

PLAYGROUND BOUNDARIES-Fences at north, east and west sides of the playground.

JUNGLE JIM-No jumping off the top. Students are allowed to sit on the top.

VOLCANO: Do not jump off or slide down the volcano. Do not push or shove.

ALL BUILDINGS ARE OFF LIMITS DURING P.A.T. AND P.E. (except for emergency use of restrooms in the main building when the duty teacher gives permission.)

#### **BUS TRANSPORTATION**

School buses are owned and operated by the school district for the purpose of transporting students to and from school who live too far of a distance to walk. The drivers have the same authority and responsibility on the bus as the teachers have in the classroom. If a student is to ride the bus home with another student, both students must bring notes indicating as such. The school's authority begins from a reasonable amount of time for students to leave their house to walk to the bus stop in the morning until a reasonable amount of time for students to walk from their bus stop to the home after school.

Appropriate behavior on the bus is essential for the safety and welfare of all persons riding. Any student who violates one or more of the following rules will have a "bus misconduct" report sent to the principal. The principal will use the following procedures in dealing with the situation.

1. First "bus misconduct" report in a semester constitutes a verbal reprimand and counsel on proper bus behavior. Parents will be notified.
2. Second "bus misconduct" report in a semester will be a warning that the next offense will result in suspension for three days from riding the bus. A parent will be notified.
3. Third "bus misconduct" report in a semester constitutes a three day suspension from riding on the bus. A parent will be notified.
4. Fourth "bus misconduct" report in a semester will result in expulsion from riding the bus for up to the rest of the present school year.
5. Fifth "bus misconduct" report in a semester will result in expulsion from riding the bus for up to the rest of the present school year.
6. Severe misconduct may result in immediate suspension from riding the bus or other disciplinary action.

Bus misconduct may also result in disciplinary measures such as detentions, missed recess and/or other forms of discipline as deemed necessary by the principal.

#### **CHANGE OF BUS STOP**

Any time a child is not to ride his or her regular bus, a note MUST be sent from the parent to the teacher and bus driver telling which bus the child is to ride. This is to protect the child. **Parents or guardians must call the elementary office by 2:00pm to change a student's bus or car rider plan for the day.**

#### **SCHOOL BUS REGULATIONS**

1. Do not change seats after you are seated.
2. Talk quietly. Yelling, whistling, singing, etc. will be distracting to the bus driver.
3. Do not stand while the bus is moving. Students must be seated while the bus is moving.
4. No hitting, scuffling, or fighting on the bus. Keep your hands to yourself.
5. When crossing the highway, wait for the bus driver to signal before crossing and walk ten feet in front of the bus.
6. Always load and unload at the same area, unless previous arrangements are made with the bus driver.
7. Never cross the road or highway without looking for oncoming traffic.
8. When loading or unloading, use a single file from front to back. No pushing.
9. No eating or drinking on the bus. No tobacco products may be carried or used on the bus.
10. Whenever insects are brought to school on the bus, they should be carried in an unbreakable container and left at the front of the bus. No snakes or animals may be brought on the bus. Always check with the bus driver before bringing any large items on the bus.
11. No sharp objects are to be taken on the bus.
12. Always keep arms and head inside the bus.
13. No writing on the bus seats, back of seats, etc.
14. You are responsible for keeping your seat and area clean and unmarked.
15. Face the front and always keep head, arms, and feet out of the aisle for easy loading and unloading.
16. Do not throw anything at any time on the bus or out the bus windows.
17. Any behavior which is distracting to the bus driver or damaging to the bus, or any failure to follow the driver's directions may result in disciplinary action.
18. Bus transportation is a privilege and not a right. Students who do not behave on the bus may lose the privilege of riding.

#### **CAR RIDERS**

The following procedures provide instructions for students who are to be picked up from the elementary school campus.

1. Vehicles should enter the circle drive keeping to the right only, next to the sidewalk.
2. Zones will be designated as the ONLY places where students may get into the vehicle picking them up. These "loading zones" will be indicated.
3. All car riders will sit in the "student waiting area" in the cafeteria or if directed lined up next to the school building in the "student waiting area".
4. Car riders will remain in the student waiting area until their vehicle pulls into the next available designated "loading zone" next to the sidewalk. Students may leave the student waiting area when the supervisor signals for them to load.
5. Car riders should load into their vehicle in a designated "loading zone" entering the vehicle from the sidewalk or cafeteria side ONLY.
6. If a vehicle enters the "loading zone" and the student is not yet in line, the vehicle should pull forward into the marked "waiting zone".
7. Cars, which will be parked, should not enter the circle drive between 2:45 and 3:00.
8. Car riders must report to the circle drive immediately after being dismissed from class at the end of the day.

#### **STUDENTS' VEHICLES**

A student, who has presented a valid driver's license and proof of insurance to the appropriate office personnel, may drive his/her vehicle to school. Vehicles driven to school shall be parked in the area designated for student parking. Parking on school property is a privilege which may be denied to a student for any disciplinary violation, at the discretion of the student's building principal.

Students are not permitted to loiter in parking areas and are not to return to their vehicles during the school day for any reason unless given permission to do so by school personnel.

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 prohibited by District policy found in their vehicle. The act of a student parking a vehicle on campus is a grant of permission for school or law enforcement authorities to search that vehicle.

#### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

The Cotter 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; and
- \* 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 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 usual 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 multi-tiered behavioral intervention procedures in accordance with Policy 4.60 in the application of student discipline.

The District's personnel committees shall annually review the District's student discipline policies, including State and District student discipline data, and may recommend changes in the policies to the Cotter School Board. The Board has the responsibility of determining whether to approve and recommend changes to the 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 or legal guardian 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.

#### **DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY**

Good discipline in school results when students are taught in the home to respect the rights of others, when the school provides a relevant curriculum taught by effective personnel, and when the community provides constructive outlets for its youth.

The school recognizes the need for firmness in dispensing with problems calling for disciplinary action. The principal and faculty are expected to be in a position to take disciplinary action that will contribute to the general welfare of a student, class, or school as a whole.

Discipline procedures may include, but are not limited to in-school suspension, after school detention, isolation, detention, parent-teacher-student conferences, corporal punishment, suspension or expulsion, depending on the nature of the problem. Teachers are the authority figure in their own classroom and will handle each situation in as positive a manner as possible. Records are kept to benefit students, teachers and parents. Programs are designed to reward good behavior and the teacher in the classroom encourages a positive attitude at all times.

Teachers will inform parents or guardians of serious classroom difficulties as they arise. The infraction and action will be recorded and sent home with the student. Please sign and return.

WE BELIEVE ALL OUR STUDENTS CAN BEHAVE APPROPRIATELY IN SCHOOL. WE WILL TOLERATE NO STUDENT STOPPING US FROM TEACHING AND/OR STOPPING ANY STUDENT FROM LEARNING.

#### **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:
  - o A definition or description of the desired target behavior or outcome in specific measurable terms;
  - o 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;
  - o 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;
  - o 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;
  - o A plan for managing a crisis situation;
  - o A system to collect, analyze, and evaluate data about the student;
  - o The school personnel, resources, and training needed before implementation of the BIP; and
  - o 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 the student or others.

"Crisis intervention" means the implementation of a service, support, or strategy to immediately stabilize a crisis and prevent the crisis from recurring 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:
  - o The review of existing records and other sources of information;
  - o Diagnostic or historical interviews;
  - o Structured academic or behavioral observations; and
  - o 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.

"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.

#### **MULTI-TIERED BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION**

The district shall establish a multi-tiered system of behavioral interventions for each student who exhibits social, emotional, or behavioral difficulty that may escalate, if not addressed, to potentially dangerous behavior.

#### **BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION TEAM**

A behavior intervention team (BIT) shall be established for each student who exhibits social, emotional, or behavioral difficulty that may escalate, if not addressed, to potentially dangerous behavior. The BIT shall include members who are academic and behavioral assessment and intervention professionals.

A student's BIT 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:

- o When imminent danger or serious physical harm to the student or others dissipates;
- o If a medical condition occurs that puts the student at risk of harm;
- o Unless the behavior of the student poses an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others;
- o After the threat of imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others dissipates; or
- o 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 BIT;
- 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.<sup>1</sup>

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:<sup>2</sup>

- 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 behavioral intervention procedures 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:
  - o Reevaluate the training needs of school personnel;
  - o Reevaluate the physical restraint policy and practices; and
  - o 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 the District's behavioral intervention procedures 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;<sup>3</sup>
- 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.

#### ANTISEMITISM PROHIBITED

"Antisemitism" means a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. Antisemitism may be expressed in speech; writing; visual forms; and actions, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

The following are examples of actions, when taken as a whole, that may constitute antisemitism:

- The targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity;
- Charging Jews with conspiring to harm humanity;
- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion;
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions;
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews;
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust);
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust;
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations;
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor;
- Applying double standards by requiring of Israel a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation;
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis;
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis; or

- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

Antisemitism does not include criticism of Israel similar to the criticism leveled against any other country. Discrimination and harassment based on antisemitism is expressly prohibited.

The District shall appoint an individual to act as the District's Title VI Coordinator, who shall be responsible for investigating any complaints of discrimination or harassment based on antisemitism. The District shall:

- Include contact information for the Title VI Coordinator in information that is provided to staff, students, and parents; and
- Provide the following on the District website that may be accessed through a link titled "Antisemitism/Title VI":
- The District's definition of antisemitism;
- A statement that antisemitism is prohibited in the District's educational programs and activities;
- A statement that complaints of discrimination or harassment based on antisemitism may be filed with the Title VI Coordinator;
- Contact information for the District's Title VI Coordinator; and
- Information on how to file a complaint of antisemitism with the Title VI Coordinator at the Arkansas Department of Education.

A student or a student's parent may contact the District Title VI Coordinator directly with any complaints of discrimination or harassment based on antisemitism. District employees are responsible for timely notifying the District Title VI Coordinator of any complaints they receive or incidents they witness of discrimination or harassment based on antisemitism.

Complaints of discrimination or harassment based on antisemitism shall be investigated and handled in accordance with Policy

#### 6.7—COMPLAINTS.

A student who is found to have violated the provisions of this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion.

The District Title VI Coordinator shall report an incident or complaint of discrimination or harassment under this policy to the Arkansas Department of Education Title VI Coordinator.

In addition to the filing of a complaint under this policy, complaints of discrimination or harassment based on antisemitism may be submitted directly to the Title VI Coordinator at the Arkansas Department of Education.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to diminish or infringe upon any right protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or Arkansas Constitution, Article 2, §§ 4, 6, and 24.

#### ARKANSAS DIRECT ADMISSIONS PROGRAM

The District shall participate in the Arkansas Direct Admissions Program.<sup>1</sup> As part of the District's participation, the District shall provide data to the Division of Higher Education (DHE) that includes, without limitation:

- A student's grade point average;
- A student's assessment scores;
- A student's course completion; and
- Other information required by DHE.

The District shall inform all students about how the student may participate in the Arkansas Direct Admissions Program.<sup>2</sup>

The District shall not actively discourage or prohibit an eligible student from participating in the Arkansas Direct Admissions Program.<sup>2</sup>

#### **ASSERTIVE DISCIPLINE**

Consequences of discipline referrals sent to administration may range from a minimum of a verbal reprimand to a maximum of expulsion.

Discipline consequences do not accumulate from one day to the next unless the misbehavior is repeated frequently for three or more times.

If a student is sent to the office two or more times in a nine weeks period, corporal punishment may be considered.

Students who disrupt class and/or school activities may be placed in an isolated area either within the classroom or in the office area.

Students who behave will earn rewards and extra privileges as determined by the individual teacher.

It is in your child's best interest that we work together in relation to his/her schooling. We will thus be in close contact with you regarding your child's progress. If you have any questions or comments, please call 435-6655.

Students who disrupt class and/or school activities may be placed in an isolated area either within the classroom or in the office area.

In-school suspension may contain aspects of physical activity (such as sit-ups, push-ups, etc.) and community service (such as picking up trash).

Refusal to cooperate with any ISS rules will result in further actions against the student.

The Individual Discipline Plan (IDP) may include but not be limited to in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, corporal punishment, alternative education, school activity exclusion and other modes of discipline. One noon detention will consist of an alternate physical activity.

Students who receive after school detention must be picked up by parent or guardian at

4:00.

#### **4th GRADE DETENTION REPEATERS**

Per Marking Period (Nine Weeks)

1. One detention
2. One detention
3. One detention

4. Two days IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION OR 2 SWATS (at school's discretion).
5. One detention & one after school detention
6. One detention & one after school detention
7. One detention & one after school detention
8. Three days IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION AND INDIVIDUALIZED DISCIPLINE PLAN DEVELOPED.

#### 5th & 6th GRADE DETENTION REPEATERS

Per Marking Period (Nine Weeks)

1. One noon detention
2. One noon detention
3. Two days IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION OR TWO SWATS (at school's discretion)
4. One noon detention and one after school detention
5. One noon detention and one after school detention
6. Five days IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION & INDIVIDUALIZED DISCIPLINE PLAN DEVELOPED, IDP DEVELOPED or THREE SWATS (at school's discretion).

#### KINDERGARTEN

Our Class Rules

1. Keep hands, feet, and objects to self.
2. No running in the room.
3. Follow my directions.

If a student chooses to break a rule:

- 1st Consequence – Name on board (warning).
- 2nd Consequence – Walk the fence for 5 minutes during P.A.T.
- 3rd Consequence – Walk the fence for half P.A.T.
- 4th Consequence – Walk the fence for all of P.A.T.
- 5th Consequence – Walk the fence all of P.A.T and during fun activity at the end of the day.

Severe Disruption – Students immediately go to the principal.

The SEVERE CLAUSE is used when the student does the following:

1. Commits or threatens physical harm to another student or adult.
2. Destroys student, teacher or school property.
3. Refuses to follow directions.
4. Engages in any behavior that keeps the classroom or supervising area from functioning. (Swearing, fighting, screaming, etc.)

#### GRADE ONE

Our Class Rules

1. Listen and follow my directions carefully.
2. Raise your hand for permission to talk.
3. Keep hands, feet and all objects to yourself.

If a student chooses to break a rule:

- 1st Consequence – Name on board (warning).
- 2nd Consequence – Walk the fence during P.A.T.
- 3rd Consequence – Lunch P.A.T. detention – lunch - isolation
- 4th Consequence – Note to parents.
- 5th Consequence – Go to the principal and call parents.

Severe Disruption – Students immediately go to the Principal.

The SEVERE CLAUSE is used when the student does the following:

1. Commits or threatens physical harm to another student or adult.
2. Destroys student, teacher or school property.
3. Refuses to follow directions.
4. Engages in any behavior that keeps the classroom or supervising area from functioning. (Swearing, fighting, screaming, etc.).

#### GRADES TWO & THREE

Our Class Rules

1. Raise your hand and get permission to talk.
2. No getting up except for business-no visiting.
3. Keep hands, feet, books and objects to yourself.
4. Bring paper, pencils, books, and completed assignments to class every day.
5. Follow my directions.

If a student chooses to break a rule:

- 1st Consequence – Name on board (warning).
- 2nd Consequence – Walk the fence during P.A.T.
- 3rd Consequence – Call parents – Walk the fence during two P.A.T.'s
- 4th Consequence – Conference with parents, Walk the fence during three P.A.T.'s
- 5th Consequence – Go to office
- Severe Disruption – Students immediately go to the principal.

The SEVERE CLAUSE is used when the student does the following:

- 1. Commits or threatens physical harm to another student or adult.
- 2. Destroys student, teacher or school property.
- 3. Refuses to follow directions.
- 4. Engages in any behavior that keeps the classroom or supervising area from functioning. (Swearing, fighting, screaming, etc.).

#### WALKED P.A.T. REPEATERS

For Marking Period (Nine Weeks)

- 1 Walk the fence during one P.A.T.
- 2 Walk the fence during one P.A.T.
- 3 Walk the fence during one P.A.T.
- 4 One detention & visit with principal
- 5 Walk the fence during one P.A.T.
- 6 Walk the fence during one P.A.T.
- 7 Walk the fence during one P.A.T.
- 8 One day IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION OR 2 SWATS (at school's discretion) and IDP written.

#### GRADE FOUR

Our Class Rules

- 1. Be in the assigned seat ready to work with class materials and completed assignments at the class times.
- 2. Keep hands, feet, books, and objects to self.
- 3. No cruel teasing, rude gestures, or swearing (verbal or non-verbal).
- 4. Follow the teacher's directions.

If a student chooses to break a rule:

- 1st Consequence – Walk the fence during one P.A.T. time
- 2nd Consequence – Walk the fence during both P.A.T. times
- 3rd Consequence – One detention
- 4th Consequence – Student immediately goes to the principal.
- Severe disruption – Student immediately goes to principal.

The SEVERE CLAUSE is used when the student does the following:-

- 1. Commits or threatens physical harm to another student or adult.
- 2. Destroys student, teacher or school property.
- 3. Refuses to follow directions.
- 4. Engages in any behavior that keeps the classroom or supervising area from functioning. (Swearing, fighting, screaming, etc.).

#### GRADES FIVE AND SIX

Our Class Rules

- 1. Be in the assigned seat ready to work with class materials and completed assignments at class time.
- 2. Keep hands, feet, books, and objects to self.
- 3. No cruel teasing, rude gestures or swearing (verbal or non-verbal).
- 4. Follow the teacher's directions.
- 5. 6th Grade: No late work will be accepted.

If a student chooses to break a rule:

- 1st Consequence – Name on board (warning)
- 2nd Consequence – One detention
- 3rd Consequence – Two detentions and parents are contacted.
- 4th Consequence – Remove from class and go to the office.
- Severe Disruption – Students immediately go to the principal.

The SEVERE CLAUSE is used when the student does the following:

- 1. Commits or threatens physical harm to another student or adult.
- 2. Destroys student, teacher or school property.
- 3. Refuses to follow directions.
- 4. Engages in any behavior that keeps the classroom or supervising area from functioning. (Swearing, fighting, screaming, etc.).

A student IDP may be required in instances of severe student misbehavior.

#### **COTTER SCHOOL DISTRICT TITLE I PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY**

It is our belief that parental interest and guidance are major factors in successful education. As such, the Cotter School District Title I program will:

1. Convene annually a public meeting, to which all parents and patrons of the Cotter School District will be invited, to discuss the programs and activities provided with Title I funds. The discussion will include informing parents of their right to consult the design and implementation of the Title I Project. Further it will solicit parents' input and will provide them an opportunity to establish mechanisms for maintaining ongoing communication among parents, teachers, and Title I officials.
2. Report to each child's parents on the child's progress.
3. Establish conferences between teachers, parents, and students.
4. Encourage parents to volunteer and participate in school activities.
5. Provide timely information concerning the Title I program including, for example, program plans and evaluations.
6. Solicit parents' suggestions in planning development review, & improvement of program.

#### **STUDENT/TEACHER/PARENT COMPACT**

##### **PARENT/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT**

I want my child to achieve. I will encourage him/her by doing the following:

- See that my child is punctual and attends school regularly.
- Support the school in its efforts to maintain proper discipline.
- Establish a time for homework and review it regularly.
- Provide a quiet well-lit place for study.
- Encourage my child's efforts and be available for questions.
- Stay aware of what my child is learning.
- Read with my child and let my child see me read.

##### **STUDENT AGREEMENT**

It is important that I work to the best of my ability. I shall strive to do the following:

- Attend school regularly.
- Come to school each day with pens, pencils, paper, and other necessary tools for learning.
- Complete and return homework assignments.
- Observe regular study hours.
- Conform to rules of student conduct.

##### **TEACHER AGREEMENT**

It is important that students achieve. I shall strive to do the following:

- Provide homework assignments for students.
- Provide necessary assistance to parents so that they can help with the assignments
- Encourage students and parents providing information about student progress.
- Use special activities in the classroom to make learning enjoyable.

##### **PRINCIPAL AGREEMENT**

I support this form of parent involvement. I shall strive to do the following:

- Provide an environment that allows for positive communication between the teacher, parent, and student.
- Encourage teachers to regularly provide homework assignments that will reinforce classroom instruction.

#### **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 provision 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 superintendent 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.**

##### **Definitions:**

"Lack of capacity" means, based on the maximum student to teacher ratio allowed under federal law; state law; the Rules Governing the Standards for Accreditation for Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts; state rules; or other applicable federal regulations, that ninety-five percent (95%) or more of the seats at the grade level in which the student would be assigned at the nonresident school are filled on the date the school choice application is made.

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



### **Standard School Choice**

#### **Transfers Into or Within 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 or school has a lack of capacity.

The District shall advertise in appropriate broadcast media and either print media or on the Internet to inform students and parents in the District and adjoining districts of the range of possible openings available under the School Choice program. The public pronouncements shall state the application deadline and 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 no later than January 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 for students transferring into the District; or
- Only this District for students transferring to another school within the District

Except for students who are transferring under Uniformed Service Member Dependent School Choice, the transfer application must be postmarked, emailed, or hand delivered between January 1 and June 1. 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 are transferring under Uniformed Service Member Dependent School Choice, applications postmarked, emailed, or hand delivered on or after June 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.

Except for students who are transferring under Uniformed Service Member Dependent School Choice, no earlier than January 1 of each year, the Superintendent will consider all properly submitted applications for School Choice. By no later than the fifteenth (15<sup>th</sup>) calendar day following the receipt of an application, the Superintendent shall notify the following, in writing, of the decision to accept or reject the application:

- For transfers within the District, the student's parent; or
- For transfers into the District, the student's parent and the student's resident district.

##### **Accepted Applications**

Applications which fit within the District's stated capacity standards shall be provisionally accepted in writing. A student's acceptance shall be effective on the earlier of:

- The day the District provides notification to the student of the student's acceptance; or
- The day the State Board grants an appeal of the student's application.

The written notice of acceptance shall inform the student that the student has ten (10) school days<sup>7</sup> from when the notice is received to either:

- Enroll in the district or in the other District school; or
- Inform the district that the student intends to enroll in the district or the other District school at the start of the next school year.

The acceptance shall be null and void if the student fails to enroll within the ten (10) school day period or fails to inform the district within the ten (10) school day period of the student's intent to transfer at the start of the next school year.<sup>7</sup>

A student, whose application has been accepted and who has enrolled in the District or in another District school, is eligible to continue enrollment until completing the student's 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 the student's resident district or assigned school; 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 completion of the student's secondary education.

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

##### **Rejected Applications**

The District may reject an application for a transfer into or within the District under Standard School Choice due to a lack of capacity. The District shall use the date and time stamp the District placed on a student's application to determine when the District has reached capacity. A student's application shall be used to determine capacity regardless of whether the student intends to transfer immediately or at the start of the next school year.

The decision to accept or reject an application shall 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.<sup>8</sup>

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. A provisionally rejected applicant could be provisionally approved and would have to meet the acceptance requirements to be eligible to enroll in the District or another district school if:

- A provisionally approved applicant subsequently does not enroll in the District;
- A provisionally approved applicant subsequently does not enroll in the District school the District student was seeking to transfer to; or
- A District student submits a school choice application to transfer to another district or another school within the District.

The superintendent shall notify the previously provisionally rejected student within fifteen (15) days of the change in status and shall provide notice of all final rejections by July 1.

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 the student's resident district only for transfers within the District or both the resident and nonresident districts for transfers into the District or another district, 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.

#### **Transfers Out of the District**

All Standard School Choice applications for transfers out of the District shall be granted.

#### **Annual Reporting**

The District shall report annually to the Secretary of the Department of Education:

- The number of transfer applications received;
- The number of applications accepted;
- The number of applications rejected; and
- The reason(s) for each rejection.

#### **School Choice Transfers Out of the District**

All Standard School Choice applications for transfers out of the District shall be granted.

#### **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 distress;
- \* The student is not required to meet the June 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<sup>9</sup>**

Unless there is a lack of capacity<sup>10</sup> 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<sup>9</sup> or from the student's resident district into the District if:

Either:

- o The student's resident district has been classified by the state board as in need of Level 5 — intensive support; or
- o The student's assigned school has a rating of "F"; and
  - Except for students who are transferring under Uniformed Service Member Dependents School Choice, 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 June 1 of the school year before the school year the student intends to transfer to the District for students transferring within the District or both the sending and receiving school districts for students that are transferring into the District.

Except for students who are transferring under Uniformed Service Members Dependent School Choice 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 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.<sup>10</sup> Unless the student's application was rejected due to the application not being timely received by the District for students transferring within the District or both the resident and nonresident districts for students that are transferring into the District, 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.

Except for students who are transferring under Uniformed Service Member Dependent School Choice, 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.<sup>11</sup>

#### **Transfers out or Within the District**

If a District school has been classified by the ADE as being in academic distress or the District has been classified by ADE as in need of Level 5 Intensive Support, the District shall timely notify the parent, guardian, or student, if the student is over eighteen (18) years of age, as soon as practicable after the academic distress or in need of Level 5 Intensive Support designation is made of all the 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 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.<sup>12</sup>

#### **Uniformed Service Member Dependent School Choice:**

"Uniformed service member" means an active or reserve component member of the:

- United States Army, United States Navy, United States Air Force, United States Marine Corps; United States Space Force, or United States Coast Guard;
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps; or
- United States Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service.

"Uniformed service veteran" means a former uniformed service member who has been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

A student shall be eligible for school choice under Uniformed Service Member Dependent School Choice if the student is a dependent of:

- Uniformed service member in full-time active duty status;
- Surviving spouse of a uniformed service member;
- Reserve component uniformed service member during the period six (6) months before until six (6) months after a Title 10, Title 32, or state active duty mobilization and service; or
- Uniformed service veteran who is returning to civilian status at the conclusion of the uniformed service veteran's active duty status.

A student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of a student, or person standing in loco parentis to the student shall submit a school choice application by mail, e-mail, or in person to the the student's resident district only for transfers within the District or to both the student's nonresident district and resident district. The application shall be accompanied by:

A copy of the identification card of the student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis that qualifies the student under this section; and

A copy of the official orders, assignment notification, or notice of mobilization of the student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis.

The application deadline required under Standard School Choice and Opportunity School Choice shall not apply to uniformed service member dependents.

The parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis of the student shall be notified in writing whether the student's application has been accepted or rejected within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of the application by:

- a. The d=Districts superintendent for students transferring within the District; or
- b. The Superintendent of the nonresident district for student's transferring to a nonresident district.

A student's transfer under the Uniformed Services Member Dependent School Choice is effective immediately upon the written notification of an acceptance.

A student shall be permitted only one (1) school transfer per academic year.

The parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of a student, or person standing in loco parentis to a student shall be responsible for transportation of the student.

#### **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 ADE as a persistently dangerous public school shall be allowed to attend a safe public school within the District.

#### **SCHOOL CHOICE CAPACITY RESOLUTION**

##### **Whereas:**

- The Board of Directors of the Cotter School District has approved by a vote of the Board, the following capacity resolution for school choice applicants for the school choice cycle under the provisions of policy 4.5-SCHOOL CHOICE and applicable Arkansas law. Applicants, whose applications meet the provisions of policy 4.5-SCHOOL CHOICE, will be sent a provisional acceptance notification letter which will give instructions on the necessary steps and timelines to enroll in the District or a District school other than the student's assigned school. Provisional acceptance shall be determined prior to July 1 with a final decision to be made by July 1 based on the district's available capacity for each academic program, class, grade level, and individual school.

-Applications will not be accepted if the applications

- Are received, electronically timestamped, or postmarked before January 1, unless the application is from a student who is transferring under Uniformed Service Member Dependent School Choice;
- Are received, electronically timestamped, or postmarked after June 1, unless the application is postmarked before June 1 or is from a student who is transferring under Uniformed Service Member Dependent School Choice;
- Are from a student whose resident district has declared itself exempt due to an existing desegregation order; or
- The student is transferring under Uniformed Service Member Dependent School Choice and the application is not accompanied by relevant documentation.
- The district reserves to itself the ability to determine, based on an examination of student records obtained from the student's assigned school or the student's prior district, and other information, where any student would require different class, course of courses program of instruction, or special services than originally applied for. If such an examination determines that capacity has been reached in the appropriate class, course or program of instruction, or that additional staff would have to be hired for the applicant, the District shall resend the original provisional acceptance letter and deny the Choice transfer for that student.
- The district reserves to itself the ability to decline to accept under school choice. Any student, whose acceptance would require the district to add additional staff, to exceed the District's current grade, program, or building capacity.

THEREFORE, let it be resolved that these shall constitute the School Choice at the beginning of the School Choice enrollment period for the 2025-2026 school choice cycle:

_____	_____
Board President	Date
_____	_____
Board Secretary	Date

#### **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:

- o The student's resident district has been classified by the state board as in need of Level 5 — intensive support; or
    - o The student's assigned school has a rating of "F"; and
- By May 1 of the year before the student intends to transfer, 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 to the:
- o DESE;
  - o Sending school district; and
  - o Receiving school district.

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.

Within thirty (30) days from receipt of an application from a student seeking admission under this section of the policy, 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. 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 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 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 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 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 the parent, guardian, or students, if over eighteen (18) years of age, as soon as practicable after the school or district designation is made of all the options available under Opportunity 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 in application to enroll the student in a school district that has not been classified by the State Board as in need of Level 5 Intensive Support or in a public school that does not have a rating of "F".

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.

#### SCHOOL CHOICE ACCEPTANCE LETTER

Dear Parent's name,

I am pleased to inform you that the application you submitted for student's name has been accepted pending enrollment of student's name by insert date, however, failure to enroll student's name by this date will render this offer acceptance null and void.

I look forward to welcoming (student name) as part of the Cotter School District.

Once your child has enrolled in school with us this coming school-year, student's name will be eligible to continue enrollment in the district until completing high school or is beyond the legal age of enrollment provided the student meets the applicable statutory and District policy requirements all other District students must meet (with the exception of residency in the District) to continue District enrollment. This information is contained in the student handbook.

Respectfully,

Insert Name

Insert position/title

#### SCHOOL CHOICE ACCEPTANCE LETTER - CAPACITY FOR IMMEDIATE TRANSFER AVAILABLE

Dear Parent's name,

The application you submitted for Student's Name has been accepted. While the School's Name looks forward to welcoming Student's Name as a student, the School's Name requires that you do one of the following within ten (10) days from the receipt of this letter:

- If you intend for Student's Name to transfer to School's Name immediately, enroll Student's Name in School's Name; or
- If you intend for Student's Name to transfer to School's Name at the start of the next school year, provide notification of your intent for Student's Name to not start at School's Name until the next school year to insert contact person.

Failure to either enroll Student's Name or to provide notice of your intent for Student's Name to transfer to School's Name at the start of the next school year within ten (10) days from the receipt of this letter shall void and nullify this letter's acceptance.

If you intend for Student's Name to transfer to School's name at the start of the next school year, to better assist the district in determining the proper placement of Student's Name, please submit the information listed below to district or school's address by insert date. In addition to the information you submit, records may be requested from the student's current district/school, and final placement may depend on the content of those records as to appropriate grade placement, program placement or services required. A student who has not previously attended an Arkansas public school or did not attend an Arkansas public school in the previous academic year may be evaluated by the district prior to enrollment, and the results of that evaluation could impact final placement.

1. For students applying to enroll in first grade or higher: a copy of the student's transcript from the school where the student is currently enrolled. The student's permanent record, including the original transcript, will be requested from the school immediately following the student's actual enrollment in our district.
1. Proof of the student's age; This can be done by providing one of the following:
  - 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 or guardian;
  - F. United States military identification; or
  - G. Previous school records.
1. The student's health care needs at school.
1. Student's name age-appropriate immunization record or an exemption granted for the previous school year and a statement of whether or not the parent is intending to continue the exemption for the upcoming school year.

Respectfully,

Insert name

Insert position/title

### **SCHOOL CHOICE REJECTION LETTER**

Dear Parent's name,

I am sorry, but the application you submitted for student's name has been rejected for the following reason(s).

\_\_\_\_\_ Your child's resident district has declared itself exempt from the provisions of the School Choice Law due to it being under an enforceable desegregation order.

\_\_\_\_\_ Your child does not meet the openings identified for the coming school year identified in the Board of Directors Resolution adopted on (insert date) due to the District having a lack of capacity by having reached at least ninety five percent (95%) of the maximum teacher-to-student ratio in your student's grade, program, or building that is allowed under the Standards for Accreditation; State law and rules; or Federal law and regulations.

As noted in your original application, you have ten(10) days from receipt of this notice in which to submit a written appeal of this decision to the State Board of Education.

Respectfully,

Insert Name

Insert position

### **STUDENT TRANSFERS**

Transfer applications received by the District shall be placed on the Board's next meeting agenda.<sup>1</sup> At least five (5) days before the meeting where the transfer application appears on the agenda, the superintendent shall notify the Board regarding:

- All transfer applications received since the last meeting; and
- The superintendent's recommendation concerning each transfer application.

Each transfer application shall be considered individually and receive a separate vote by the Board. The parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis to a student who submits a transfer application shall be given at least five (5) minutes to present the student's case for a transfer to the Board.

The District may reject a non- resident'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.

If the superintendent intends to recommend the Board deny the transfer application, the superintendent shall provide a written explanation of the reasons for the recommendation to the Board and the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis to the student.

The parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of a student, or person standing in loco parentis to the student who submitted a transfer application that was rejected may appeal the decision of the Board to the State Board of Education.

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 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 homeschool will be placed in accordance with Policy 4.6-HOME SCHOOLING.

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.

Except as otherwise required or permitted by law, the responsibility for a transportation of any nonresident student admitted to a school in the 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.

#### **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 the foster child's continuity of educational services to the fullest extent that is practical and reasonable.

The Superintendent or the superintendent's 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 the foster child's 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 case worker that foster child's school enrollment is being changed to one of the District's schools, the school receiving the child must immediately enroll the foster child. 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 the foster child's 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 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 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 June 1 of the year the student seeks to begin the fall semester to 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 with 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 written agreement for the District to provide the transportation to and from the school the foster child transferred to.

#### **HOMELESS STUDENTS**

The Cotter 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 liaison for homeless children.



and youth whose responsibilities shall include coordinating with the state educational liaison for homeless children and youth to ensure that homeless children are not stigmatized for segregated on the basis of their status as homeless and such other duties as are prescribed by law and this policy.

Notwithstanding Policy 4.1, homeless students living in the district are entitled to enroll in the district's school that non-homeless students who live in the same attendance area are eligible to attend. If there is a question concerning the enrollment of a homeless child due to a conflict with Policy 4.1 or 4.2, the child shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought pending resolution of the dispute. It is the responsibility of the District's local educational liaison for homeless children and youth to carry out the dispute resolution process.

To the extent feasible, the District shall do one of the following according to what is in the best interests of a homeless child. (For the purposes of this policy "school of origin" means the school the child attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child was last enrolled.)

1. continue educating the child who becomes homeless between academic years of during an academic year in their school of origin for the duration of their homelessness;
2. continue educating the child in his/her school of origin who becomes permanent housed during an academic year for the remainder of the academic year; or
3. enroll the homeless child in the school appropriate for the attendance zone where the child lives.

If the District elects to enroll a homeless child in a school other than their school of origin and such action is against the wishes of the child's parent or guardian, the District shall provide the parent or guardian with a written explanation of their reason for doing so which shall include a statement of the parent/guardian's right to appeal.

In any instance where the child is unaccompanied by a parent or guardian, the District's local educational liaison for homeless children and youth shall assist the child in determining his/her place of enrollment. This Liaison shall provide the child with a notice of his/her right to appeal the enrollment decision.

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.

A homeless student shall be immediately eligible to participate in interscholastic activities at the school in which the student is enrolled. For the purposes of this policy, students shall be considered homeless if they lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and

(1) Are:

\*Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;

\*Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;

\*Living in emergency or transitional shelters;

\*Abandoned in hospitals; or

(2) 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;

(3) are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and includes

(4) are migratory children who are living in circumstances described in clauses (a) through (c)

#### **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 14<sup>th</sup> 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 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 the 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.