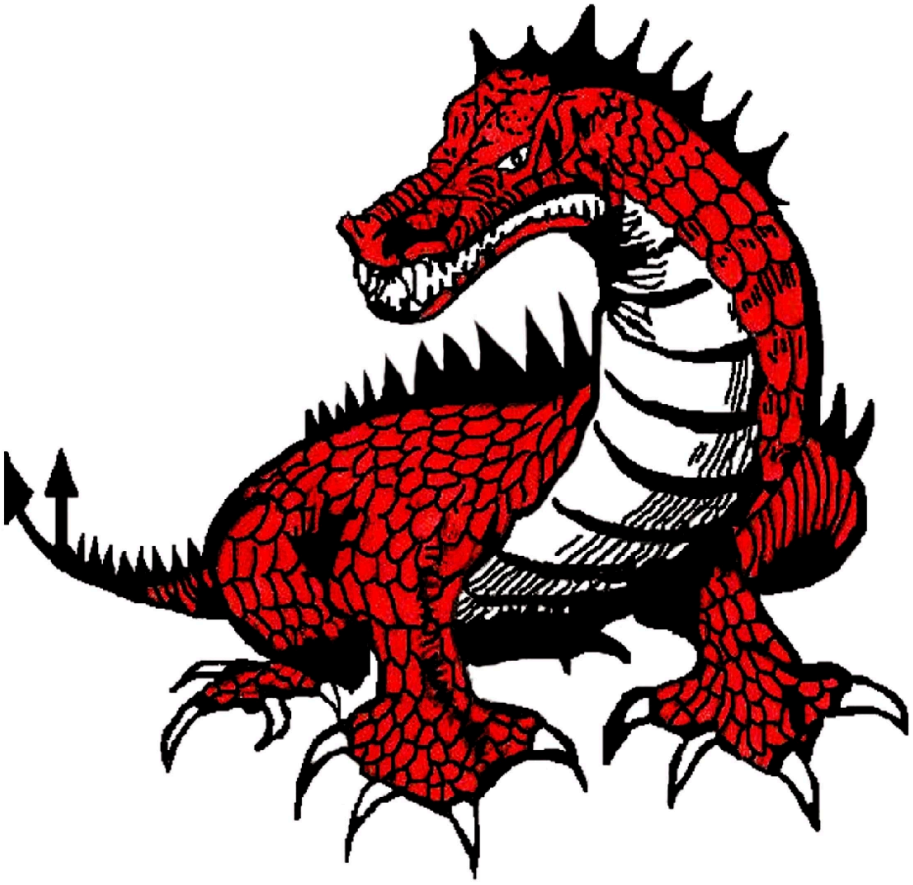
Pender Public Schools

2026-2027



PK - 6th Grade
Parent - Student Handbook

Approved by the Pender Board of Education (7/8/26)

Pender Elementary School

609 Whitney St. ~ Pender, NE 68047
402-385-3244
www.penderschools.org

Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to Pender Elementary School! This handbook has been prepared for all students and parents/guardians in hopes that it will be helpful in answering questions you might have about the policies and practices of our school. When policies and practices are in place, it is easier for everyone to then focus on our most important work, teaching and learning.

Please carefully review the contents of this handbook with your child. If you have questions or concerns not covered in this handbook, please do not hesitate to call your child's teachers, the school office or myself.

On behalf of the entire staff, I am looking forward to working together to make this an enjoyable, productive and successful year! It's a GREAT day to be a PENDRAGON!

Respectfully,

Kelly Ballinger
P-6 Principal
Special Services Director

Intent of Student Handbook

This handbook is intended to be used by students, parents, and staff as a guide to the rules, regulations, and general information about Pender Public Schools. Each student is responsible for becoming familiar with the handbook and knowing the information contained in it. Parents are encouraged to use this handbook as a resource and to assist their child in following the rules contained in this handbook.

Although the information found in this handbook is detailed and specific on many topics, the handbook is not intended to be all encompassing so as to cover every situation and circumstance that may arise during any school day, or school year. This handbook does not create a "contract." The administration reserves the right to make decisions and make rule revisions at any time to implement the educational program and to assure the well-being of all students and the educational program. The administration will be responsible for interpreting the rules contained in the handbook. Should a situation or circumstance arise that is not specifically covered in this handbook, the administration will make a decision based upon all applicable school district policies, and state and federal statutes and regulations.

The Policies of the Board of Education may cover areas not addressed in this Handbook. Every parent or guardian and student should familiarize themselves with Board Policies online at www.penderschools.org.

PENDER PUBLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Pender Public School District is to provide quality educational opportunities in a safe, positive learning environment that motivates and challenges all students to become productive and responsible citizens.

Pender Public Schools Governing Beliefs

- *We believe communication is necessary in providing a quality education.*
- *We believe that a quality education is a joint commitment and responsibility of the entire community.*
- *We believe that our school system should provide the educational opportunities to meet the individual needs of all students.*
- *We believe the learning environment should be safe, supportive, positive and dignified.*
- *We believe in providing the learning environment and technology to motivate and challenge the student to be the best he/she can be.*
- *We believe in recognizing the diversity of students, their backgrounds and families.*
- *We believe in creating an educational environment in which students learn to take responsibility for their own actions.*
- *We believe that our school system should hire, maintain and retain the best-qualified staff possible.*

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This handbook is available online at www.penderschools.org.
There is also a link for school board policy as well as a variety of additional resources for students/parents. Feel free to contact the district office/administration at any time with questions.

Elementary School Directory

Administration

Superintendent	Dr. Jason Dolliver
Elementary Principal/SPED Director	Kelly Ballinger
Secondary Principal	Luke Hoffman

District Secretaries

Superintendent's Office	Deanna Hansen
Elementary	Kristin Walsh
Secondary	Lisa Johnson

Elementary Staff

Preschool	Pam Peters
Kindergarten	Amy Bargholz
	Shauna Kinning
1st Grade	Ashley Bessmer
	Marin Behnk
2nd Grade	Sheila Dahlman
	Mitchell Mailloux
3rd Grade	Liz Hoffman
	Brianna Gear
4th Grade	Megan Nixon
	Kelly Schrunk
5th Grade	Nick Arlt
	Tara English
6th Grade	Traci Krusemark
	Bailey Tofflemire
Special Education, K-3	Kaelyn Svehla
Special Education, 4-7	Kira Swinton
Title 1	Audra Miller
Music	Brandi Kolbeck
Band	Matt Dregalla
PE	Dylan Behnk
4-6 Art	Dustin Krusemark
Guidance Counselor	Thad Nixon
Library/ Technology	Rhonda Heise
Speech Therapist	Erica Mogensen

School Psychologist	Nicole Swain
Paraprofessional	Tiffany Beckman
Paraprofessional	Alaynna Beutler
Paraprofessional	Morgan Fillipi
Paraprofessional	Judy Giese
Paraprofessional	Kaylinda Holloway
Paraprofessional	Carolyn Jensen
Paraprofessional	Vicki Nickels
Paraprofessional	Betty Roberts
Paraprofessional	Tiffany Rose
Paraprofessional	Melinda Ruppert
Paraprofessional	Janet Schopke
Paraprofessional	Liz Tierney
Paraprofessional	Courtnie Walker
Paraprofessional	Richelle Webster

Support Staff

Food Service Manager	Pam Buchholz
Maintenance	Tony Crippen
PreK-12th Nurse	Leslie Timm
Cook	Jody Davis
Cook	Jaclyn Anderson
Cook	Robbie Welsh
Custodian	Jessica Reppert
Custodian	Michelle Davis
Transportation/Custodian	Dan Swinton
Bus Route Driver	Greg Meyer
Bus Route Driver	Jeff Meyer

Board of Education

President	Matt Peters
Vice President	Matt Heineman
Secretary-Treasurer	Jason Roth
	JJ Maise
	Jean Karlen
	Mandy Johnson

When Contacting the School By Phone

When calling the school, a voice message will answer the phone and state, *"Thank you for calling Pender Public Schools. We are currently assisting other callers. If you know your party's extension number please dial it at any time."* You will then be given the following options:

Section 1	Elementary Office press 1
Section 2	High School Office press 2
Section 3	Superintendent's Office press 3
Section 4	Activities Press 4
Section 5	To report your Student's Absence, press 5
Section 6	Press 6 for a directory
Section 7	Or dial '0' to hold for the first available staff person

After pressing 5 to report a student absence, you will hear the following prompt:

Student Absence Mailbox: To leave a message you will press '1' and hear "*Please leave your students name and reason for missing school. In case of illness, please include symptoms, as this assists us in our overall health reports for the school. Thank you.*"

Pender Public Schools
2026-2027 School Calendar

AUGUST 2026						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	~~10~~	~~11~~	~~12~~	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Dates	Description
August 10	FB/VB/CC/GG/SB Practice Begins
10, 11, 12	Teacher Inservice
11	Open House 6-8 p.m.
13	First Day - K-12 Students
13	Dismiss @ 1; no preschool
17	First Day - Preschool
19, 26	Dismiss @ 2:30 pm; tchr inservice
September 7	No School - Labor Day
2, 9, 16, 23, 30	Dismiss @ 2:30 pm; tchr inservice
October 7, 14, 28	Dismiss @ 2:30 pm; tchr inservice
9, 10	FB Game / Dance (Homecoming)
16	End of Quarter; 46 days
21	Parent/Teacher Conf; 10 am - 8 pm
21	No School
23	No school (Comp Day)
November 4, 11, 18	Dismiss @ 2:30 pm; tchr inservice
25	Dismiss @ 1:00 pm
26-29	Thanksgiving Break
December 2, 9, 16	Dismiss @ 2:30 pm; tchr inservice
18	2nd Quarter Ends-41 days; Dismiss @ 1:00 pm
23-27	NSAA Moratorium - No Practice
Dec 19 - Jan 4/5	Winter Break
January 4	No School - Teacher Inservice
5	School Resumes
6, 13, 20, 27	Dismiss @ 2:30 pm; tchr inservice
February 3, 10, 17, 24	Dismiss @ 2:30 pm; tchr inservice
19	No School
March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31	Dismiss @ 2:30 pm; tchr inservice
4	3rd Quarter Ends - 42 days
5, 11	No School
11	Parent/Teacher Conf; 10 am - 8 pm
12	No School (Comp Day)
26, 29	No School - Spring Break
28	Easter
April 7, 14, 21, 28	Dismiss @ 2:30 pm; tchr inservice
17	Prom
May 5, 12	Dismiss @ 2:30 pm; tchr inservice
9	Graduation
19	Last day for students; Dismiss @ 11 am
19	End of 4th Quarter - 48 Days
19	Last day for staff
20, 21, 24, 25, 26	Snow make up days

SEPTEMBER 2026						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	~~7~~	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

NOVEMBER 2026						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	~~26~~	~~27~~	28
29	30					

JANUARY 2027						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					~~1~~	2
3	~~4~~	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

MARCH 2027						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	~~5~~	6
7	8	9	10	11	~~12~~	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	~~26~~	27
28	~~29~~	30	31			

APRIL 2027						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

MAY 2027						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

= Weighted Leave

"Weighted Leave" also applies on all teacher inservice days and on days when PT conferences are conducted

87 Days	1st Semester
90 Days	2nd Semester
177 Days	Total Student Days
185 Days	Teacher Contract Days

= No School

= Early Dismissal

Approved by the Board of Education - March 9, 2026

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Birth Certificates **See Board Policy #5001*

A certified copy of the student's birth certificate issued by the state in which the child was born, upon admission of a child for the first time, shall be provided within 30 days of enrollment. Other reliable proof of the child's identity and age, accompanied by an affidavit explaining the inability to produce a copy of the birth certificate, may be used in lieu of a birth certificate. An affidavit is defined as a notarized statement by an individual who can verify the reason a copy of the birth certificate cannot be produced. (Failure to provide the birth certificate does not result in non-enrollment or disenrollment, but does result in a referral to local law enforcement for investigation). A certified copy of the birth certificate may be obtained from the Bureau of Vital Statistics located in the capital of the state in which the child was born.

Guardianship

Any student, or students, whose legal guardianship has been transferred to a resident of this school district, shall reside at the domicile of the appointed guardian. The guardian of each student may be requested to file a copy of the court order assigned guardianship to the individual with the office of the superintendent of schools. The school shall conduct all business on behalf of the student with the legal guardian.

Physical Examinations **See Board Policy #5001*

Each student entering:

1. Kindergarten
2. Seventh grade
3. Entering PPS from another state regardless of grade level

A physical form or other written evidence signed by a qualified physician must be presented by every student confirming that the student has received a physical examination within six months prior to the beginning of the school year. A physical examination is not required of any child whose parent or guardian objects in writing. The cost of the required physical examination is the responsibility of the parent or guardian of each child.

IMPORTANT! No student in any of the above groups will be permitted to enroll in school unless the school is provided with (1) evidence of physical examination within the past six months, or (2) a parent signed waiver. The above requirements were established by Nebraska State School Law 79-444 as enacted by the legislature of the State of Nebraska. (See board policy 5001)

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Compulsory Attendance Policy **See Board Policy #5008*

Except for those students exempted by law, this school district expects all children living within the boundaries of the school district and who are between the ages of six and eighteen to be in attendance every day that school is in session unless they have been excused.

Attendance Policy and Excessive Absenteeism

Regular and punctual student attendance is required. The administration is responsible for developing further attendance rules and regulations, and all staff members are expected to implement this policy and administrative rules and regulations to encourage regular and punctual student attendance. The Principals and teachers are required to maintain an accurate record of student attendance.

Attendance and Absences

1) Circumstances of Absences – Definitions. The circumstances for all absences from school will be identified as School Excused or Not School Excused. Absences should be cleared through the Principal's office in advance whenever possible. All absences, except for illness and/or death in the family, require advance approval.
    a) School Excused. Any of the following circumstances that lead to an absence will be identified as a School Excused absence, provided the required attendance procedures have been followed:
        i) Impossible or impracticable barriers outside the control of the parent or child prevent a student from attending school. The parent must provide the school with documentation to demonstrate the absence was beyond the control of the parent or child. This could include, but is not limited to documented illness, court, death of a family member, or suspension.
        ii) Other absences as determined by the principal or the principal's designee.
    b) Not School Excused. Absences that are not school excused may result in a report to the county attorney and may be classified as follows:
        i) Parent acknowledged absences are those in which the parent communicated with the school in the prescribed manner that the child is absent and is the parent's responsibility for the extent of the school day. This includes, but is not limited to, illness, vacations, and medical appointments.

ii) Other absences are those in which the parent has not communicated a reason for the student's absence.

2) Excessive Absenteeism. Students who accumulate ten (10) not school excused absences in a semester shall be deemed to have "excessive absences." Such absences shall be determined on a per day basis for elementary students and on a per class basis for secondary students. When a student has excessive absences, the following procedures shall be implemented:
   a) Verbal or written communication by school officials with the person or persons who have legal or actual charge or control of any child; and
   b) One or more meetings between the school (a school attendance officer, a school administrator or his or her designee, and/or a social worker), the child's parent or guardian, and the child, when appropriate, to address the barriers to attendance. The result of the meeting or meetings shall be to develop a collaborative plan to reduce barriers identified to improve regular attendance. The plan shall consider, but not be limited to:
      i) Illness related to physical or behavioral health of the child.
      ii) Educational counseling;
      iii) Educational evaluation;
      iv) Referral to community agencies for economic services;
      v) Family or individual counseling; and
      vi) Assisting the family in working with other community services.

   If the parent/guardian refuses to participate in such meeting, the principal shall place documentation of such refusal in the child's attendance records.

3) Reporting Excessive Absenteeism to the County Attorney. The school may report to the county attorney of the county in which the person resides when the school has documented the efforts to address excessive absences, the collaborative plan to reduce barriers identified to improve regular attendance has not been successful, and the student has accumulated more than twenty (20) absences per year. The school shall notify the child's family in writing prior to referring the child to the county attorney. Illness that makes attendance impossible or impracticable shall not be the basis for referral to the county attorney. A report to the county attorney may also be made when a student otherwise accrues excessive absences as herein defined.

Arrival & Dismissal

The K-6 school day is 8:10 a.m. - 3:40 p.m. Students in grades K-6 eating breakfast may arrive at 7:30 am. Prior to that time, the school is not responsible for supervision of the students. Students in grades K-6 not eating breakfast at school should not arrive before 8:00 a.m. Students in grades K-6 are not allowed in the building until 8:00 a.m. unless it is raining or is extremely cold. When it is raining or extremely cold, students will be allowed to go to the Heese Event Center with adult supervision at 8:00 a.m. Elementary students can enter through door #4 or can be dropped off on the playground in the morning. If a student arrives at school after 8:10 a.m., he/she must enter through door #4, must check in at the district office before going to class, and will be counted tardy and. It is important that students arrive to school on time. Students should have a note or a parent should call the school if they arrive late/tardy.

K-2 students are dismissed from their classroom at 3:30 p.m., 3-6 students are dismissed at 3:40 p.m. All students will be dismissed from the south side of the building. Parents picking up their children at the end of the school day should meet them on the southwest side of the building in the designated pick up area. Students riding the bus will be dismissed out door #8 and will be supervised on the playground or in the cafeteria until buses arrive. Students who are walking home will be dismissed out door #6 on the south side of the building and will be escorted to the alley to the west. Students are to go directly home after school unless parents have made other arrangements and the school has been notified. Parents need to make arrangements to have their children picked up from school no later than 3:45 p.m. Students waiting for high school siblings will wait on the playground for pick-up. The school is not responsible for supervision of students once the students are to have left the school grounds.

Certain days on the calendar are “shortened days,” meaning that the school day starts or ends other than on the normal schedule. Parents are strongly encouraged to be aware of those days so their children are not left in an unsupervised situation or without a means to get home upon dismissal.

4 Year Old Preschool students should enter and exit on the south side of the building in the designated preschool pick-up/drop off area near the preschool entrance. There will be two groups of students (morning and afternoon) in the preschool program. Morning preschool students will attend school from 8:00 am to 11:30 am and afternoon preschool students will attend from 12:00 pm to 3:30 pm. Morning preschool students should be dropped off no earlier than 7:55 am and picked up between 11:15 am and 11:30 am. Afternoon preschool students should be dropped off no earlier than 11:55 am and picked up between 3:15 pm and 3:30 pm. Preschool students do not eat breakfast or lunch at school and are typically not provided transportation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the school office.

After School Policy

If a teacher keeps a student after school, the student should call his/her parent(s). If the student's family does not have a telephone or the family cannot be reached, a teacher should make arrangements with a parent in writing the day before the student stays after school

Attendance is Required to Participate in Activities

Students must be in attendance all day of any scheduled school activity in order to participate in the activity. This includes sports contests, practice, and dances. Failure to attend on that day may result in a student being withheld from participation in the activity. The Principal retains the right to grant participation should exceptional circumstances prevail.

Make-up Work

Teachers may assign make-up work for any absent students. Parents should understand that some class work cannot be made up due to the nature of the work. When possible, students should make every attempt to make up work prior to being absent. The school asks that if at all possible, the school be notified a few days in advance of the date the student will be absent. Two school days will be allowed to make up work for each day missed, with a maximum of 10 days allowed to make up work unless other arrangements are made with the teacher.

Release of Students

A student shall not be released from any portion of the school day into the custody of any person, other than the parent/legal guardian, unless written permission from the parents or legal guardian has been received by the building principal.

Reporting Absences

To report an absence, please either call the district office at 402-385-3244 or report directly to the district office through door #4. The absence should be reported to the school by 8:30 a.m. The school office will attempt to call the parents/guardians to verify reasons for absence after 8:30. This is done to ensure that parents know their child is not in school.

A student leaving school during the school day is to check out at the district office. The student will need to present a note from a parent or guardian giving the time and reason for leaving school early. Parents need to come to the office to check their children out. In case of illness, a call to the parent or guardian will be made to insure proper attention to the health of the students.

Tardy vs. Half-Day Absent

A student is considered “tardy” if he/she arrives between 8:10 a.m. and 8:45 a.m. If a student arrives after 8:45 a.m., he/she will be considered “absent for a half- day”. A student that leaves in the afternoon before 3:00 p.m. will be considered “absent for a half- day”. A student that

leaves after 3:00 p.m. will be marked as “left early”. Students will not be marked absent (for the purpose of attendance) if they leave and return for appointments during lunch/specials (approximately 11:00-1:00).

Transferring Students

Parents/Guardians are asked to notify the school in advance of a planned move from the Pender District. This can be done by coming to the school office and signing a form that releases cumulative records. The form ensures that all books are returned and that the lunch account has been settled.

STUDENT CONDUCT

**See Board Policy #5100 & 5101*

Pender Elementary School’s rules encourage safety, respect and responsibility for all students and staff. All Pender staff members encourage, model and practice these skills. All staff members are responsible for enforcing these procedures with students across all school settings. If the staff member or teacher needs additional support, the student may be referred to the administration. The teacher or principal may contact a parent to discuss the student’s behavior.

Purpose of Student Conduct Rules

These student conduct rules are established to maintain a school atmosphere which is conducive to learning, to aid student development, to further school purposes, and to prevent interference with the educational process. Violations of the rules will result in disciplinary action.

Forms of School Discipline

Short-Term Suspension: Students may be excluded by the Principal or the Principal’s designee from school or any school function for a period of up to five (5) school days (short-term suspension) on the following grounds:

- A student on a short-term suspension shall not be permitted to be on school grounds without the express permission of the Principal.
- Conduct that constitutes grounds for expulsion, whether the conduct occurs on or off school grounds; or,
- Other violations of rules and standards of behavior adopted by the Pender Public Schools
- Behavior observed by Board of Education or the administrative or teaching staff of the school, which occur on or off school grounds, if such conduct interferes with school purposes or there is a nexus between such conduct and school.

Long-Term Suspension: A long-term suspension means an exclusion from school and any school functions for a period of more than five (5) school days but less than twenty (20) school days.

- A student who is on a long-term suspension shall not be permitted to be on school grounds without the express permission of the Principal.
- A notice will be given to the student and the parents/guardian when the Principal recommends a long-term suspension.
- The notice will include a description of the procedures for long-term suspension.
- The procedures will be those set forth in the Student Discipline Act.

The following process will apply to short-term and long-term suspensions:

1. The Principal or the Principal's designee will make a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances. A short-term suspension will be made upon a determination that the suspension is necessary to help any student, to further school purposes, or to prevent interference with school purposes.
2. Prior to commencement of the short-term suspension, the student and parents will be given oral or written notice of the charges against the student. The student and parents will be advised of what the student is accused of having done, an explanation of the evidence the authorities have, and be afforded an opportunity to explain the student's version of the facts.
3. As necessary following the suspension, the Principal or administrator may send a written statement to the student and the student's parent or guardian describing the student's conduct, misconduct or violation of the rule or standard and the reasons for the action taken.
4. An opportunity will be given to the student, and the student's parent or guardian, to have a conference with the Principal or administrator ordering the short-term suspension before or at the time the student returns to school. The Principal or administrator shall determine who in addition to the parent or guardian is to attend the conference.

Expulsion:

a. Meaning of Expulsion. Expulsion means exclusion from attendance in all schools, grounds and activities of or within the system for a period not to exceed the remainder of the semester in which it took effect unless the misconduct occurred (a) within ten school days prior to the end of the first semester, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect through the second semester, or (b) within ten school days prior to the end of the second semester, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect for summer school and the first semester of the following school year, or (c) unless the expulsion is for conduct specified in these rules or in law as permitting or requiring a longer removal, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect for the period specified therein. Such action may be modified or terminated by the school district at any time during the expulsion period. A student who has been expelled shall not be permitted to be on school grounds without the express permission of the Principal. A notice will be given to the student and the parents/guardian when the Principal recommends an expulsion. The notice will include a description of the procedures for expulsion; the procedures will be those set forth in the Student Discipline Act.

b. Suspensions Pending Hearing. When a notice of intent to discipline a student by long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment is filed with the superintendent, the student may be suspended by the principal until the date the long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment takes effect if the principal determines that the student must be suspended immediately to prevent or substantially reduce the risk of (a) interference with an educational function or school purpose or (b) a personal injury to the student himself or herself, other students, school employees, or school volunteers. If the student is suspended pending the outcome of the hearing, the student may complete classwork and homework, including, but not limited to, examinations missed during the period of suspension. During this period, the student will not be required to attend alternative programming for expelled students in order to complete classwork or homework.

c. Summer Review. Any expulsion that will remain in effect during the first semester of the following school year will be automatically scheduled for review before the beginning of the school year in accordance with law.

d. Alternative Education. Students who are expelled may be offered an alternative education program that will enable the student to continue academic work for credit toward graduation. A student will not be required to attend the alternative education program in order to complete classwork and homework. In the event an alternative education

program is not provided, a conference will be held with the parent, student, the Principal or another school representative assigned by the Principal, and a representative of a community organization that assists young people or that is involved with juvenile justice to develop a plan for the student in accordance with law.

e. Suspension of Enforcement of an Expulsion. Enforcement of an expulsion action may be suspended (i.e., "stayed") for a period of not more than one full semester in addition to the balance of the semester in which the expulsion takes effect. As a condition of such suspended action, the student and parents will be required to sign a discipline agreement.

f. Students Subject to Juvenile or Court Probation. Prior to the readmission to school of any student who is less than nineteen years of age and who is subject to the supervision of a juvenile probation officer or an adult probation officer pursuant to the order of the District Court, County Court, or Juvenile Court, who chooses to meet conditions of probation by attending school, and who has previously been expelled from school, the Principal or the Principal's designee shall meet with the student's probation officer and assist in developing conditions of probation that will provide specific guidelines for behavior and consequences for misbehavior at school (including conduct on school grounds and conduct during an educational function or event off school grounds) as well as educational objectives that must be achieved. If the guidelines, consequences, and objectives provided by the Principal or the Principal's designee are agreed to by the probation officer and the student, and the court permits the student to return to school under the agreed to conditions, the student may be permitted to return to school. The student may with proper consent, upon such return, be evaluated by the school for possible disabilities and may be referred for evaluation for possible placement in a special education program. The student may be expelled or otherwise disciplined for subsequent conduct as provided in Board policy and state statute.

g. Returning from Expulsion. At the conclusion of an expulsion, the District will reinstate the student and accept non duplicative, grade-appropriate credits earned by the student during the term of expulsion from any Nebraska accredited institution or institution accredited by one of the six regional accrediting bodies in the United States.

h. Exception for Pre-Kindergarten through Second Grade Students. Notwithstanding the foregoing, no pre-kindergarten through second grade student may be suspended from school, unless the student brings a deadly weapon on school grounds, in a school vehicle, or to a school activity. Instead, the Principal or Principal's designee may implement alternative disciplinary measures on a case-by-case basis if a pre-kindergarten through second grade student engages in misconduct that would otherwise result in a short-term suspension. If a pre-kindergarten through second grade student brings a deadly weapon on school grounds, in a school vehicle, or to a school activity, then the student may be suspended or expelled in accordance with this Policy's disciplinary procedures.

i. Religious Freedom. The District will not substantially burden a student's right to religious exercise unless the students' religious exercise is disruptive to the school environment, not permitted by staff, may pose a safety risk, or would otherwise interfere with the school day.

Emergency Exclusion:

Emergency Exclusion: A student may be excluded from school in the following circumstances:

a. If the student has a dangerous communicable disease transmissible through normal school contacts and poses an imminent threat to the health or safety of the school community; or
b. If the student's conduct presents a clear threat to the physical safety of himself, herself, or others, or is so extremely disruptive as to make temporary removal necessary to preserve the rights of other students to pursue an education.

Any emergency exclusion shall be based upon a clear factual situation warranting it and shall last no longer than is necessary to avoid the dangers described above.

If the emergency exclusion will be for five school days or less, the procedures for a short-term suspension shall be followed. If the Superintendent or his or her designee determines that an emergency exclusion shall extend beyond five days, a hearing is to be held and a final determination made within ten school days after the initial date of exclusion. Such procedures shall substantially comply with the procedures set forth in this policy for a long-term suspension or expulsion, and be modified only to the extent necessary to accomplish the hearing and determination within this shorter time period.

Other Forms of Student Discipline. Administrative and teaching personnel may take actions regarding student behavior, other than removal of students from school, which are reasonably necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or prevent interference with the educational process. Such actions may include, but are not be limited to, counseling of students, parent conferences, rearrangement of schedules, requirements that a student remain in school after regular hours to do additional work, restriction of extracurricular activity, or requirements that a student receive counseling, psychological evaluation, or psychiatric evaluation upon the written consent of a parent or guardian to such counseling or evaluation. The actions may also include in-school suspensions. When in-school suspensions, after-school assignments, or other disciplinary measures are assigned, the student is responsible for complying with such disciplinary measures. A failure to serve such assigned discipline as directed will serve as grounds for further discipline, up to expulsion from school.

Student Conduct Expectations

Students are not to engage in conduct which causes or which creates a reasonable likelihood that it will cause a substantial disruption in or material interference with any school function, activity or purpose or interfere with the health, safety, well-being or rights of other students, staff or visitors.

1) Grounds for Short-Term Suspension, Long-Term Suspension, Expulsion or Mandatory Reassignment The following conduct has been determined by the Board of Education to have the potential to seriously affect the health, safety or welfare of students, staff and other persons or to otherwise seriously interfere with the educational process. Such conduct constitutes grounds for long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment, and any other lesser forms of discipline. The conduct is subject to the consequence of long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment where it occurs on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by the school and being used for a school purpose or in a vehicle being driven for a school purpose by a school employee or an employee's designee, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event.
    - Willfully disobeying any reasonable written or oral request of a school staff member, or the voicing of disrespect to those in authority.
    - Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, harassment, or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes or making any communication that a reasonable recipient would interpret as a serious expression of an intent to harm or cause injury to another.

- Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property of substantial value, repeated damage or theft involving property, or setting or attempting to set a fire of any magnitude;
- Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to any person, including any school employee, school volunteer, or student. Personal injury caused by accident, self-defense, or other action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect some other person shall not constitute a violation of this subdivision;
- Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of or with the intent of obtaining money or anything of value from such student or making a threat which causes or may be expected to cause a disruption to school operations;
- Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon or that has the appearance of a weapon or bringing or possessing any explosive device, including fireworks;
- Selling, using, possessing or dispensing of alcohol, tobacco, narcotics, drugs, controlled substance, or an inhalant; being under the influence of any of the above; possession of drug paraphernalia, or the selling, using, possessing, or dispensing of an imitation controlled substance as defined in section 28-401 of the Nebraska statutes, or material represented to be alcohol, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance or inhalant. For purposes of this policy, tobacco means any tobacco product (including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, and chewing tobacco), vapor products (such as e-cigarettes), electronic nicotine delivery systems, alternative nicotine products, tobacco product look-alikes, and products intended to replicate tobacco products either by appearance or effect.
- Use of a controlled substance in the manner prescribed for the student by the student's physician is not a violation. The term "under the influence" has a less strict meaning than it does under criminal law; for school purposes, the term means any level of impairment and includes even the odor of alcohol or illegal substances on the breath or person of a student; also, it includes being impaired by reason of the abuse of any material used as a stimulant;
- Public indecency or sexual conduct;
- Engaging in bullying, which includes any ongoing pattern of physical, verbal, or electronic abuse on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by a school being used for a school purpose by a school employee or a school employee's designee, or at school-sponsored activities or school-sponsored athletic events;
- Sexually assaulting or attempting to sexually assault any person. This conduct may result in an expulsion regardless of the time or location of the offense if a complaint alleging such conduct is filed in a court of competent jurisdiction;

- Engaging in any activity forbidden by law which constitutes a danger to other students or interferes with school purposes. This conduct may result in an expulsion regardless of the time or location of the offense if the conduct creates or had the potential to create a substantial interference with school purposes, such as the use of the telephone or internet off-school grounds to threaten; or
- Repeated violation of any rules established by the school district or school officials if such violations constitute a substantial interference with school purposes;
- Truancy or failure to attend assigned classes or assigned activities; or tardiness to school, assigned classes or assigned activities;
- The use of language, written or oral, or conduct, including gestures, which is profane or abusive to students or staff members. Profane or abusive language or conduct includes, but is not limited to, that which is commonly understood and intended to be derogatory toward a group or individual based upon race, gender, disability, national origin, or religion;
- Dressing or grooming in a manner which is dangerous to the student's health and safety or a danger to the health and safety of others or repeated violations of the student dress and grooming standards; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that is lewd or indecent, vulgar or plainly offensive; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that school officials reasonably conclude will materially and substantially disrupt the work and discipline of the school; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that a reasonable observer would interpret as advocating illegal drug use.
- Willfully violating the behavioral expectations for those students riding Pender Public Schools' buses/vans.
- A student who engages in the following conduct shall be expelled for the remainder of the school year in which it took effect if the misconduct occurs during the first semester, and if the expulsion for such conduct takes place during the second semester, the expulsion shall remain in effect for the first semester of the following school year, with the condition that such action may be modified or terminated by the school district during the expulsion period on such terms as the administration may establish:
    (1) The knowing and intentional use of force in causing or attempting to cause personal injury to a school employee, school volunteer, or student, except if caused by accident, self-defense, or on the reasonable belief that the force used was necessary to protect some other person and the extent of force used was reasonably believed to be necessary, or

(2) The knowing and intentional possession, use, or transmission of a dangerous weapon other than a firearm. The term "dangerous weapon" includes any personal safety or security device (such as tasers, mace and pepper spray). If a student desires to carry or possess a personal safety or security device, the student must obtain prior approval from the building principal before bringing such device on school grounds. If a student obtains prior approval from the building principal, the student must store the device during the school day in the student's locker, in the main office or in another secure location designated by the building principal. A student shall not carry a personal safety or security device during the school day.

(r) Knowingly and intentionally possessing, using, or transmitting a firearm on school grounds, in a school-owned or utilized vehicle, or during an educational function or event off school grounds, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event. This conduct shall result in an expulsion for one (1) calendar year. "Firearm" means a firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921, as that statute existed on January 1, 1995. That statute includes the following statement: "The term 'firearm' means (a) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (b) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (c) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (d) any destructive device." The Superintendent may modify such one (1) year expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis, provided that such modification is in writing.

Bringing a firearm or other dangerous weapon to school for any reason is discouraged; however, a student will not be subject to disciplinary action if the item is brought or possessed under the following conditions:

- Prior written permission to bring the firearm or other dangerous weapon to school is obtained from the student's teacher, building administrator and parent.
- The purpose of having the firearm or other dangerous weapon in school is for a legitimate educational function.
- A plan for its transportation into and from the school, its storage while in the school building and how it will be displayed must be developed with the prior written approval by the teacher and building administrator. Such plan shall require that such item will be in the possession of an adult staff member at all times except for such limited time as is necessary to fulfill the educational function.
- The firearm or other dangerous weapon shall be in an inoperable condition while it is on school grounds.

- For personal safety or security devices, the student abides by the requirements set forth above.

Reporting Student Law Violations:

- Cases of law violations or suspected law violations by students may be reported to the police and to the student's parents or guardian as soon as possible.
- When a Principal or other school official releases a minor student to a peace officer (e.g., police officer, sheriff, and all other persons with similar authority to make arrests) for the purpose of removing the minor from the school premises, the Principal or other school official shall take immediate steps to notify the parent, guardian, or responsible relative of the minor regarding the release of the minor to the officer and regarding the place to which the minor is reportedly being taken, except when a minor has been taken into custody as a victim of suspected child abuse, in which case the Principal or other school official shall provide the peace officer with the address and telephone number of the minor's parents or guardian.
- In an effort to demonstrate that student behavior is always subject to possible legal sanctions regardless of where the behavior occurs it shall be the policy of Pender Public Schools to notify the proper legal authorities when a student engages in any of the following behaviors on school grounds or at a school sponsored event:
    - Knowingly possessing illegal drugs, tobacco, or alcohol.
    - Assault.
    - Vandalism resulting in significant property damage.
    - Theft of school or personal property of a significant nature.
    - Automobile accident.
    - Any other behavior which significantly threatens the health or safety of students, staff or other persons or which is required by law to be reported

Bullying **See Board Policy #5415 & 5101*

One of the missions of the Pender Public School District is to provide a physically safe and emotionally secure environment for all students and staff. Positive behaviors (non-violence, cooperation, teamwork, understanding, and acceptance of others) are to be encouraged in the educational program and are required of all students and staff. Inappropriate behaviors (bullying, intimidation, and harassment) are to be identified and students and staff are required to avoid such behaviors. Strategies and practices are to be implemented to reinforce positive behaviors and to discourage and protect others from inappropriate behaviors.

"Bullying" is behavior where one person or group engages in harmful action towards another person or group acting on a real or perceived imbalance of power or view of superiority. The behavior typically includes verbal (e.g. teasing or name-calling) and physical aggression (e.g., hitting, pushing), threatening, excluding or ignoring, spreading rumors, or taking, defacing or destroying the others' property. "Harassment" includes the same actions, though not necessarily from a standpoint of perceived power. Harassment is prohibited. Bullying and harassment is a violation of student conduct rules and appropriate disciplinary measures, up to expulsion, will be enforced. When bullying or harassment is done on the basis of gender, disability, race, or other protected status, it is considered a very serious offense for which expulsion may be a likely consequence depending on the severity of the conduct.

Students who are the victim of bullying or harassment or who observe such occurrences are to promptly report the problem to their teacher or to the Principal so the problem can be addressed. Students who make reports of bullying activity will not be retaliated against for making the report.

Cell Phones/Smart Watches/Headphones

Pender Public Schools understands the need for parents to communicate with their children. During the normal school day, this should be done through the district office. Cell phones may be brought to school, however; the student accepts sole responsibility for this device and it must be kept in the student locker and powered off the entire school day. Smart watches used for the purpose of texting/messaging are not allowed, but may be kept in student lockers or in storage pockets in the classroom, during the school day. Headphones or earbuds are not allowed without permission during the school day. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones, watches, headphones or other electronic devices (iPods, gaming consoles, cameras, etc.). Cell phones and smart devices are allowed by parent request (with physician documentation) to monitor health conditions.

Computer/Internet Policy **See Board Policy #5801 & #6800*

Students at the Pender Elementary School should use the computers and other electronic devices and/or the Internet for educational purposes only. Students who do not follow this policy will face disciplinary action from the administration. Please refer to board policy that is available in the office or can also be found online at www.penderschools.org.

Dress Code

Students at Pender Public Schools are expected to dress in a way that is appropriate for the school setting. Students should not dress in a manner that is dangerous to the health and safety of anyone or interferes with the learning environment or teaching process in our school.

The principal reserves the right to decide if a student's dress or appearance is in violation of school policy. If clothing and/or appearance interfere with the educational process, parents will be notified.

Students will be outside for arrival, dismissal and recess unless it is raining or the temperature is below 0 degrees, including wind chill. Hats, scarves, boots and mittens are strongly encouraged to be worn when it is cold outside.

Pender Elementary School Dress Code Special Considerations:

-All clothing must be modest and appropriate . It must properly cover the body.
-Shorts should be of modest length and extend to approximately mid-thigh.
-Hats (including bandanas) are only worn on special occasions with permission from the principal.
-**Shirts** should be modest in nature covering midriffs completely with no cut outs/holes/plunging necklines. Mesh tops or tops with cut outs/holes may be worn if a solid shirt is worn underneath.
-All Clothing should be free of advertisements regarding alcohol, tobacco or other topics of questionable nature. Double meaning shirts with negative or questionable wording should not be worn to school.
-Tennis shoes are the best footwear for elementary students. Sandals and flip-flops are not recommended.
-**Visible piercing or tattoos** that disrupt the educational process are not allowed.
-**Heavy or bulky coats or sweatshirts** need to be removed upon entering the building. These clothing items can serve as a security threat and will be stored in a student's locker. (ex. Trench coats, Carhartt-type, ski jackets, winter coats, etc.)

Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco **See Board Policy #5104*

Drug-Free Schools

The District implements regulations and practices which will ensure compliance with the federal Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act and all regulations and rules promulgated pursuant thereto. The District's safe and drug-free schools program is established in accordance with principles of effectiveness as required by law to respond to such harmful effects. The consistent message of the program is that the use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful.

Education and Prevention

The District promotes comprehensive, age appropriate, developmentally based drug and alcohol education and prevention programs. The curriculum includes the teaching of both proper and incorrect use of drugs and alcohol for all students in all grades. The District provides in-service orientation and training for staff with regards to drug and alcohol education and prevention programs.

Drug and Alcohol Use and Prevention

Each student of the District is hereby provided a copy of the standards of conduct for student behavior in the District which prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol on school premises or as a part of any of the school's activities.

Drug and Alcohol Education and Prevention Program of the District Pursuant to the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Laws and Regulations

All students are provided an age appropriate, developmentally based drug and alcohol education and prevention program. The program educates on the adverse effects of the use of illicit drugs and alcohol, with the primary objective being the prevention of illicit drug and alcohol use by students.

Drug and Alcohol Counseling, Rehabilitation and Re-entry Programs

Information concerning available drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, and re-entry programs is available to all of the students upon request of the Counselor. In the event of disciplinary proceedings against a student for any District policy pertaining to the prohibition against the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol, appropriate school personnel will confer with the student and the student's parents or guardian concerning available drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, and re-entry programs that appropriate school personnel consider to be of benefit.

Safe and Drug-Free Schools—Parental Notice

Pursuant to the provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), if upon receipt of information regarding the content of safe and drug free school programs and activities other than classroom instruction a parent objects to the participation of their child in such programs and activities, the parent may notify the District of such objection in writing. Upon the receipt of such notice the student will be withdrawn from the program or activity to which parental objection has been made.

Standards of Student Conduct Pertaining to Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco

These standards are in addition to standards of student conduct elsewhere adopted by board policy or administrative regulation. The District's standards prohibit the possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs or alcohol on school premises, in school vehicles, or as a part of any of the school's activities on or off school premises. Conduct prohibited at places and activities as hereinabove described shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Possession, use, distribution or being under the influence of any controlled substance, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, any hallucinogen, any stimulant, or any depressant.
2. Possession of any prescription drug in an unlawful fashion.
3. Possession, use, distribution or being under the influence of alcohol.
4. Possession, use, distribution, or being under the influence of any abusable glue or aerosol paint or any other chemical substance for inhalation, including but not limited to lighter fluid, whiteout, and reproduction fluid, when such activity constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes.
5. Possession, use, or distribution of any look-alike drug or look-alike controlled substance when such activity constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes.
6. Possession, use or distribution of any tobacco product. For purposes of this policy, tobacco means any tobacco product (including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, and chewing tobacco), vapor products (such as e-cigarettes), electronic nicotine delivery systems, alternative nicotine products, tobacco product look-alikes, and products intended to replicate tobacco products either by appearance or effect
7. Misuse or abuse of legal products for the purpose of or acting as a hallucinogen, stimulant, or depressant.

Disciplinary Sanctions

Violation of any of the above-prohibited acts will result in disciplinary sanction being taken within the bounds of applicable law, up to and including expulsion and referral to appropriate authorities for criminal prosecution. In particular, students should be aware that:

1. Violation of these standards may result in suspension or expulsion.
2. Prohibited substances will be confiscated and unlawful substances will be turned over to law enforcement authorities.
3. The student may be referred for counseling or treatment.
4. Parents or legal guardian will be notified.
5. Law enforcement will be notified.
6. If it appears there is imminent danger to the student, other students, school personnel, or students involved, emergency medical services will be contacted.

Intervention

The District does not have the authority or responsibility to make medical or health determinations regarding chemical dependency. However, when observed behavior indicates that a problem exists which may affect the student's ability to learn or function in the educational environment, the school has the right and responsibility to refer the student for a formal chemical dependency diagnosis based on behavior observed by school staff.

Administration

The administration is authorized to adopt such administrative rules, regulations or practices necessary to properly implement this policy. Such regulations, rules or practices may vary the procedures set forth herein to the extent necessary to fit the circumstances of an individual situation. Such rules, regulations and practices may include administrative forms, such as checklists to be used by staff to record observed behavior and to determine the proper plan of action.

**If parents have any questions or concerns regarding any of the services provided by Pender Public Schools they are asked to contact school administration.

Initiations, Hazing, Secret Clubs & Outside Organizations **See Board Policy #6284*

Initiations, hazing, secret clubs and outside organization solicitation are prohibited.

Lockers/ Searches of Lockers and Other Types of Searches **See Board Policy #5406*

The Board of Education has established policy #5406 to address the following topics.
For more information on this policy, please visit www.penderschools.org then click on 'Board of Education' and 'Board of Education Policies.'

Mutual Respect

Pender Public Schools expects every staff member and student to be treated with respect and dignity. A show of disrespect toward a staff member or insubordination on the part of students will not be tolerated.

Personal/Nuisance Items

Students are discouraged from bringing personal/nuisance items to school. Examples include: squishies, extra money, toys, candy, comics/cards, jewelry, iPods, headphones, electronic games, sports equipment, etc. These items can easily become lost, stolen, or broken and should be left at home. Personal/nuisance items may be confiscated by school administration.

Video Surveillance

The Board of Education has authorized the use of video cameras on School District property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment including buses. Video cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent. The devices shall not be placed or operational in locations in which individuals have a high expectation of privacy, such as restrooms and locker rooms. Video recordings are considered student educational records and may be subject to FERPA guidelines.

Notice is hereby given that video surveillance may occur on District property. In the event of video surveillance recording captures a student or other building user violating school policies or rules or local, state or federal laws, the video surveillance recording may be used in appropriate disciplinary proceedings against the student or other building user and may also be provided to law enforcement agencies.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Assessment **See Board Policy #6211, 6212, 6213*

Each year Pender Public Schools asks K-12 graders to participate in the following assessments:

- NSCAS (Nebraska Student Centered Assessment System) Tests, originating from the Nebraska Department of Education, are given once a year in the late spring in the areas of English Language Arts, Math, & Science. Tests are given to grades 3-6. Each test takes approximately a half-day and is administered in an electronic format.
- MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) Tests, originating from NWEA and ESU #1, are given three times a year, once in the early fall, once in the winter, and once in the late spring. Tests are given in the areas of Reading, Language Usage, Math Concepts, and Science. Tests are given to grades K-6. Each test takes approximately 2 hours and is administered in an electronic format.
- DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) assessments are given 3 times a year, once in the early fall, once in the winter, and once in the late spring. Tests are given in the areas of reading and math. Tests are given to grades K-6. Collectively DIBELS Testing takes about 1 hour and is administered orally/paper pencil and electronically.
- Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading Benchmark Assessments, originating from Fountas and Pinnell, are given one time a year in the early fall. Tests are given to establish Guided Reading levels in K-6 grade. Benchmarking takes approximately a ½ hour.

The purpose of any assessment given is to improve instructional practices and provide students and parents with useful information. Results from each assessment will be provided to parents in a timely manner.

Bicycles/Scooters/Skateboards/Rollerblades/Shoe Skates

Bicycles and scooters must be parked in the racks provided on the north or south sides of the building. It is encouraged that all bicycles be equipped with locks. The school is not responsible for damage or theft of parts while bicycles are on school property. Skateboards, rollerblades, and shoes skates are not allowed.

Birthdays

Parents may deliver or send treats or favors for their child's birthday. Deliveries should be made to the district office. It is beneficial to the teacher if he/she is notified the day before the treats are brought. *Due to the increase of allergies and health issues among children, NO HOMEMADE TREATS ARE ALLOWED. Pre-packaged purchased treats, with available ingredient lists, are necessary.* Parents are asked not to send invitations to parties and other social gatherings to school with their children.

Care of School Property

Students are responsible for the proper care of all books, equipment, supplies and furniture supplied by the school. Students who disfigure property, break windows or do other damage to school property or equipment will be required to pay for the damage done or replace the item.

Child Abuse/Neglect

Nebraska State Law and school policy mandates school officials to make a report to the proper law enforcement agency or the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected, or a child is in a situation that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect.Teachers are obligated to inform law enforcement or the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services of suspected abuse or inform their Principal or supervisor so that they can make a report.

Communication

Pender Public School's website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages are valuable tools to access up-to-date information about school activities and the school calendar. The website is www.penderschools.org, the Twitter account can be found at @pendragonupdate, and the Facebook/Instagram pages are Pender Public Schools. PowerSchool is a web-based computer program parents can access to view student grades, schedules, and receive information about what is happening in the classroom. To view this website, go to www.powerschool.penderschools.org. Please contact the district office for assistance. The District mass communication system will be used to provide families with information regarding inclement weather, upcoming activities and events.

Complaint Procedures

The proper procedure for a parent or student to make complaints or raise concerns is to begin with the school employee who is most immediately or directly involved in the matter, as illustrated in the complaint procedure set forth below. There are specific procedures to address certain complaints or concerns, such as discrimination or harassment, bullying, disciplinary actions. Those procedures should be used where applicable.

Complaint procedure

Step 1 - Schedule a conference with the staff person most immediately or directly involved in the matter.
Step 2 - Address the concern to the Principal if the matter is not resolved at Step 1.
Step 3 - Address the concern to the Superintendent if the matter is not resolved at Step 2.
Step 4 - Address the concern to the Board of Education if the matter is not resolved at Step 3.

Conditions Applicable to All Levels of Complaint Procedure

All information to be considered at each step should be placed in writing in order to be most effective. Action or decisions will be expedited as quickly as possible, typically within ten (10) calendar days, depending on the nature of the complaint and the need for prompt resolution.

Copyright and Fair Use Policy

It is the school's policy to follow the federal copyright law. Students are reminded that, when using school equipment and when completing course work, they also must follow the federal copyright laws. The federal copyright law governs the reproduction of works of authorship. Copyrighted works are protected regardless of the medium in which they are created or reproduced; thus, copyright extends to digital works and works transformed into a digital format. Copyrighted works are not limited to those that bear a copyright notice.

The "fair use" doctrine allows limited reproduction of copyrighted works for educational and research purposes. The relevant portion of the copyright statute provides that the "fair use" of a copyrighted work, including reproduction "for purposes such as criticism, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research" is not an infringement of copyright. The law lists the following factors as the ones to be evaluated in determining whether a particular use of a copyrighted work is a permitted "fair use," rather than an infringement of the copyright:

- the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes;
- the nature of the copyrighted work;
- the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole, and
- the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

Although all of these factors will be considered, the last factor is the most important in determining whether a particular use is "fair." Students should seek assistance from a faculty member if there are any questions regarding what may be copied.

Emergency Procedures

Tornado, fire and other emergency drills are conducted annually according to requirements of state law. Procedures are posted in each classroom. All classrooms have emergency response packets. Tampering with fire safety equipment or deliberately setting off fire alarm equipment is a serious offense. Such an act is grounds for suspension or expulsion and may be accompanied by a complaint filed with the State Fire Marshal.

Field Trips

Educational field trips may be taken during the school year. Such trips will be made in school vehicles with a teacher in charge. A permission slip will be sent home and must be signed by a parent/guardian in order for a student to participate. If a student does not return a permission slip and the school is unable to contact a parent/guardian by phone, the student will not be allowed to participate in the field trip. Parents have the right to opt out of these activities and have their child remain at school.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued four times during the school year. Report cards are sent home in "Thursday Folders" or given to parents after each of the 3 first quarters of the school year. The final fourth quarter report cards are mailed to parents.

Grading Scale

**See Board Policy #5204*

The elementary (K-6 grade) students grading scale for all subjects is as follows:

4 – Mastery – Exceptional understanding of grade level skills. Consistent mastery with insignificant mistakes. Minimal or no support needed.

3 – Proficient – Solid understanding of grade level skills. Showing mastery with occasional mistakes. Minimal support needed.

2 – Developing – Basic understanding of grade level skills. Progressing toward mastery. Frequent support needed.

1 – Novice – Limited understanding of grade level skills. Minimal evidence of mastery. Extensive support needed.

Within each content area, teachers will assess student knowledge and assign one of the proficiency ratings above to each graded standard. Each content area has several graded standards based on standards dictated by the Nebraska Department of Education. The proficiency rating assigned will be based on student performance over the course of the grading period on practice work, formative assessment, and summative assessment. Emphasis will be placed on the most consistent level of work and knowledge as well as the most recent level of work and knowledge. Life skills and student conduct are separately graded for each student.

Honor Roll

The purpose of the honor roll is to recognize those students who demonstrate academic excellence. Honor rolls will be determined for 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th quarters. Students will be recognized accordingly:

1. Students receiving all "3's" and "4's" on their report card will be classified as honor roll students.
2. Students in grades 4-6 are honor roll eligible.
3. Honor roll lists are published in school and community publications.

Library

Students are encouraged to use the library on a regular basis. Library fines may be assessed for overdue books. Lost books may require payment.

Lost and Found

Students who have found an item should bring it to the office. Students who have lost an item may check the Lost and Found. Every month unclaimed items in Lost and Found will be donated to a charitable organization.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences are usually held at the end of the first quarter and a second conference will be held in the spring. If parents/guardians ever have questions or concerns regarding the progress of his/her child(ren), they are encouraged to contact their teachers directly and do not need to wait for conference times. Parents/Guardians who wish to contact a teacher by phone should call before 8:00 a.m. or after 3:40 p.m. Messages can be left for teachers during the school day if necessary. Teachers may also be reached by school email.

Pets/Animals

Due to the increase of allergies and health issues among children, pets and other animals are not permitted in school. Please contact administration for special requests or exceptions. Please refer to *Board Policy # 1260* for guidelines regarding service animals.

Promotion and Retention

Students will be placed at the grade level and in the courses best suited to them academically, socially and emotionally as determined by the professional staff. Students will typically progress annually from grade to grade. A student may be retained at a grade level or be required to repeat a course or program when such is determined in the judgment of the professional staff to be appropriate for the educational interests of the student and the educational program. By the end of the third quarter the classroom teacher will contact the parent/guardian if there is a consideration of retention.

School Closings/Late Starts

A decision to close school is made when forecasts by the weather service and civil defense officials indicate that it would be unwise for students to go to school. If possible, a decision about the next school day will be made by 9:00 p.m. **An announcement will be made to parents via the District mass communication system as soon as possible. School closings will also be announced on radio stations KWPN at West Point, KTCH at Wayne, and TV stations KTIV Channel 4, KCAU Channel 9, in Sioux City & KETV Channel 7 in Omaha.** In some instances, school will be open, but certain services may be cancelled (bus transportation, preschool, student activities). When school is cancelled, all activities, practices and use of school facility will be cancelled.If school is dismissed early due to inclement weather, the notice will be broadcast by the media and/or the District mass communication system. All activities, practices, and use of school facilities will be cancelled.

Parents may decide to keep their children at home in inclement weather. Students absent because of severe weather when school is in session will be marked absent upon notification from parents/guardians. Parents may pick up their children in inclement weather at any time during the school day. Students who ride with older siblings to school may be dismissed from school during severe weather pending parental/guardian permission. In an emergent weather situation (tornado warning) students will remain sheltered in place until the threat passes.

Smoke-Free Environment

All of our school buildings and grounds are smoke and tobacco-free. We would appreciate your help in meeting the goal of a smoke and tobacco-free environment for our children. When you attend school events, including athletic events, please abide by our District's policy.

Solicitation and Selling

Organizations outside school jurisdiction shall not be permitted to advertise events through the use of school or use pupils to sell services, tickets, etc. except those jointly sponsored with the school or approved by the principal. Soliciting and selling must therefore take place outside the regular 8:15 -3:30 school day.

Student Injuries/Accidents

At the beginning of each school year, parents/guardians are asked to complete and sign a form authorizing the staff at Pender Public School to call a physician if necessary. This form will be sent home with each student at the start of the school year. The form provides the school with following information and more:

1. The name of the student's family doctor.
2. The home, work, and cellular phone numbers of the student's parents/guardians.
3. The name/phone numbers of a close friend or relative, in the event the parents/guardians cannot be reached.

If a significant injury occurs at school, immediate first aid is applied, and parents are notified. If parents are not available, an emergency contact provided by the parent will be called. If that person is also not available and the child's well being is in danger, the student may be taken to a physician or medical facility. From time to time, families' contact numbers change. If this occurs during the school year, please take the time to notify the elementary school office.

When significant injuries occur (injuries that involve a bump to the head, or require treatment beyond a Band-Aid or ice pack), an accident form is completed, and the accident is reported to the elementary secretary. All school personnel are encouraged to become familiar with the principles of first aid. Parents will be called when necessary. A copy of the accident form will be sent home with the student the day of the accident so the parent is aware of the injury. The school does not assume responsibility for accidents or injuries that occur during school hours. Minor injuries and accidents do frequently occur at school. Minor falls, bumps, scratches

or collisions often require a Band-Aid, ice pack and a little extra care. These injuries may not be reported to the office and do not require that an accident form be completed. If parents ever have a question or concern about something that has happened at school they are encouraged to contact the principal.

Student Insurance

A group accident insurance policy is made available to all students of Pender Public Schools. Information specifically describing the insurance is made available to families soon after school starts in the fall. Parents and students should understand that this is sold as a supplement to any family insurance and is not intended to take the place of family medical/accident insurance.

Student Valuables

Students, not the school, are responsible for their personal property. Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money or items of value to school. If it is necessary to bring valuable items or more money than is needed to pay for lunch, leave the money or valuables with a staff member in the school office for temporary safe-keeping. Even then, the school is not in a position to guarantee that the student's property will not be subject to loss, theft, or damage.

Visitors and Volunteers

Special guests are always welcomed to visit the school but are asked to check in at the office. Visitors should notify the office of their presence, sign the visitor's log in the office and get a visitor's badge to wear during the school visit. Please check with administration before visiting to avoid testing situations and special events. In grades PK-6, students may visit only if accompanied by an adult or if other arrangements have been made.

Volunteers are welcome to help teachers by assisting students in the classroom or as part of a school-related activity. Volunteers are assigned subject to the approval of the administration. Examples of volunteer opportunities may include: assisting with grant work, working in the library, and volunteering at extra-curricular activities, working in classrooms and participating in our Parent-Teacher Organization. Those interested in volunteering or gaining more information about our Parent-Teacher Organization should contact Kristin Walsh in the District office, or Kelly Ballinger, Elementary Principal.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Backpack Food Program

Pender Public Schools and the Pender Ministerial Association team up to provide the Backpack Food Program. The Backpack Food Program provides healthy snacks and meals for participating students each weekend throughout the school year. If you believe your child/children could benefit from this program, we encourage you to complete the Backpack Food Program Form, which will be sent home with students the first day of school. Only one form is needed per family. This information is kept confidential. If your family is in need of additional help, please do not hesitate to contact the school at 402-385-3244 and we can provide you with additional resources.

"Beyond the Bell" After School Program

The after school program is open to all K-6 students. Beyond the Bell will be from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and 2:30 to 5:00 p.m. on early dismissal Wednesdays. There is no charge for students to attend. Students will have a snack, physical education activities, academic time, and free play opportunities during Beyond the Bell. Approximately once a week enrichment activities will be provided as well. Those enrichment activities may include vocal/instrument music sessions, art sessions, core academic area extensions, guest readers, and writer's workshops.

ESL/ELL Services

Services are available to students who qualify as English Language Learners. Please complete the language survey sent home as part of the back-to-school or new-student forms packet.

Guidance Services

Pender Public Schools employs a guidance counselor for the purpose of assisting with district testing, Preschool – 6th grade character education, post-secondary planning, student schedules, and a resource for problem solving and conflict resolution. The guidance counselor is also available for students/families in need of additional support during a family crisis/issues. If someone wishes to see the counselor, contact the school office and make arrangements for an appointment.

High Ability Learners **See Board Policy #5414*

The school district recognizes that the student population includes students with exceptional academic abilities. Efforts to refer and identify learners with high ability will be made at each grade level. Multiple criteria shall be used for identification purposes and identification efforts shall be inclusionary. These students shall be provided appropriately challenging curriculum and instruction in their classrooms with opportunities for curricular extension as well.

Special Education Services **See Board Policy #6600*

What Does Special Education Mean?

Special education means specially designed instruction and related services adapted as appropriate to the needs of an eligible student with a disability. Special education is provided at no cost to the parent to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability.

Students Who May Benefit

A student verified as having autism, behavior disorders, deaf-blindness, developmental delay, hearing impairments, mental handicaps, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairments, other health impairments, specific learning disabilities, speech-language impairments, traumatic brain injury or visual impairments, who because of these impairments need special education and related services.

How are Students With Disabilities Identified?

Referrals are made by teachers or parents to a Student Assistance Team. If the student assistance team or comparable problem solving team feels that all viable alternatives have been explored, a referral for multidisciplinary evaluation is completed. An evaluation is conducted to assist in the determination of whether a student has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services the student needs. The evaluation is conducted only with written consent of a parent or guardian. A multidisciplinary evaluation team (MDT) will then meet to determine whether the student is eligible for special education.

Independent Evaluation

If a parent disagrees with an evaluation completed by the school district, the parent has a right to request an independent educational evaluation at public expense. Parents should direct inquiries to school officials to determine if the school district will arrange for further evaluation at public expense. If school district officials feel the original evaluation was appropriate and the parents disagree, a due process hearing may be initiated. If it is determined that the original evaluation was appropriate, parents still have the right to an independent educational evaluation at their own expense.

Reevaluation

Students identified for special education will be reevaluated at least every three (3) years by the IEP team. The IEP team will review existing evaluation data on the student and will identify what additional data, if any, are needed. The school district will obtain parental consent prior to conducting any reevaluation of a student with a disability.

Individual Education Program (IEP)

Upon a student being verified as having a disability, a conference will be held with parents. At the conference, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be developed specifying programs and services which will be provided by the schools. Parent consent will be obtained prior to a student being placed for the first time in a program providing special education and related services or early intervention services to infants and toddlers. Once in place, the IEP is reviewed on an annual basis, or more frequently as needed. Parents are given a copy of the IEP.

Special Education Placement

The student's placement in a special education program is dependent on the student's educational needs as outlined in the Individual Education Program (IEP). To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated with students who are not disabled. Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Determination of a student's educational placement will be made by the IEP team.

Written notice shall be given to parents a reasonable time before the school district: 1. Proposes to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, verification or educational placement of a child or the provision of a free appropriate public education; or 2. Refuses to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child or the provision of a free appropriate public education to the child.

More Information

Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of the District's special education policy, the Parental Rights in Special Education brochure, or a copy of the Nebraska Department of Education Rule 51 (special education regulations and complaint procedures) or Rule 55 (special education appeal procedures) may contact the Superintendent. A notice of parental rights, Rules 51 and 55 and more information about special education are also available at the Nebraska Department of Education's website: http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SPED/sped.html.

Students with Disabilities: Section 504

Accommodations and related services are made available to students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Under Section 504, parents have the following rights:

1. Have your child take part in, and receive benefits from, public education programs without discrimination because of your child's disability.
2. Have the school district advise you of your rights under federal law.
3. Receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation or placement of your child.
4. Have your child receive a free appropriate public education. This includes the right to be educated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate. It also includes the right to have the school district make reasonable accommodations to allow your child an equal opportunity to participate in school and school-related activities.
5. Have your child receive services and be educated in facilities which are comparable to those provided to students without disabilities.
6. Have your child receive an individualized evaluation and receive special education and related services if your child is found eligible under Section 504.
7. Have evaluation, eligibility, educational and placement decisions made based on a variety of information sources and by persons who know your child and who are knowledgeable about the evaluation data and placement options.
8. Have transportation provided to and from an alternative placement setting at no greater cost to you than would be incurred if your child were placed in a program operated by the school district.
9. Have your child be given an equal opportunity to participate in nonacademic and extracurricular activities offered by the school district.

10. Examine all relevant records relating to decisions regarding your child's identification, evaluation and placement. Obtain copies of educational records at a reasonable cost on the same terms as records are provided students without a disability unless the fee would effectively deny you access to the records.
11. Receive a response from the school district to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of your child's records.
12. Request amendment of your child's educational records if there is reasonable cause to believe that they are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of your child. If the school district refuses this request, it shall notify you within a reasonable time, and advise you of the right to a hearing.
13. File a local grievance in accordance with school policy.
14. Request an impartial hearing related to decisions regarding your child's identification, eligibility, and educational program or placement with opportunity for participation by the person's parents or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure. This is provided in the local grievance procedure.

Student Health Services

School Nurse Hours

The nurse will be in the building two days (16 hours) per week. The school nurse or school staff will notify parents when a student needs to be sent home from school due to illness. Conditions requiring a student to be sent home include: temperature greater than 100 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea, unexplained rashes, live head lice, or on determination by the school nurse or school staff that the child's condition prevents meaningful participation in the educational program, presents a health risk to the child or others, or that medical consultation is warranted. Parents are asked to provide the school with emergency daytime phone numbers on each child's contact form so they can be reached if their child becomes ill or injured while at school.

Health Survey

Each year parents are asked to complete an annual health survey on their child or children so the nurse is informed of any necessary health information. This form is included in the back-to-school packet.

The school nurse is required by law to assess vision, dental screening, weight and height. Parents are notified if the results are not in the normal range. These routine check-ups are not intended to replace regular medical and dental checkups. Parents are asked to inform the school of any issues impacting child's health.

Student Illness

Students should not attend school if they experience any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100.4 degrees F orally, or higher in the past 24 hours
  - Must be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication to return

- Vomiting within the past 24 hours
- Diarrhea within the past 24 hours
- Severe headache, stiff neck, earache, croupy cough, listlessness or oozing sores

Head Lice

At Pender Public Schools, any student with nits (eggs) and/or head lice will be temporarily excluded from school until properly treated and inspection of the hair and scalp by the school nurse shows elimination of the lice.

Chickenpox

Chickenpox is a highly contagious disease caused by primary infection with varicella zoster virus (VZV). Children with chickenpox must be excluded from school until the chickenpox spots are scabbed over.

Guidelines for Administering Medication **See Board Policy #5600 & 6910*

The administration of prescription and/or non-prescription (over-the-counter) medications by school personnel is subject to the following conditions:

1. For the safety of all children, students are not permitted to have medicine in their possession while at school.
2. If, under any circumstances, a child is required to take oral medication during school hours and the parent cannot be present to administer it, only the school nurse or appropriate designee will administer the medication.
3. Medication must be brought to school in the original container and appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician.
4. All medications must be properly labeled with the child's name, medication name, and directions for administration and possible side effects.
5. A signed and dated note from the parent or guardian must accompany all requests for students to receive medication at school.
6. In the case of a medication that the student takes on a regular basis, further documentation is required by the state and can be obtained through the school nurse. This documentation must be reviewed annually.
7. With written consent, your child may be given Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen from the school supply of generic adult and/or children's Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen based on the recommended dose by weight/age.

All medication left at the school will be disposed of two weeks after school is dismissed. Written authorization forms for both non-prescribed and prescribed medications are available in the district office.

Student Self-Management of Asthma, Anaphylaxis, and/or Diabetes

**See Board Policy #6920, 6920.1 & 6920.2*

Students with asthma, anaphylaxis or diabetes will be permitted to self-manage such medical conditions upon:

1. written request of the student's parent or guardian;
2. authorization of the student's physician or, for asthma and anaphylaxis, a health care professional who prescribed the medication for treatment of the student's condition;
3. receipt of a signed no liability statement from the parent or guardian; and
4. development of an asthma or anaphylaxis or a diabetes medical management plan for the student.

Students with such a medical management plan may possess the necessary medication to manage their medical condition upon the conditions established in the plan and not be subject to discipline for such possession. Provided that, if the student uses or allows the medication to be used for any reason other than as prescribed or as provided in the plan or possesses the medication other than as provided in the plan the student shall be subject to discipline in accordance with the student conduct and drug-free school policies.

Title I

Title I is a federally funded program whose goal is to improve the educational opportunities of designated students. Title I supplies supplemental assistance to eligible students to succeed in the classroom. The emphasis in a school-wide Title 1 program is in serving all students, improving all structures that support student learning, and combining all resources, as allowed, to achieve a common goal. On request, the District will provide parents, in a timely manner, information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's teachers. This is in compliance with the Title I highly qualified section of ESSA.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to and from school is provided to students in accordance with law and Board Policy (see BOE Policy 5501). Students may also be provided transportation on field trips and when participating in school activities. Students are expected to follow the behavioral expectations for riding on school buses and in school vans. Parents are an important part of providing safe and effective student transportation. Cooperation with school authorities in enforcing regulations, and observing school, traffic and road regulations related to students transportation is requested and greatly appreciated.

While riding in school buses, students are expected to follow the same student conduct rules that apply when on school property or attending school activities, functions or events. There are also special conduct rules for riding school buses. These rules also apply to riding in other school vehicles.

Student Conduct

- Students will be respectful and obey instructions of the vehicle driver and other supervisory personnel;
- Students will conduct themselves in a courteous and appropriate manner when interacting with other students and District staff; and
- Students will demonstrate respect and pride for school district property.

When Boarding the Vehicle:

- Be at their designated school bus stop 10 minutes prior to their scheduled pickup time;
- In the event a student will not ride the bus.
    - Please contact the school office that day by 6:15 am by calling 402-385-3244 and using extension 5 to leave a message;
    - After 6:15 am, please notify the driver of the child(ren)'s bus.
- Stay off streets and roadways while waiting for the school vehicle to arrive;
- Stay clear of the "danger zone" around the bus while waiting, approaching, or leaving the bus. Before crossing the street, always look both ways to check for vehicles that might illegally pass the bus. Always cross the street in front of the bus.
- Wait until the school vehicle comes to a complete stop and the driver has given them a prearranged signal before approaching or attempting to board the bus;
- Use the handrail when boarding the bus;
- Move quickly to their assigned seat;
- In the event a student brings an unauthorized student on a school vehicle, the transportation department will contact the student's parents or guardians to make alternate arrangements. If alternate arrangements cannot be made, the vehicle driver will transport the student and their friend to school in the morning. We will not transport any unauthorized person after school to any destination.

When Riding the Vehicle

- Keep aisle clear at all times;
- Treat all students and the driver with respect;
- Do not tease, harass, bully or fight with another student(s);
- Keep all body parts inside the school vehicle at all times;
- Remain seated and facing forward in the designated seat;
- Talk quietly, maintain silence at railroad crossings, and conduct themselves in a manner that does not distract the driver;
- If vehicle is equipped with seatbelts they must be worn;
- Windows may be opened with the driver's permission. If a window is opened, shut the window.
- Use headphones if using personal electronic devices;
- Do not chew gum or consume any beverage or food while in the vehicle;

- Keep the bus clean. Place garbage in the trash container. Do not throw anything out of the windows or inside the bus. Eating or drinking is not allowed on the bus.
- All school-owned buses are equipped with surveillance equipment that records both audio and video.
- Students will not possess or use any tobacco product, alcoholic beverage or non-prescription drug while in a school vehicle; For purposes of this policy, tobacco means any tobacco product (including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, and chewing tobacco), vapor products (such as e-cigarettes), electronic nicotine delivery systems, alternative nicotine products, tobacco product look-alikes, and products intended to replicate tobacco products either by appearance or effect.
- Refrain from using obscene or profane language, yelling or causing any unreasonably loud noise. Quiet voices should be used;
- Students will not use violence, threats, intimidation, insubordination or other conduct that interferes with normal transportation operations;
- Do not tamper with vehicle and/or equipment control mechanisms or mark or carve in any manner to cause damage to the transportation vehicle;
- All student projects must be enclosed and remain enclosed during the bus route in a backpack or safe container for transporting and must be able to fit on the student's lap.
- If students need assistance from the driver, wait until the bus is at a full stop. If students are close enough, tell the driver what they need. If they are too far away from the driver and he would be unable to hear them, they should ask a student in front of them to get the driver's attention. If necessary, walk up to the driver while the bus is at a full stop. If students need immediate assistance for an emergency, they should take all action needed to safely get the help of the driver.

When Exiting the Vehicle

- Remain seated until school vehicle reaches a complete stop and the driver has indicated it is safe to get up;
- Take all personal property with them when exiting the vehicle;
- Exit the school vehicle in an orderly manner beginning with the passengers in the front of the vehicle;
- Do not loiter or walk near the vehicle;
- Students who are required to cross a roadway must walk no less than 12 feet in front of the school bus and wait for the driver's signal before crossing the street or roadway;
- Students are allowed to board and exit the vehicle only at their designated stop, unless parent/guardian permission is provided to school personnel and communicated to the bus driver;
- If a student verbally informs the driver he/she is not to exit at their regular stop, but to exit at another stop on the route, the transportation department will try to reach the parent/guardian by phone. If no verbal authorization can be obtained, the student will be taken to their designated stop. If no parent/guardian is present, the driver will bring the student back to the school. If telephone contact continues to be unsuccessful, the police will be contacted.

See BOE Policy #5506, Pender Public Schools Safe Pupil Transportation Plan for additional information on the District's plan for providing safe transportation to students being transported in pupil transportation vehicles.

Misconduct Reporting Procedures

Discipline problems on the bus jeopardize the safety of all students on the bus. The bus driver is an employee of Pender Public Schools who will be enforcing the bus rules. There will be consequences for those who do not follow the rules. Riding the school bus is a privilege and should not be taken for granted. Consequences for school bus misconduct may include restriction or suspension of bus privileges and other disciplinary measures, up to and including expulsion from school. In the event of misconduct and regardless of the outcome, the following procedures will be followed:

- Transportation staff will communicate their expectations verbally and personally to students whose behavior is inappropriate. Should the behavior continue, an Unsatisfactory Bus Conduct Report (see AR 5506.1 in board policy) will be completed. Students will usually be notified before exiting the vehicle that the misconduct will be reported.
- The Transportation Department will forward a copy of the written report, indicating the nature of the violation to the appropriate school principal.
- The school principal will discuss the violation with the student(s) and determine the proper disciplinary action to be taken.
- The principal will notify the parent/guardian, by telephone and/or mail, indicating the nature of the violation, the disciplinary action to be taken, and the consequences of continued student misconduct.
- The principal will provide an opportunity for the parent/guardian to confer with the principal and/or transportation supervisor with regards to the reported student misconduct. The principal will return the written report to the transportation coordinator.

SCHOOL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAMS

The hot lunch and breakfast program are available every day for students. The cost of school meals for the 2026-2027 school year are listed below:

Breakfast: $2.55 - PreK-12 students; $3.50 - adults
Seconds: $1.50 – main entrée ; $1.15– side dish; $.60 – milk/juice
Lunch: $2.95-PreK students; $3.20 – K-6th students; $3.45 – 7-12 students; $5.00 - adult
Seconds: $2.05 – main entrée; $1.55 – side dish; $.60 – milk/juice

Students who choose to bring a lunch from home may purchase milk at school. Pop is not allowed in the lunchroom, unless as part of a special incentive sponsored by the school. **In accordance with U. S. Department of Agriculture policy, Parents/Guardians/Family may provide outside lunch/breakfast for their child/children only.** Parents/Guardians, who may qualify for free/reduced lunches, should complete the application and return it to the district office as soon as possible. For questions concerning the free and reduced please call 402-385-3244 ext. 2106**. Free and reduced students under federal guidelines will only receive their first tray for free or reduced prices and will have to pay for any seconds they receive.**

Families using the lunch program may access their meal account information on-line. Go to www.penderschools.org and select the "Lunch Account Information" tab. If you need assistance with your lunch account information, call the district office. Parents/Guardians can send any amount of money and it will be applied to the appropriate child's account. An account is required in order for any child to eat school meals.

Families with 1 child in the lunch program - Students will not be allowed to charge any extras to their lunch account when the account balance reaches negative $20. The student will still be allowed to charge the first meal, but no extras will be allowed. When the account reaches negative $35, the student will no longer be able to charge anything.

Families with more than 1 child in the lunch program - No student in the family will be allowed to charge any extras to their lunch account when the account balance reaches negative $35. Each student will be allowed to charge his/her first meal, but no extras will be allowed. When the account reaches negative $50, the students in that family will no longer be able to charge anything.

Preschool through 3rd grade students will have a milk break every day. See the chart on page 69 for milk break prices. This fee is due at the beginning of each semester. Milk break is optional.

APPENDIX

State and Federal Programs

Notice of Nondiscrimination	**See Board Policy #1025.2*
Anti-Discrimination & Harassment Policy	**See Board Policy #1200*
Multicultural Policy	**See Board Policy #6370*
Notification of Rights Under FERPA	**See Board Policy #5202.1*
Notice Concerning Directory Information	**See Board Policy #5421*
Notice Concerning Disclosure of Student Recruiting Information	**See Board Policy #5012*
Student Privacy Protection Policy	**See Board Policy #5421*
Homeless Students Policy	**See Board Policy #5418*
Breakfast and Lunch Programs	**See Board Policy #3571*

Notice Concerning Designation of Law Enforcement Unit

The District designates the Thurston County Sheriff's Department as the District's "law enforcement unit" for purposes of (1) enforcing any and all federal, state or local law, (2) maintaining the physical security and safety of the schools in the District, and (3) maintaining safe and drug free schools.

Notice Concerning Staff Qualifications

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) gives parents/guardians the right to get information about the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teachers. Upon request, the District will give parents/guardians the following information about their child's classroom teacher:

1. Whether the teacher has met State qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or provisional teaching certificate.
3. The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher. You may also get information about other graduate certification or degrees held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree. We will also, upon request, tell parents/guardians whether their child is being provided services by a paraprofessional and, if so, the qualifications of the paraprofessional. The request for information should be made to an administrator in your child's school building. The information will be provided to you in a timely manner. Finally, the District will give timely notice to you if your child has been assigned or has

been taught for four (4) or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet the requirements of the Act.

Annual Notification of Asbestos Management Plan Availability, Pender Public Schools

Federal regulations require all schools to inventory asbestos-containing materials and develop management plans to identify and control asbestos.

The presence of asbestos in a building does not mean that the health of the buildings occupants is necessarily endangered. As long as asbestos-containing material remains in good condition and is not disturbed, exposure is unlikely.

The plan is available for review in the school administrative office during normal business hours.

At least once each six months, periodic surveillance is being conducted on all asbestos-containing material and suspect material assumed to contain asbestos.

A re-inspection is being conducted every three years in all schools that have asbestos-containing material.

From time to time, operations and maintenance activities may be conducted to maintain all materials in good condition.

For more information, please contact: Leigh Alexander; CDS Inspections & Beyond; 53506 862 Road; Plainview, NE 68769-2118; phone 402-582-3580 or 402-841-2142

2026-2027 Fees
Approved by Board of Education on July 8, 2026

Breakfast	2026-27
Pk-12 Students	2.55
Adults	3.50
Main - Seconds	1.50
Side - Seconds	1.15
Milk/Juice - Seconds	0.60

Lunch	
PK Students	2.95
K-6 Students	3.20
7-12 Students	3.45
Adults	5.00
Main - Seconds	2.05
Side - Seconds	1.55
Milk/Juice - Seconds	0.60

Milk Break	Sem/Year
K-3 Students	$50/$100
K-3 Students Reduced	$7.50/$15.00

Technology Fees	Year
4-6 Students	$25.00
7-8 Students	$25.00
9-12 Students	$25.00

** Reduced will pay a Percentage

Activity Fees	2026-27
Junior High Student	*waived for 2025-26*
Senior High Student	*waived for 2025-26*
Family Maximum	*waived for 2025-26*
Free & Reduced Waiver Available**	

Activity Passes	
Adult	$75.00
Senior Citizens (62 years & older)	$65.00

High School Contest Admission	
Adults & Students	$5.00
PPS Students	Free

Junior High Contests	
Adults & Students	$3.00
PPS Students	Free

Substitutes	
Teacher Substitute (per day)	$170.00
Classified Staff Substitute (per hour)	$17.50