



Board of Education

ACTION

TITLE: Consider Approval of Student Handbook for 2025-2026

DATE: July 21, 2025

RESPONSIBLE ADMINISTRATOR: Dr. Michael Farrell
Executive Director of Student Services

BACKGROUND/CONSIDERATIONS:

The administration desires to update the 2025-2026 Fort Smith Public School Student Handbook to reflect and operationalize the recent Board Policy changes on the student level.

On July 10, 2025 the [Student Handbook Review Committee](#) met to review the following changes. Members of this review committee voted to bring these proposed changes as written to the Fort Smith School Board. Mr. Marshall Ney has subsequently reviewed and approved these changes to the 2025-2026 Fort Smith Public Schools Student Handbook.

These sections for changes are submitted in both redline and clean copy for Board review. The handbook in its entirety following the individual sectional review.

Introduction- Changes made were to align with the update to the Fort Smith Public Schools logo and new district leadership. Changes were made in the Civil Rights Compliance letter to accommodate change in terminology. Revisions were made in the Sexual Harassment of Students or Staff members letter in accordance to changes in Policy - 3.26 Licensed Professional Sexual Harassment and policy 4.27 - Student Sexual Harassment.

[Red Line](#)

[Clean Line](#)

Eligibility for Enrollment – This section was updated to coordinate with changes to policy 4.5 - School Choice. Highlights include extending the School Choice deadline from May 1 to June 1, extending support of the enrollment of military-dependent students, and to amend the enrollment of International Exchange students to permit the transfer from the attendance zone of the host family to the school of choice.

[Red Line](#)

[Clean Line](#)

Virtual School Attendance Accounting – The portion of the Attendance policy pertaining to FSPS Virtual School was eliminated from the handbook.

[Red Line](#)

Clean Line – Omitted from 2025-2026 Student Handbook

Absences – This section was updated to coordinate with changes to policy 4.7 - Absences. Highlights include absences pertaining to; students who are children of fallen service members of first responders, and absences with parent consent for social or public policy advocacy.

[Red Line](#)

[Clean Line](#)

Legal Notification – This section was updated to actions that are to be taken by the Arkansas Department of Finance if they are notified a student over the age of 14 is no longer attending school.

[Red Line](#)

[Clean Line](#)

Epinephrine and Emergency Administration of Epinephrine - This section was updated to coordinate with changes to policy 4.35 - Student Medications. Highlighted is the addition of using nasal spray as an alternative delivery method for emergency dosage of epinephrine.

[Red Line](#)

[Clean Line](#)

Graduation Requirements for the Class of 2026 and Graduation Requirements for the Class of 2027 and Thereafter – This section was updated to correspond to changes made in statewide graduation requirements. Highlights include the elimination of the Core Curriculum graduation path, a link to the Fort Smith Public School Course Catalog and the Smart Core graduation requirements provided by the Arkansas Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE); and changing terminology.

[Red Line](#)

[Clean Line](#)

Directory Information – A link is included to provide parents/guardians a platform to record and submit their rejection to the release of directory information.

[Red Line](#)

[Clean Line](#)

[Link](#)

Eligibility for Athletic Competition – This section was updated to coordinate with changes 4.56 – Extracurricular Activities – Secondary Schools. Highlights include a delineation regarding eligibility requirements pertaining to transfer status and grade level.

[Red Line](#)

[Clean Line](#)

Student Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) – This section was added to the handbook in 2025-2026 to include the adoption of policy 4.64 – Student Use of Artificial Intelligence.

[Red Line](#)

[Clean Line](#)

Prohibited Conduct – The section was updated to include changes to Policy 4.47 – Personal Electronic devices and the inclusion of prohibited conduct related to Policy 4.64 – Antisemitism. In addition, electronic cigarettes were changed to an electronic nicotine delivery system.

[Red Line](#)

[Clean Line](#)

Sexual Harassment – This section was updated to correspond to Policy 4.27 - Sexual Harassment.

[Red Line](#)

[Clean Line](#)

Possession and Use of Personal Electronic Devices - This section was added to the handbook in 2025-2026 to include the amendments to policy 4.47 – Possession and Use of Personal Electronic Devices known as “Bell to Bell No Cell.”

[Red Line](#)

[Clean Line](#)

RECOMMENDATION:

The administration recommends the attached handbook changes be approved as presented for inclusion in the 2025-2026 District Handbook. If the Board agrees, the motion would read:

Move to approve the attached handbook changes as presented for inclusion in the 2025-2026 Fort Smith Public School District Student Handbook.