

# ESU 7



## Student/Parent Handbook

2025-2026



### ESU 7 Student Services

2563 44th Ave.  
Columbus, NE 68601  
402-564-0815

### ESU 7 Main Office

2657 44th Ave.  
Columbus, NE 68601  
402-564-5753

## **WELCOME**

The Board of Directors, administrators, and staff at Educational Service Unit 7 are pleased you have chosen our services. In our program, each student will be provided with educational opportunities to meet academic and behavioral needs. Students will either receive support in completing their resident school district curriculum in core subjects or a specially-designed program agreed upon by the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team. All students will be presented with instruction on social-emotional skills. Opportunities to access art, music, and physical education will also be available.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with some general information about our services and answer any questions you have regarding our procedures. If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to call your child's teacher or the ESU 7 Director of Special Education.

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 at which time the parents/guardians will be asked to sign the revised document. The administration will be responsible for interpreting the rules contained in the handbook. Should a circumstance arise that is not specifically covered in this handbook, the administration will make a decision based up all applicable ESU 7 policies, and state and federal statutes and regulations.

## **CURRICULUM FOCUS AREAS**

- Communication & Language Development
- Social & Play Skills
- Independent Self-Care & Daily Living Skills
- Fine & Gross Motor Development
- Pre-Academic & Academic Readiness
- Behavioral Intervention & Self-Regulation

## **BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT & ASSESSMENT**

- System-wide Positive Behavior Supports
- Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP) to support and teach appropriate behavior.
- Ongoing skill assessments, including the Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills-Revised (ABLLS-R), to monitor progress and refine intervention strategies.
- ABA methodologies such as discrete trial training, verbal behavior analysis, and natural teaching to optimize learning outcomes.



## **PROGRAM VISION**

ESU 7 Bridges is committed to unlocking students' potential by meeting them where they are academically, behaviorally, and socially, building on their strengths to foster meaningful growth.

## **PROGRAM MISSION**

Bridges strives to equip students with the behavioral and academic skills needed to transition successfully to their resident school districts and communities as engaged and capable learners.

## **VALUES**

Bridges fosters a supportive environment centered on:

- Grace
- Resilience & Perseverance
- Generosity
- Engagement
- Compassion
- Responsibility
- Gratitude
- Integrity

## **CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT**

Bridges provides a structured, nurturing setting designed for students who have not responded, for whom a traditional classroom does not meet their educational needs. The students are supported by specialized educators and therapists. Sensory rooms, calm-down areas, and individualized instruction create an optimal learning environment that prioritizes comfort, safety, and engagement.

## **PROGRAM GOALS & TRANSITION PLANNING**

The ultimate objective of Bridges is to prepare students for reintegration into their home school districts by developing essential skills in communication, self-regulation, and adaptive behavior. Through collaboration with families and district educators, the program ensures a smooth transition, empowering students to succeed in mainstream educational settings.

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

Student Services Main Number 402-564-0815, ext. 1017

### ESU 7 Chief Administrator

Marci Ostmeyer  
402-564-5753 ext. 1001  
mostmeyer@esu7.org

### ESU 7 Special Education Director

Tami Clay  
402-564-0815 ext. 1018  
tclay@esu7.org

### Executive Assistant

Angie Arndt  
402-564-0815 ext. 1017  
aarndt@esu7.org

### ESU 7 Student Services Principal Teacher

Jenna Mattox  
402-564-0815 ext. 1041  
jmattox@esu7.org

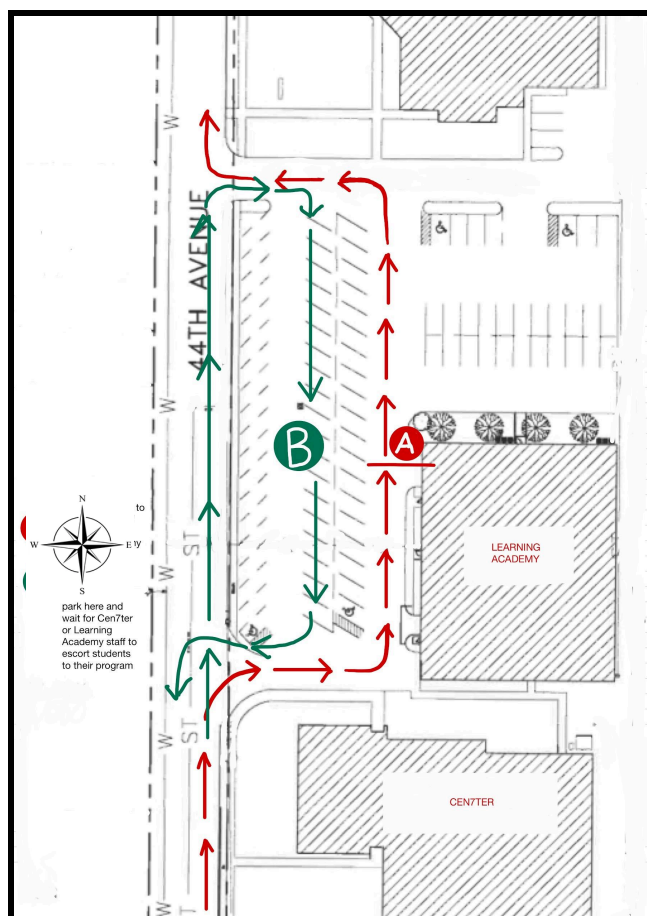
Jenna Mattox  
402-564-0815 ext. 1041  
jmattox@esu7.org

## LOCATION

The Bridges is located in the South Building on the ESU 7 campus in Columbus, NE.

## DROP OFF / PICK UP

Resident school districts are responsible for the drop-off and pick-up of students. School vehicles dropping off students with physical impairments will enter the ESU 7 parking lot via the south entrance on 44th Avenue and will pull to the area indicated with a stripe at the north end of the Bridges (see area on map marked A). School vehicles dropping off students who are able to ambulate independently, may enter the ESU 7 parking lot via the north entrance on 44th Avenue and pull into any of the parking stalls to wait for Bridges staff members to escort him/her to the building (see area on map marked B). The diagram below illustrates the procedure.



## **PLACEMENT**

Placement is an IEP team decision. Each district has established educational teams to identify students in need of such intensive services. Students should be verified as a student needing assistance according to the Nebraska Department of Education Rule 51. The resident school district IEP team will make the recommendation for placement at Bridges after the application process is complete and with Bridges personnel collaboration. Students are contracted into the program by resident school districts and payment is made on a pre-approved daily rate.

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

School is in session from 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM. Since the staff must have adequate time for meeting and planning the daily activities, it is important that students do not arrive before 9:30 AM. Students can be picked up as early as 2:20 PM.

## **LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DEPARTURE INSTRUCTIONS**

Notify the Bridges if you will be dropping her/him off late or picking up early. Notify the resident school district so that transportation will be notified.

## **DRESS CODE**

Values

- All students should be able to dress comfortably for school without fear of or actual unnecessary discipline or body shaming.
- All students and staff should understand that they are responsible for managing their own personal "distractions" without regulating individual students' clothing/self-expression.
- Teachers can focus on teaching without the additional and often uncomfortable burden of dress code enforcement.
- Students should not face unnecessary barriers to school attendance.
- Reasons for conflict and inconsistent discipline should be minimized whenever possible.

Dress Code

1. It is important your child dresses properly for school (Ex. hats, mittens, and boots are appropriate for the cold and wet weather). Shorts are allowed in school only when the temperature is projected to be higher than 60°F. For the comfort of your child, shorts should be long enough to protect the child when seated on varnished or plastic seats. Girls should wear shorts/tights/leggings under dresses due to floor-type activities. Improper logos on shirts will not be allowed in the Bridges (Ex. tobacco, alcohol, drugs, gang affiliation, profanity, etc.). Footwear must be safe and appropriate for the activities of the day. Hats are not permitted to be worn in the class by students without permission. Any admittance will need to go through the Student Services Principal.
2. Student dress and personal grooming must not be disruptive to the educational setting. If the students do not meet dress code, he/she will change into Bridges clothes.
3. Masks - In the case of health risk due to a pandemic or other health-related concerns all students will be required to, at a minimum, follow the mask guidelines defined in ESU 7 Return to Services/School Plan unless one of the following persists:

- The student has a disability and reasonable accommodation excuses the student from wearing a mask for some or all of the school day;
- The student's IEP team has determined that wearing a mask for some or all of the school day would interfere with the student's ability to receive a free, appropriate public education and that determination is documented in the student's IEP;
- Another legally valid reason exists to modify the face covering requirements and such reason has been approved in writing by the Student Services Principal and ESU 7 administration.
- OR Their parent/guardian has opted their student out of being required to wear a mask by executing a written document and such document is on file in the office of the Student Services Principal at the time at issue. This option is only available to students whose contracting district has such a process.

## **ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES**

Regular and punctual student attendance is required. The Bridges is required to maintain an accurate record of student attendance. If a student must be absent, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the resident school district secretary. Your resident school district will contact Bridges. Parents/guardians may also contact Bridges. Students are expected to follow the ESU 7 Calendar. Exceptions to this policy will be considered through the Student Services Principal.

Parents/guardians are also required to notify the resident school district AND the Bridges if they plan to pick their child up during the day in order to cancel afternoon transportation.

## **STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS**

Student progress reports will be sent to the resident school district by the Bridges teacher on a quarterly basis. If you have any questions regarding the report, please call and schedule a conference time with your child's Bridges teacher.

## **IEP CONFERENCES**

An IEP conference to review your child's progress will be scheduled by the resident school district annually. Each person participating in the conference will be notified in writing as to the date, time, and place of the conference. If you wish to discuss your child's progress or have concerns at any other time during the school year, we encourage you to contact your child's Bridges teacher and arrange a time to meet.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

[Article V, Section 10, A Safe Pupil Transportation Plan](#) (Reviewed May 2024)

To/From Bridges Arranged on an individual basis through the resident school district. Contact your resident school district with any questions

Day Trip Provided by properly trained ESU 7 personnel in ESU 7 pupil transportation vehicles. Contact the Student Services Principal with any questions.

State law requires students to wear seat belts at all times (this includes wheelchairs) unless



being transported by bus. During the time students are being transported, they are required to conduct themselves as they would at any other phase of the educational program. If problems occur during transportation, a specific plan described in Article V, Section 10, A [Safe Pupil Transportation Plan Policy](#) will be followed during the immediate incident and additional plans may be developed that ties into the behavior program for your child.

## **LUNCH**

Lunch will be delivered each day to Bridges through a contract with the Columbus Public Schools Food Program. The cost of lunch will be included in the cost of tuition to Bridges.

The Bridges lunch program will meet or exceed the nutritional guidelines for the requirements of federal and state law and regulatory authorities and no food in competition with the school lunch program shall be sold or otherwise made available to students anywhere on Bridges premises during the period of one-half hour prior to the serving period for lunch and lasting until one-half hour after serving lunch. The students may bring their own lunches. Parents/guardians are encouraged via health promotional materials to make healthy choices for student lunches.

## **USDA CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLAINT PROCESS**

Follow this procedure for Accepting and Filing Complaints of Discrimination in the School Meals Program

- **RIGHT TO FILE A COMPLAINT:** Any person alleging discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability has a right to file a complaint within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory action.
- **ACCEPTANCE:** All complaints, written or verbal, shall be accepted by the School Food Authority (SFA) and forwarded to the Administrator of the Nebraska Department of Education - Nutrition Services within five days. It is necessary that the information be sufficient to determine the identity of the agency or individual toward which the complaint is directed, and to indicate the possibility of a violation. Anonymous complaints shall be handled as any other complaint.
- **VERBAL COMPLAINTS:** In the event that a complainant makes the allegation verbally or through a telephone conversation and refuses or is not inclined to place such allegations in writing, the person to whom the allegations are made shall write up the elements of the complaint for the complainant. Every effort should be made to have the complainant provide the following information:
  - Name, address and telephone number or other means of contacting the complainant.
  - The specific location and name of the entity delivering the program service or benefit.
  - The nature of the incident(s) or action(s) that led the complainant to feel discrimination was a factor
  - The basis on which the complainant feels discrimination exists (race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability).

- The names, titles and addresses of persons who may have knowledge of the discriminatory action(s).
- The date(s) during which the alleged discriminatory action occurred, or if continuing, the duration of such actions.

### **Nondiscrimination Statement**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
  - Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
  - 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
  - Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
- Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

### **INDOOR / OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES**

Indoor/outdoor activities give students the opportunity to relax, breathe in the fresh air, and/or work off excess energy. Therefore, all children are expected to participate in these scheduled Bridges activities unless a medical condition as identified by a doctor prevents participation. As cold weather approaches, please dress your child accordingly. If the students are not able to have outdoor activities on excessively cold days when the 'feel like' temperature is at or below



25 degrees or during inclement weather, exercise will be structured in the Activity Room. Excessive heat activities will be left to the discretion of the Student Services Principal or designee.

## **DISCIPLINE**

It is our belief that the best way to improve and stabilize student behavior is through teaching and reinforcing desired behaviors while reducing the effectiveness of undesired behaviors. All students should be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their behavior. At Bridges, students earn access to activities, technology, tangibles, and other privileges through the demonstration of the target behaviors outlined in their IEP/ Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) and compliance with school rules and expectations. There may be a fee when large items have been broken. Discipline response will need to follow the student's IEP and BIP. Specific interventions, consequences, and supports are defined within the IEP/BIP.

If the behavior results in a situation where the student's IEP team needs to convene and create an adjusted plan before returning to the Bridges campus, the student's resident school district will be contacted and the resident school district will follow their procedures for discipline until the meeting and the creation of an adjusted plan can occur.

## **SCHOOL CLOSING / CANCELLATION**

Parents/guardians will annually receive an ESU 7 Bridges calendar. Please note this calendar may differ from the resident district calendar.

- Follow the ESU 7 Calendar.
- If the main offices of ESU 7 are closed due to inclement weather, the Bridges will also be closed.
- If your resident district is closed due to inclement weather, your child will not attend Bridges.
- If the main offices of ESU 7 are opening late, the Bridges schedule will adjust to the opening of the main offices.
- If the resident district has a late start, AND travel to the Bridges is safe after school resumes, your child may attend Bridges.
- If travel is unsafe, the decision for transporting your child to the Bridges will be made by the resident school districts in collaboration with ESU 7 Student Services Principal.

Parents/guardians will be notified via the current electronic messaging system. The following locations may also be accessed for closings, cancellations, and late starts: Facebook, X, 1011 News, KSNB Local4, WeatherThreat, KLIR 101(AlphaMedia).

## **FIRE DRILLS / TORNADO DRILLS / EMERGENCY DRILLS**

Fire Drills and Tornado Drills are conducted throughout the school year in accordance with state guidelines. Other drills throughout the year will be an evacuation, school secure, and school lockdown. Immediate attention must be observed throughout the entire drill. Students do not talk or run during the drill. Bridges teachers will instruct and practice these procedures with students on the first day/week of class as well as throughout the school year as needed.



Special accommodations will be made for those students whose medical condition would be exacerbated by participating in drills.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Continuous and open communication between teachers and parents/guardians is important to creating a successful school experience for our students. Two-way communication between Bridges, resident school district, and home is important. The educational process is the sharing of information between the teachers, the learner, and parents/guardians. Informal communication and personal calls between parents/guardians, Bridges staff, and students are discouraged.

Parents/guardians can expect their child to come home each day with a daily data sheet. Students should return the signed data sheet the following morning. Parents/guardians are encouraged to be in frequent contact with their child's Bridges teacher through email and/or phone calls.

If you need to call the Bridges to visit with your child's teacher, please do so between 7:30-9:30 AM or 2:30-4:30 PM. Bridges staff will only be called to the phone for emergencies during the day. The Student Services Principal may be reached throughout the day at 402-564-0815.

If you need to contact your child during the school day, please call the Student Services phone number and the secretary will get the message to the student. Due to the disruption of the classroom, we ask that you not call the classrooms directly during the school day or request your child come to the phone.

If there are any changes in your child's environment, physical, or medical condition, please communicate via written note/email.

### Data Sheets

Each student participating in the program will have a data sheet to track their daily progress on their behavioral goals. The daily report will also be used to communicate with parents/guardians about the child's day. Students are expected to return the data sheet each day with a parent/guardian signature.

## **STUDENT AND STAFF RELATIONSHIPS**

All students and Bridges staff are expected to recognize and support the following affirmation:

1. That there be demonstrated, at all times, a respect for others regardless of race, religion, gender, national origin, age, personal well-being, sexual orientation, or economic status. Please see [Article V, Section 1, A Policy of Non-Discrimination](#) for extensive listing of protected groups.
2. That language of any kind, which is disparaging or demeaning to others, shall not be tolerated, such as racial, religious, or sexual epithets.
3. Both Bridges staff and students are expected to exhibit good judgment, respect, and

sensitivity for others.

## **STUDENT ATTITUDE**

If a problem arises with another student in the classroom, the staff member will work with students(s) on the problem and help resolve it in a positive manner at the student's developmental level.

## **VISITING SCHOOL**

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are always welcome as Bridges visitors. If you would like to visit, please contact the Student Services Principal to schedule a time. When visiting Bridges, please help us to protect the privacy of all students and families. Do not disclose names, situations, or photographs of any other student to anyone outside the Bridges or on social media without written parent/guardian consent from each child involved. While we appreciate your interest in all of our students, please understand that we will be unable to answer any questions regarding other students. The Bridges administration reserves the right to deny visitation at any time to any party. Again, we ask that all visitors schedule times in advance of the proposed visit time and provide the purpose of the visit to the Bridges administration. All visitors must follow the health guidelines put in place by ESU 7 while visiting our program.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Students are not to bring items to school that are not required for educational purposes or otherwise allowed by the teacher. These items include, but are not limited to tablets, laser pointers, and handheld games. These items pose a risk for theft and interference with the educational process. Personal devices (Ex. cell phones) will be locked in the students' locker each day. Access to those personal devices depends on where the student is in the Level System and the privileges they have access to within that system. When an item becomes a distraction to themselves or other students, the classroom teacher will remove the device and lock it in the office until the end of the school day. The device will be returned to the student at the end of the school day. If it becomes a regular disruption, the Student Services Principal will notify the parent/guardian and resident school district to address the problem in the BIP.

## **CALM DOWN ROOM**

Calm Down rooms are used for a variety of reasons for students at Bridges. These rooms can be used for students to take a break, use their calming strategies, work on school work with minimal distractions, read quietly, play a game with a partner, etc. The calm down rooms can also be used for students who need a safe place to regulate their emotions. Staff will always be present with students using the calm down rooms either within the room or directly outside the door where students can be observed through the window. Sometimes students need seclusion to help them calm down when they are in crisis and the calm down rooms are made to provide that space. Please see the section regarding seclusion for more details.

## **PUPIL SUPPLIES**

The Bridges will provide educational materials. Parents/guardians will be notified of specific



school supplies and/or personal items needed. Any requests throughout the year will be reasonable and your cooperation in making sure your child has the necessary items by the date specified is appreciated. Parents/guardians may need to supply batteries for your child's personal communication devices such as Dynovox and hearing aid batteries.

## **ANTI-BULLYING**

[ESU 7 Policy, Article V, Section 6, C](#) (Reviewed May 2024)

It is the policy of ESU 7 to provide a physically safe and emotionally secure environment for students and staff. The administration and staff are to implement strategies and practices to reinforce and encourage positive behaviors by students. Positive behaviors include non-violence, cooperation, teamwork, understanding, and acceptance of others. The administration and staff are to implement strategies and practices to identify and prevent inappropriate behaviors by all students, including anti-bullying education for all students. Inappropriate behaviors include bullying, intimidation, and harassment. Bullying means any ongoing pattern of physical, verbal, or electronic abuse in areas within the control or jurisdiction of the ESU.

ESU 7 shall review [Article V, Section 6, C Anti-Bullying Policy](#) annually.

## **PHYSICAL ASSAULT**

Physical assault will not be tolerated at the ESU 7 Bridges. Harassment of students, staff, or visitors by other students will not be tolerated at Bridges. This policy is in effect while students are on the ESU 7 campus, Bridges property, or on property within the jurisdiction of Bridges; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from the Bridges if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management, and welfare of the school. Such assaults may result in removal from Bridges, an IEP review, or police reports with charges being filed. If a physical assault occurs, the Bridges will contact the parent/guardian.

The following steps may be followed:

1. Contact local law enforcement
2. Contact resident school district

## **WELLNESS**

[ESU 7 Policy, Article V, Section 7, F](#) (Revised May 2024)

It is the policy of ESU 7 to provide curriculum, instruction, and experiences in a health-promoting environment to instill habits of lifelong learning and health when providing services to students in its own school programs, to be generally consistent with that in place in the schools from which students served by ESU 7 are enrolled. Therefore, the Board adopts the following Wellness Policy applicable to any school program in which the services are provided by ESU 7 in a school setting other than within a school district served by ESU 7.

### **1. Goals to Promote Student Wellness**

Bridges has established the following student wellness goals that are designed to promote student wellness in a manner that Bridges determines to be appropriate:

- Nutrition Education. To implement a curriculum that meets or exceeds the health and nutrition education objectives established by the Nebraska Department of Education.

- Physical Activity. To implement a curriculum that meets or exceeds the health and physical education objectives established by the Nebraska Department of Education.
- Other School Activities. To offer other suitable opportunities for students to engage in health-promoting activities.

The ESU 7 Special Education Director or designee shall establish such further goals as are determined appropriate to meet the stated mission.

## 2. Nutrition Guidelines

Nutrition guidelines have been selected by Bridges for all foods available to students during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity. The guidelines are as follows:

- (1) any lunch program offered by Bridges will meet or exceed the requirements of federal and state law and regulatory authorities, and
- (2) no food in competition with the school lunch program shall be sold or otherwise made available to students anywhere on Bridges premises during the period of one-half hour prior to serving lunch and lasting until one-half hour after the serving of lunch. The ESU 7 Special Education Director or designee shall establish such further nutrition guidelines as are determined appropriate to meet the stated mission.

## 3. Plan for Measuring Implementation and Designation of Responsible Persons

The ESU 7 Special Education Director or designee is charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that the ESU meets the Wellness Policy. The ESU 7 Special Education Director or designee shall measure implementation of the Wellness Policy by conducting periodic reviews or receiving periodic reports.

Due to the unique nature of Bridges, it is understood that all students have an IEP, which will provide the basis for the Wellness Policy guidelines.

## 4. Development of Policy

Bridges assures that the development of the Wellness Policy involved the ESU Board, administrators, and staff.

ESU 7 shall review [Article V, Section 7, F Wellness Policy](#) annually.

## HEALTH SERVICES

[Article V, Section 7, E Emergency Medical Aid](#) (Reviewed May 2024)

[Article V, Section 7, B Dispensing Medication policy](#) (Reviewed May 2024)

Many of the students in the Bridges are medically fragile (susceptible to illnesses that are minor for the majority of the population, but could become life-threatening for some of our students). It is extremely important to keep ill children home for the duration of the illness. (Reference - Contagious and Infectious Disease/Condition Minimum Isolation Standards set by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.)

Guidelines to keep children at home or to send them home:

- fever of 100 or more (axillary temperature (underneath armpit) of 99=100, rectal temperature of 101=100), and must stay below 100 for 24 hours before returning to school without the use of medications



- questionable illness or injuries which may require evaluation by a physician
- undiagnosed rash/skin lesion
- inflamed red eyes and/or drainage
- earache and/or drainage from the ear
- sores that appear infected or are draining
- lethargy (extreme tiredness uncharacteristic of the child)
- extreme paleness uncharacteristic of the child
- any contagious disease such as chickenpox (contagious for one week through upper respiratory tract), influenza, cold symptoms with green or yellow nasal discharge, croupy or persistent cough, diagnosis of strep throat, conjunctivitis (pink eye), or any other illness that requires treatment with antibiotics, etc.
- nausea/vomiting (no vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school) infectious diarrhea (no yellowish or greenish liquid stools with a water ring surrounding it for 24 hours before returning to school)
- refusal to eat or drink the two previous meals
- complaints of headache or stomach ache that seems debilitating
- infestations such as scabies or head lice (not including nits only) excluded from school until treated

Students who are ill will be sent home at the discretion of the Student Services Principal. When a student needs to be sent home, Bridges will contact the resident district for transport or the student's parent/guardian.

Minor injuries will be treated by Bridges staff who have been trained in First Aid and CPR. As written and approved in ESU 7 policy, in the event that further medical attention is deemed necessary, parents/guardians will be notified immediately. In the event a child needs immediate medical care, they will be transported to the nearest medical facility.

To help ensure the health and safety of our students, Educational Service Unit 7 personnel shall only administer medications to students when following directions specified in a medication policy. Bridges staff will follow ESU 7 policy when administering medications.

ESU 7 shall review [Article V, Section 7, E Emergency Medical Aid policy](#) annually.  
ESU 7 shall review [Article V, Section 7, B Dispensing Medication policy](#) annually.

Educational Service Unit 7 Process for Administering Medications  
[Article V, Section 7, B Dispensing Medication policy](#) (Reviewed May 2024)

1. Authorizations for Prescription Medications. Prescription medications may be administered when the following are on file with the ESU:
  - a. Physician's Authorization. A physician's signed, dated authorization including the name of the medication, dosage, administration route, time to be given, and reason the student is receiving the medication.
  - b. Caretaker's Authorization. A caretaker's signed and dated authorization or permission to administer the medication during school. (Note- All references to "caretaker" in this policy shall mean a parent, foster parent, family member, or legal guardian who provides care for the student for whom medication is to be administered. The laws include a "friend" as a caretaker, but the ESU will not



ordinarily recognize such an individual as a “caretaker” for the purposes of medication administration).

- c. Original Packaging. The medication is in its original packaging and is labeled as dispensed by the prescriber or pharmacist. The label must name the student and identify the medication, strength, time interval, and route to be administered. If needed, the physician may be contacted for clarification.
2. Authorizations for Non-Prescription Medications. Non-prescription medications may be administered provided that a caretaker’s authorization is provided in the form established by the Administrator or designee and the medication is in its original packaging.
3. Renewal of Authorizations. Medication authorizations must be renewed annually and updated immediately as changes occur.
4. Documentation. Accurate medication administration records are to be kept and maintained. Documentation of each dose of medication administered shall be made reflecting the student’s name, the name of the medication, date, time, dosage, route, the signature and title of the person administering the medication and any unusual observations, and any refusal by the recipient to take or receive the medication. Medication documentation shall be kept confidential in accordance with the policies and practices concerning student records, provided that medication administration records shall be available to the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services Regulation and Licensure for inspection and copying according to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requirements. Such medication administration records shall be maintained for not less than two years.
5. Storage. Medication shall be stored in a locked or otherwise secure area in accordance with the manufacturer’s or dispensing pharmacist’s instructions or temperature, light, humidity, or other storage instructions. Only authorized personnel who are designated by the administration shall have access to the medications. The ESU 7 staff shall establish procedures for monitoring the storage and handling of medication, the medication’s expiration date, and the disposal of medication.
6. Receipt and Disposal of Medications. Medication shall be delivered to ESU personnel and picked up by the parent/guardian or resident school district personnel when accompanied by a signed/dated permission to do so by the parent/guardian. When medication is received, the amount received should be documented. Medication that is either past the expiration date or not claimed by the parent/guardian a reasonable time following the student’s departure from the ESU program shall be destroyed. Disposal of medications are handled through a third party.
7. Administration of Medication by ESU Personnel
  - a. Administration of Medication. Administration of medication includes, but is not limited to the following items:
    - i. Providing medications for another person according to the “five rights” (getting the right drug to the right recipient in the right dosage by the right route at the right time);
    - ii. Recording medication provision; and
    - iii. Observing, monitoring, reporting, and otherwise taking appropriate actions regarding desired effects, side effects, interactions, and contraindications associated with the medication.
  - b. Authorized ESU Personnel. Administration of medication shall only be done by the following personnel:

- i. Medication Competent Staff. This means a staff member of the ESU who, by arrangement with the school in which the student is enrolled is an employee of the ESU for purposes of the medication administration laws and who has been determined to be competent to administer medication in accordance with the competency assessment standards established by law. A medication competent staff member is to be subject to direction and monitoring, which involves the responsibility for observing and taking appropriate action regarding any desired effects, side effects, interactions, and contraindications associated with the medication. Direction and monitoring are to be done by a recipient with the capability and capacity to make an informed decision about medications, a caretaker, or the school nurse. Medication competent staff members are to promptly report any medication errors or concerns to the school nurse.
- c. Routes of Medication Administered by ESU Personnel
  - i. Routine Medication via Oral, Inhalation, Topical, and Installation Routes. medication competent staff may provide routine medications (meaning the frequency of administration, amount, strength, and method are specifically fixed) by the following routes:
    1. Oral, which includes any medication given by mouth including sublingual (placing under the tongue) and buccal (placing between the cheek and gum) routes and oral sprays
    2. Inhalation, which includes inhalers, and nebulizers. Oxygen may be given by inhalation;
    3. Topical application of sprays, creams, ointments, and lotions and transdermal patches; and
    4. Instillation by drops, ointments, and sprays into the eyes, ears, and nose.
  - ii. Administration of Medication via Additional Routes, PRN Medication, and Observing and Reporting. medication competent staff may provide medication by additional routes (“additional routes”), provide PRN medication (PRN medication means an administration scheme in which a medication is not routine, is taken as needed and requires assessment for need and effectiveness), or participate in observing and reporting for monitoring medications only under the following conditions:
    1. In the case of a medication competent staff member, a determination has been made by the school nurse or by the student’s physician or duly licensed health care professional that these activities can be done safely for the specified recipient by the medication competent staff member and the determination is placed in writing.
    2. Directions for additional routes must be for recipient-specific procedures and must be in writing.
    3. Directions for PRN medication must be in writing and include parameters for provision of PRN medication.
    4. Directions for observing and reporting for monitoring medication must be in writing and include the parameters for the observation and reporting.

5. ESU personnel administering the medication shall comply with the written directions.
- iii. Injections. A medication-competent staff member will be trained to administer medications by injection administration. Students may be authorized to self-administer medication as hereafter provided.
- d. Refusal to Administer Medication. The ESU may refuse to give medication if after reasonable and prudent research by an ESU or school health care professional a decision has been made that the dosage prescribed exceeds that which is recommended in the Physician's Desk Reference, Mosby's Nursing Drug Reference, the most recent edition of the Nursing Drug Handbook, or other pharmaceutical manuals handbook; or when a drug or substance is not currently approved by the FDA. When ESU personnel refuse to carry out a request to administer medication, the Administrator or designee is to be notified and efforts are to be made to work out a suitable solution (such as changing the time of administration, dosage, or the medication) with the parent/guardian and the physician.

ESU 7 shall review [Article V, Section 7, B Dispensing Medications policy](#) annually.

## **RESPONSE TO LIFE-THREATENING ANAPHYLAXIS**

(Title 92, Chapter 59, Section 006)

A systemic allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) is a severe response resulting in cardiovascular collapse (shock) after the injection of an antigen (e.g. bee or other insect sting), ingestion of a food or medication, or exposure to other allergens, such as animal fur, chemical irritants, pollens or molds, among others. The blood pressure falls, the pulse becomes weak, AND DEATH CAN OCCUR. Immediate allergic reactions may require emergency treatment and medications.

### **Emergency Protocol:**

1. Summon designated trained, nonmedical staff to implement emergency protocol.
2. Instruct someone to call 911.
3. Check airway patency, breathing, respiratory rate, and pulse.
4. Administer an IM EpiPenJr. for a child less than 50 pounds or an adult EpiPen for any individual over 50 pounds (In Nurses labeled cupboard in the office).
5. Follow with nebulized albuterol (premixed) while awaiting EMS. (Located in medical cupboard in the office).
6. Determine cause as quickly as possible.
7. Monitor vital signs (pulse, respiration, etc.).
8. Administer CPR, if indicated until EMS arrives.
9. Contact parents/guardians immediately and physician as soon as possible.
10. Any individual treated for symptoms with epinephrine at school will be transferred to medical facility.
11. Notify ESU 7's Student Services Principal, Special Education Director, and student's district administration.

The emergency EpiPens and nebulized albuterol can be accessed in the labeled cupboard in the office of each building.

As a parent/guardian, you have the right to refuse this emergency action. If you do not want our staff to follow this protocol or take this action during an emergency situation, you must provide a written statement of refusal for this emergency action.

## **SAFETY**

Safety in the Bridges is a priority. In the event one of the following occurs, staff will respond as indicated

- Student leaves campus without permission - staff may notify the police to assist.
- Physical aggression by a student - staff will use a separate room and/or physical restraint.
- Threats to harm self or others - staff will assess the seriousness of the threat and take appropriate steps to help ensure safety.
- Bridges emergency (intruder, fire, etc.) - staff will follow the emergency plan.

In all cases listed above, parents/guardians and the resident school district will be notified as soon as possible.

It is the goal of the Bridges staff and students to maintain safety at Bridges. They may contact the local police department in safety-related situations requiring their assistance. Parents/guardians and the resident school district of the student involved will be notified when police involvement is necessary.

## **INTERNET SAFETY**

[Article III, Section 7, G Internet Safety Policy](#) (Reviewed May 2024)

It is the policy of the ESU to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). With respect to the ESU's computer network, the ESU shall, (a) protect against user access to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) provide for the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications; (c) protect against unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful activities online; (d) protect against unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; (e) obtain verifiable parental consent before allowing third parties to collect personal information online from students; and (f) implement measures designed to restrict minors' access to materials (visual or non-visual) that are harmful to minors.

ESU 7 shall review [Article III, Section 7, G Internet Safety Policy](#) annually.

## **LEAVING THE CAMPUS**

If a student chooses to leave the ESU 7 campus without permission, the ESU 7 personnel will use the following steps:



1. 911 may be called and the Student Services Principal notified. The school will provide them with a description of the student, time of departure, and general direction the student is traveling
2. Staff will try to intervene and encourage them to return to Bridges
3. Staff will follow them to keep the student visible
4. Parent/guardian will be notified
5. The resident school district will be notified
6. If a report is filed by the police, a copy will be provided to the parent/guardian.

## **WEAPONS**

Possession and/or use of any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon in any ESU 7 building, on the ESU 7 campus, in any vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by the ESU 7, being used for Bridges purpose, or in a vehicle being driven for a Bridges purpose by a Bridges employee or his or her designee, or at any Bridges sponsored activity or event is prohibited. Such weapons include, but are not limited to, any pistol, revolver, rifle, shotgun, airgun or spring gun, slingshot, bludgeon, brass knuckles or artificial knuckles of any kind, knives having a blade of greater than two inches, any knife with a blade of which can be opened by a flick of a button or pressure on the handle, or any pocketknife where the blade is carried in a partially opened position.

The possession or use of any such weapon will require the proceedings for the immediate removal from the Bridges by the ESU 7 Administrator, Special Education Director, or Student Services Principal. Law enforcement officials, parents/guardians, and the resident school district will be called by the Administrator, Special Education Director, or Student Services Principal.

If a weapon is found or Bridges suspects concealment of a weapon the steps that may be followed are to

1. Contact local law enforcement agency
2. Contact parents/guardians
3. Contact resident school district

## **USE OF ALCOHOL / DRUGS / OTHER CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES**

It is unlawful to illegally manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, or use a controlled substance at ESU 7 campus. Any student present on the campus or in any of the buildings who, observed by a staff member, appears to have manufactured, distributed, dispensed, possessed, or used alcohol/drug/other controlled substances (or facsimile) will be considered in violation of ESU 7 policy and will be sanctioned according to Nebraska State Statutes. Parents/guardians and any appropriate outside agencies will be contacted.

If there is a concern about alcohol/drug/other controlled substances use or an object or substance is found, the steps that may be followed are to

1. Contact local law enforcement agency
2. Contact parents/guardian

### 3. Contact resident school district

## **POSSESSION OF TOBACCO**

ESU 7 is a non-smoking campus. Non-smoking includes the ban of electronic cigarettes, cigars, cigarettes, vapor products, and any alternative nicotine products or the use of tobacco in any form. Students who possess or use any of these products or a product defined as an alternative nicotine product on the ESU 7 campus or while transported will be reported to their resident school district and/or local law enforcement if deemed an appropriate action. ESU 7 follows all Nebraska Department of Education regulations applicable to the ban of electronic cigarettes, cigars, cigarettes, vapor products, and any alternative nicotine products or the use of tobacco in any form. This guidance expands to any ESU 7 off campus activity.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

[Article V, Section 6, B, Search and Seizure](#) (Reviewed May 2024)

Student and student's possessions including, but not limited to, purses, and book bags may be searched whenever there is a reasonable suspicion that the student possesses any illegal substance or object which is in violation of law, ESU 7 Policy, or which could cause bodily harm or damage to property. The local law enforcement agency and resource dogs may be used to detect illegal drugs or contraband in school at any time, announced or unannounced, and illegal drugs and contraband may be seized.

The refusal of a student to consent or submit to a reasonable search, and/or to surrender objects or substances found as a result of such a search, may be grounds for discipline and local law enforcement may be contacted for follow-up.

If an object or substance is found the steps that may be followed are to

1. Contact local law enforcement agency
2. Contact parents/guardians
3. Contact resident school district

ESU 7 shall review [Article V, Section 6, B Search and Seizure Policy](#) annually.

## **RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION**

[Article V, Section 5, C, Restraint and Seclusion](#) (Reviewed May 2024)

The use of physical restraint and/or seclusion of students by Bridges personnel should be used only as a last resort to maintain safety in emergency situations when there is a substantial risk of imminent bodily injury to the student and/or others. Any staff member may physically restrain and/or seclude a student without advance notice to the Student Services Principal when it is necessary for the protection of students, staff, self, or others. The Educational Service Unit 7 Board of Education and the administration of Bridges place emphasis on prevention and behavioral de-escalation which reduces the risk of injury and promotes the care, welfare, safety, and security for all members of the school community. The purpose of physical restraint and/or seclusion is to temporarily control the behavior of a student as a last resort in an emergency situation, to prevent immediate danger or serious bodily injury to the student or others in the environment.

## Definitions

- A. Physical Restraint. Physical restraint means one or more persons using a physical hold to restrict a student's freedom of movement as a response to student behavior. A light touch of a student while conducting a physical escort or touching to provide instructional assistance is not a physical restraint for purposes of this guidance.
- B. Seclusion. Seclusion is the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving as a response to student behavior.

## Physical Restraint

- A. When Physical Restraint May be Used. Physical restraint may be used in the following circumstances:
- To prevent a student from completing an act that would result in injury to the student or others when there is a substantial risk that the student would commit the act.
  - A verbal threat by a student does not present a substantial risk that a student would commit an aggressive act **unless** the student also demonstrates the ability, the intent, and the immediacy to carry out the threat.
  - Destruction of or damage to property does not present a substantial risk of personal injury **unless** personal injury would be caused as a result of the destructive act (for example, throwing sharp or heavy objects when others are present, or the person whose property is about to be destroyed is likely to react physically if the person's property were destroyed). (Note- If a student is about to destroy or damage property, the act of grasping the student's arm or leg solely to prevent the striking, throwing or kicking of the item is not prohibited).
  - To move a student to a seclusion room, or to remove a student to another location because the student is creating a substantial disruption to others, in circumstances where the student is unable to be moved or removed without the use of physical restraint; and
  - In circumstances where the student's IEP or a Behavioral Plan provides for the use of physical restraint in circumstances other than the foregoing. If it is anticipated that physical restraint may need to be used with a special education student, the IEP team is to discuss and include use of physical restraint in the student's IEP if the IEP team determines use of physical restraint to be appropriate. (Note: IEPs or Behavioral Plans should not provide for such physical restraint except in those circumstances where the professional staff determines that non-aversive or positive intervention strategies would not be effective).

### Physical restraint may not be used in the following circumstances:

- When a known medical or psychological condition contraindicates its use.
- As a form of punishment.



- B. Conditions. Use of physical restraint shall take into consideration the safety and security of the student.

In determining whether a student who is being physically restrained should be removed from the area where such restraint was initiated, the staff shall consider the potential for injury to the student, the student's privacy interests, and the educational and emotional well-being of other students in the vicinity.

If physical restraint is imposed upon a student whose primary mode of communication is sign language or an augmentative mode, the student shall be permitted to have his or her hands-free of restraint for brief periods, unless staff determines that such freedom appears likely to result in harm to the student or others.

- C. Timeline. Physical restraint is to be used only as long as necessary to resolve the reason for which it was initiated.

- D. Training. Physical restraint shall be applied only by individuals who have received systematic training that includes all the elements described below. An individual who applies physical restraint shall use only techniques in which he or she has received such training within the preceding two (2) years.

Training with respect to physical restraint may be provided either by the ESU or by an external entity and shall include, but need not be limited to the following:

- Appropriate procedures for preventing the need for physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship-building, and the use of alternatives to restraint;
- A description and identification of dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may indicate the need for physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted;
- The simulated experience of administering and receiving a variety of physical restraint techniques, ranging from minimal physical involvement to very controlling interventions;
- Instruction regarding the effects of physical restraint on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance;
- Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints; and
- Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint.

An individual may provide training to others in a particular method of physical restraint only if he or she has completed training in that technique that meets the foregoing requirements within the preceding one-year period.

## Seclusion

- A. When Seclusion May be Used. Seclusion may be used in the following circumstances:



- When a student's behavior is so out of control that the student's behavior creates a risk of injury to the student or others;
- When a student's behavior is so out of control that the student is causing substantial disruption to school activities and there is no other technique and no other place the student may be moved to prevent continued disruption;
- When a student's behavior is so out of control that the student is unable to engage in educational activities and there is no other technique that could reasonably be employed to allow the student's emotions to cool down and engage in appropriate behaviors and educational activities; and
- The student has an IEP or a Behavioral Plan which provides for the use of seclusion in circumstances other than the foregoing. If it is anticipated that seclusion may need to be used with a special education student, the IEP team is to discuss and include the use of seclusion in the student's IEP if the IEP team determines use of seclusion to be appropriate. (Note- IEPs or Behavioral Plans should not provide for the use of seclusion except in those circumstances where the professional staff determines that non-aversive or positive intervention strategies would not be effective).

Seclusion may not be used:

- When a known medical or psychological condition contraindicates its use.
- As a form of punishment.

B. Conditions. Use of seclusion shall take into consideration the safety and security of the student.

Enclosures used for seclusion, other than enclosures used on a temporary basis, shall

- Have the same ceiling height as the surrounding room or rooms and be large enough to accommodate not only the student being isolated but also any other individual who is required to accompany that student.
- Be constructed of materials that cannot be used by students to harm themselves or others, be free of electrical outlets, exposed wiring, and other objects that could be used by students to harm themselves or others, and be designed so that students cannot climb up the walls (including walls far enough apart so as not to offer the student being isolated sufficient leverage for climbing).
- If an enclosure used for isolated time out is fitted with a door, the door shall either be a steel door or a wooden door of solid-core construction. If the door includes a viewing panel, the panel shall be unbreakable.
- Be designed to permit visual monitoring of and communication with the student sufficient to ensure the student's safety and security. For students who do not communicate verbally, arrangements shall be made to permit the student to periodically communicate the student's needs.
- If a locking mechanism is used on the enclosure, the mechanism shall be constructed so that it will engage only when a key, handle, knob, or other similar

device is being held in position by a person, unless the mechanism is an electrically or electronically controlled one that is automatically released when the building's fire alarm system is triggered. Upon release of the locking mechanism by the supervising adult, the door must be able to be opened readily.

The procedures for use of seclusion include

- An adult who is responsible for supervising the student shall remain within close proximity of the enclosure.
  - The adult responsible for supervising the student must periodically check on the student visually if possible.
- C. Timeline. A student shall not be kept in seclusion for more than 20 minutes after the student ceases presenting the specific behavior for which isolated time out was imposed or any other behavior for which isolated time out would be an appropriate intervention.
- D. Training. Orientation will be provided to staff members who are anticipated to be involved in the use of seclusion. The orientation shall cover the procedures contained in this Guidance.

#### Documentation and Evaluation

- A. Documentation of Use of Physical Restraint or Seclusion. A written record of each use of seclusion or physical restraint shall be prepared and maintained in the student's Bridges record. The student's resident school district shall also maintain a copy of each such record. Each such record shall include
- The student's name;
  - The date of the incident;
  - The beginning and ending times of the incident;
  - A description of any relevant events leading up to the incident;
  - A description of any interventions used prior to the implementation of physical restraint or seclusion;
  - A description of the incident and/or student behavior that resulted in the implementation of physical restraint or seclusion;
  - A log of the student's behavior during physical restraint or seclusion, including a description of the restraint technique(s) used and any other interaction between the student and staff;
  - A description of any injuries (whether to students, staff, or others) or property damage;
  - A description of any planned approach to dealing with the student's behavior in the future;
  - A list of the school personnel who participated in the implementation, monitoring, and supervision of physical restraint or seclusion;

- The date on which the parent/guardian was notified.

The record shall be completed by the beginning of the school day following the use of seclusion or physical restraint.

- B. Notification of Administration. ESU 7 Special Education Director or Director designee shall be notified of the incident as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the school day on which it occurred.
- C. Notification of Parent or Guardian. Parents/guardians will be notified after use of seclusion or physical restraint, the ESU 7 Special Education Director or designee shall send written notice of the incident to the student's parents/guardians, unless the parent/guardian has provided the ESU a written waiver of this requirement for notification. The parent/guardian shall be informed of the date of the incident, a description of the intervention (physical restraint or seclusion) used, and who at the school may be contacted for further information.
- D. Evaluation. An evaluation shall be conducted whenever a physical restraint exceeds 15 minutes or results in physical injury, whenever a seclusion exceeds 30 minutes, or use of physical restraint or seclusion is repeated with an individual student during any three-hour period:
  - A certified staff person trained in the use of physical restraint, or knowledgeable about the use of seclusion, as applicable, shall evaluate the situation.
  - The evaluation shall consider the appropriateness of continuing the procedure in use, including the student's potential need for medication, nourishment, or use of a restroom, and the need for alternate strategies (e.g., assessment by a mental health crisis team, assistance from police, or transportation by ambulance).

The results of the evaluation shall be committed to writing and copies of this documentation shall be placed into the student's Bridges student record and provided to the ESU 7 Special Education Director or designee.

ESU 7 shall review [Article V, Section 5, C, Use of Restraint and Seclusion Policy](#) annually.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT NOTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH A VERIFIED DISABILITY**

[Article V, Section 5, D, Removal of Students and Interview of Students Policy](#) (Reviewed May 2024)

Students enrolled in ESU 7 Bridges that are determined to be a threat to themselves, others, the property of Bridges, or any surrounding properties to the Bridges will be reported to local law enforcement as required by Nebraska Statute 79-293. Law enforcement will be provided with all information that law enforcement officials request and require to enforce the law they are required to enforce as per their regulations. By reading and signing the handbook consent form, you are consenting to the "notification of disability disclosure" and "actual disclosure of

this disability information” should local law enforcement be called in regard to your child that warrants local law enforcement being called to intervene as per Nebraska Statute 79-293.

ESU 7 shall review [Article V, Section 5, D - Removal of Students and Interviews of Students Policy](#) annually.

## **MANDATORY REPORTERS**

[Article V, Section 5, A, Child Abuse and Neglect](#) (Reviewed May 2024)

Nebraska State Statute requires any person, including school employees, who have cause to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, or observes such person being subjected to conditions, which reasonably would result in abuse or neglect, shall report such incident to the appropriate law enforcement agency and/or Child Protective Services. This report shall be followed by a written report. Nebraska State Statute requires that any court order requesting records will be followed and records will be released.

ESU 7 shall review [Article V, Section 5, A, Child Abuse and Neglect Policy](#) annually.

## **NONDISCRIMINATION**

ESU 7 and Bridges hereby gives this statement of compliance and intend to comply with all state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination. ESU 7 and Bridges intend to take all necessary measures to assure compliance with all laws against any prohibited form of discrimination. ESU 7 and Bridges does not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, religion, military or veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, gender identity or sexual orientation, or other protected status in its programs and activities, and provides equal access to designated youth groups. Complaints or concerns involving discrimination for students, employees, and others should be addressed to Dr. Beth Ericson, Professional Development Director/Title IX Coordinator, 2657 44th Avenue, Columbus, NE 68601 (402) 564-5753 ([bericson@esu7.org](mailto:bericson@esu7.org)). [Title IX Policy of Non-Discrimination](#).

## **VIDEO SURVEILLANCE**

ESU 7 uses video cameras to help provide for the safety and well-being of all students, faculty, staff, and visitors on school premises. The highest concern is providing a safe environment that encourages learning. The video surveillance equipment is intended to enhance security and safety in classrooms, hallways, lunch areas, activity centers, parking lots, and other common areas in and around ESU 7 where privacy is not expected.



## SCHOOL CALENDAR 2025-2026



LA/7 Student Start
Teacher Work Day - No Students
Unit Closed
LA/7 Student End

August 2025						
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	



## STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 2025-2026

After reading this document and meeting with the Bridges intake team, I understand and agree with the contents of the Educational Service Unit 7 Bridges Student/Parent Handbook.

In the case of a necessity for remote and/or blended learning (some in person, some remote), our staff and students may use video conferencing software that allows for group video calling. Our staff may meet with your child individually using a video call, or with a group of students. To protect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties involved, when meeting with a group, all student's identities must remain confidential to that group.

### **Not allowed on video conferencing**

- Taking pictures of the group video call, and/or
- Posting pictures of the group on social media platforms, and/or
- Recording the group video call.

The identities of the other individuals visible in the group are strictly confidential. Sharing their identities with anyone outside of the group is absolutely prohibited.

As a parent/guardian, I understand that all those present in a group video call have the right to privacy of their identities as students of the programs in which they attend. Therefore, their identities will stay confidential within the group.

I understand that I need to keep identities of other students private and confidential, meaning I will not share the names of individuals with anyone outside of the group. I understand that it is my responsibility to make sure that my child also does not violate the confidentiality of other students within the group.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's printed name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Services Principal or Designee Signature

Date \_\_\_\_\_





**STUDENT CONTACT INFORMATION**  
**2025-2026**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Gender \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Relation to student \_\_\_\_\_

Street/Rural Address \_\_\_\_\_

PO Box \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want this number to get ESU 7 School Messenger notifications? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

When does the student live at this address? Please check

\_\_\_\_ All of the time \_\_\_\_ Some of the time due to visitations, Explain \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

Additional Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Relation to student \_\_\_\_\_

If same as above, check here \_\_\_\_ (then skip to phone #)

Street/Rural Address \_\_\_\_\_

PO Box \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want this number to get ESU 7 School Messenger notifications? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

When does the student live at this address? Please check

\_\_\_\_ All of the time \_\_\_\_ Some of the time due to visitations, Explain \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

Emergency Contact #1 \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to student \_\_\_\_\_

Street/Rural Address \_\_\_\_\_

PO Box \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

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Emergency Contact #2 \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to student \_\_\_\_\_



Street/Rural Address \_\_\_\_\_  
PO Box \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_





# STUDENT MEDICAL INFORMATION 2025-2026

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Please list all medications that this student takes

<u>Prescription Medication Name/Reason</u>	<u>Dosage</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>*Given at School? (Circle)</u>
			Yes No
			Yes No
			Yes No
			Yes No
			Yes No

\* Any medication given at school MUST be accompanied by a doctor's prescription and in the original packaging with an attached label from the pharmacy.

Diagnosis
Please check any conditions that pertain to your child Diabetes _____ Allergies _____ Asthma _____ Seizures _____ Other ( <i>Specify Below</i> )
Other health concerns/special needs
List any allergies (including allergies to any animals)
Special dietary needs
Hearing problems
Vision problems

Child's Name	
Speech problems	
Recent hospitalization	
Any other health concerns we should know about	
Physician Name	Phone
Counselor/Psychiatrist	Phone

Parent/Guardian please Initial each for Consent:

- \_\_\_\_\_ I give permission for trained Bridges staff to provide prescription medications(s) as listed above.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I agree to notify Bridges immediately with any changes in medication orders and provide a current physician order.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I give permission for trained staff to provide Tylenol or Ibuprofen (according to manufacturer dosage instructions, and provided by the parent/guardian in the original packaging) to this student for discomfort and verify that the student has taken these medications previously without problem.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Authorization expires one year following the date signed.**



**STUDENT'S AGREEMENT FOR ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS AND NETWORKS  
2025-2026**

In order to make sure that all members of the Bridges understand and agree to these rules of conduct, ESU 7 asks that you as a student user sign the following statement:

I have received a copy of, and have read, the Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Policy adopted by the ESU 7, and I understand and will abide by those guidelines and conditions for the use of the facilities of Bridges and access to the Internet. I further understand that any violation of the Bridges guidelines is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges will be revoked. Bridges disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action will be taken.

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Parent/Guardian has read and understands this document. Parent/Guardian Initials \_\_\_\_\_

This form will be retained on file by authorized faculty designee  
for the duration of applicable computer/network/Internet use.



**PARENT'S AGREEMENT FOR ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS AND NETWORKS  
2025-2026**

In order to make sure that all members of the Bridges community understand and agree to these rules of conduct, we ask that you as a parent/guardian sign the following statement:

I have received a copy of, and have read, the Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Policy adopted by ESU 7. As parent/guardian of the student named below, I grant permission for my son or daughter to access networked computer services such as electronic mail (email) and the Internet. I understand that this free access is designed for educational purposes. I also understand that individuals may be held liable for violations of these Terms and Conditions. However, I also recognize that it is impossible to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold ESU 7 responsible for materials acquired or sent via the network.

At ESU 7, staff sometimes use or implement online applications and software that might share a student's information with third party applications. Federal and state law impose requirements on the student data that can (and cannot) be shared with outside entities. In addition, parents and guardians may opt out of any online program or software that shares student data with any third-party application. Unless a parent or guardian opts out of any program or software, the District will assume that parents and guardians consent to their students accessing the applications and software tools at school. If a parent or guardian is requesting to opt out, please contact the Student Services Principal at (402) 564-0815.

I agree not to hold ESU 7, any of its employees, or any institution providing network access to ESU 7 responsible for the performance of the system or the content of any material accessed through it.

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

This form will be retained on file by authorized faculty designee  
for the duration of applicable computer/network/Internet use.





**MEDIA PERMISSION FORM  
2025-2026**

Student \_\_\_\_\_

I give permission for my child to

- have his/her name and/or image appear in any  
**Yes**\_\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_\_ Local newspaper, local magazine, or T.V. (news) story  
highlighting projects and events at Bridges  
**Yes**\_\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_\_ ESU 7 owned social media platforms, or other online  
media to highlight projects and events at the Bridges.
- be video-recorded, photographed or digitally recorded for education purposes\*

**Yes**\_\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_\_

\*Educational Purposes consist of use only at our site or the student's job sites and for student benefit (i.e. pictures of themselves on their locker spaces, photos of themselves in group pictures for students portfolios, videos of them performing a task for training, videos of a teacher instructing a lesson for the teacher and Student Services Principal to reflect on instructional skills, video surveillance for safety purposes within our program, etc.)

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



**EMERGENCY RELEASE OF INFORMATION AND CONSENT FOR CARE  
2025-2026**

Student \_\_\_\_\_

I give permission for my child to

**Yes**\_\_\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_\_\_ for the Bridges staff to consent for my child to receive treatment by emergency personnel, in the case of an emergency when I (the parent/guardian) can not be reached.

**Yes**\_\_\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_\_\_ have personally identifiable information regarding the student's unique needs (disability, medication, etc.) shared with police or other emergency personnel in the event the child is taken into their care.

**Yes**\_\_\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_\_\_ have ESU 7 staff follow the emergency protocol for response to life-threatening or systemic allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) that is described in this handbook.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



**PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES  
2025-2026**

Student \_\_\_\_\_

I give permission for my child to

**Yes**\_\_\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_\_\_ Go on short trips to the library, park, bowling alley, grocery store,  
or

various other local sites and participate in those activities that may be performed at those locations (ie. bowl, play on equipment, etc.) during the school day. Transportation will be either walking, ESU 7 owned vehicles, or by local transport companies.

**Yes**\_\_\_\_\_ **No**\_\_\_\_\_ Go to various local businesses when they have earned a reward for going out to eat, special activities, special privileges (swimming at the Y, ordering lunch or a dessert from a restaurant, etc.)  
Transportation will be either walking, ESU 7 owned vehicles, or by local transport companies.

Parent/Guardian Signature\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



## MEDICATION DELIVERY INFORMATION FOR PARENTS 2025-2026

(Please fill out only if your child will be taking any medications at ESU 7)

Health care provider and parent/guardian permission is needed for all prescription medications that are used at school and school-sponsored activities.

- Parents/guardians are responsible for having medications delivered directly to the school in the original or pharmacy labeled container that will include the students name, healthcare provider's name, pharmacy name and phone number, name of medication, directions concerning dosage, special instructions if required, and date of prescription.
- If you are unable to deliver your child's medications when in need of a refill, you may authorize the bus driver/transportation staff to deliver medications to ESU 7.
- He or she will be responsible for safely transporting the medication/medications to ESU 7 and someone from our staff will collect what is sent and have the driver sign and date a medication delivery log. All medication/medications are counted in and locked in a secure storage unit. When your child needs a refill, someone will notify you via phone or text; please list your preference below.
- If there is a medication change you will need to obtain a physician order before we can administer the new medication. Your healthcare provider can make a copy and you can bring it to ESU 7 or they can fax it to 402-563-1121 Attention: Student Services Principal. The order must contain the name of the child, diagnosis or reason they are taking the medication, date of order, name of medication, dose, and duration of order. The duration cannot exceed the current school year. It must be signed and dated by the healthcare provider and include their phone number.
- If you plan on delivering your child's medication/medications, please notify an ESU 7 staff member so they can anticipate your arrival and have the appropriate paperwork ready.
- ESU 7 staff will be available for medication drop off through school hours Monday-Friday from 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

**Please indicate your preference for medication delivery** (Mark any that may apply)

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ I will be delivering my child's medication/medications.

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ The bus driver/transportation staff will be delivering my child's medication/medications.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_







**PARENTAL AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE FORM FOR ADMINISTRATION OF  
OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS  
2025-2026**

The undersigned is the parent/guardian responsible for the following student:

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

If it is necessary that the student receives over-the-counter medications while attending the Bridges during the school day, the following procedure will be implemented:

1. The medication staff will administer non-medicinal interventions prior to the administration of medication. These are non-medicinal interventions that may include deep breathing to relax, hydration, snack, toileting, etc.
2. If it is determined that the student is in need of medication the parent/guardian will be notified prior to administration.
3. The medication approval or denial will be documented in the medication administration record.
4. If approved the designated medication staff will administer the medication as directed and send home a communication form detailing the reason the medication was given, time administered, etc.

**Please remember that any medication that is listed on this form must be sent to school with the student in the original packaging.** (We can NOT provide over the counter medication, it must be sent to us for your child's use).

Please make sure that the medication is not expired and will not expire within the school year. The medication(s) will be labeled, counted in, and documented on the medication administration record. They will be locked in a secure cabinet within Bridges.

I hereby authorize the Bridges staff to administer the following over-the-counter medication/medications

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Signature of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

This form is valid for 1 year from the date of signature. If you have any questions please feel free to contact us.  
402-564-0815 Ex. 1008

