Evans Mills Primary School
2026-2027
Frequently Asked Questions

Dear Evans Mills Families,

We know that the school year starts with many questions. To help ease some of your concerns, we have created this FAQ sheet with answers to many common questions. We know this is a lot of information and hope that putting it in one place is helpful. If you find that a question you have is not addressed in this document, please feel free to contact us at (315) 629-4331.

Vicki McCullouch
Evans Mills Primary Principal
vickimccullouch@ircsd.org

Chris Hanson
Evans Mills Primary Assistant Principal
christopherhanson@ircsd.org

First Day of School

When is the first day of school?

The first day of school for the Indian River Central School District is Wednesday, September 2, 2026.

How will I find out about my child's teacher?

In the coming week you will be receiving a letter from the school letting you know your child's teacher. This envelope will also include a name tag for K &1 for the first day of school. Please make sure to have your child wear this the first day (K-1). It helps us to make sure students go to the right classrooms.

How will I find out my students' bussing information?

For students beginning the school year: In the next few days you will receive a postcard from our Transportation Department with your child's busing information on it. If your child will be going to a different location than what is on the postcard, please be sure to send a note to school on the first day indicating where he/she will be going with the name, address and phone number of the location. If you do not receive your postcard prior to school starting, please call Transportation at (315) 642-0331.

When is Open House?

EMPS Open House is Tuesday, September 1, 2026 from 3:30-5:30. Please see our post on ParentSquare, Facebook or our website for more details.

Arrival and Departure from School

What time is arrival in the morning?

Buses unload at 8:35 a.m. for breakfast students, 8:45 a.m students who are not getting breakfast. If you are bringing your child to school, please drop him or her off using our *Parent Drop Off* from 8:45-9:00, in the front parking lot along South Main Street, please walk your child to the door. Students are considered tardy if they arrive after 9:00 a.m. An excuse is required and you will have to park your vehicle and walk your child to the main entrance along the side of the building. There is no staff at the Parent Drop Off door after 9:00.

What time is dismissal in the afternoon?

Afternoon dismissal begins at 3:35 p.m. Students begin boarding the buses at 3:40 and we aim to roll buses at 3:50. The first few days of school, our buses will likely be a little bit later as our drivers get to know their riders. If you are picking your child up, you can use our *Parent Pick Up* which is available from 3:35 -3:45. **Be sure to bring photo identification and have it ready to show our staff.** We will only allow students to go with contacts you have provided through ParentSquare or in writing. If you anticipate your child being an Every Day Pickup, please let the main office know at (315) 629-4331.

Can I send in a bus note to have my student be dropped off at another stop?

Unfortunately, IRCSD schools are not able to allow for any changes to a student's bus plans on a day-to-day basis. Bus passes are only provided for permanent address changes, specialized circumstances (EX: custody orders or permanent daycare purposes), or in matters of emergency as approved by the building principal. Please contact the main office at (315) 629-4331 for more information.

My child's bus is late, who do I call?

Our transportation department is in the office from 5:00 AM - 6:00 PM. You can reach them at (315) 642-0331 or (315) 541-4477.

What do I do if I want to pick up my child instead of them riding the bus on a specific day?

Changes in parent pick up must be done with a note upon arrival. This is to ensure no one picks up your child without your consent. If you forget to send a note, please call the office before **12:00 PM** so that we can have your child ready for you at dismissal time.

My child has an issue with another child on the bus, who do I call?

Please call our main office at (3115) 629-4331 between 8:00 AM and 4:45 PM.

What is the procedure for coming to the school?

If you come to school during the day for any reason, please come to the main door (along the side of the building), ring the buzzer, and wait to be let in. For safety reasons, access to the building is limited.

Attendance

What do I do after my child is absent?

Written excuses are required when your child is absent. If an excuse is not received, the absence will be considered illegal. A ParentSquare message will automatically be sent from the office each day your child is absent. You may send in a written note, reply to the ParentSquare or email emoffice@ircsd.org.

What if my child has a mid day appointment?

If your child has to leave school for some reason during the school day and you know in advance, it is helpful to send a note to school so we know that he or she will be leaving and can have them ready for you.

School Health

What do I do if my child is sick?

We have two nurses in the building each day. They are truly excellent at assessing students for illness and injury. If your child is sick please keep them home. This helps to keep everyone healthy as well as cutting down on the need for you to come pick your child up midday.

We realize this can be very difficult for parents, however, **students with the symptoms below will be asked to leave/be picked up within 30 minutes.** If you have questions, please reach out to our nursing department.

Symptoms: fever (as per school policy, 100.4) or chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscles or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.

We are required to follow guidelines set forth by the NYS Department of Health as well as Jefferson County Public Health.

Communication

When school starts, how will the teacher communicate?

Each classroom teacher is different in how they prefer to communicate but some helpful reminders are:

- Most of our staff uses **ParentSquare** for communication. If you haven't downloaded the app yet, it can be found in your app store by searching for ParentSquare. You can use this app to send a message directly to your child's teacher.

- Please check your child's book bag every day. Important information/dates/forms/schedules, etc., are sent home quite often from both the teacher and the office.

- Please check your child's folder for newsletters and or specific information on events during the school year.

When will my child's teacher respond to my message?

When students are in the classroom, our amazing teachers have planned educational opportunities for your child. They may not respond immediately to your message but will do so when they are able. Messages sent after 4:00 PM may not receive a reply until the next day. Messages sent on a weekend may not receive a reply until Monday.

What is the correct order of operations for communicating needs for my child?

We always encourage you to start with your child's teacher. Often problems can be solved by establishing clear communication. A quick phone call can solve many problems.

If your issue cannot be resolved by collaborating with your child's teacher, Mrs. McCullouch and/or Mr. Hanson can help to facilitate a solution.

If you are a military connected family, our Fort Drum school liaison Jessica Smith mflac6@ircsd.org is excellent at helping parents and schools navigate situations.

Food and Drink

How do I arrange to have my child eat school breakfast or lunch?

Breakfast and lunch will be offered in our cafeteria each day (menus are sent home each month or are available on the Indian River website – www.ircsd.org).

All families are encouraged to complete our Community Eligibility Provision Economic Survey. You can easily complete this form online where it is sent directly to the district for processing at MySchoolApps.com. Simply click on "Select District & Continue" at the bottom and complete!

"Extras" including cookies, ice cream, and extra drinks can be paid for with cash OR by creating a prepaid online account at www.myschoolbucks.com funds can be added through the website or the MySchoolBucks app. Please note, if you send cash with your child, we are not responsible for lost money between your household and the cashier. Please send any cash in a clearly labeled envelope.

Can I eat with my child?

Unfortunately, we will not allow family members to come in and eat lunch with the children. Seating in the cafeteria is limited.

Are water fountains in use this year?

Each classroom has a water fountain. In addition there are several filtered bottle fillers in the building. If you send your child with a water bottle, please make sure it is clearly marked with their name and classroom teacher.

Can I send in a treat for my child's birthday or classroom events?

Although you won't be able to come to your child's classroom, at the teacher's discretion, you may send an individually packaged, store-made, treat to celebrate your child's birthday. If your child's teacher chooses to have a classroom event, they may ask for items to be sent in. The same food and drink rules apply: pre-packaged and store-made. Party invitations handed out at school must be extended to the entire class.

Building Expectations

What are the basic school rules?

EMPS is a PBIS School (Positive Behavior Interventions and Support). Our school expectations are in place building wide. EMPS Students are expected to be Empathetic, Motivated, Problem Solvers, and Safe in everything they do. What this means in each area will be communicated to your child by the appropriate staff. Students will work with their classmates to earn a class book from our vending machine. They are also able to earn individual book vending tokens through our Pack Pride tickets. These tickets go into a weekly drawing for tokens and a monthly drawing for a wolf plush.

EXPECTATIONS	CLASSROOM	CAFETERIAS LARGE/SMALL	ASSEMBLIES	HALLWAYS	PLAYGROUND	BUSES
We are Empathetic 	We have manners. We listen while others speak. We look at the person who is speaking. We respect ourselves and others. We include others.	We have restaurant manners. We respect ourselves and others. We are quiet with our tablemates. We help others at our table.	We are attentive. We have listening ears. We have watching eyes. We show positive appreciation.	We keep our bodies to ourselves. We respect the bulletin boards. We use a silent wave to our friends. We exit and enter rooms quietly.	We share time on the equipment. We are helpful to others. We are kind. We keep our bodies to ourselves.	We use a quiet voice. We share seats appropriately. We respect everyone on the bus. We keep our body to ourselves.
We are Motivated 	We try our best. We actively learn and participate. We ask questions. We complete tasks. .	We sit three (large) and two (small) to a bench. We eat our lunch in a timely fashion. We clean up our area. We line up quietly.	We respect the space around us. We are engaged with the presenter. We appropriately participate. We know our school song.	We are role models. We have quiet voices, "Bubbles In." We walk with a purpose. We have our eyes forward.	We have fun. We know the signal or sign to line up. We use the playground and field space. We can see and hear the adults.	We know our stops. We listen to the driver and attendant. We know how to safely evacuate. We want to earn group bus incentives.
We are Problem Solvers 	We think for ourselves. We ask for help when needed. We work together to learn. We take care of our supplies. WE ARE A TEAM!	We try it first. We ask for help by raising our hands. We stay seated on the bench. We recycle at the end of our lunch.	We sit in our own space. We follow the rules. We raise a hand to inform an adult, if needed. We use the bathroom prior to the assembly.	We have tied laces before the hall. We have our hands to our sides. We stay together in a straight line. We keep our lines moving	We use the bathroom prior to going out. We welcome all to play. We talk it out. We use the equipment appropriately.	We have a clear aisle. We find our seat quickly and safely. We stay seated. We walk in the aisle.
We are Safe 	We follow the rules. We respect others space. We use materials appropriately. We know our safety procedures.	We sit safely on the benches. We respect personal space. We walk in the cafeteria. We go directly to the destination.	We walk in and leave with our class. We sit together as a class. We sit appropriately on the floor or bleachers. We use emergency response rules, if needed.	We walk in the hall. We stay to the right. We look where we are walking. We go directly to the destination.	We walk on the sidewalk and stairs. We stay within the set boundaries. We wear appropriate clothing / footwear. We listen for emergency instructions	We are safe at the bus stop. We wait for the signal to cross. We load and unload appropriately. We are silent at the tracks and gate.