

Emmetsburg Community School District

WEST ELEMENTARY STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

2025-26





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WELCOME TO WEST!

This handbook has been prepared to help explain the general policies and procedures of our elementary school program. While we've made every effort to include important information, some details may be unintentionally omitted. Please note that this version has been updated for the current school year. As changes have been made, we ask that you discard any previous editions to ensure you are referencing the most accurate and up-to-date information.

Our goal is to foster strong cooperation and understanding between home and school. We encourage you to take time to read through this handbook and review it with your child. We also recommend keeping it in a convenient location so you can refer to it throughout the year.

The Emmetsburg Community School District is committed to equal opportunity and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity, or socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs or employment practices. A grievance procedure is in place to address complaints of discrimination. Questions or grievances related to this policy should be directed to the district's Equity Coordinator:

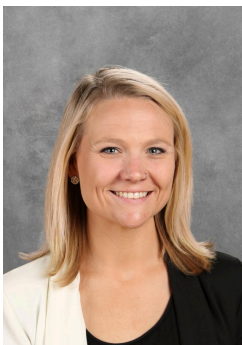
If you have any questions or find parts of this handbook unclear, please don't hesitate to reach out to the principal or any member of the elementary staff. We also welcome your feedback and suggestions on how to make this handbook even more helpful.

The principal's office is always open to families. Whether you have questions, concerns, or ideas, you are encouraged to call or stop by. Your voice matters.

Kari Menefee, Principal

602 Call Street, Emmetsburg, IA

712-852-4485 | Email: kmenefee@e-hawks.org





District Mission Statement

The mission of the Emmetsburg Community School District believes we will create an environment of promoting growth and serving others.

Conduct and-Behavior Expectations

It is assumed that students will conduct themselves properly upon ANY school grounds (includes the HS & MS football field), within ANY school building (includes the gyms at West, MS & HS) and in the classrooms. Students shall be expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the building PBIS Behavior Expectations.

Corrective measures may include, but are not limited to:

- A. For minor offenses, a word of caution from any staff member should eliminate the problem.
- B. Detention before and/or after school - **may be assigned by ANY school employee**. Must be completed within a reasonable time frame.
- C. Loss of school privileges.
- D. Parent or guardian conference with school staff and/or principal.
- E. Retraining of expectations by any staff member.
- F. Suspension (in-school or out-of-school)
- G. Expulsion
- H. Students who require frequent discipline or who are involved in a severe disciplinary problem may be considered for suspension and/or expulsion from school. The student's parents shall be called immediately to remove the student from the building. Depending on the severity, the Police may be called and charges filed against the student. EXAMPLES (but not limited to):
 1. Possession of illegal substances or weapons.
 2. Gives obscene gestures to a staff member.
 3. Adamantly refuses to report to the principal-requiring removal from the room.
 4. Threatens or strikes a staff member.
 5. Harassment/bullying of staff or other students.

1. Respect Yourself
 - a. Be prepared for class and arrive on time.
 - b. Practice academic honesty.
 - c. Be a positive role model.
 - d. Give your best effort.
2. Respect Others
 - a. Be courteous and respectful to all staff/adults.
 - b. People are different, opinions may vary...that's okay.
 - c. Personal electronics are not needed.
3. Respect this Place
 - a. Open and close doors appropriately.
 - b. Be respectful of others' property.
 - c. Leave things better than you find them.



Absences and Excuses

Regular attendance is a desirable trait and a necessity if you want your children to be successful now, and later in life. At West Elementary the average attendance rate is 97%, or approximately 5½ days missing a year. However, we all find it necessary to be absent from work occasionally. Please keep your children home when they are sick, as they will not be able to do their work properly and can easily spread their sickness to others in the school.

If your children have been absent from school for any reason, please send an excuse for their absence to the teacher. If your child is to be absent for reasons other than sickness, we would appreciate a call telling us of the upcoming absence so adjustments in your child's school work may be made.

Absences for trips to a dentist, doctor, optometrist, or other specialists are considered to be excused absences. In case of extended illness, one call is sufficient. If parents are unable to call or email, a designee may do so or a note may be sent with a friend or sibling.

Students arriving prior to 10:00 a.m. will be considered Tardy, rather than absent. When making appointments, please consider that your child will not be considered absent if he/she leaves after 2:00 p.m.

Calls to the school should be made before 8:30 A.M.

If a student has been absent for 5 days of the school year, the administrator sends an attendance letter to the parents. If 10 days of the school year have been missed, the administration will set up a meeting with parents to discuss a resolution to the problem. At 15 days' absence we will look to pursue truancy laws. If we hit 20 days absent, the student's chronic absence will initiate conversations about repeating the grade. Regular attendance allows students to be exposed to the mandatory grade level material. Chronic absence means the student is not receiving the material, which could lead to grade level retention. If attendance continues to be a problem, the Palo Alto County Attorney's Office will be notified. Truant students may be reported to law enforcement officials. Under Iowa law it is a criminal offense when parents or guardians do not ensure that their children attend school on a regular basis.

Child Leaving Early: If your child is leaving early we ask that you pick them up in the office. We will also need you to sign them out before they leave the building.

Class Placement and Teacher Requests

Each year, student placement into classrooms is a thoughtful process that considers many factors, including the overall makeup of each class. For this reason, we do not accept general parent requests for specific teachers. Class rosters are developed collaboratively by the elementary principal and teaching staff, with the goal of creating the most beneficial learning environment for all students. If you believe there is a significant reason to request a specific teacher for your child, a Teacher Request Form must be completed and submitted to the elementary principal's office by **May 1**.

All submitted forms will be carefully reviewed; however, due to the many factors involved in class placement, not all requests can be honored. Final placement decisions are made by the



administration. Please note: Submitting a request form does not guarantee placement in the requested classroom.

Activity Tickets

Activity Tickets are available to elementary students (I-4), and are optional. The activity ticket gives admission to all athletic contests, music programs, and other activities, both at the middle school and high school. Students must present the ticket for admission to each activity. The prices are established yearly.

Address Change

The West Elementary School Office should be informed if a change of address, name, or telephone number occurs during the school year or is planned during the non-school months. The school should be notified if you, parents/guardians, will be out of town for an extended period of time and names need to be provided for emergency response situations.

Area Education Agency (AEA) Services

Prairie Lakes AEA provides a wide variety of educational services to the Emmetsburg School District. The following are some of the student services most frequently used:

Speech Clinician: Assistance from a speech clinician is available to any student, on a referral basis by school personnel or by parent request. Hearing tests may be given as well.

Special Education Consultant: A Special Education consultant is utilized when students are referred for placement into a Special Education Program. Parent's rights are explained.

Asbestos

An Asbestos Management Handbook for the elementary schools is available in the principal's office. Friable asbestos has been removed from the building.

Bell Schedules & Student Arrival at School

Listed below is the basic bell schedule for the elementary school.

Breakfast	7:50 - 8:10
Teachers' Day Begins	7:45
Students Begin Heading to class	8:00
Tardy "Bell"	8:10
Dismissal	3:25

**** IMPORTANT !! -Student Arrival at School ****

Parents, we ask that your children not arrive on the school grounds until **7:45 A.M.**, or after. Doors will be locked until 7:45 A.M. Teachers' contracted hours begin at 7:45 so students who show up earlier are unsupervised. Students must enter through the main entrance. *Parents, we also ask that you do not escort your student down to their rooms as we are trying to limit traffic in the building. At no time should parents ever park in front of the building on the road as that is an emergency exit and a bus stop. If you are dropping off your child you will need to use the parking lot. Be cautious*



when leaving as we have students and staff walking in the parking lot during mornings and afternoons.

Leaving School: If you are picking up your students we ask that you wait in the parking lot or on Madison St east of the building. Please be patient as we are trying to get kids safely to their destination.. Students 1st-4th will exit out of the lunchroom doors by the ramp. Early Childhood and Kindergarten students will exit out of the pre-K doors on the Northeast side of the building. If you have multiple students in the building your children will exit together based on the oldest student. * Example: 2 children: one in Kindergarten and a 3rd grader, the kindergarten student will travel to the 3rd grade students room and they will leave together out the lunchroom doors.

The school playgrounds are not supervised before 8:00 A.M. and after 3:25 P.M. Your child will be asked to leave the school playground immediately after school is dismissed. Children may return to the play areas after 4:00 P.M.

Bicycles, Rollerblades, Skateboards

Riding a bicycle to school can be a convenience or a hazard depending on the student who is riding the bike. Any student who rides a bike to school should have parent's permission and will be required to obey the school rules for riding such. Parents should remember that you are primarily responsible for the children when you give them permission to ride their bikes or other means of transportation in the street coming to and from school. The following guidelines have been established:

1. Your child will be requested to observe traffic rules while riding to school.
2. Each child will be required to park the bike in the racks provided as soon as he/she arrives at school.
3. The school will not assume the responsibility for damages or theft to bicycles, rollerblades or skateboards while they are at school.
4. All bicycles must be walked off of school property, at a crosswalk.

(Please note: We discourage skateboards, scooters and rollerblades as means of getting to and from school.)

Birthday Treats

Students are allowed to bring treats to celebrate their birthday. We encourage prepackaged items. By no means is bringing birthday treats for the class required.

SPECIAL NOTE: We do not want our students to plan birthday parties for the teacher.

SPECIAL NOTE: Invitations to birthday parties should not be given out at school, home parties are not school related.

Textbook/Software Fees and Fines

The Emmetsburg Community Elementary Schools charge a fee to help defray the cost of providing computers and workbooks. This fee is payable when you enroll your child in school. These fees may be waived in some cases. A form for waiver of fees is available when you register your child.

Computers/Technology

Your School District has invested heavily in improving the technology capabilities of all the schools in the District. Every student in the building is issued a computer and those computers are connected



together so that each computer can contact every other computer in the building. Also, all the schools are connected together and information can be shared between computers in other buildings, and each computer can connect to the Internet. Pictures of students may be used on the internet but student names will not be associated with the pictures. We encourage students and staff to utilize advanced technology at every opportunity, as we continue to strive to keep pace with the world around us. Any student damage or vandalism to the equipment or software will result in suspension from school and financial accountability for all damages. Improper use of the computers and/or Internet will result in the loss of privileges.

School Bus Policy

Riding rural buses is prohibited unless you are assigned to the bus on a permanent basis. A principal must approve of any student riding who has NOT been assigned to the bus. Parents must write a note allowing their student to ride a rural bus route, the principal or office staff will sign the note and the students must give the note to the bus driver. Please read the following complete list of bus rules.

Safety is the primary concern for every child that rides an Emmetsburg Community School District bus. Therefore, every precaution will be taken to see that children arrive at their destination safely. This can only be accomplished if we have the cooperation of both students and parents. Driving a bus is a difficult and responsible task. The attention of the driver must be on the driving responsibilities, at all times, and any deviation from this task could endanger the safety of all passengers. It is absolutely necessary that students assume responsibility for their behavior, and any infraction of procedures necessary for the safe transportation of students be reported immediately to the appropriate supervisor/principal. The following guidelines will be used to ensure the safe and efficient operation of our buses.

All persons riding in school district vehicles shall adhere to the following rules. The driver, sponsor or chaperones are to follow the school bus discipline procedure for student violations of this policy. Video cameras may be in operation on the school buses.

1. Bus riders shall be at the designated loading point before the bus arrival time.
2. Bus riders shall wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before attempting to enter.
3. Riders must not extend arms or heads out of the windows at any time.
4. Aisles must be kept cleared at all times.
5. All bus riders shall load and unload through the right front door. The emergency door is only for emergencies.
6. A bus rider will depart from the bus at the designated point unless written permission from parent or guardian to get off at a different location is given to appropriate office staff first and then to the driver.
7. A rider may be assigned a seat by the driver.
8. Riders who damage seats or other equipment will reimburse the district for the cost of the repair or replacement.



9. Riders are not permitted to leave their seats while the vehicle is in motion.
10. Waste containers are provided on all buses for bus riders' use.
11. Permission to open windows must be obtained from the driver.
12. Classroom conduct is to be observed by students while riding the bus except for ordinary conversation.
13. The driver is in charge of the students and the vehicle, and the driver is to be obeyed promptly.
14. Students shall assist in looking after the safety and comfort of younger students.
15. A bus rider who must cross the roadway to board or depart from the bus shall pass in front of the bus (no closer than 10 feet), look in both directions and proceed to cross the road or highway only on signal from the driver.
16. Students shall not throw objects about the vehicle nor out through the windows.
17. Students shall keep feet off the seats.
19. Roughhousing in the vehicle is prohibited.
20. Students shall refrain from crowding or pushing.
21. The use or possession of alcohol, tobacco or look-alike substances is prohibited in the vehicle.
22. The Good Conduct Rule is in effect.

Unacceptable Behavior

The following list of behaviors shall not be permitted on the Emmetsburg Community School District buses. This list shall include but is not limited to the following: hitting, spitting, profanity, out of seat, throwing objects, obstructing aisles, making loud noises, hanging out of windows, assault, fighting, vandalism, insubordination, possession of a weapon, possession or use of tobacco, and possession or use of alcohol and/or any other controlled substance. All spray and mist products are not to be used on the bus. Sprays and mist products can be a danger to others with allergies and pollute the bus environment. Deodorant, cologne, perfume, hairspray and any other spray or mist product is prohibited.

If the infraction/behavior is a violation of the law, the proper authorities shall be notified and all riding privileges for the student shall be suspended for a period not to exceed the remainder of the school year. If the infraction results in property damage, restitution must be paid or a plan for restitution must be agreed upon before riding privileges are reinstated.

Consequences for Infractions

First Offense	Driver conferences with the student, identifies the infraction, and writes the behavior referral with copies to the parent(s) and the appropriate
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	administrator.
Second Offense	Driver conferences with the student, identifies the infraction, and writes the behavior referral with copies to the parent(s) and the appropriate administrator. The appropriate administrator contacts the parent(s), reviews the incident, and may suspend the student's riding privileges for a period not to exceed five (5) school days.
Third Offense	Driver conferences with the student, identifies the infraction, and writes the behavior referral with copies to the parent(s) and the appropriate administrator. The appropriate administrator contacts the parent(s), reviews the incident, and may suspend the student's riding privileges for a period not to exceed fifteen (15) school days.

Any succeeding violations shall result in suspension of all riding privileges for a period not to exceed the remainder of the school year.

If a student performs an act that obviously jeopardizes the safe operation of the bus and endangers the safety of others on the evening route, the driver may suspend the student from riding the bus the next morning. The driver must notify the parent(s) and the appropriate administrator of this action upon completion of the evening route. A written report shall also be filled out and delivered to the appropriate administrator immediately following the next morning's route detailing the incident. Riding privileges can't be reinstated until a conference is held with the driver, parent(s), student and appropriate administrator.

Open Enrollment Notification

Parents/guardians considering the use of the open enrollment option to enroll their child/children in another public school district in the State of Iowa must:

- Complete an application (available in the District Office)
- Submit an application for each child in their family, and
- Send a copy of the application to both the resident and receiving school districts.

Parents/guardians may apply for open enrollment at any time without the need for good cause. The receiving district may deny an open enrollment request if one of the following applies:

- The application violates the district's insufficient classroom space policy.
- The district does not have the appropriate special education program.
- The application would adversely affect the district's implementation of a court-ordered desegregation plan, or
- The student has been expelled or suspended.

Communications to and from the Elementary School

When sending a note or money to school, the child should receive clear instructions from you, the parents, as to who is the appropriate person to receive the note or the money. Check your child's book bag daily and help your child to become responsible in getting school information to you.



Ultimately, however, as parents you are responsible for knowing the contents of the notes or papers brought home by your child.

Dressing For School-Suggestions

We have simple dress suggestions in our elementary schools. We ask that you cooperate with us in this matter. The following guidelines have been established:

- We would prefer that boys and girls wear apparel that is appropriate for school.
- Blue jeans are by all means acceptable.
- Shorts and skirts that are at least fingertip in length are permissible during extremely warm or hot weather.
- Not acceptable would be spaghetti straps, bare midriffs, and clothing with inappropriate logos.
- During our Iowa winters, children must be dressed properly for outside play. Hats, mittens, snow pants and boots are necessary for cold weather and/or snow. Boots will be required until the temperature is such that the feet will not become excessively cold. Signs will be posted in the hall as to what winter attire is needed for each recess. **Students will wear coats if the temperature is 49 degrees or below, and a light jacket or sweatshirt 50 - 60 degrees, 61 degrees and above no coats are necessary.**
- Students who "forget" to wear boots will be asked to stand in a spot where there is no snow, so that their feet do not get wet.
- Children are required to have a pair of shoes/sneakers at school when they are wearing boots outdoors. It is not good practice to have children in a classroom without shoes.
- Labeling of clothing items really helps the teacher when things are lost or misplaced. (First and last name)

If you have any questions concerning these suggestions, please call the building principal.

Equal Opportunity/Non Discrimination

It is the policy of the Emmetsburg Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age (Employment only), marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (students/program only) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district's Equity Coordinator, Cory Jenness, Superintendent, 205 King Street, 712 852 4485, cjenness@e-hawks.org

The Emmetsburg Community School District complaint procedure is located in the board of directors' policies. Procedures for parents, students, staff and community members are referred to in board policy 107.1.

School Improvement Advisory Committee

Our Effective Schools Committee was created in the Fall of 1992. The committee is engaged in gathering input from the staff and community, collecting data about students and compiling the information. This information is then used to guide the decisions we make in our schools to improve the educational environment for the students. On your Master Calendar it is labeled as the Supt. Advisory Committee.



Field Trips

Throughout the school year, your child will have the opportunity to participate in various field trips designed to enrich and extend classroom learning. These experiences are considered an important part of the curriculum and are treated as a regular school day activity. You will be notified in advance of any field trips that take students outside the school district. All students will be supervised, and clear expectations for behavior will be communicated prior to each trip.

Please note:

- Students with **five or more office referrals** may only attend field trips if accompanied and directly supervised by a parent or guardian.
- **Extreme behavioral concerns** may result in a student being excluded from a field trip.

If there are special circumstances that may limit or prevent your child's participation in a field trip, please contact their teacher.

Permission for field trip participation is included on the school registration form and must be signed by a parent or guardian.

Guidance Counselor

A guidance counselor is available to support students' social, emotional, and academic needs. The counselor conducts occasional large group sessions with all students and also works with small groups to address specific concerns or situations they may be experiencing. When appropriate, the counselor may also meet with parents to provide additional support and collaboration.

Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policy

Harassment and bullying of students and employees are against federal, state and local policy, and are not tolerated by the board. The board is committed to providing all students with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. To that end, the board has in place policies, procedures, and practices that are designed to reduce and eliminate bullying and harassment as well as processes and procedures to deal with incidents of bullying and harassment. Bullying and harassment of students by students, school employees, and volunteers who have direct contact with students will not be tolerated in the school or school district.

The board prohibits harassment, bullying, hazing, or any other victimization, of students, based on any of the following actual or perceived traits or characteristics, including but not limited to, age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status. Harassment against employees based upon race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, age or disability is also prohibited.

This policy is in effect while students or employees are on property within the jurisdiction of the board; while on school-owned or school-operated vehicles; while attending or engaged in



school-sponsored activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school or school district.

If, after an investigation, a student is found to be in violation of this policy, the student shall be disciplined by appropriate measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. If after an investigation a school employee is found to be in violation of this policy, the employee shall be disciplined by appropriate measures up to, and including, termination. If after an investigation a school volunteer is found to be in violation of this policy, the volunteer shall be subject to appropriate measures up to, and including, exclusion from school grounds. "Volunteer" means an individual who has regular, significant contact with students.

Harassment and bullying mean any electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward a student which is based on any actual or perceived trait or characteristic of the student and which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:

- Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property;
- Has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

"Electronic" means any communication involving the transmission of information by wire, radio, optical cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. "Electronic" includes but is not limited to communication via electronic mail, internet-based communications, pager service, cell phones, electronic text messaging or similar technologies.

Harassment and bullying may include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors and circumstances:

Verbal, nonverbal, physical or written harassment, bullying, hazing, or other victimization that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim.

- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, property, etc. that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim;
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim; and/or
- Unreasonable interference with a student's performance or creation of an intimidating, offensive, or hostile learning environment.

Sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to the conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of the student's education or benefits;
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct by a school employee is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that student; or



- The conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive education environment.

In situations between students and school officials, faculty, staff, or volunteers who have direct contact with students, bullying and harassment may also include the following behaviors:

- Requiring that a student submit to bullying or harassment by another student, either explicitly or implicitly, as a term or condition of the targeted student's education or participation in school programs or activities; and/or
- Requiring submission to or rejection of such conduct as a basis for decisions affecting the student.

Any person who promptly, reasonably, and in good faith reports an incident of bullying or harassment under this policy to a school official, shall be immune from civil or criminal liability relating to such report and to the person's participation in any administrative, judicial, or other proceeding relating to the report. Individuals who knowingly file a false complaint may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Retaliation against any person, because the person has filed a bullying or harassment complaint or assisted or participated in a harassment investigation or proceeding, is also prohibited. Individuals who knowingly file false harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation shall be subject to discipline by appropriate measures, as shall any person who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy. Any student found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. Any school employee found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, termination of employment. Any school volunteer found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, exclusion from school grounds.

Homework

We believe that most of the students' academic activities should take place in the classroom. Some homework may be assigned to your child from time to time. This homework will follow the guidelines listed as follows:

1. Supplemental type activities to help teach, review, or give added experiences to the normal classroom work.
2. Make-up type activities for work missed due to absence from school.
3. Enrichment type activities.

If you have questions concerning the amount of work that your child is bringing home from school, please feel free to contact the classroom teacher. He/she will investigate the circumstances concerning the problem.

Kindergarten

Children are eligible to begin kindergarten if they turn five years old on or before September 15 of the current year. To enroll, families must provide a certified birth certificate and documentation of a physical examination.



While age is an important factor, it is not the only consideration in determining kindergarten readiness. Not all children who are five years old are developmentally prepared for the demands of a full-day school program. We rely heavily on feedback from preschool teachers and results from a readiness rating scale to guide these decisions.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with families to discuss any questions or concerns about a child's readiness for kindergarten. Prior to the start of the school year, we hold kindergarten conferences where the teacher, parent, and child come together to discuss expectations, complete a brief readiness assessment, and help ensure a smooth transition into school.

West Elementary Library

Whole class visits and story times are scheduled, but students are most welcome to come to the library for browsing or reading when large groups aren't scheduled. Appropriate behavior by students is expected and they will be asked to leave if there is a problem. The teacher will be notified if this occurs. When the schedule of classes is established a copy will be given to each teacher. Library skills classes will also be scheduled with teachers and the staff will be notified when they are being taught. Teachers are encouraged to visit the library on a regular basis to see new materials.

Everything borrowed from the library needs to be checked out, no matter how long it will be used. Usage statistics are important when evaluating the collection for thinning or purchasing. As in classrooms, some items in the library are not for general use, so please ask before taking anything.

Library Loan Periods for Students

- Library books -- 2 weeks
- Magazines -- 2 weeks
- Reference material -- overnight

Library overdue notices will be given to teachers daily to be handed out to the students. Please help us in getting items returned in a timely manner. If a student knows a material is lost they should discuss it with Mrs. Gloede or Mrs. Brennan. It is school policy that families pay for any materials not returned by May. Refunds will be given for items returned after payment.

Lost and Found Articles

You would be amazed at the number of clothing and footwear items that are left at school and go unclaimed at year's end. The lost items that have been found during the school year are placed in a box outside the office. If your child has lost something, we will make an effort to help you find it. Please instruct your child that if he or she finds anything at school, it should be turned into the office or to a teacher. If this practice is carried out by everyone, we should have a minimum of articles lost during the year. If you think your child has left something at school, feel free to call, and we will help you look for it. If your student's name is on the article, this will help us return the items. Boots (both feet) and coats are items that should have students' names in them.

Lunch Program

A school lunch will be served each noon to all attendance centers in the Emmetsburg Community School District. Students may purchase lunch or may bring their own from home. The costs of the hot



lunch meals are determined yearly. Information on current prices may be obtained by calling the West Elementary Office. Please check the menu that is sent home each month with your child.

Free or Reduced Prices:

If you qualify, you may receive free or reduced lunch prices (and breakfast). Please contact the office for further information and application.

Extra Milk:

A half pint of milk is furnished with a hot lunch meal. If your child desires more than one carton of milk with their hot lunch, they may purchase another. If you qualify for free or reduced lunches an extra milk is not included. The price of this extra half pint will be set according to the price of milk being paid at the time.

Your child may bring a cold lunch to school if he/she desires. We do ask you to refrain from your students bringing pop for lunch. Milk may be purchased at the same cost per half pint of milk as that purchased with a hot lunch.

Lunchroom Rules

The following rules have been established for our lunchroom. These basic rules have been established to provide guidelines so as to have a peaceful eating environment for all students.

- Keep your hands and feet to yourself
- Be seated as is your place in line on the corresponding dot
 - Talk quietly to your neighbors
 - Wait patiently to be dismissed
 - Eat over the table

Medication at School

State law prohibits staff members from administering any medication not prescribed by a physician or without parental approval, including aspirin and all "over-the-counter" medication. Prescription medication to be administered during school hours must be approved in writing by a physician and parent/guardian. The following information must be clearly labeled on the bottle: (1) name of medicine, (2) dosage, (3) time medication is to be given at school, (4) student name, and (5) physician's name. Medication authorization forms are distributed at registration time and are available from the school nurse. It is preferred that morning medications are given at home before school.

Student Progress and Communication

At our school, we believe that regular communication between home and school is essential to your child's success. Our goal is to keep families informed about student progress and to work together to support learning.

The main purposes of our reporting system are to:

- Help parents and guardians understand how their child is doing in school



- Show students how they are growing and learning
- Encourage students to reflect on their own progress
- Support a strong partnership between home and school

Teachers will usually contact parents if a student is having difficulty with classwork. **Report cards should not be the first time you hear about any challenges.** We value ongoing communication and may also send home positive notes to share the good things your child is doing.

"New Parent" Rights

There are situations where other adults, who are not actual parents or legal guardians, play a parent role in a child's life. It will be our policy to cooperate with those adults for the good of the child as long as doing so does not violate legal precept or writ.

Newsletters and Bulletins

Periodically throughout the school year a *Parent Newsletter* is published. This newsletter is compiled to help inform you of things that have happened and will happen throughout the school year in the elementary schools. Occasional *Special News Bulletins* addressing a single item will be sent out via Remind, JMC, or a physical letter sent home with the student.

Nurse Program

The Emmetsburg Community Schools have the services of a full-time school nurse. The nurse attends to the health needs of the students while they are at school and is available for parent consultation when necessary. The school nurse will administer the following programs in our school:

1. Emergency First -Aid
2. Dental checks
3. Vision checks
4. Immunization cards records
5. Heights and weights
6. Special lectures
7. Developmental Progress Checks
8. Information for Parents as needed
9. Maintenance of permanent health records
10. Scoliosis screenings
11. Recording of communicable diseases

Parent-Teacher Conferences

We hold our Fall conferences in November each year. Fall Parent Teacher Conferences will be held on **October 28th and October 30th, 2025**, Spring Parent Teacher Conferences will be **March 3rd and March 5th, 2026**. A master schedule will be worked out by the elementary teachers. You will be sent a conference sign up via email, which will allow you to sign up for a time to meet with the teacher.

Parent Volunteers

Parent Volunteers wishing to help out in specific instances and with specific students in the elementary school are always welcome. We will make every attempt to set up a program which will be workable for both the school and the volunteer worker. If you belong to a group, or are an interested individual who would like to become involved as a parent volunteer, please call the building principal or a staff member for information . We welcome your interest and participation.

**Parties (At School and Invitations to)**

We have three main parties each year. They are: Fall, Holiday, and Valentine's Day Parties. Most teachers will divide their class into groups for bringing treats. We consider school parties to be a *FUN* activity. If you don't want your child to participate in these events, please notify your building principal or your child's teacher and suitable arrangements will be made to exclude them.

Birthday treats are given at the discretion of the pupil or parent. You are not required to furnish treats for your child's birthday unless you desire to do so. We do not want our students to plan birthday parties for the teacher.

Personal invitations to birthday parties should not be given out at school, home parties are not school related.

We ask that parents not deliver flowers or other items to the office for Valentines day as it becomes overwhelming for staff.

Personal Items of Students

Students are asked not to bring items of value (such as ball, toys, game cards, iPods, gameboys, etc.) to school which could be misplaced, lost, or stolen. The school does not take responsibility for the replacement of personal items.

Pets on the Playground

We ask for your cooperation in keeping your pets at home and not in the building. You may receive a call to come and get your dog or cat if it wanders onto the school playground. Also, please help us remind the children that they shouldn't approach or play with strange dogs or cats. It is also requested that students not bring animals to school for sharing. Thanks for your cooperation.

Playground Supervision

The playground is supervised by staff members at all recess periods and noon hour periods. During cold stormy weather pupils will remain in the building and will be expected to remain quietly in their assigned areas.

The following is a list of guidelines, or rules that have been established for the playground at West Elementary.

Recess Policy

In all grades the children have a mid-morning recess scheduled. There is also a recess after lunch for all grades and a mid-afternoon recess for students in grades K-2. Each child needs these recess breaks from their work and will be expected to participate. Occasionally, a teacher may use a recess as a directed play period to extend the activities being taught in the classroom. If you do not want your child to participate in recess activities for some reason, please arrange for an excuse from the activity with your child's teacher or the building principal. Occasionally, a student is kept in the room at recess time to complete unfinished work or for disciplinary reasons. Our teachers usually do not withhold recesses unless there is a serious problem with the child. If you feel that this guideline is being abused, please call their classroom teacher to discuss the situation.



Playground Goal

Students will play safely in all games and on all equipment. Any student who is a safety concern to him/herself or peers will be removed from the playground.

Responsible Playground Behavior

Students will show respect for others and follow instructions given by staff.

Rough play is not allowed on the playground.

EXAMPLES: tackle football, king of the mountain, crack the whip, tripping, wrestling, karate chops or kicks, punching, shoving, bumping into others, etc.

Unsafe play is not allowed on the playground.

EXAMPLES: snowballs, sliding on ice, throwing ice, climbing swing poles, tag on equipment, being on top of the tube tunnel, throwing rocks, baling out of swings, objects on the slide, sliding down head first or backwards, etc.

Dangerous objects are not allowed.

EXAMPLES: hard balls, baseballs, hard bats, guns, knives, matches, etc.

Students will settle differences peacefully.

When the bell rings, students are to stop what they are doing and line up on their dot.

Students are to remain in their assigned play areas:

Students will stay in assigned play areas as shown in the maps.

Students must have permission to go outside the fence, and to re-enter the building.

Keep a safe distance from windows.

Take turns on the equipment.

When on the snow hill, students can, when dressed appropriately:

-Slide down from the top, feet first, one at a time toward the playground - Build forts, where others aren't sliding - Stay on top and front side of the hill - Follow all other school rules.

Students will not chew gum or eat candy or food on the playground.

Boots need to be worn when the sign says they are required. When the sign says boots are not required, students must stay in dry areas.

Report Cards

We report student progress to the parent in two ways, by use of report cards and parent conferences. Our school system is organized on a nine week reporting basis. This means that we report student progress to parents four times each year. The parent receives a report card following the end of the 9th week (1st Qtr.), first semester (2nd Qtr.), 27th week (3rd Qtr.), and second semester (4th Qtr.).



Please understand that Parent/Student/Teacher conferences are much more effective in communicating student progress than any report card.

Special Education

We have Special Education teachers who work with individual or small groups of students who have been found to have a specific learning disability, which is hindering their progress in school. Students are recommended for referral to the program by the Student Success Team or by parent request. The student will then be tested by the school psychologist and other special area personnel to determine whether they are eligible for this special help. You, as the parent of a student, will be consulted through a staffing procedure concerning your approval of the placement of your child into this special program.

Students in the program are worked into Special Education for part of the day and in the regular classroom for the vast majority of the day. There are specialized materials for use in the resource rooms. We feel that this program gives us the opportunity to work with any student who needs special attention due to learning disabilities. All Questions and inquiries regarding Special education should go through the Special Education teachers or Mrs. Menefee.

Safety

Here at school, we constantly remind children to practice safe habits and include them in the curriculum. We also ask children to use extreme caution in crossing the street and to do so at the corners only. As children leave and come to school this is especially important due to the buses and traffic. Please watch your children closely to make our school area a safe environment. Also, throughout the school year there are regular **Fire and Severe Weather** drills, which are an integral part of our elementary school. These drills are noted on the District Calendar.

School Spirit

We are proud of our schools and the activities provided. We encourage the children to attend activities, but only if they are interested in watching. They are to remain seated during the activity, at least until the half-time or intermission. They are not to run to the concession stand or rest rooms until there is a break. If they have difficulty in following these requests, then they may be asked to leave, or stay next to you, the parent. We encourage pride, enthusiasm, and sportsmanship with the understanding that we must act like winners in all situations.

Snow or Emergency Vacations

Occasionally it is necessary to call off school because of extreme weather conditions or other emergencies. If this situation occurs, you will be notified of the school closing by the following procedures: Any announcement will be made over radio stations as soon as the decision to close school has been made, a REMIND message will also be sent from the school. Please subscribe to the REMIND account to be notified (sign up directions will be available at registration and in the office). Please listen to Y100 100.1 FM - KICD 107.7 FM

Please note: You are requested not to call the radio station or school to find out if there will be school or not. If school is to be called off, the radio station will make the announcement repeatedly prior to the normal starting time of school.

**"Specials" Programs: Art, Music, Physical Education**

Each class meets with the Physical Education, Art, and Music instructor every third day for a period of twenty to thirty-five minutes. (This time varies based on age/grade level).

Student Success Team

Occasionally students display difficulty in either academic or social areas. A team consisting of the Principal, Counselor, AEA consultants, and the referring teacher(s) meet weekly or as needed, during the school day to come up with possible solutions, which could improve the child's performance at school. The initial meeting is limited to the professional staff.

Testing Program

We give a variety of tests in an attempt to evaluate student progress and the effectiveness of the curriculum that we use. All tests given are mandated by the state. The tests used and the grades in which we use them are as follows:

- Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress – Grades-3-8..... Determines students' achievement, compared to other students in Iowa and the Nation, in basic learning skills. The results are also used for placement of students into the Title I reading program.
- FAST Literacy and Math Assessment - Grades K-4-..... Determines student's growth in reading. (Given three times a year).
- Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) - Grade 3..... The CogAT is used to help identify students who may qualify for services through the Extended Learning Department (Gifted and Talented). It measures reasoning and problem-solving skills in three areas: verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal.

Title I Reading Program

Our Title I Reading Program is funded by a Federal Grant to the States. Through this Program we hire supplemental staff. Their objective is to work with individual pupils or small groups of students who are experiencing difficulty with reading. The Title I Reading Program is provided for the student in addition to the regular reading program. We are using many varied types of instruction and equipment in this program in an attempt to spark an interest in reading or to teach specific skills that have not been mastered. Students are eligible for this program if they score lower than proficient on the ISASP or FAST reading test or are recommended by the classroom teacher. Students are placed in and removed from this program as their need for it exists. We feel that this program has been effective for most of the students involved in it. When funds are available, a summer program is provided through this grant. Parents of Title I reading students may be asked to become involved in a Parent Advisory Council which assists in planning and operation of the program.

TOBACCO FREE ENVIRONMENT

It is the intention of the Emmetsburg Community School District to provide a healthy learning and working environment for students, employees, and visitors. With this in mind, no student, employee, or visitor may display or use any tobacco product on any school building, property, or vehicle owned or maintained by the district.

School property includes any parking lot, sidewalk, athletic complex, bleachers, or other area that is owned and/or maintained by the Emmetsburg Community School District.



Transfer Out of the District

Whenever a student moves from our school district to another school district the following procedures will be followed:

Call the West Elementary office, 852-4485, when you intend to move from our district.

Your child's report card will be brought up to date and you may take this with you to the new school district you will be attending. If for some reason, you are unable to do so, it will be mailed with the regular school records to the new school.

Your child's cumulative record will be brought up to date. It will be sent to your new district upon request of the school you transfer to.

Visitation and Guests at School

Parents and guests are always welcome to visit our schools. We do, however, have some guidelines to help make school visitations more meaningful for both parents and students. We ask your cooperation on the following points:

Parent visitations during the first two and last two weeks of school are usually not too successful.

These times can be non-routine with more than normal teacher direction.

Children will not be allowed to visit school unless they are accompanied by an adult or have received prior permission from the principal and classroom teacher.

We discourage all day visitors. Please keep visits to a minimum as these are a distraction to the classroom.

Please check in at the office and get a visitor tag before you visit a classroom.

Web Publishing

West Elementary has a web site which can be accessed via the District's Web site at www.e-hawks.org. The purpose of this web site is: 1.) to introduce visitors to the schools and programs; 2.) to assist users within the district and outside the district in locating resources offered by our district; 3.) to assist users within the district in locating good external resources. At the elementary level, student work or pictures will be published only with permission of a parent or guardian. No last names of students will be published. Parents/guardians will be notified annually and given the opportunity to grant or deny permission for their child's work or picture to be on the West Elementary website.

Notice: Corporal Punishment, Restraint, and Physical Confinement and Detention

State law forbids school employees from using corporal punishment against any student. Certain actions by school employees are not considered corporal punishment. Additionally, school employees may use "reasonable and necessary force, not designed or intended to cause pain" to do certain things, such as prevent harm to persons or property.

State law also limits school employees' abilities to restrain or confine and detain any student. The law limits why, how, where and for how long a school employee may restrain or confine and detain a child. If a child is restrained or confined and detained, the school must maintain documentation and must provide certain types of notice to the child's parent.



If you have any questions about this state law, please contact your school. The complete text of the law and additional information is available on the Iowa Department of Education's website: www.iowa.gov/educate

Weapons

Policy Code No.: 502.6

The board believes weapons and other dangerous objects and look-a-likes in school district facilities cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district.

School district facilities are not an appropriate place for weapons or dangerous objects and look-a-likes. Weapons and other dangerous objects and look-a-likes shall be taken from students and others who bring them onto the school district property or onto property within the jurisdiction of the school district or from students who are within the control of the school district.

Parents of students found to possess weapons or dangerous objects or look-a-likes on school property shall be notified of the incident. Confiscation of weapons or dangerous objects shall be reported to the law enforcement officials, and students will be subject to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion.

Students bringing firearms to school or knowingly possess firearms at school shall be expelled for not less than one year. Students bringing to school or possessing dangerous weapons, including firearms, will be referred to a law enforcement authority. The superintendent shall have the authority to recommend this expulsion requirement be modified for students on a case-by-case basis. For purposes of this portion of this policy, the term "firearm" includes, but is not limited to, any weapon which is designed to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, incendiary or poison gas.

Weapons under the control of law enforcement officials shall be exempt from this policy. The principal may allow authorized persons to display weapons or other dangerous objects or look-a-likes for educational purposes. Such a display shall also be exempt from this policy. It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the principal, to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

Legal Reference: Improving America's Schools Act of 1994, P.L. 103-382.
18 U.S.C. 921 (1988).
McClain v. Lafayette County Bd. of Education. 673 F.2d 106
(5th Cir. 1982).
Iowa Code 279.8; 724 (1995).
Iowa Code 280.21B (Supp. 1995)

Cross Reference: 502 Student Rights and Responsibilities
503 Student Discipline
507 Student Health and Well-Being



Student Printed Name: _____ Grade _____

2025-26
Emmetsburg Elementary School
Parent/Student Handbook Agreement

I have received a copy or have been notified of the location to the web-page to have access to a copy of the Emmetsburg Community School District's Parent/Student Handbook and understand all policies and procedures described in said handbook and agree to review the contents with my student to ensure they abide by its provisions.

Parent Signature

Date

(Parent Signature may be via electronic format through JMC.)