

COLUMBIA SCHOOL DISTRICT ELEMENTARY STUDENT HANDBOOK



Mission Statement

*The Columbia School District, in partnership with the community,
will provide a safe and positive learning environment, which will prepare
ALL students to contribute and compete in a global society.*

www.columbiaschooldistrict.org



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SCHOOL CONTACT NUMBERS

BROOKLYN ELEMENTARY

HOTLINE *school closing / delays* 517 592-7552
ABSENTEE 517 592-7552
OFFICE 517 592-6632
TRANSPORTATION 517 592-6449

MILLER ELEMENTARY

HOTLINE *school closing / delays* 517 592-7579
ABSENTEE 517 592-7577
OFFICE 517 592-2157
TRANSPORTATION 517 592-6449

Attendance

The Board of Education as an agency of the State is required to enforce regular attendance of students. The Board recognizes that the presence in the classroom enables the student to participate in instruction, class discussions, and other related activities. As such, regular attendance and classroom participation are integral to instilling incentives for the student to excel. Tardiness is disruptive to the classroom and has an adverse effect on your child's educational progress. All Jackson County schools are supporting the following truancy guidelines:

- Tardiness encompasses late arrival and early dismissal from school.
- Regular or excessive tardiness will require truancy intervention.
- After the 10th unexcused absence, the student will be referred to the ISD Truant Officer.
- Only written doctor's excuses or professional discretion days (administrator excused) will be allowed.
- If truancy continues after 15 days, they will be referred/petitioned to the court system.

The Jackson County Intermediate School District has employed a Truant Officer, who is empowered to file charges with the court system if parents are not ensuring their children's regular and punctual attendance. Columbia Schools contracts the services of the JCISD.

The Board considers the following factors to be reasonable documented excuses for time missed at school:

- Illness
- Recovery from an accident
- Required court attendance
- Professional appointments
- Death in the immediate family
- Observation of celebration of a bona fide religious holiday

Such other good cause as may be acceptable to the Superintendent or his/her designee.

8:40 a.m. – First Bell – Start of the day
3:45 p.m. – End of the day

Bicycles/Scooters

Children are allowed to ride bicycles to school provided they follow all laws pertaining to bike riders. Bike parking is available. Bikes are to be locked and kept in the bike stands. Once a rider arrives on school premises s/he is to park in the

designated area until dismissal time. Students must walk their bikes on school property. Scooters may be ridden to and from school property but not to be used during the school day.

Books and Supplies

The Supreme Court ruling does not allow rental of books and supplies. Therefore, each youngster is responsible for keeping books in good condition. When a book is misused, a repair fee will be charged to the child. If the book is lost by a student, the full cost of the book will be charged to the student.

Communicable Diseases

Communicable disease control is an integral part of school health services. The school follows current public health practice, rules and regulations governing the control and prevention of communicable diseases that are set up by the state and county health departments. Should your child become ill during school hours and need to go home, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to arrange transportation. **Please update emergency phone numbers with the office so that we may call you when necessary.** During the year many communicable diseases will go through a school. If your child becomes ill at school due to a communicable disease, he/she will be excluded until a doctor has signed a release for the child to re-enter school. This must be presented to the teacher and, in turn, to the office. If a child has head lice s/he will be excluded from the school program until treatment has been obtained. The school has a "nit-free" policy pertaining to head lice.

Credit Union

Banking services are available through the CP Federal Credit Union Youth Program. Fifth grade students will be selected to operate the monthly savings plan for students in grades 1-5. The local branch of CP Federal is located in the Pamida Store in Brooklyn.

Daily Schedule

Walkers	should not arrive before 8:30
8:40 a.m.	1 st Bell / School Begins
8:45 a.m.	Tardy Bell
3:45 p.m.	School Dismisses

Dangerous Weapons

Public Act 211 prohibits students from possessing "a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade three (3) inches or over in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles" or other devices capable of inflicting bodily harm while in attendance at school or a school activity, or enroute to or from school on a school bus. Toy

weapons are also prohibited. Public Act 211 requires a mandatory minimum of expulsion from school for a period of 90 school days for students in grade 5 or below.

In addition, Board policy states that actions, such as false fire alarms, bomb threats, or intentional calls to falsely report a dangerous condition will be considered in the same light.

Discipline

Our purpose is to educate students and assist them in making good choices. The goals of the discipline policy are:

- to maintain an environment in which all students may learn,
- to develop socially appropriate behaviors,
- to provide the Responsible Thinking Model which promotes self-discipline,
- to follow due process, and
- to evaluate behaviors, not students.

The primary expectation of students is to respect the rights of others to learn and to teach. This includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Participate responsibly in classroom activities.
2. Treat others as you want to be treated.
3. Keep hands, feet, and objects under control.
4. Do not chew gum. An exception will be gum and/or candy treats given by school personnel which may be eaten in class or taken home.
5. No toys (i.e., walkmans, radios, electronic games, toy-like weapons, skateboards, rollerblades, street hockey sticks) are to be brought from home for use during recess. The exception is a ball mitt. Items for classroom use may be brought to class as arranged by the teacher.
6. Students who enter the building before the start of school will stay in the cafeteria until the bell rings for the start of the day.
7. Respect others by using their given names.
8. Walk in the hallways, classrooms, and on the sidewalks.
9. Fighting, wrestling, spitting, defacing school property, and contact games are prohibited.
10. Being disrespectful (threatening, using profanity, refusing instructions) to school personnel will not be tolerated.
11. No possession of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, matches, and/or weapons.
12. Playing safely on the playground includes using the equipment as it was intended.
13. Lunchroom expectations include
 - a. Remain seated to eat your lunch.
 - b. Talk quietly.
 - c. Use good manners and be respectful.

- d. Clean up your own area.

Procedure for Responsible Thinking Classroom (Brooklyn Elementary Only)

Step 1 – the plan of expectations will be explained to all students.

Step 2 – Student and school personnel initially will attempt to informally resolve problems when a misbehavior occurs using the questions in Step # 4.

Step 3 – If necessary, student will be sent to the RTC for special intervention assistance.

Step 4 – Specific questions will be asked to guide students to prepare a plan of action for improving behavior:

1. What are you doing?
2. What are the rules? Is that okay?
3. What happens when you break the rules?
4. Is that what you want to happen?
5. What do you want to do now?
6. Is what you're doing going to get you what you want?
7. What will happen if you disrupt again?

Step 5 – Student will prepare a cooperative control plan which will show how the behavior will improve.

This plan implemented may include restrictions/conditions to be monitored as appropriate. Step 6 – The RTC staff will notify the teacher that the student is ready to discuss the plan and return to class.

Step 7 – The teacher will establish a time that is convenient to meet and negotiate the student's return.

Step 8 – Parents will be informed of the referral and the plan by phone and/or mail.

Step 9 – The RTC staff includes the RTC facilitator, the building principal, the school social worker as well as all teachers involved. The group will coordinate efforts to support the student in efforts to grow in responsibility.

Step 10 – Due process will be followed in all cases which consider suspension and expulsion. The student and parent(s) will be informed on the problem(s) in writing as it/they occur. The student/parent may appeal directly to the superintendent. If dissatisfied with the superintendent's decision, the appeal may proceed to the Board of Education. If still dissatisfied, legal channels may be pursued. If an appeal is pending, the student may be allowed to remain in school through the Board Level at the discretion of the principal. Separation of the student from the school may be necessary to ensure the safety and welfare of all concerned.

Drug-Free Schools

In accordance with Federal Law, the Board of

Education prohibits the use, possession, concealment, or distribution of drugs by students on school grounds, in school or school-approved vehicles, or at any school-related event. Drugs include any alcoholic beverage, anabolic steroid, dangerous controlled substance as defined by State statute, or substance that could be considered a "look-a-like" controlled substance. Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all students. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with due process and as specified in the student handbooks, up to and including expulsion from school. When required by State law, the District will also notify law enforcement officials. The District is concerned about any student who is a victim of alcohol or drug abuse and will facilitate the process by which s/he receives help through programs and services available in the community. Students and their parent should contact the school principal or counseling office whenever such help is needed.

Early Dismissal

No student will be allowed to leave school prior to dismissal time without a written request signed by the parent or a person whose signature is on file in the school office or the parent coming to the school office to request the release.

Emergency Information

It is required that each child have an emergency card on file in the school office. The card should list the numbers to call in case a parent is not at home, as well as the doctor or hospital to contact in case a parent or emergency number cannot be reached. **It is very important that the school information is kept up to date.** Please notify the office of any changes throughout the school year. Also, no child will be allowed to leave school with anyone but the names on the emergency card.

Fire Drills

In case of fire emergency, the signal to evacuate the building will be a continuous sounding of the emergency alarm. In keeping with good safety habits, pupils are instructed in the quickest and safest way to leave the building in case of fire or other emergencies. This instruction includes actual practice in filing out of the building, moving to a safe distance, and remaining until the "all clear" is given.

Fundraising

Families may be invited to participate in fundraising programs selected by the school as a whole, the PTO, or an individual group (ie grade or organization). Financial responsibilities are assumed by the adult(s). When the District receives a check from a student or parent that, when deposited, is returned marked

"insufficient funds", the Superintendent shall provide an opportunity for the payor to make proper payment or to arrange for a satisfactory payment schedule. If payment is not received within fifteen(15) calendar days, the payment schedule is not adhered to, or the monies do not appear to be collectable, the Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to remove the fee or to take appropriate action for the full restitution of the bad check and any banking or other financing charges.

Library Materials

The students are given ready access to the materials which are located there. Most of the materials are available to be checked out and taken to their classroom or home. Parents are requested to help see that the children return their items by the due date. Students will be charged the replacement cost of any item lost or damaged. Report cards may be held until accounts are paid. As a student enrolls in the district, an acceptable use policy is signed granting permission for accessing the district's computer system and Internet services. The form will remain valid and on file as long as the child is a Columbia School District student.

Lost and Found

Parents are requested to label all items, such as coats, boots, hats, etc., and any other items your child might lose or misplace. Please encourage your child to inquire about lost items. Parents are encouraged to inspect the lost and found. An occasional inspection might prove helpful in retrieving lost articles or clothing.

Medication

Any type of medication that a student is to be given at school must have an authorized form on file signed by the parent or guardian. Only prescription medication in a properly labeled pharmacist container may be administered at school. All medication should be brought to the office by the parent. Before any non-prescribed medication or treatment may be administered, the Board shall require the prior written consent of the parent along with a waiver of any liability of the District for the administration of the medication. The parent must also authorize any self-medication by his/her child.

Parent Conferences

Parents are welcome and encouraged to come and talk to their child's teacher and principal. Appointments must be made to coincide with the teachers' and principal's schedules. Please make appointments through the school office. Official Parent / Teacher conferences will be announced.

PTO-Parent Teacher Organization

Brooklyn and Miller Elementary PTO exists for the

purpose of providing resources for various projects. All parents of elementary students are granted membership. Your assistance will be appreciated when called upon for help. You may volunteer for any project by notifying the school.

Parties

Three parties are scheduled during the school year: Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. Invitations to birthday parties at home are requested to not be distributed during school.

Personal Property

Students may not bring animals, electronic devices, cameras, etc., to school except on special occasions AND with teacher's permission. Also, large sums of money should not be brought to school.

Possession of a Weapon

A weapon includes conventional objects like guns, pellet guns, knives, or club type implements. It may also include any toy that is presented as a real weapon or reacted to as a real weapon or an object converted from its original use to an object used to threaten or injure another. This includes, but is not limited to padlocks, pens, pencils, chairs, jewelry, and so on. Criminal charges may be filed for this violation. Possession of a weapon will subject a student to permanent exclusion. **It will make no difference whether or not the weapon belongs to someone else, unless the student can provide convincing evidence that the weapon was placed in the student's possession without his/her knowledge. If it can be confirmed that a weapon belonged to a student other than the one who possessed the weapon, that student shall also be subject to the same disciplinary action.**

Recess Policy

Children need time to run and play. Recess is an important part of the day. Weather conditions are continually evaluated to determine whether recess is outdoors or indoors. The general school policy is that **IF STUDENTS ARE WELL ENOUGH TO BE IN SCHOOL, THEY SHOULD BE WELL ENOUGH TO GO OUTDOORS.** Please see that your child is dressed for the weather.

Report Cards

Parents will receive standardized report cards at the end of each quarter.

Right of Privacy

A written release from parent/guardian must precede the release of any information regarding a pupil. The school adheres to the provision of the Freedom of Information Act of 1977. All information requested by the parent/guardians of a child will be available upon request.

Rural Bible Mission

Students who have signed permission from their parents may attend the scheduled religious instruction classes offered during the school year. No member of the school staff will discourage or encourage participation in any religious instruction program.

School Closings and Snow Days

Access the school hotline for any school closing- (592-7552 for Brooklyn Elementary / 592-7579 for Miller Elementary). In the event that ice or heavy snow hits the area, you may also listen to WJR-76 Detroit, WKHM or WIBM FM, Jackson, WLEN or WABJ, Adrian. Radio stations are notified early to let all parents know if school will be in session. Also, channel 10 NBC TV and the Instant Alert Call System.

School Dress Policy

Neatness and cleanliness are encouraged at all times. Parents are requested to see that their child is dressed appropriately for weather conditions. During inclement weather, boots must be worn. When shoe boots are worn, other shoes are to be provided for indoor wear. For safety reasons, sandals and flip-flops are not to be worn. Appropriate shoes are to be worn for physical education class. Shoes are to be tied. Shorts must be longer than a child's fingertips when arms are extended on their thighs. Halter tops, bare midriffs, t-shirts with distracting words, pictures, and or advertising are prohibited. Caps are not to be worn in the building. An exception will be for special events/celebrations when hats/caps may be worn as a reward. If a student's attire is a distraction to him/herself or others and may interfere with normal school functioning, parents will be called to bring appropriate clothing. Parents are encouraged to label all clothing.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

Students who have been diagnosed as having a disability and who, through a multifaceted evaluation, qualify for categorical services under IDEA will be served under the existing State Special Education regulations. Section 504 protects all students with a mental or physical impairment which is defined as follows:

- A.** substantially limits one or more major activities, or
- B.** has a record of such impairment, or
- C.** is regarded as having such an impairment.

The District will identify, evaluate, and provide an appropriate education for students who qualify under Section 504.

Social Worker Services

The purpose of the social worker is to help students resolve problems and overcome obstacles that are

preventing them from achieving their educational and personal goals. It is also to help students maintain productive relationships with other students, staff members, parents, and other adults. Services involve individual conferences, group participation, and/or after school programs. Participation in any program must have parental consent.

Student Attendance at School Events

The School encourages students to attend as many school events held after school as possible, without interfering with their school work and home activities. Enthusiastic spectators help to build school spirit and encourage those students who are participating in the event.

However, in order to ensure that students attending evening events as non-participants are properly safeguarded, it is strongly advised that students be accompanied by a parent or adult chaperone when they attend the event. The School will not be able to supervise unaccompanied students nor will it be responsible for students who arrive without an adult chaperone. The school will continue to provide adequate supervision for all students who are participants in a School activity.

Student Sign-Out

All students must be signed out from the office when being picked up during or after school. Persons picking up your child MUST be listed on the emergency card.

Tardiness

Tardiness is disruptive to the classroom and has an adverse effect on your child's educational progress. After three tardies, students will be required to make up all missed work and time, after school.

Telephone

Use of the telephone by students is limited to emergency calls and school business calls only. Calls for permission to attend parties and ride busses with friends, etc., will not be permitted. These matters should be taken care of at home. A note from the student's teacher is required before the telephone may be used.

Tests

The Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) Test is administered to all third, fourth, and fifth grade students.

Tornado Policy

In case of a tornado watch or warning, students will remain at school and follow the tornado emergency plan.

Use of Breath Test Instruments

The principal may arrange for a breath test for blood-alcohol to be conducted on a student whenever s/he has individualized reasonable suspicion to believe

that a student has consumed an alcoholic beverage. The student will be taken to a private administrative or instructional area on school property with at least one other member of the teaching or administrative staff present as a witness to the test.

The purpose of the test is to determine whether or not the student has consumed an alcoholic beverage. The amount of consumption is not relevant, except where the student may need medical attention.

If the result indicates a violation of school rules as described in this handbook, the student will be disciplined in accordance with disciplinary procedures described in this handbook. **If a student refuses to take the test, s/he will be advised that such denial will be considered an admission of alcohol use with the consequent discipline invoked. The student will then be given a second opportunity to take the test.**

Visitors

ALL VISITORS MUST REPORT TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE UPON ENTERING THE BUILDING. Students may not bring younger brothers or sisters or students from other schools who may be on vacation.

Parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom, if they make arrangements prior to visitation.

Volunteers

The Board of Education recognizes that certain programs and activities can be enhanced through the use of volunteers who have particular knowledge or skills that will be helpful to members of the professional staff responsible for the conduct of those programs and activities.

The Superintendent shall be responsible for recruiting community volunteers, reviewing their capabilities, and making appropriate placements. S/he shall not be obligated to make use of volunteers whose abilities are not in accord with District needs.

The Superintendent is to inform each volunteer that s/he:

- A. Must sign a Volunteer Release Form
- B. Shall agree to abide by all Board policies and District guidelines while on duty as a volunteer including signing the District's Network and Internet Access Agreement Forms;
- C. Will be covered under the District's liability policy but the District cannot provide any type of health insurance to cover illness or accident incurred while serving as a volunteer, nor is the person eligible for workers compensation.
- D. Will be asked to sign a form releasing the District of any obligation should the

volunteer become ill or receive an injury as a result of his/her volunteer services.

Bus Transportation-Adopted Aug. 1999

General Information

- Please allow a five (5) minute window both ways of scheduled arrival time at each bus stop.
- Parents are expected to know bus rules for safety and behavior, and support the school in enforcement procedures.
- Even though a student has had their bus riding privileges suspended, this does not mean the student has been suspended from school. It is the parent's responsibility to provide transportation for their student to and from the school they attend.
- Parents must accept responsibility for student's behavior at the bus stop prior to the arrival of the bus or after delivery. Where a large number of small children congregate at a stop, parents are expected to alternately share responsibility of supervision.

The Disciplinary Process

Rules for student bus riders are posted inside the bus.

At least once each semester the drivers will review the rules with all student bus riders. Students who fail to respect and observe the adopted rules will be subject to a five-step disciplinary process signified by the issuance of a "misconduct slip" at each stop:

Step # 1 – The FIRST "slip" will constitute a formal **written warning**, in all but the most serious infractions, preceded by one or two verbal warnings. Issuance of "slips" shall be solely at the discretion of the bus driver. The student copy must be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the bus driver before he/she will be permitted to again ride the bus.

Step # 2 – the SECOND "slip" requires an automatic suspension of two (2) days of bus riding privileges. Issuance of "slips" shall be at the sole discretion of the bus driver. The student copy must be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the bus driver before he/she will be permitted to again ride the bus.

Step # 3 – The THIRD "slip" requires an automatic suspension of three (3) days of bus riding privileges. A parent conference can be held involving the bus driver, the Transportation Supervisor, and/or the Principal, to review the particulars of the incident. The conference is to inform the parents of the student's behavior and what will result from the issue of the next "slip". Issuance of "slips" shall be at the sole discretion of the bus driver.

Step # 4 –The FOURTH "slip" requires an automatic suspension of FIVE (5) days of bus riding privileges.

A parent conference can be held involving the bus driver, the Transportation Supervisor, and/or the Principal, to review the particulars of the incident. The conference is to inform the parents of the

student's behavior and what will result from the issue of the next "slip". Issuance of "slips" is at the sole discretion of the bus driver.

Step # 5 – The FIFTH "slip" requires a suspension of not less than TEN (10) days. A student may face the possible suspension of bus riding privileges for the remainder of the school year. A conference will be held involving the parent or guardian, bus driver, Transportation Supervisor, and the Principal, to review the particulars of the final disciplinary incident. Issuance of "slips" shall be at the sole discretion of the bus driver.

Due Process

In all instances of disciplinary action, particularly in Steps #2, #3, #4, and #5, the right of student and parents will be carefully observed and respected. All must be frequently informed of rules and expectations, procedures, and consequences and, in a specific incident, of the infraction, evidence, witnesses, penalties, and appeal procedure.

Specific Automatic Suspension - Due to the seriousness of the behavior involved, the following rule infractions will result in the immediate penalties listed below:

Smoking - Automatic ten (10) days suspension from bus riding privileges on the first offense and a parent conference. For the second offense, bus riding privileges are immediately terminated for the remainder of the school year or six weeks into the next school year.

Use or Possession of Drugs or Alcohol - Automatic fifteen (15) days from bus riding privileges on the first offense and a parent conference. For the second offense, bus riding privileges are immediately terminated for the remainder of the school year or six weeks into the next school year.

Assault of the Bus Driver – Automatic fifteen (15) days suspension from bus riding privileges and a parent conference. If a weapon is used, the bus riding privilege is immediately suspended. A meeting will be held with the Supervisor of Transportation to determine what action will be taken. Under Board Policy 4362.01, the local law enforcement authorities will be notified along with the student's parent or legal guardian.

Fighting with a Fellow Rider – First offense, automatic suspension of three (3) days. Second offense, automatic suspension of five (5) days.

Bus Transportation (continued)

If a weapon is used, the bus riding privilege is immediately suspended. A meeting will be held with the Supervisor of Transportation to determine what action will be taken. Under Board Policy 4362.01, the local law enforcement authorities will be notified

along with the student's parent or legal guardian.

Assault of Fellow Rider –First Offense, automatic suspension of five (5) days. Second offense, automatic suspension of ten (10) days, with the possibility of termination for the remainder of the school year or six weeks into the next school year.

Assault of a fellow rider shall be determined by the Supervisor of Transportation or his/her designee.

Damage/Vandalism to the Bus – Automatic five (5) days suspension from bus riding privileges and reimbursement of District for cost and repairs on the first offense. At least fifteen (15) days suspension from bus riding privileges on the second offense plus reimbursement of District for cost and repairs.

Verbal Abuse of the Bus Driver – Automatic five (5) days suspension from bus riding privileges and a parent conference.

Stealing From the Bus Driver or Fellow Rider – Proceed to Step #3 of the disciplinary process; automatic suspension of three (3) days and a parent conference. Notification will be made to local authorities.

Harassment of the Bus Driver or Fellow Rider – Automatic five (5) days suspension from bus riding privileges and a parent conference.

State Law – In any case, state law will supersede any of the above.

Appeals -At any step of the Disciplinary Process, the parent/guardian or adult student may appeal the decision of the authority at that level. A decision of a bus driver may be appealed to the Supervisor of Transportation within ten (10) working days. A decision of the Supervisor of Transportation may be appealed to the Superintendent of his/her designee within ten (10) working days. The appellant should be prepared in every instance to both meet with the official involved and submit the specifics of the case in writing if required. The response to such appeals will be rendered within ten (10) working days.

Any child who must ride on a bus other than the one he/she usually rides must have a note from the parent. This note will be given to the secretary in the office who will write out a permission slip. The

above rules also pertain to any child getting off his regular bus at any house other than his/her own.

Changes in bus transportation must be done through a written note or telephone call from a parent.