



**2025-2026**  
**Parent / Student Handbook**



**Mill Creek Academy Mission:**

**“We are Lifelong Learners Preparing to Positively Impact our Community.”**

**At Mill Creek, We Believe Our School Community Members Will:**

- Share the right to and responsibility of lifelong learning.
- Provide a safe and secure environment for physical, intellectual, and emotional growth, in a cooperative, respectful and enthusiastic climate.
- Learn Problem Solving and Critical Thinking Skills.
- Understand learning is achieved through effort.
- Encourage risk taking, celebrate successes, and allow for mistakes.



Dear Mill Creek Families,

On behalf of our school community, I am pleased to welcome you to the 25-26 School Year at Mill Creek Academy! Our school provides children with a supportive learning environment and a dynamic educational experience that enables them to achieve academic success, build character, and develop social-emotional skills. By combining academics with a strong sense of community, we help children feel connected, solve problems, and become lifelong learners.

The Mill Creek Parent/Student Handbook has been prepared to answer frequently asked questions and help you become quickly informed about Mill Creek's policies, procedures, and programs.

We are proud of many things, one of which is our caring and compassionate team, which consistently goes above and beyond to serve our students on a daily basis. We take pride in our ability to form relationships, our commitment to excellence, and our high parent involvement. In addition, we offer extracurricular opportunities for students of all ages and interests.

Once again, welcome to the 25-26 Mill Creek School year. We look forward to getting to know your student(s) and your family! Go Elks!

Nate Plum, Principal



## 24-25 MILL CREEK ACADEMY STAFF DIRECTORY

Name	Position	Extension
Nate Plum	Principal	5100
Jenny Pike	Lead Administrative Assistant	5151
Christina Engman	Administrative Assistant	5152
Lisa Zipser	School Social Worker/ Kids' Club	5302
Taylor Patton	GSRP Teacher	5106
Allie Cole	GSRP Teacher Assistant	5106
Marie Sieting	GSRP Teacher Assistant	5106
Rachael Birgy	Preschool/ Paid Tuition Director	4120
Bellany Miller	3-Year-Old Preschool Teacher	5107
Morrigan Pruyt	Preschool Teacher Assistant/ Kids' Club	5107
Lewis Bunting	Kindergarten Teacher	5101
Daniele Okma	Kindergarten Teacher	5102
Naomi Chalk	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher	5103
Joni Capling	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher	5104
Molly Abbring	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher	5110
Amy Brady	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher	5112
Jane Bruso	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher	5108
Jennifer Drewanz	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher	5109
Susan Flores	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher	5120
Brooke Bridges	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher	5122
Deepak Prabhaker	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher	5121
Jessica Lawrence	Special Education Teacher	5113
Drew Pichan	Art Teacher	5300
Lucas DeForge	Physical Education Teacher	5500
Lindsey McCarty	Music Teacher	5200
Jennifer Haggerty	Library Paraprofessional	5119
Corinna Dewey	Speech & Language Pathologist	5301
Diana Broussard	School Wellness Nurse	5154
Loraine Steinbarger	Paraprofessional	
Alyce Rivas	Paraprofessional	
Carley Lortz	Paraprofessional	
Briton Cobb	Kitchen Lead	5605
Chris Maxson	Cook	5605
Paul Rees	Custodian	
Paul Chalmers	Custodian	
John Rice	School Resource Officer	5153
Karen Sniegowski	Transportation Director	231-264-9321, ext. 6000

## 24-25 MILL CREEK ACADEMY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Name	Position
Kwin Morris	President
Kaitlyn Pasik	Vice President
Carey Tafelsky	Treasurer
Kyle Arnold	Secretary
Lorraine Berak	Trustee



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# ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

## ENROLLING IN THE SCHOOL

Mill Creek Academy has enrollment periods throughout the summer and before each semester, as well as after Kindergarten Round Up. Families can always contact the office to make get more information.

## ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL (Ref. Board Policy 5200)

When your child will be absent or tardy, please call the school office at 267-9955 or email [jpike@erschools.com](mailto:jpike@erschools.com) and .

Pre-excused absences should be arranged through the school office at least one day prior to the anticipated absence. Arrangements for make-up should be made prior to the absence and provided to the student upon return. Pre-excused absences should be used judiciously. Please do your best to avoid student pre-excused absences during assessment periods.

Good school attendance enables students to participate in instruction, class discussions, and other related activities, which significantly increases the likelihood of academic success. Mill Creek follows the Michigan Department of Education compulsory attendance mandates and parent notification will occur as follows:

- 10 absences/tardies--a letter will be sent home
- 20 absences/tardies—another letter will be sent home requesting a meeting between the parent, teacher, and principal to discuss truancy support plan.
- 25 absences/tardies—another letter will be sent home and a meeting will occur. It will be up to the discretion of the building administrator to involve the Antrim County Truancy Intervention Officer.

Students arriving between 8:55 - 10:15 a.m. – Tardy

Students arriving after 10:15 a.m. – Absent for AM

Students leaving early afternoon before 2:15 – Absent for PM

Students leaving after 2:15 p.m. – LE (Left Early)

## STUDENTS LEAVING WHILE SCHOOL IS IN SESSION

Students are prohibited from leaving school grounds without an approved adult. This policy is intended for the protection of all students. If a student becomes ill or has a pre-arranged appointment, a parent or emergency contact must come into the office and sign the student out. Families are encouraged to make student appointments after school hours whenever possible. We highly encourage families to schedule vacations and elective absences outside of school days, which can be found in our [District Calendar](#).

## ILLNESS OR ACCIDENT AT SCHOOL

If a child becomes ill in school, or is injured at school, the parents will be contacted, and arrangements will be made before the child is released from school. If parents cannot be reached, contact will be made with the person designated by parents as Emergency Contacts.

**It is very important that Emergency Contact information be kept up to date at all times.**



## SCHOOL HOURS

- 8:30 A.M. Breakfast or Recess upon arrival
- 8:45 A.M. Students released to class
- 12:10 P.M. *Half Day Dismissal*
- 3:42 P.M. Bussers dismissed
- 3:48 P.M. Pick- Up Students dismissed

## TARDINESS

Students are considered tardy when arriving at or after 8:55 A.M. Students are not considered tardy if/when bussing arrives late. Persistent tardiness will be called to the parent's attention by the teacher and principal.

## HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

The District shall arrange for individual instruction to students of legal school age who are not able to attend classes because of a physical or emotional disability.

Parents should contact the school administration regarding procedures for such instruction. Applications must be approved by the Superintendent. The District will provide homebound instruction only for those confinements expected to last at least five (5) days.

Applications for individual instruction shall be made by a physician licensed to practice in this State, parent, student, or other caregiver. A physician must: certify the nature and existence of a medical condition; state the probable duration of the confinement; request such instruction; and/or present evidence of the student's ability to participate in an educational program.

**(Board Policy 2412)**

# ELEMENTARY INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

## CHILD FIND

The purpose of Child Find, supported by our Educational Support Team (EST), is to identify and brainstorm solutions to support a student's learning challenges with as little interruption of the classroom program as possible. Although each case is unique, we generally follow these steps:

1. Teacher and family identify student's learning challenges
2. The EST meets to consider solutions to the student's challenges and generates recommendations, such as:
  - Reading or Math remediation in the classroom or intervention group
  - Accommodations to support student learning
  - Additional testing/ screening/ observations
  - Behavior plan and/or positive behavior support plan
  - Referrals to outside agencies or special education services\*

*\* Parents must be in attendance or submit a written request*

3. The EST creates an action plan and team review date

Please note: Parents or teachers can request an EST. If you have further questions about our process, please contact either your child's teacher or the principal.



## CURRICULUM

Mill Creek strives to provide students with a comprehensive curriculum that is rich in experiences designed to give students a good foundation in reading, writing, and math, as well as in the arts and social-emotional well-being. It is our mission to build the capacity of Lifelong Learners Preparing to Positively Impact our Community.

## KIDS' CLUB

Elk Rapids Kids' Club is a tuition-based, before-school program designed to provide a nurturing and enriching experience for Mill Creek students. The program is sponsored by Elk Rapids Schools and is licensed by the Division of Day Care Licensing. All children in Kids' Club must be registered; it is desirable they use the program on a regular basis.

## KIDS' CLUB SUMMER PROGRAM

Summer Kids' Club is a licensed program currently offered at Lakeland Elementary for children in Transitional Kindergarten through fifth grade. Students are offered a variety of experiences ranging from field trips, arts and crafts, and even the chance to participate in some community service.

## OBJECTIONABLE MATERIALS

If a parent finds any aspect of his/her child's educational materials objectionable, including videos or reading materials, please review all of the material in question and address specific concerns with the teacher.

## SOCIAL WORKER

Mill Creek receives the benefit of a school-based social worker via 31n grant funding. Services include individual counseling support, friendship and small groups, behavior planning assistance, and more. If you are interested in having your child seen by our school social worker, please contact the main office.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

Mill Creek is committed to providing all students with a rigorous educational experience that fosters academic success. Special education provides a wide variety of programs and services to students who have been identified as eligible for services.

**Northwest Educational Services** provides Elk Rapids Schools with specialists who facilitate the special education review and service process. The School Psychologist, teacher consultant, occupational and physical therapists, autism spectrum disorder consultant, ESL or Limited English Proficiency consultant, and school speech therapist provide services to Mill Creek students within their areas of expertise. The services of these specialists are only available to students through an Individualized Education Plan.

Mill Creek has Resource programming that services the needs of children with varying disabilities. These programs and services are designed so that the students can develop to realistic levels of social, educational and vocational potential and include: appropriate facilities, specialized instructional materials, teaching methods and teachers with specialized training. For more information and details, please call the principal.





## SPECIALS & LIBRARY

Classes in art, vocal music, and physical education are “specials” classes that are offered to all students in grades K – 5<sup>th</sup>. These specialists are highly qualified in their fields and provide programming that adheres to national and state standards, which occurs 1-2 times per week.

Mill Creek's library is a centrally located, academic support facility that houses thousands of books. The organization and maintenance of the facility are accredited to the library paraprofessional and volunteers. They provide literature appreciation and assistance on a scheduled basis and as needs arise. The library is open during regular school hours for small groups, self-checkout for 3rd-5th graders, and during library times that take place 1- 2 days per week.

## STATE AND DISTRICT TESTING

Although good attendance is important throughout the year, we especially encourage perfect attendance during the administration of these tests. Research indicates children are more successful if they are tested with their classmates, as opposed to individualized make-up sessions. In addition, a consistent sleeping and eating pattern during these two weeks may prove beneficial.

M-STEP: **State**-wide testing for 3rd-5th graders: Occurs annually in April or May.

- o Grades 3 & 4: State Mandated Test- Math & Language Arts
- o Grade 5: State Mandated Test- Math, Language Arts, Science & Social Studies

NWEA-MAP: **District**-wide testing for K-5th graders: Occurs three times each school year: typically in September/October, December/January, and April/May in the areas of reading and math.

## 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 nonparticipants are properly safe-guarded, 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. Students must comply with the Code of Conduct at school events, regardless of the location. [\(Board Policy 5855\)](#)



## GENERAL INFORMATION

### ANNUAL NOTIFICATIONS

Please [click here](#) for the following annual notifications:

- Asbestos Notification
- Child Find Special Education / Section 504 Notice
- District Policies & Administrative Guidelines
- Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) Notice for Directory Information
- Free & Reduced Meals
- Notification Regarding Staff Qualifications
- Pesticide Notification Advisory
- Requirements for Student Immunizations
- Students with Disabilities
- Title IX, Section 504, Age Discrimination Act, and Title II Americans with Disabilities Act and CTE Opportunities
- Translation Services
- Michigan Constitution Posting
- Budget Hearing Notice
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

### BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM

For the 2025-26 school year, the State of Michigan will continue the Michigan School Meals program, which means students will have the opportunity to enjoy breakfast and lunch at no cost to families throughout the academic year.

It is important to note that families should still complete a free and reduced-price meal application, which helps ensure ongoing state funding and can qualify your child's school or community for other special programs like free summer meals. Parents or guardians can submit this application online at <https://elkrapids.familyportal.cloud> or in person at your child's school office.

### BUILDING SIGN-IN

In an effort to improve the management of our facility, we ask parents, guests, and visitors to sign in at the office when they enter and sign out when leaving. This procedure is in place during regular school hours only.

### BUILDING USE AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

We welcome the use of our building for special student-related activities and community education. Any adult sponsoring a group should contact the school office for a copy of the guidelines and to reserve space. Students must be supervised until all have left the building. Mill Creek is not responsible for the safety and supervision of children here for special activities, including use of the playground, outside of school hours.

### CLASS PLACEMENT REQUESTS

The teaching team, supported by the building principal, will do their best to honor class



placement requests from parents. These requests need to be in place by the end of April each school year. Because teacher placements can change throughout the summer, we ask that your request not name a specific teacher, but rather specific traits or a learning environment that you feel your child would benefit from. The teaching teams are composed of the current and incoming teachers for each grade level to create class lists that are balanced in terms of gender, academic ability, effort, and learning styles of students.

### **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

Policy # 380.1310b: Anti-Bullying Policy: Prohibiting bullying; adoption and implementation by board of school district or intermediate school district or board of directors of public school academy; public hearing; submission of policy to the department; contents of policy; annual report of incidents of bullying; form and procedure; school employee, school volunteer, pupil, or parent or guardian reporting act of bullying to school official; modified policy; definitions; section to be known as "Matt Epling Safe School Law."

Please contact the building principal for information related to Mill Creek's Anti-Bullying policy, instruction/awareness/curriculum for students and staff, and protocols/consequences for those taking part in identified behavior.

### **DIRECTORY INFORMATION & MEDIA RELEASE**

In accordance with "The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act", we do not give out information that would be an invasion of your family's privacy. Under this act, however, it is considered appropriate to give out directory information including name, address, and telephone number. Most often, this is requested by our PTO or parents for making calls for birthday parties or other out-of-school events.

During the course of the school year, occasions may arise when photographs of students will be taken for town Meetings, Elk Rapids News and other publications, including the district website. Students are typically identified in these pictures.

If you would like to opt out, please provide a written request to the office at the beginning of the school year or complete a [Media & Field Trip Release form](#) that can be obtained in the main office.

### **Transportation**

Mill Creek Academy contract transportation services through Elk Rapids Schools. Door to door pickup occurs for families within the Elk Rapids School Historical bus boundaries. Centralized pick up locations are distributed throughout the region for families who reside throughout the region. Please call 264-9321 for more information.

### **ADVERTISING OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES**

All outside advertising and communication will take place and be approved through the office before distribution to school families. [\(Ref. Board Policy 9700.01\)](#)



## STUDENT VALUABLES

### ELECTRONIC DEVICES & TELEPHONE USE ([Ref. Board Policy 5136](#))

The following expectations are to be followed:

- Cell phones/smart watches: Students may have a cell phone/smart watches at school, but they may not be in use from 8:50 am – 3:48 pm, nor may they be brought into classrooms (Away for the Day). Students will keep their cell phones/ smartwatches in their lockers/backpacks. The school is not responsible for these devices should they become lost or stolen.
- Game Systems are prohibited on school grounds unless otherwise indicated in writing from a staff member or written into a student's individualized plan.
- Students may use the office telephone to call their parents in case of illness or other emergencies. Students should make after-school plans in advance and are discouraged from using the telephone for such calls.

### TOYS FROM HOME

Due to distractions and unintentional damage, **students should not bring any toys from home to school** unless expressly granted permission by your child's teacher for use in the classroom. This includes, but is not limited to, stuffed animals, Barbie dolls, trading cards, electronic toys and balls.

### LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found items are stored in the vestibule. Contact the office for lost items of money and jewelry. We encourage students and parents to personally check for lost items from time to time. Lost items not claimed will be sent to a local charitable institution periodically during the school year.

### SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Textbooks, workbooks, materials and supplies necessary for instruction are furnished by the school and our PTO. Students are expected to care for them as if they were their own and are liable for loss or damage. We ask that your child have a backpack that is large enough to carry his/her things from school to home, but not too big to fit in their locker. If you need assistance with school supplies, including backpacks, please contact the main office.

### SCHOOL PROPERTY SEARCHES ([Ref. Board Policy 5771](#))

The desks, drawers, lockers, and/or other areas where students keep their books, supplies, and personal items are the property of the school. All students are expected to keep their areas clean. If there is any reasonable suspicion that a student's area may contain something that it should not, it may be open to a search by a school official. Locks are prohibited on school-issued items such as lockers.



## STUDENT RECORDS

### EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

At the beginning of each school year, we send home a printout of your child's contact page from Powerschool for each student consisting of address, parent's name(s), place of employment, home and work telephone numbers, and an emergency contact. We ask that you confirm/update any information and promptly send the form back to school. This enables us to contact the parent(s) in case of illness or injury. This information is kept confidential.

### STUDENT RECORDS

The following statement briefly summarizes parents' legal access to their child's record, the CA-60 folder. Parent, legal guardian or adult student may request a scheduled conference to review the record in the presence of the principal or his/her designee-- such conference to be held within two weeks of the request under ordinary circumstances and never to exceed six weeks. In most cases, we will try to accommodate your request as soon as possible.

### WITHDRAWAL AND TRANSFER OF STUDENT RECORDS

If you move to another school district, you will be asked to sign a statement releasing/transferring the student's records to the new school. The records may then be legally mailed to the new district. Should you need copies of parts of the records such as immunizations, standardized testing, etc., we will be happy to make copies for you. A small fee may be charged for copies.

## HEALTH

### COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (Direct Contact)

Parents must notify the school when a child has a communicable disease. Immediate warning permits the school to promptly notify parents whose children may have been exposed so that preventive measures can be taken. Communicable diseases include; chicken pox, Fifth's disease, head lice, impetigo, mumps, pink eye, rubella, scabies, and scarlet fever/strep throat.

### HEAD LICE

If you detect head lice or nits, please notify the school so that we may monitor the classroom to avoid further infestation. Elk Rapids Schools follows the parameters and guidelines set forth by the CDC and our local health department. For specific guidelines, please refer to the [Michigan Head Lice Manual](#).

### HEALTH CONCERNS

If your child has an allergy, requires medication, or has any health problem that the school should be aware of, please follow this procedure:

1. Notify the office of the situation.
2. Follow the "Medication at School" policy (listed below) when needed



## 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, an anabolic steroid, and 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, up to and including expulsion from school. When required by state law, the district will also notify law enforcement officials.

## IMMUNIZATION

All students are required by state law to have a certificate of immunization on file or have a signed waiver on file to enroll at school. Students who have not met the immunization requirements will not be able to attend school. Please contact your County Health Department for immunization waiver procedures or to learn more about immunization requirements.

## MEDICATION AT SCHOOL ([Ref. Board Policy 5330](#))

Administration of medication to students is only done under Board of Education policy as follows:

1. Administration of medication by a staff member is voluntary.
2. The request to administer the medication must be in writing, signed by the student's parents. **All medication must be brought in by the parent.**
3. The request must include the written prescription for the medication, signed by the prescribing physician, or the reproduction of this prescription by the pharmacy, which compounds the medication.
4. Students who need to take medication during school hours must have a signed medication form on file. Forms are available in the main office upon request.

## SCHOOL NURSE

Mill Creek Academy shares a school nurse with Elk Rapids High School, which is funded through a Northwest Michigan Health Department Grant. Our school is onsite four days each week and focuses on immediate health related needs and health related initiatives for our district.

## VISION AND HEARING SCREENING

Annually, students in grades K, 2 and 4 will have hearing tests and students in grades 1, 3, and 5 will receive vision screening through a partnership with the County Health Department. Students whose results indicate a possible problem will be retested. If the retest confirms the presence of a problem, parents will receive written notification for follow-up with their family physician.

INCOMING KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS: The health department also conducts a preschool vision and hearing testing program each year. Michigan law requires that incoming kindergarten students submit evidence of preschool vision, dental and hearing testing as a prerequisite for admission to school. These services are available without charge.

## WELLNESS ([POLICY 8510](#))

As required by law, the Board of Education establishes the following wellness policy for the



District.

The Board recognizes that good nutrition and regular physical activity affect the health and well-being of the District's students. Furthermore, research concludes that there is a positive correlation between a student's health and well-being and his/her ability to learn. Schools play an important role in the developmental process by which students establish healthy habits by providing nutritious meals and snacks through the schools' meal programs, by supporting the development of good eating habits, and by promoting increased physical activity both in and out of school. For more information regarding district wellness guidelines, please refer to board policy 8510 (linked above) or speak with the building principal.

## **SAFETY PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS**

### **BUILDING SAFETY/SECURITY**

At Mill Creek, the safety and well-being of students is top priority. All entrances/ exits are kept locked with the exception of the front doors.

In 2014, Michigan legislation was passed that requires each public school to hold a minimum of three (3) lockdown drills each year. Please call the principal if you have any questions on this matter.

### **VIDEO SURVEILLANCE**

The Board of Education has installed video cameras on school grounds and school buses to monitor student behavior. Actual videorecording of the students on any particular bus will be done on a random-selection basis.

If a student misbehaves on a bus and the student's actions are recorded, the recording will be submitted to the Principal and may be used as evidence of the misbehavior. Since these recordings are considered part of a student's record, they can be viewed only in accordance with Federal law. **(See Board Policy 7440.01)**

### **PENALTIES FOR INFRACTIONS**

A student who misbehaves on the bus shall be disciplined in accordance with the Student Discipline Code and may lose the privilege of riding on the bus.

### **DANGEROUS AND DISTRACTING ITEMS**

Under section 1303 of the Revised School Code, school districts prohibit students from carrying pocket pagers, electronic communication devices, or other personal communication devices in school, except for health or unusual reasons. The Revised School Code defines "dangerous weapons" as:

A firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three inches in length, pocketknife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles.

*PLEASE NOTE: The State of Michigan requires a one-year expulsion from school for students found in possession of a "dangerous weapon" on school property.*

Certain personal items should not be brought to school unless special arrangements have been made with the teacher. Examples are: radios, tape recorders, electronic games, knives and other tools, toy guns, etc. These things are easily damaged, dangerous, or simply inappropriate to have at school. In addition, gum chewing is not allowed at school, unless in cases of class parties and other such special events deemed appropriate by the teacher.





## EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

In the event of school cancellation because of severe weather, notification will be broadcast, usually by 7:00 A.M., over the following radio and/or TV stations:

RADIO/ TV STATION	AREA
WKHQ (106)	Charlevoix
WKLT (97.5)	Kalkaska
WLDR (102)	Traverse City
WTCM (93.5)	Traverse City
WCCW (107.5)	Traverse City
WSRT (106.7)	Traverse City
TV 7 & 4 and TV 9 & 10	Traverse City

Parents should also be notified via email and may choose to sign up for text notifications through our School Messenger program. Text "Yes" to 67587 to sign up.

## FIRE AND NATURAL DISASTER PROCEDURES

In case of fire, tornado or other disasters, an emergency plan will be put into operation to assure the greatest possible protection for children. Feel free to ask your child's classroom teacher where children go from their classroom in such an emergency. Every school is responsible for having 5 fire drills, 2 tornado drills, and 3 lockdown drills per year.

## PARKING LOT/ DROP-OFF & PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Parents and visitors are encouraged to use extreme care in the school driveway and parking lot. Parents who drive students to and from school should permit walkers the right of way. Students should never cross between parked cars or buses, only where there are designated crosswalks. Parents are asked to observe the "No Parking Zone" during drop off and pick up and refrain from using the bus/ staff lot during the hours of 8am - 4pm on school days.

## TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

Bus riders are expected to follow Bus Guidelines, which align with our Student Code of Conduct. Distractions to the driver must be kept to a minimum. While waiting at a bus stop, students are to stay away from the traffic and wait for the bus in a safe and orderly manner.

The Michigan Transportation Act PA-187 prohibits school buses from transporting more students than their rated capacity allows. Because we have designed our routes so our buses are operating near their passenger-rated capacity, allowing extra riders would cause us to exceed the passenger limit. Therefore, we are not able to transport groups of students to destinations that are not part of their assigned routes. Students will have no more than two guest students (students who do not normally ride that bus) ride home with him/her. We will continue to consider special destination requests for individual students on a first come, first served basis as long as it does not create an overload situation.

**Bus Information:** The [transportation department](#) can be reached at 231-264-9321. If your child needs to ride a different bus or go to a different drop-off point, please communicate with the office as soon as you are able.





**Parents of Preschoolers/Kindergarteners:** Please note that our bus drivers are not allowed to let preschool & kindergarten students off the bus without an adult present.

### **VOLUNTEERING AT MILL CREEK**

Families are encouraged to become involved in the school. Families have assisted the staff with special projects such as scenery building, cooking, chaperoning, tutoring, and helping with PTO- sponsored activities. If you are interested, you may contact your child's teacher or the office. Any adult volunteer working directly with children will need to complete a **Mill Creek Volunteer Application** annually, and a mandatory background check will take place. For more information on our District's volunteer policy, please refer to [Board Policy 4127](#) and [Board Policy 3120](#).

We love to have volunteers in our classrooms! To ensure that we don't interrupt the learning process and that we always provide a safe environment for our students, please help us by following these guidelines:

- Arrange your visit with the teacher/school at least a day in advance.
- Parent volunteering will be dictated by the school/teacher/administrator as far as dates and times.
- Report to the office before going to classrooms and obtain a visitor's pass.
- If you need to consult with the teacher about something, please schedule a conference outside of instructional hours

### **WEATHER GUIDELINES**

Wind chill factors and extreme temperatures affect when students are allowed to have outdoor recess. If the wind chill falls below zero degrees, recess will be inside. It is imperative that students come to school in weather-appropriate clothing.

- <40°F: students are expected to wear a winter-type jacket when outdoors. During Winter, students will also wear snow pants, boots, gloves, and hats.
- 40-60°F: students will wear a pull-over or jacket.
- >60°F: Students are not required to wear a jacket.



## **SCHOOL/HOME COMMUNICATION**

### **COMMUNICATING WITH SCHOOL**

Administrators and teachers generally will reply to communication using the preferred method of contact within 24 hours or by appointment.

### **FALL OPEN HOUSE/ PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Our Fall Open House will be held approximately one week prior to the start of the new School Year. This is a chance for students to receive their class assignment, meet their teachers, and get acquainted with the school community.

Parent-teacher conferences are conducted two times each year, one in the fall and one in the spring. This is a time for families and teachers to meet and discuss a common goal of helping your child get the best education possible. In addition to scheduled conferences, parents are encouraged to contact the teacher whenever it is felt that an additional conference is needed.

### **HOMEWORK REQUESTS**

Requests for "vacation homework" will be honored after students have returned from vacation. Suggestions to read and write throughout vacation will be given.

### **MONDAY FOLDERS**

Students at Mill Creek receive orange communication folders that are sent home every Monday. The folders include work the students have completed during the week, and notes from teachers or the office. Notes are sent home with the oldest child in the family. A white dot is placed on folders to indicate whether a child is the oldest. The purpose of the white dots is to reduce duplication of notes and to conserve paper.

### **REPORT CARDS / GRADES**

All subject areas are listed on the student's report card. In grades K-5<sup>th</sup>, the report card is sent home two times per year. If you have a question about your student's report card, please contact the teacher or principal.

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

### **ASSEMBLIES AND FIELD TRIPS**

The purpose of field trips and assemblies are to enrich educational experiences to students. We may ask families for a nominal fee to help finance the programs, and can ask for a fee only if trips do not correspond with core curriculum. Whether or not a child brings the designated fee, everyone participates in the assembly or field trip.

You will be asked to fill out a permission slip during your child's enrollment, which will stay current unless you notify the office otherwise. You will be notified in advance by a note from your child's teacher when and where a specific field trip will be taken by the class.

### **MATURATION PROGRAM**

In the spring, a program designed to assist parents in guiding their "maturing girls and boys" will be offered at Mill Creek School. At this meeting, girls in grade 5 will be invited to view a film and discuss the aspects of the maturation process with a qualified teacher. A similar program will be offered for boys. Parents are invited to attend sessions and to preview any materials associated with this program.



## **PARTIES AND TREATS**

At the teacher's discretion, Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day class parties may be held. Halloween costumes are permitted. The program, decorations, and refreshments shall be at the discretion of the teacher. **Please be sure to check with the teacher regarding food allergies.** Birthday treats may be brought to school to be shared at the teacher's discretion. Food should not be eaten on school buses.

## **SCHOOL PICTURES**

Annually, a commercial photographer will be present at school to take pictures of individual students and then sell these pictures to the students and families in a package. Families who do not purchase a picture package, but would like a yearbook, will need to purchase one using the order form. Before the photography session, parents will be provided with complete information regarding the picture package, the cost, and an envelope for prepayment. Traditionally, all students are photographed for the yearbook, whether or not they purchase a picture package. If you have an objection to having your student photographed for the yearbook, please send a note to the school office.

## **STUDENT COUNCIL**

Student council is a leadership opportunity for 4th and 5th graders. Officers are elected in the fall and typically are members of fifth grade. The offices are president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer.

### **ELK PRIDE COMMITTEE**

Elk Pride Committee opens to Student Council applicants each semester. There is not a specific number of students that may join, but rather students who are committed. Committee members should act as role models and embody the ELK PRIDE characteristics, and therefore should attend meetings regularly and refrain from disciplinary infractions.

## **STUDENT FUND RAISING / SALES [\(Board Policy 5830\)](#)**

All student fundraising activities/sales must be administrator approved before being put into action and follow all board policy expectations.

## **NONSCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES**

Nonschool-sponsored student groups organized for religious, political, or philosophical reasons may meet during noninstructional hours. The applicant for permission can be obtained from the Principal. The applicant must verify that the activity is being initiated by students, that attendance is voluntary, that no school staff person is actively involved in the event, that the event will not interfere with school activities and that nonschool persons do not play a regular role in the event. All school rules will still apply regarding behavior and equal opportunity to participate. [\(Board Policy 5730\)](#)

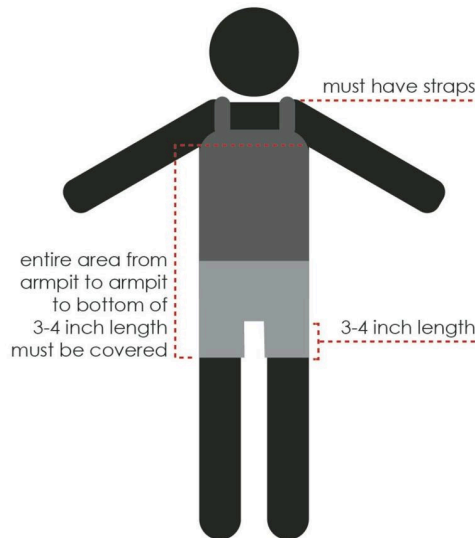


# STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## DRESS CODE ([Board Policy 5511](#))

In compliance with the Code of Student Conduct approved by the Board of Education, parents are encouraged to guide their children in appropriate dress for school.

- No hats worn inside the building (unless a designated class or school wide incentive day).
- All tops must have at least two-finger wide shoulder straps. Crop tops & half shirts are prohibited.
- Flip-flops are prohibited due to the risk of injury and interruptions to the learning environment. Sandals may be worn as long as they strap securely to the foot.



## STUDENT RIGHTS OF EXPRESSION

The School recognizes the right of students to express themselves. With the right of expression comes the responsibility to do it appropriately. Students may distribute or display, at appropriate times, nonsponsored, noncommercial written material and petitions; buttons, badges, or other insignia; clothing, insignia, and banners; and audio and video materials. All items must meet the following school guidelines:

- A. A material cannot be displayed if it:
  1. is obscene to minors, libelous, indecent and pervasively or vulgar,
  2. advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law,
  3. intends to be insulting or harassing,
  4. intends to incite fighting or presents a likelihood of disrupting school or a school event.
  5. presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or manner of distribution or display, it causes or is likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of school or school activities, a violation of school regulations, or the commission of an unlawful act.
- B. Materials may not be displayed or distributed during class periods, or during passing times between classes. Permission may be granted for display or distribution during lunch periods and after school in designated locations, as long as exits are not blocked and there is proper access and egress to the building.

Students who are unsure whether or not materials they wish to display meet school guidelines may present them to the principal twenty-four (24) hours prior to display.



## **BUS CONDUCT REGULATIONS**

To ensure safe operation of school buses, students are expected to demonstrate respect for the driver and other passengers, and to obey all regulations established by the driver. Transportation questions should be directed to the Transportation Director: Karen Sniegowski at (231) 264-9321.

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

The mission of Mill Creek School is to prepare students to become lifelong learners preparing to positively impact our community. We support student learning in the area of social and emotional learning through curriculum programming and established standards, entitled ELK PRIDE (*see Appendix D*).

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

Search of a student and the student's possessions, including vehicles, may be conducted at any time the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of law or school rules. A search may also be conducted to protect the health and safety of others. All searches may be conducted with or without a student's consent.

Students are provided lockers, desks, and other equipment in which to store materials. It should be clearly understood that this equipment is the property of the school and may be searched at any time if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the law or school rules. Locks are to prevent theft, not to prevent searches. If student lockers require student-provided locks, each student must provide the lock's combination or key to the Principal.

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the right not to return items which have been confiscated. In the course of any search, students' privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against school policy.

All computers located in classrooms, labs and offices of the District are the District's property and are to be used by students, where appropriate, solely for educational purposes. The District retains the right to access and review all electronic, computer files, databases, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the District's computer system, and electronic mail. Students should have no expectation that any information contained on such systems is confidential or private.

Review of such information may be done by the District with or without the student's knowledge or permission. The use of passwords does not guarantee confidentiality, and the District retains the right to access information in spite of a password. All passwords or security codes must be registered with the instructor. A student's refusal to permit such access may be grounds for disciplinary action. [\*\*\(Ref Board Policy 5771\)\*\*](#)



## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

The Elk Rapids Elementary Schools behavior and consequence plan (*see Board Policy 5500, 5520, 5600*) begins with the expectation that all students display appropriate behavior within, around, and pertaining to the school setting. Teachers, supervising adults and the principal will follow these steps when dealing with inappropriate student behavior:



# Mill Creek Student Consequence Chart

Infraction	Definition	First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
<b>ALL</b>	All Violations to our Student Code of Conduct resulting in student(s) being sent to the Principal's office will include the following consequences:	1. Time & Space <i>[under supervision, purpose to de-escalate]</i> 2. Student discussion with Principal, followed by parent contact 3. Complete Reflection Sheet with Designated Staff Member		
<b>Defiance/ Disrespect</b>	Direct & intentional refusal to follow directions, repeatedly talking back, engaging in socially rude interactions after repeated warnings from adults.	-Warning <i>and/or</i>  -Restitution and/or Community Service* (5-10 minutes)	-Restitution and/or Community Service (1)	-Restitution and/or Community Service (2+/ <i>ISS</i> *)
<b>Disruption</b>	Intentionally interrupts or distracts from classroom activities.			
<b>Inappropriate Language</b>	Use of profanity or words would be considered offensive and not appropriate.			
<b>Inappropriate Location/ Skipping Class</b>	Not being in the assigned or supervised area of the school and/ or leaving school grounds without staff/guardian supervision.			
<b>Physical Aggression **</b> <i>-and/or-</i> <b>Fighting**</b>	Actions involving serious physical contact where injury may occur (i.e. punching, hitting, kicking, hair pulling, scratching, biting, spitting, use of an object as a weapon to do harm).	Removal from Location of Violation for duration of time,* to include:		
<b>Harassment**</b>	Student uses targeted messages such as threats, intimidation, obscene gestures, pictures, written notes, and/ or intent to physically harm.	Restitution and/or Community Service	Restitution and/or Community Service ( <i>ISS</i> )	Restitution/ Community Service ( <i>ISS/OSS</i> )
<b>Property Damage / Vandalism**</b>	Intentionally damaging, defacing, destroying, or misusing property.			
<b>Bullying **</b> <i>(Repeated Harassment)</i>  <i>*refer to board policy po5517.01</i>	Student behavior consisting of <b>repeated</b> , targeted disrespectful messages (verbal or nonverbal) to another person(s) occurring <b>3 or more incidents</b> that may include: threats, intimidation, obscene gestures, pictures, written notes, and/ intent to physically harm. Sustained or repeated attacks based on ethnic origin, disability, race, gender and or other personal matters.	Restorative Conversation with involved parties  Community Service ( <i>ISS/OSS- 1 day*</i> )	Restorative Conversation with involved parties  Community Service ( <i>ISS/OSS- 2 days*</i> )	Restorative Conversation with involved parties  Community Service ( <i>ISS/ OSS- 3+ days*</i> )
<b>Use/ Possession of Weapons or Drugs**</b>	Refer to Board Policy			
<b>Dress Code Violation</b>	Wearing clothing or other items that would be considered offensive to others i.e. have offensive messages written on them or carry violent or aggressive messages not appropriate for school, and or wearing clothing that does not meet district policies for decency in the school setting.	<b>Parent contact to obtain appropriate clothing +</b>		
		Warning	Community Service	<i>ISS</i>



<b>Technology Violation:</b> Cell Phone/ Personal Devices at School	Use of Personal Devices during school day (i.e. cell phone, video game consoles)	<b>Parent will pick up device from office at end of school day +</b>		
		Warning	Community Service	ISS
<b>Technology Violation:</b> Misuse/ Purposeful damage of school-issued technology <i>***Bullying consequences also apply</i>	-Accessing/ sharing inappropriate or restricted material, others' accounts, inappropriately altering documents -Engaging in harassment or cyberbullying*** by sending intimidating or threatening messages/ content to others. -Damage caused to school-issued technology (non-accidental and/or neglectful)	Loss of Technology Privileges	Loss of Technology Privileges	Loss of Technology Privileges
		<i>Damage:</i> Restitution*	<i>Damage:</i> Restitution*/ Community Service	<i>Damage:</i> Restitution*/ Community Service (ISS)
<b>Theft**</b>	Taking items from another without consent or knowledge.	<b>Return Item [theft] +</b>		
<b>Forgery/ Plagiarism</b>	Taking credit for another person's work.	-Warning <i>and/or</i>  -Restitution and/or Community Service: 5-10 minutes	-Restitution and/or Community Service	-Restitution and/or Community Service (ISS)
<b>Lying / Cheating*</b>	Not telling the truth.			
<b>Inappropriate Display of Affection**</b>	Actions of a sexual nature that involve the inappropriate or unwanted touching of another person (i.e. kissing, groping, etc) or involve sexually suggestive messages, notes, or displays.			

\*Restitution and/or Community Service will be served during recess and/or non-academic preferred activities unless otherwise indicated.





## **Appendix A: NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES FOR TITLE II, TITLE VI, TITLE VII, AND TITLE IX, SECTION 504, AGE ACT AND ADA**

### Nondiscrimination (Ref. Board Policy 5710)

Board of Education declares it to be the policy of this District to provide an equal opportunity for all students, regardless of race, color, creed, age, disability, religion, gender, ancestry, national origin, place of residence within the boundaries of the District, or social or economic background, to learn through the curriculum offered in this District.

### Complaint Procedure

#### **Section I**

If any person believes that the Elk Rapids School District or any of the District's staff has inadequately applied the principles and/or regulations of (1) Title II, Title VI, and Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, (2) Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, (3) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, (4) The Age Act, and (5) The Americans with Disabilities Act, s/he may bring forward a complaint, which shall be referred to as a grievance, to the District's Civil Rights Coordinator.

#### **Section II**

The person who believes s/he has a valid basis for grievance shall discuss informally and on a verbal basis with the District's Civil Rights Coordinator, who shall in turn investigate the complaint and reply with an answer to the complainant. S/He may initiate formal procedures according to the following steps:

##### *Step 1*

A written statement of the grievance signed by the complainant shall be submitted to the District's Civil Rights Coordinator within five (5) business days of receipt of answers to the informal complaint. The Coordinator shall further investigate the matters of grievance and reply in writing to the complainant within five (5) business days.

##### *Step 2*

If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision of the District's Civil Rights Coordinator, s/he may submit a signed statement of appeal to the Superintendent of Schools within (5) business days after receipt of the Coordinator's response. The Superintendent shall meet with all parties involved, formulate a conclusion, and respond in writing to the complainant within ten (10) business days.

##### *Step 3*

If the complainant remains unsatisfied, s/he may appeal through a signed written statement to the Board of Education within (5) business days of his/her receipt of the Superintendent's response in step two. In an attempt to resolve the grievance, the Board of Education shall meet with the concerned parties and their representative within twenty (20) business days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within ten (10) business days of this meeting.

##### *Step 4*

If at this point the grievance has not been satisfactorily settled, further appeal may be made to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, 600 Superior Avenue, Room 750, Cleveland, Ohio 44114. Inquiries concerning the nondiscriminatory policy may be directed to the Director, Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20201.

The District's Coordinator, on request, will provide a copy of the District's grievance procedure and investigate all complaints in accordance with this procedure. A copy of each of the Acts and the regulations on which this notice is based, may be found in the District Coordinator's office.



## **Appendix B: ELK RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA AND THE DIRECTORY INFORMATION PUBLIC NOTICE**

The Family Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records.

These rights are outlined below:

The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the Elk Rapids Schools receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask Elk Rapids Schools to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school principal; clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If Elk Rapids Schools decide not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, Elk Rapids Schools will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by Elk Rapids Public Schools as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom Elk Rapids Schools has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, Elk Rapids Schools discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks to or intends to enroll.

The right to refuse to permit Elk Rapids Schools to designate certain personally identifiable information about the student as directory information which is not subject to the above restrictions on disclosure. Elk Rapids Schools may with its discretion release some or all directory information as it determines is appropriate. Elk Rapids Schools has designated the following information about a student as directory information: name, address, telephone listing, e-mail address, date and place of birth, major field of study, years in school, class schedules, class rosters, participation in officially recognized activities and athletics, weight and height of members of athletic teams, photographs, dates of attendance, diplomas received, awards received, and the name of the last previous school attended by the student, and other similar information which would not generally be considered harmful to a student, or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. If a parent or eligible student does not wish to have the student's information designated as directory information and disclosed, the parent or eligible student must request and complete a Request to Prevent Disclosure of Directory Information from the school principal and submit the completed form to the school principal no later than the 15th day of the school year. Please note that a request to block the designation of information as directory information will apply to all categories listed above and to all requests for directory information from within and outside the Elk Rapids Schools community. This notification will remain in effect until the parent or eligible student informs the school principal in writing to remove the block to designation and disclosure.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Elk Rapids Schools to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605



## Appendix C: TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

### RATIONALE

The continued growth of technology in our school necessitates the need for an Acceptable Use Policy to guide how we use the emerging devices and systems that are available to us. All people need to know what is acceptable and what is not. For example, a person who wouldn't dream of picking a lock or breaking into an office and tampering with files and records may think it is okay to bypass a computer's security code and change the computer's inner workings to their advantage or another person's disadvantage. It should be obvious that it is not acceptable to do any of the above. To make it clear, the following are the standards, rights and responsibilities for technology users in our system as well as the disciplinary action(s) for those who misuse the system.

### STANDARDS

The use of technology in the Elk Rapids Schools is an opportunity extended to students, parents, faculty and staff to enhance learning, productivity, and information processing. The computer hardware and software of the district shall be used for educational purposes specified by the Board of Education and Administration of the Elk Rapids Schools. The use of computer and related equipment and software for the purpose of sending or receiving information or images of a prurient nature is expressly prohibited.

### RIGHTS

Students, Parents/Guardians, and Staff may:

- o use hardware and software, which they have received permission to use
- o access information from approved resources inside and outside the school district
- o access the Internet to receive and send information

### RESPONSIBILITIES

Students, Parents/Guardians, and Staff are responsible for:

- o Utilizing information technology for **only** educational purposes of our district
- o Using hardware and software in a manner that enables its ongoing usage
- o Adhering to the rules of the school, lab, office, or classroom, which govern the technology
- o Keeping hardware and software from being relocated, or removed from school premises.
- o Maintaining the privacy of passwords.
- o All materials received from sources outside the school district, including the Internet, under their user accounts and for accepting responsibility for keeping all pornographic material, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the school's network, equipment, or software from entering the school

Adhering to the law and district policy pertaining to copyright and privacy rights in the use of hardware and software and in the transmission or copying of text or files. Not using the technology for personal or private business, for product advertisement, or political lobbying without the express permission of the school's administrator. Not engaging in the malicious use of information technology to disrupt the use of technology by others or to infiltrate unauthorized computer systems or areas. Not using information technology to engage in any forms of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

### DISCIPLINARY ACTION(S) FOR TECHNOLOGY MISUSE

Students, Parents/Guardians, or Staff violating any of these Rights and Responsibilities may face disciplinary action(s). These actions may include:

- o Restricting or eliminating their use of school information technology
- o Attending training sessions
- o Making financial restitution for any damages caused or for any unauthorized expenses incurred
- o Criminal or civil charges/complaints being lodged against them
- o Suspension, dismissal, expulsion, or other disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the Administration and Board of Education



## Appendix D: ELK PRIDE- MILL CREEK'S STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

	Attribute	Code of Conduct: What & Why?
<b>E</b>	Essential Agreements	<p><b>Essential Agreements</b> are the key rules/acknowledgments we follow to keep our students safe. These agreements include: how we walk in the hall, act in the bathroom and cafeteria, play/interact on the playground, and behave in the school setting in general. It helps to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce anxiety</li> <li>• Establish safety protocols</li> <li>• And provide positive school culture.</li> </ul>
<b>L</b>	Lifelong Learners	<p><b>Lifelong learners</b> exhibit above all else a growth mindset with persistence and initiative, collaboration, productivity, precision and accuracy, self-direction, and complex-reasoning strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome new challenges.</li> <li>• Read daily.</li> <li>• Develop time management skills.</li> </ul>
<b>K</b>	Kindness Matters	<p>Being kind has many physical and mental health benefits, including increased happiness and reduction of stress. Mill Creek students show <b>kindness</b> by: being generous and sharing, celebrating others' successes, listening when a friend is sad, and helping peers with a question they're stuck on.</p>
<b>P</b>	Personal Integrity	<p><b>Integrity</b> is a key to preserving self-confidence and self-trust and is a core value for a stable life. A person who has integrity is someone who is honest and trustworthy, by acting in a way that is honest, fair, respectful and responsible.</p>
<b>R</b>	Respectful	<p>A school community will always find success if it is built on a foundation of respect. <b>Respect</b> is a very important foundational factor in the development and maintenance of a healthy learning environment. It is respect that opens space for the development of trust and learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be polite, avoid interrupting or causing disturbances.</li> <li>• Think before you speak, your language and tone.</li> <li>• Lend a helping hand or ear and practice compassion.</li> </ul>
<b>I</b>	Inclusive	<p><b>Inclusiveness</b> in schools makes everyone feel safe, respected and valued. When kids learn to empathize with others and show compassion for their peers, being an "includer" becomes automatic. They learn to look for the lonely and consider how kids on the outside of the group might feel, and this motivates them to be the positive change who invites others into the fold.</p>
<b>D</b>	Dedicated	<p>Students demonstrate personal responsibility to take advantage of their educational opportunities and demonstrate <b>dedication</b> and creativity in overcoming obstacles to learning. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment.</p>
<b>E</b>	Engaged	<p>When students are <b>engaged</b> and can be as good at listening to the ideas of others as articulating their own, they are more likely to be successful in leading teams and taking an active part in their education.</p>