

**Bertha Neal Elementary
Robert Kerr Elementary
Durand Area Schools**

2026-2027



A Great Place to Be!

Student Handbook

Bertha Neal Mission Statement

Every child. Every family. Every teacher. Every day.

Bertha Neal Vision Statement

Nurturing children. Empowering families.

Robert Kerr Elementary Mission Statement

The mission of the Robert Kerr Elementary School Family is to educate the whole child by working to meet their physical, emotional, social, and academic needs, in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Robert Kerr Vision Statement

Durand Area Schools is a model district where students want to be.

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REMEMBER TO SIGN AND RETURN THE NECESSARY FORMS.

Bertha Neal School Staff

Mr. Robert Cawson, Principal

Teaching Staff	Grade
Mrs. Lisa Kaul	Special Education Teacher
Mrs. Jeni Oja	Preschool Lead
Mrs. Michelle Bowers	Preschool Lead
Ms. Crystal Yount	Preschool Lead
Mrs. Rebecca Seiler	Preschool Lead
Ms. Jody Neumeyer	Kindergarten
Mrs. Michelle Lorenz	Kindergarten
Ms. Kristie Barta	Kindergarten
Ms. Hailee Oszust	Kindergarten
Ms. Madison Hatherill	First Grade
Mrs. Nicole Church	First Grade
Mrs. Ryleigh Hayes	First Grade
Mrs. Tori Winiarski	First Grade
Mrs. Cathy Mitchell	Title I
Mr. Alex Gardner	Music
Mrs. Amanda Johnson	STEM
Mrs. Samantha Lach	Physical Education
Ms. Sydnee Whitehead	Art

Paraprofessionals & Assistants	Position
Mrs. Shelly Vandendries	Paraprofessional
Mrs. Melody Holler	Paraprofessional
Ms. Allison Newsom	Paraprofessional

Mrs. Leatha Hissong-Beaudry	Paraprofessional
Mrs. Erin Black	Paraprofessional
Mrs. Martha Bullard	Paraprofessional
Mrs. Amanda Bronkema	Paraprofessional
Mrs. Stacie Smith	Preschool Assistant
Mrs. Chelsay Shepard	Preschool Caregiver
Mrs. Miranda Baker	Preschool Assistant
Mrs. Marlene Sherwood	Preschool Assistant
Mrs. Nicole Cook	Preschool Assistant
Mr. Caiden Hotelling	On Track Behavior Coach
Mrs. Sue Lynch	Building Aide

Lunchroom Staff	Position
Mrs. Stacey Watson	Head Cook
Mrs. Cheryl Rex	Assistant Cook
Mrs. Brianna Gonzales	Lunchroom Monitor
Mrs. Kathleen McDonald	Lunchroom Monitor
Mrs. Herbie Raschke	Cash Manager

Bertha Neal School Hours: 8:30am – 3:25pm Half Days: 8:30am – 12:10pm

Half Day: 8:30 am – 12:10 pm

2-Hour Delay: 10:30 am - 3:25 pm

Robert Kerr School Staff
 Mrs. Lee Worsham, Principal
 Mrs. Michelle Koons, Secretary

Teaching Staff	Grade
Mrs. Courtney Baker	Second Grade
Mrs. Kristin Delaney	Second Grade
Mrs. Courtney Jones	Second Grade
Ms. Miranda Thoen	Second Grade
Mrs. Gretchen Highfield	Third Grade
Mrs. Amanda Inman	Third Grade
Mrs. Shannon Odette	Third Grade
Mrs. Melanie Szczepanski	Third Grade
Mrs. Cindy Newman	Fourth Grade
Mrs. Heather Page	Fourth Grade
Mr. Justin White	Fourth Grade
Mrs. Samantha White	Fourth Grade
Ms. Whitney Fornari	Fifth Grade
Mr. Robert Howard	Fifth Grade
Mrs. Tonya Pavey	Fifth Grade
Mrs. Debbie Shaefer	Fifth Grade
Mrs. Kelly Johnson	Title I (STARS)
Mrs. Nancy Scott	Title I (STARS)
Mr. Alex Gardner	Music Education
Mrs. Amanda Johnson	STEM
Mrs. Samantha Lach	Physical Education
Ms. Sydnee Whitehead	Art
Mr. Mark Mianeki	Special Education Teacher
Mrs. Kasey Barker	Special Education Teacher

Mrs. Spencer	Special Education Teacher
Mrs. Kay Hite	District Nurse/MTSS Coordinator

Paraprofessionals & Assistants	Position
Mr. Mike Papanek	On-Track Behavior Coach
Mrs. Shawna Freeman	Building Aide
Mrs. Michelle Koons	Secretary
Mrs. Leslie Stine	Title Paraprofessional
Mrs. Jessica Coil	Paraprofessional
Mrs. Sherry Dickman	Paraprofessional

Lunchroom Staff	Position
Mrs. Mary Kallin	Head Cook
Mrs. Anne McKillip	Assistant Cook
Ms. Isabella Friedman	Lunchroom Aide
Mr. Anthony Proctor	Lunchroom Aide
Mrs. Kimberly Scott	Lunchroom Aide
Mrs. Karen Nelson	Lunchroom Aide/Cash Manager
Mrs. Stephanie Watson	Recess Aide

Robert Kerr School Hours: 8:20 am – 3:15 pm

Half Day: 8:20 am – 12:00 pm

2-Hour Delay: 10:20 am - 3:15 pm

Arrival



To ensure student safety and proper supervision, please note the following:

- **Arrival Times:**

- *Robert Kerr Elementary:* Walkers should arrive **no earlier than 8:00 AM.**
- *Bertha Neal Elementary:* Walkers should arrive **no earlier than 8:15 AM.**
Early arrivals create safety and supervision concerns.

- **Parent Cooperation:**

Please help protect your children by ensuring they do **not leave home too early** to walk or wait at the bus stop.

Do **not drop students off** before the designated times.

- **Walkers and Bicyclists:**

- Walkers must use the **sidewalk** and enter through the **main front entrance.**
- Bicycles must be **walked on school property** and **parked in the front bike rack.**

- **School Breakfast:**

Students eating school breakfast must arrive **at least 10 minutes before school starts.**

Tardy Policy

Students who arrive after school starts or leave before school ends, will be marked tardy.

Attendance Policy

Students who accumulate 5 or more absences or tardies during a single marking period will receive a formal letter from the principal addressing attendance concerns.



If a student reaches 10 or more days of absence or tardiness, a referral will be made to the Shiawassee County Truancy Officer in accordance with the Michigan Compulsory Attendance Law.

We encourage families to prioritize regular attendance, as consistent participation is essential for student success.

Absences and Absent Work

Please report any student absence to our office by calling BN: 288-2016 or RK: 288-2805 before 10:00am on the day of the absence. All absences need to be explained with a note or phone call from the parent. Daily attendance for all students who are enrolled at Bertha Neal/Robert Kerr is required in accordance with STATE LAW and policies set forth by our Board of Education. If your child accumulates 5 absences and/or tardies per Marking Period, you will receive a letter informing you of our concern and possible consequences.

If you anticipate an absence, we would like to make work available to you in advance. We have found that since changes in lesson plans occur daily, it is better to give out make-up work after the class has been given the assignment. The dynamic classrooms of today are flexible to meet the learning demands of the students in the class, therefore, a lesson plan can change based on the needs of the students. There is no way to predict these changes. Vacationing students should receive work after they return in order to avoid doing work that was “in the plan” but never ended up assigned to the class. Please plan to pick up any assignments requested after 3:35 pm in order to give the teacher time to prepare the materials/assignments. Please complete the necessary form, Pre-Arranged Absence Request at least 7 days prior to the absence.

Planned Absences and Make-Up Work

If your child will be absent from school, we understand the importance of staying on track with learning. Due to the flexible nature of today’s classrooms and frequent changes in lesson plans based on student needs, it will be **up to the teacher’s discretion** whether work will be provided **before** the absence or **after** your child returns.

To request make-up work, please complete a **Pre-Arranged Absence Request Form** at least **7 days prior** to the planned absence. If work is provided in advance, please plan to **pick it up after 3:35 p.m.** to allow time for preparation. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding.

End of Day Release

We ask parents/guardians to wait outside of the school gym for their child to come; they will be escorted/directed by a staff member. Always be sure that school personnel can see you picking up your child. IF A STAFF MEMBER IS NOT FAMILIAR WITH WHO THE STUDENT IS BEING RELEASED TO, IDENTIFICATION WILL BE REQUIRED. PLEASE CARRY IT WITH YOU!

Changes for pick-up arrangements must be made to the office prior to 12:30 pm.

If there is a change in take home procedures for the day please notify the office and your child’s teacher prior to **12:30 pm**. Bus changes must be made through the Transportation Department at 989-288-8995. This will allow us adequate time to make the proper notifications. We understand if an emergency arises, but on a normal day this can reduce anxiety and miscommunication to the necessary staff members. A note is also suitable as notification for your child’s change in transportation for the day.

***Please note – We MUST have adult notification when there is a change in transportation. We will NOT take the word of the student.**

All students must have and wear a “transportation tag” on their backpack daily, regardless of type of transportation. Please do not make changes on it yourself. All changes must be made through the Transportation Department and/or the school office **by 12:30 pm**.

Illness



Attendance is very important to us; however, we are also very concerned about the spread of illness. We serve many children and when germs are brought into the classroom, they spread quickly. Upon arrival at school, each child is observed by teaching staff for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child’s ability to participate comfortably in the daily activities. Children will be excluded when a child is not able to participate comfortably; if the illness requires more care than staff are able to provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group or if keeping the child at school poses an increased risk to the child or to other children or adults with whom the child will come in contact.

When a child develops signs of an illness during their day at preschool, parents, legal guardians, or other person authorized by the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. For this reason, please be sure that

we have current, accurate phone numbers for you, your authorized emergency contact person and your child's pediatrician.

If a child becomes ill during class, the parents will be contacted with the request to take their child home. If you cannot be reached, we will call the person you have given us to notify in case of an emergency. Some diseases will require your child to be excluded from school until a release is written by a doctor. If your child is displaying any of the following symptoms, he or she should not attend:

Disease/Illness Symptoms	When a Child May Return
Fever 100 degrees or above (or less when behavior changes or other signs or symptoms)	Fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medicine
Vomiting	A child that has vomited one to two times. The child should have no vomiting episodes for 24 hours prior to returning. *May need a healthcare provider to determine the cause.
Diarrhea	A child has one to two loose or watery stools. The child should have no loose stools for 24 hours prior to returning to school.
Abdominal Pain	A child with abdominal pain that continues for more than two hours, or intermittent pain associated with fever or other symptoms.
Nasal discharge (yellow or green mucus)	Discharge is not thick yellow or green and/or if the child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours.
Eye Discharge	When eyes are mucous free or on medication for 24 hours.
Rash	The child with a rash AND has a fever or a change in behavior. Exclude until the rash subsides or until a healthcare provider has determined the rash is not contagious.
Severely Ill	A child that is lethargic or less responsive, has difficulty breathing, or has a rapidly spreading rash.
Skin Sores	Seeping/moist/oozing sores in an exposed area that cannot be covered.
Hand, Foot and Mouth	When lesions heal and oozing ceases.

Certain communicable diseases: Children and staff diagnosed with certain diseases may have to be excluded for a certain period of time. School Board Policies will supersede this list and can be accessed on the school district's website. The school will follow the medication board policy which can be found on the school district's website.

Medication

Students may not have any medication on them during the school day. This includes Aspirin/Tylenol, cough drops, etc. Please use the form at the back of this handbook for the purpose of allowing your child to be administered prescription/nonprescription medication or stop by the office to get a copy of the form. A parent or guardian must bring the medication into the office and it is not to be transported in a child's backpack or on the bus. Our

office cannot be responsible for calling home for medication. Please keep an accurate record at home of when it is time for medicines to be replenished. All medication not picked up at the end of the school year will be discarded. Please see below for further information on administration of prescription and nonprescription medication.

Administration of Prescription Drug Products by School Staff

Before any prescribed medication may be administered to any student during school hours, the Board shall require written instructions from the child's practitioner accompanied by the written authorization of the parent. Such documentation shall be kept on file in the school office. Prescription medication must be provided in the original container with the prescription label showing the name and telephone number of the pharmacy, the student's name, the name of the physician, the name of the drug, and the dosage to be administered.

Administration of Nonprescription Drug Products by School Staff

Nonprescription drug products may be administered to any student during school hours only with the prior consent of the parent. Such documentation shall be kept on file in the school office. Substances that are not FDA approved (i.e., natural products, food supplements) will not be administered by District staff. Nonprescription drugs that are provided by the parent may be administered by school staff only if the nonprescription drugs are supplied in the original manufacturer's package which lists the ingredients, recommended therapeutic dosage in a legible format, and the student's name. Any dosage of nonprescription medication other than that listed on the medication's packaging must be authorized in writing by a medical practitioner.

Emergency Forms

Emergency cards are necessary to give the best care for your children. Be sure the school has your current phone number. School records are updated by these forms.

Emergency School Closing

In the event there is a school closing caused by heavy snow, flooding, power outage, or a tornado, we will notify TV-12. The district also uses an instant alert system that will send an automated or recorded message to your preferred phone number (home # unless otherwise noted). School closings and delays are posted on our District website.

Emergency Transportation Changes

If your child needs to ride home with a friend or if there needs to be a change in his/her ride home, you must contact transportation at 989-288-8995 for permission and then contact the school to notify the secretary. This should be done only in emergency situations—not for social reasons. It is at the discretion of the Transportation Director to refuse any change in a daily bus run.

Notes for Changes of Routine

Children need a note if there is a change in any routine, such as: being picked up at school or riding home with a person other than the child's parent. We do not take the word of the student. Children picked up before the end of the school day must be obtained through the office. The office will notify the adult supervisor of the child that they are being picked up. **The end of the day is a very busy time so we ask that if you have a message for your child, please call before 12:30 pm.** This allows us to be sure that your child receives the message before the dismissal for the day.

Music Education, Physical Education, STEM, and Art

All students will have each “Special” one day a week for an hour.

Music Education – Concert information will be shared by the music teacher.

Physical Education – We require that students have tennis shoes and dress appropriately for physical activities. These recommendations are made for their comfort and safety. When students do not dress appropriately, a sneaker reminder will be sent home (requiring a parent signature) and then needs to be returned to the school.

STEM – Students will be exposed to technology in the classroom daily, however, technology class will be taught at least once a week. Students will learn about basic keyboarding skills, computer research skills, Word processing, Excel, PowerPoint presentations, and other related technological skills. Students will also partake in team building activities that incorporate other subjects.

Art - Students will be exposed to art and various forms of collaboration to establish problem solving and critical thinking skills. Students will also have opportunities to develop/build projects they can share with their families. Students at Bertha Neal will also have opportunities to develop their social and emotional learning skills. Computers are available to the children in the classroom and in the computer lab.

We believe that the specialists who instruct your children in these programs contribute a great deal to your child's education. Children are expected to be responsible for assignments in these classes, just as in their other subjects.

Title I

Title I services are available and provided to identified students, as needed. Students are identified through Benchmark testing and progress monitoring that is done by the classroom teacher. Students who receive these services are notified by letter and/or conference. Services are provided as an intervention or bridge to help students close the gap on missing/developing skills. The Title I teacher will review the Title I learning compact during orientation and Parent/Teacher conferences.

Lockers

Children that are assigned lockers are expected to keep them neat. This means that old lunch sacks or wastepaper should not accumulate. Students are to hang up their coats and hats and close their locker to create a neat and orderly atmosphere in the hallway. Locks should NOT be put on the lockers. Many students will have to share lockers.

Search of a student's person or intimate personal belongings shall be conducted by a person of the student's gender, in the presence of another staff member of the same gender, and only in exceptional circumstances when the health or safety of the student or of others is immediately threatened.

The principal shall be responsible for the prompt recording in writing of each student search, including the reasons for the search; information received that established the need for the search and the name of informant, if any; the persons present when the search was conducted; any substances or objects found and the disposition made of them; and any subsequent action taken. The principal shall be responsible for the custody, control, and disposition of any illegal or dangerous substance or object taken from a student.

Field Trip Permission

During the school year, teachers may plan activities related to their instructional program, which require leaving the school grounds. Some of these “field trips” may be simple walks to study the changes in nature, to study the composition of the community, or to visit the library. In every case, the children will be accompanied by a teacher and properly supervised. Unless otherwise stated, all students are expected to ride District transportation to and from any designated trip. Parent volunteers may need to be limited due to field trip occupancy. If chaperones are attending and driving separately, students should still ride District transportation to the destination and then be signed out if riding home with a parent/guardian. Teachers will implement a lottery drawing for all field trips if necessary.

Field trips are a time for learning and discovery. Siblings often distract and draw away from student experience. Please make arrangements for siblings outside of the field trip.

Students are required to ride the bus to field trips; this is for attendance and organizational needs. We reserve the right to deny alternate arrangements for transportation.

The form in the back of this booklet, signed by you, does not guarantee your child to participate in these activities which necessitate leaving the school/district grounds. Each field trip off of school/district grounds will have an additional permission form with further details pertaining to the trip/activity which will need to be signed by parent/guardian.

Volunteers Needed - Interested parents help to create successful students!

Making school more interesting to children and helping them to get the most out of school is one of our goals. Parents, Grandparents, or others interested in working as a volunteer at Bertha Neal/Robert Kerr Elementary are asked to contact the school for more information regarding areas where help is needed. **All volunteers must fill out a “Volunteer Background Check” Form. These are available in the school office. These must be filled out at school and a district witness signature is required.** These must be filled out and turned in to the office in order to attend any field trips.



Recess

All children are expected to go outside as part of their lunch time unless they have a **Doctor's note** that directs us to keep them inside. Please discuss this and advise your children to wear appropriate clothing and footwear for the weather as it turns colder. Please do not send a note asking to have your child stay inside unless it is accompanied by a Doctor's note.

DAS Communication Device Policy

Students are prohibited from using a wireless communication device (“WCD”) on school grounds during instructional time. A WCD is an electronic device capable of, but not limited to, text messaging, voice communication, entertainment, navigation, accessing the internet, sending and receiving photos and videos, or producing email. A WCD does not include a basic telephone, which is a device primarily used for voice calling that cannot support the third-party applications, except those preinstalled, and does not support access to internet platforms via applications or web browsers.

For the purposes of this policy, school grounds means a building, playing field, or property used for school purposes to impart instruction to children or used for functions and events sponsored by the school. School grounds does not include a building used primarily for adult education or college extension courses.

WCDs, including, but not limited to, smart watches, those with cameras, may not be activated or utilized at any time in any school situation where a reasonable expectation of personal privacy exists. These locations and circumstances include, but are not limited to, classrooms, gymnasiums, locker rooms, shower facilities, rest/bathrooms, and any other areas where students or others may change clothes or be in any stage or degree of disrobing or changing clothes. The Superintendent and building principals are authorized to determine other specific locations and situations where use of a WCD is absolutely prohibited.

Students shall have no expectation of confidentiality with respect to their use of WCDs on school premises/property.

Students may not use a WCD in any way that might reasonably create in the mind of another person an impression of being threatened, humiliated, harassed, embarrassed, or intimidated. See Policy 5517.01-Bullying and Other Forms of Aggressive Behavior. In particular, students are prohibited from using WCDs to: (1) transmit material that is threatening, obscene, disruptive, or sexually explicit or that can be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based upon their race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, or political beliefs; and (2) engage in "sexting" - i.e., sending receiving, sharing, viewing, or possessing pictures, text messages, e-mails, or other materials of a sexual nature in electronic or any other form. Violation of these prohibitions shall result in disciplinary action. Furthermore, such actions will be reported to local law enforcement and child services as required by law.

Students are prohibited from using a WCD to capture, record, and/or transmit test information or any other information in a manner constituting fraud, theft, cheating, or academic dishonesty. Likewise, students are prohibited from using WCDs to receive such information.

Code of Conduct for WCDs:

The following discipline progression will be used for minor WCD infractions and may include further discipline for major WCD infractions at the discretion of the building principal. Students recording on their WCD or using their WCD to bully or interfere with the safe and respectful learning of others will move directly to step four of the cell phone consequences.

WCDs must be turned off and in the student's locker. WCDs are not to be used during school hours unless a lesson-specific academic assignment is approved by the classroom teacher, in which a permission slip will be sent home prior to the lesson(s) for parent/guardian approval. Students found not complying with the guidelines will have their phone confiscated and it will be sent to the office. The school will not take responsibility for the loss or damage of personal WCDs.

The following discipline progression will be used for minor WCD infractions and will include further discipline for major WCD infractions at the discretion of the building principal.

First Offense: Students may pick up WCD at the end of the day in the office and parents/guardians will be contacted.

Second Offense: WCD will be sent to the office and parents/guardians will be contacted to pick up the WCD from school.

Third Offense and Beyond: Detention and WCD picked up by parents/guardians. Persistent disobedience in this area will result in OSS for one or more days.

*Please note that in the event that a student refuses to give the electronic device to a staff member, the student will receive the above consequences and will also receive a disciplinary referral for insubordination.

Dress and Grooming

While fashion changes, the reason for being in school does not. Students are in school to learn. Any fashion (dress, accessory, or hairstyle) that disrupts the educational process or presents a safety risk will not be permitted. Personal expression is permitted within these general guidelines.

Students and parents should consider the following questions when dressing for school:

- Does my /my child's clothing expose too much? (no)
- Does my /my child's clothing advertise something that is prohibited to minors? (no)
- Are there obscene, profane, drug-related, gang-related, or inflammatory messages on my clothing? (no)
- Am I dressed appropriately for the weather? (yes)
- Do I feel comfortable with my appearance? (yes)

If a student has selected a manner of appearance that is beyond mere freedom of expression and disrupts the educational process or presents risk to themselves or others, they may be removed from the educational setting.

Students in violation of the dress code will be sent to the office and required to change their clothing. Students have an option of changing with clothes they may have in their locker, contacting a parent/guardian, or reporting to ISS for the school day. If you have any questions related to these expectations, please contact the office.

Students who are representing the Durand Area Schools at an official function or public event may be required to follow specific dress requirements. Usually, this applies to athletic teams, cheerleaders, bands, and other such groups.

Anything printed on clothing must not be offensive in any way. The building principal/staff has the right to decide what is offensive, but some examples are: words/slogans that advertise illegal substances, words/slogans that are racially or religiously offensive, violence themes, vulgar or sexual innuendo, etc.

Clothing should be neat, clean, and modest. Any dress that disrupts the educational environment is not permitted. The following are examples (but not an exhaustive list) of clothing **not** appropriate for school:

- Strapless clothing of any kind.
- Clothing that reveals undergarments.
- See-through clothing.
- **Pajamas and/or slippers.**
- Blankets (including but not limited to The Comfy) and/or fags.

- **Footwear** Proper shoes must be worn at all times for health and safety. Because of health and safety, regular shoes must be worn in the shop areas.
- Coats, gloves, and hats are not to be worn in school.
- Hats, including but not limited to baseball caps, hoods, cowboy hats, etc. (bandanas may be considered hats).
- Sunglasses are not acceptable in school.
- Costumes of any kind (including but not limited to tails and ears) shall not be worn without the prior approval of the building principal.

The dress code applies to extra-curricular activities and public performances. The final decision rests with the school administrator. Students who are representing Durand at an official function or public event may be required to follow specific dress requirements. Usually, this applies to athletic teams, bands, and other student organizations.

Toys

Absolutely NO toys should be brought to school unless there is a specific “Show and Tell” in the classroom. Toys cause hurt feelings, sadness at the possible loss or theft or breakage, and disrupt the general learning environment. No investigation will be done in regards to stolen toy property. Examples of toys include: fidget spinners, gaming devices, and Pokémon cards. Cell phones are not allowed out of backpacks.

Freedom 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, non-sponsored, 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 Material cannot be displayed if it:
 - Is obscene to minors, libelous, indecent and pervasively vulgar
 - Advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law
 - Intends to be insulting or harassing
- Intends to incite fighting or presents a likelihood of disrupting school or a school event or a 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

Materials may not be displayed or distributed during class periods, or during any 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.

Class Celebrations, Activities and Activity Money

Some teachers will ask for activity/party money. This money may be paid directly to the teacher and is used for special parties such as Halloween. Guidelines for parties are sent home in advance of the party/activity and have been developed by a committee of parents and teachers. Due to classroom space, siblings should not attend parties/celebrations or field trips.

*Activity days and times will be communicated through newsletters.



Birthday Treats, Snacks, and Celebrations

At times, parents and children will wish to share a birthday snack with classmates. **If arranged with the teacher in advance**, this can be planned into the daily routine. However, balloons, clowns and other items or activities that can become disruptive to the educational environment are prohibited.

To promote school health and decrease childhood obesity, parents/guardians are encouraged not to bring birthday treats that are unhealthy, such as (but not limited to): cupcakes, cookies, candies, brownies, cake, chips, etc. We encourage students to bring other healthy snack alternatives.

Classes often have a snack at some point throughout the day. Please check with your child's teacher for a schedule. We are asking that students make healthy choices with their parents for snacks. Snacks are meant to be a source of energy for students during the academic day. Sugary snacks do not help and often hinder the educational process. Each teacher will provide a list of ideas for snacks. We stress that cookies, chips, candy and some fruit snacks are not healthy choices.

Holiday Party Guidelines

Due to limited available space, teachers may limit the number of parent volunteers and ask parents to alternate volunteering to help with this. Siblings should be kept at home.

Halloween

- No spray hair coloring may be brought to school.
- Students will bring costumes to school and dress prior to the party.
- Costumes must be able to be put on in 10 minutes; make-up and hair coloring should not be applied.
- Costumes must not represent violent characters and/or violent acts.
- No weapons should be carried nor items representing weapons.
- These guidelines apply to students and adults.

These guidelines are not to diminish the amount of fun, but to make the party a fun event for all students, parents and staff that choose to participate. Students who do not follow the guidelines may not be able to attend the class party.

The time before/after a party is an academic day and must be treated as such. We appreciate the cooperation of all parents in helping to provide a safe and wholesome experience for the children during holidays and at all other times.

ATOD Notification

The use and possession of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs is wrong and harmful. Durand Area Schools Board Policy strictly prohibits the use and/or possession of these substances.

Pesticide Control Act Notification

You have the right to be informed of any and all pesticides that may be applied at this school. If you wish to be notified, please contact the school office at any time.

Building Security and Safety

All Durand Area School buildings are equipped with entry buzzer systems during school hours. You will be required to identify yourself prior to entry if asked by staff personnel. All visitors must then proceed to the office to sign-in. Please remember to have identification on you; students will not be released without identification being checked.

We understand that your child's teacher may be able to identify you, but in the event there is a guest teacher, you will be required to show identification to them. Any individual not listed on your child's emergency card will not be released without parental permission, via written communication.

Due Process Rights

Before a student may be suspended or expelled from school, there are specific procedures that must be followed.

The Board recognizes the importance of safeguarding a student's constitutional rights, particularly when subject to the District's disciplinary procedures.

To better ensure appropriate due process is provided to a student, the Board establishes the following:

Consideration of Seven Factors

The following factors have been considered before determining consequences:

- A. Age and developmental stage
- B. Disciplinary history
- C. Student's disability status
- D. Seriousness of the violation
- E. Threat to safety
- F. Restorative practices
- G. Lesser interventions

Due Process Verification

- A. Notice of the charges
- B. Opportunity to respond
- C. Student Subject to Short-Term and Long Term Suspension

Except when emergency removal is warranted, a student must be given at least oral notice of the charges against him/her and the opportunity to respond prior to the implementation of a suspension. When emergency removal has been implemented, notice and opportunity to respond shall occur as soon as reasonably possible. The Superintendent or other designated administrator shall provide the opportunity to be heard and shall be responsible for making the suspension decision. An appeal may be addressed to the Superintendent whose decision will be final.

- D. Students Subject to Expulsion

A student and his/her parent or guardian must be given written notice of the intention to expel and the reason therefore and must also be given an opportunity to appear before the Superintendent with a representative to answer any charges. The students and/or his/her guardian must also be provided a brief description of the student's rights and the hearing procedure, a list of the witnesses that will provide testimony and a summary of the facts to which the witnesses will testify. The Board shall act by providing a written decision on any appeal of an expulsion or a request for admission after permanent expulsion from another school.

The Superintendent shall develop procedures to ensure all members of the staff use the above guidelines when dealing with students. In addition, this statement of due process rights shall be placed in all student handbooks, in a manner that facilitates understanding by students and their parents.

The Durand Area Schools make a sincere effort to have disciplinary actions take actions to place that will allow the student to remain in school. If a disciplinary action does not result in removal from school, it is not appealable. Should a student or parent have questions regarding the propriety of an in-school disciplinary action, they should contact the Superintendent.

Transportation Rules

1. Bus transportation is an extension of the school building and the student code of conduct is in effect.
2. If a student is suspended from school, the transportation department must be informed.
3. Verbal warnings of a violation of these regulations must be followed by the student.
4. To ensure maximum attention to the road, students must avoid talking to the driver except when absolutely necessary.
5. Normal conversation is permitted and expected; however, to ensure greater safety, shouting, fighting and pushing is prohibited.
6. Changing seats without driver's permission is prohibited.
7. Smoking, spitting, and using profane language by anyone are absolutely prohibited at all times.
8. Throwing waste paper and rubbish on the floor of the bus is prohibited.
9. Eating and drinking on the bus is prohibited on daily runs.
10. Passengers must keep hands and arms inside the bus.
11. Passengers must not attempt to leave the bus while it is in motion.
12. Passengers must not open the emergency door or escape hatches or tamper with any other part of the bus equipment unless an emergency situation exists.
13. When crossing the road after leaving the bus, students must cross in front of the bus only on the signal from the driver after making sure that no other vehicles are approaching. Ten feet is the recommended safe distance for crossing in front of the bus.
14. Talking is prohibited while the bus is stopped or crossing a railroad crossing.
15. Passengers are expected to be on time at their designated bus stops.
16. Passengers are to stay off the roadway at all times while waiting or departing from the bus until the bus has left the area.
17. Book bags/backpacks should be appropriate size with no wheels and no long or extended zipper pulls.
18. Skateboards and scooters will not be transported on school buses.
19. No glass bottles or jars are permitted on school buses.
20. No balloons permitted on school buses.
21. No large school projects are permitted on the buses, a parent must bring them to and from school for the student.
22. High school/Middle school students are not allowed to ride the elementary buses.

23. Due process procedures are in effect.

Bussing Disciplinary Process

Notice # 1: Notification must be signed by the parent and returned to the pick-up driver. Possible 1-3 day suspension of bus privileges.

Notice # 2: Notification must be signed by a parent, Parent Conference with Transportation Supervisor in person or by phone, possible 1-5 day suspension of bus privileges.

Notice # 3: Notification must be signed by parent, Parent Conference with Transportation Supervisor and driver in person or by phone, possible 1 day to indefinite suspension of bus privileges.

Please note:

* Suspension of bus privileges may take place during any step of the disciplinary process depending on the severity of the incident.

* Bus suspension also includes all field trips as well as sporting events for the duration of the suspension.

* Any student damaging a school bus seat by writing on it, poking holes in it, or tearing it will be charged \$75 per seat damaged.

[Transportation Link](#)

School Board Policies

~~We are including some of the age appropriate district policies.~~ If you are interested in any School Board Policy, please visit our district website under the Board of Education tab to view them.

~~5136 - CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES~~

~~A student may possess a cellular telephone or other electronic communication devices (ECD) and electronic storage devices (ESD) in school provided that the cell phone or other ECD/ESD remains off.~~

~~The unauthorized use of cellular phones and ECD/ESD to communicate or access information during classes or testing is prohibited.~~

~~Except as authorized under this policy, use of a cellular telephone or other electronic communication devices (ECD) and electronic storage devices (ESD) in school will be subject to disciplinary action.~~

~~Also, during school activities when directed by the administrator or sponsor, cell phones and other ECD/ESD shall be turned off and stored away out of sight. The use of cell phones and other ECD/ESD in locker rooms or restrooms is prohibited.~~

~~The use of audio or video recording capacity of any cell phone and other ECD/ESD is prohibited in locker rooms.~~

~~Possession of a cellular telephone or other ECD/ESD by a student is a privilege, which may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of this policy, or otherwise engages in misuse of this privilege.~~

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action against the student which may result in confiscation of the cellular telephone or ECD/ESD.

The student who possesses a cellular phone or ECD/ESD shall assume responsibility for its care. At no time shall the District be responsible for preventing theft, loss, or damage to cell phones or ECD/ESD brought onto its property. M.C.L.A. 380.1303 Adopted 3/10/08

5514 - STUDENT USE OF BICYCLES

The Board of Education regards the use of bicycles for travel to and from school by students as an assumption of responsibility on the part of those students, a responsibility in the care of property, in the observation of safety rules, and in the display of courtesy and consideration toward others. The Board will permit the use of bicycles by students in accordance with the rules of the District.

5513 - CARE OF DISTRICT PROPERTY

Basic to the philosophy of the Board of Education is a respect for the rights of others. Students are urged to exercise this respect in regard to the belongings of others, including District property. Each student should realize that vandalism to District property is costly to repair and is directly related to increased school taxes.

Attempts should be made to teach students respect for property which can be done in connection with the care of textbooks and the use of District materials and equipment.

In accordance with law, students who cause damage to District property shall be subject to disciplinary measures, and their parents shall be financially liable for such damage to the extent of the law except that students over eighteen (18) years of age shall also be liable for damage they cause.

The Board authorizes the imposition of fines for the loss, damage, or destruction of District equipment, apparatus, musical instruments, library materials, textbooks, and for damage to District buildings.

The Superintendent may report to the appropriate authorities any student whose damage of District property has been serious or chronic in nature.

In no case shall such referral to juvenile authorities be made without prior notification to the student's parent.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative guidelines to implement this policy.

5517.01 - BULLYING AND OTHER AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR TOWARD STUDENTS

It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students.

This policy protects all students from bullying/aggressive behavior regardless of the subject matter or motivation for such impermissible behavior.

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board of Education members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety or personal degradation.

Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.

This policy applies to all "at school" activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it interferes with the school environment.

Notification

Notice of this policy will be **annually** circulated to and posted in conspicuous locations in all school buildings and departments with the District and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student, and parent/guardian handbooks. State and Federal rights posters on discrimination and harassment shall also be posted at each building. All new hires will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related complaint procedure.

Parents or legal guardians of the alleged victim(s), as well as of the alleged aggressor(s), shall be promptly notified of any complaint or investigation as well as the results of the investigation to the extent consistent with student confidentiality requirements. A record of the time and form of notice or attempts at notice shall be kept in the investigation file.

To the extent appropriate and/or legally permitted, **confidentiality** will be maintained during the investigation process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure of names and allegations. Further, the appropriate authorities may be notified, depending on the nature of the complaint and/or the results of the investigation.

Implementation

The Superintendent is responsible to implement this policy, and may develop further guidelines, not inconsistent with this policy.

This policy is not intended to and should not be interpreted to interfere with legitimate free speech rights of any individual. However, the District reserves the right and responsibility to maintain a safe environment for students, conducive to learning and other legitimate objectives of the school program.

Procedure

Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of bullying, hazing, or other aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the Principal or assistant principal. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building principal should be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent should be filed with the Board President.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The Principal (or other administrator as designated) shall promptly investigate and document all complaints about bullying, aggressive or other behavior that may violate this policy. The investigation must be completed as

promptly as the circumstances permit and should be completed within three (3) school days after a report or complaint is made.

If the investigation finds an instance of bullying or aggressive behavior has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors, and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

The individual responsible for conducting the investigation shall document all reported incidents and report all verified incidents of bullying, aggressive or other prohibited behavior, as well as any remedial action taken, including disciplinary actions and referrals, to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall submit a compiled report to the Board on an annual basis.

Non-Retaliation/False Reports

Retaliation or false allegations against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of bullying or aggressive behavior (as witness or otherwise), or is the target of the bullying or aggressive behavior being investigated, is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy, independent of whether a complaint of bullying is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as aggressive behavior.

Making intentionally false reports about bullying/aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

Prevention/Training

The District shall provide, and all administrators, school employees, contracted employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students shall undertake annual training on preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying and other aggressive behavior.

Definitions

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been bullying, hazing, harassment or other aggressive behavior, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it immediately and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action:

"Aggressive behavior" is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well-being. Such behavior includes, for example, bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidation, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hitting/pushing/shoving.

"At School" is defined as in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises. It also includes conduct using a telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider that occurs off school premises if either owned by or under the control of the District.

"Bullying" is defined as any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts — i.e. internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand held device) that, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus, is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- A. substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students
- B. adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress;
- C. having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health; and/or
- D. causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with the orderly operation of the school;

Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are:

- A. Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling, taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money; blocking or impeding student movement; unwelcome physical contact.
- B. Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name calling, making threats
- C. Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in a number of different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti.

"Harassment" includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written, or physical nature, often on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability, but may also include sexual orientation, physical characteristics (e.g., height weight, complexion), cultural background, socioeconomic status, or geography location (e.g., from rival school, different state, rural area, city, etc.);

"Intimidation /Menacing" includes, but is not limited to, any threat or act intended to: place a person in fear of physical injury or offensive physical contact; to substantially damage or interfere with person's property; or to intentionally interfere with or block a person's movement without good reason.

"Staff" includes all school employees and Board members.

"Third parties" include, but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors, vendors, or others engaged in District business, and others not directly subject to school control at inter-district or intra-district athletic competitions or other school events.

For further definition and instances that could possibly be construed as: harassment, see Policy [5517](#); and/or hazing, see Policy [5516](#).

M.C.L. 380.1310B (Matt's Safe School Law, PA 241 or 2011)

Policies on Bully, Michigan State Board of Education

Model Anti-Bullying Policy, Michigan State Board of Education

Adopted 12/13/04

Revised 11/12/07

Revised 4/16/12

Student Acceptable Use Guidelines

The purpose of this document is to establish parameters for access to and use of all district technology by students. District technology includes, but is not limited to: computers and accompanying peripherals, projectors, interactive whiteboards, software, the network, the Internet, television, surveillance technology, and digital cameras.

The use of district technology is intended for educational purposes only, as defined by Durand Area Schools.

The use of technology is a privilege and not a right. Those abusing the privilege may lose it regardless of the impact that such a decision would have on one's grade.

Students should have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality in any files sent, received, or stored on district media. The school system may review the subject, content, and appropriateness of any and all electronic data stored or transmitted over its network.

The recreational use of technological equipment by students is strictly prohibited. Recreational use includes but is not limited to such things as playing games and listening to music.

Students are prohibited from entering chat rooms and using email or instant messaging services unless they have received permission from their teacher to do so and such use promotes the educational goals of Durand Area Schools.

Students will not access, create, or pass along material that is unlawful, indecent, obscene, pornographic, abusive, or otherwise objectionable.

Students are responsible for the correct use and care of the technological equipment they are assigned to use. Students are not to use technological equipment that they have not been properly trained on.

Prior to use, students must inspect the equipment they work on and immediately report any damage or vandalism to the equipment or furniture to their teacher or adult supervisor. Failure to comply with this rule may result in being held responsible for damage not inflicted by the student him or herself.

If when working on technological equipment, something breaks or fails to work properly, the student must report the problem to his or her teacher immediately.

There is absolutely no eating or drinking (even water) around technological equipment.

Students may only log onto computers under their login name, and they must log off of the machine when they are done using it. Students may not use another student's login to log onto a computer. The only exception to this rule is when a staff member logs the student on under a generic user account.

Students may not share their computer passwords with anybody. They must follow reasonable safeguards in creating passwords and safeguarding them. Students will be held responsible for any wrongdoing committed under their login.

Students will not explore, access, alter, or tamper with system, security, network, or program files. Such activity is considered "hacking" by Durand Area Schools.

Students are not to download, install, or copy programs or system files onto the computer or delete system or program files from the network or computers.

Students may only use the network to access their "home" or specifically assigned shared directories. Any attempt to access other directories, files or folders will be considered "hacking" by Durand Area Schools.

Although Durand Area Schools' Internet connection is filtered, there is no guarantee that users will not encounter objectionable material while working on the Internet. If this happens, users are to immediately turn off their monitor and report the incident to a teacher, administrator, or other responsible adult.

Users may not use Durand Area Schools' technology for personal or private business, for product advertisement or political lobbying, or for making any financial commitments on the Internet.

Users are prohibited from the malicious use of technology. Students may not use technology to disrupt the use of technology by others, to harass, to discriminate against, to defame, or otherwise embarrass others.

Students violating the acceptable use policy will face disciplinary action up to and including: retraining, detention, referral to the principal, suspension, loss of computer or other technological equipment privileges, removal from technology classrooms, reimbursement to Durand Area Schools for costs incurred as a result of vandalism or negligence, or referral to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Students may also fail technology courses they are enrolled in as a result of losing computer privileges. There should be no expectation that a technology teacher will create alternative lessons or assessments for students who have had their technology privileges pulled.

Durand Area Schools do not warrant the functions of district technology. The district does not warrant the system will meet any specific requirements the user may have, or that it will be error free or uninterrupted. The district will not be liable for any direct or indirect, incidental, or consequential damages including lost data, information, or time sustained or incurred in connection with the use, operation, or inability to use the system.

**Bertha Neal Elementary School
Robert Kerr Elementary School
Student Handbook Acknowledgement**

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS PAGE

Please sign and return this page for each child attending Bertha Neal and/or Robert Kerr Elementary School(s).

*** I have read the Bertha Neal/Robert Kerr Student Handbook available online at www.durand.k12.mi.us**

- Go to: Schools ☐ Bertha Neal Elementary - OR -
- Go to: Schools ☐ Robert Kerr Elementary
- If you are unable to access the Handbook online, you may request a paper copy from the office.

*** I have reviewed the policies and procedures contained in this handbook.**

*** My signature below is my affirmation that I am aware of its contents.**

*** I have contacted the school and received clarification regarding any section, policy, or procedure described within that was not clear to me.**

*** My signature below signifies my permission for my child to attend school sponsored field trips.**

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Name (please print)

Parent/Guardian Name (please print)

Student Name (please print)

Grade

Date

Authorization for Each Prescribed/Non Prescribed Medication or Treatment

To the Parent:

The following information is necessary for any student to use prescribed medications in school. All spaces must be complete.

Name of Student

Address

City

School

Grade

H. I am requesting permission for my child, named above, to: (check one or both)

_____ use or receive the following prescribed medications
****medications must be in the original prescription container****

Medication: _____

Dosage: _____

_____ self-administer such medication(s) in the presence of an authorized staff member

_____ receive prescribed treatment

I. I will assume responsibility for the safe delivery of the medication to school. Parent should bring medication to school.
 All medicine will be kept in the school office.

J. I will notify the school immediately if there is any change in the use of the medication or the prescribed treatment.

K. I release and agree to hold the Board of Education, its officials, and its employees harmless from any and all liability foreseeable or unforeseeable for damages or injury resulting directly or indirectly from this authorization.

Michigan law requires a physician's written order and parent/guardian authorization for administration of medication.

 Signature of Parent

 Date

 Home Telephone

 Work Telephone

 Physician's Signature

 Date

 Physician's Address

 Physician's Phone

Bertha Neal Elementary and Robert Kerr Elementary **Pre-Arranged Absence Request**

It is essential that your child(ren) be in school each and every day that they are physically able to be. Absences, due to illness, will be excused with a parent note or phone call.

The school recognizes that family educational or vacation opportunities do occur outside of the school vacation calendar. It is requested that extended leaves be limited to opportunities that **absolutely cannot** be arranged during the scheduled non-school days in the school calendar.

It is required that "excused" pre-arranged absences for family vacations or extended leaves be requested through Mr. Cawson/Mrs. Worsham. Please return this completed form within 7 days prior to the absences.

My Child(ren) _____

Will be absent from school on the following date(s): _____

Due to the following reason:

_____ Family Vacation (this includes hunting and fishing)

_____ Funeral

I am mindful that my child's success is directly related to establishing and maintaining good school attendance.

Parent Signature and Date: _____

Principal's Signature and Date: _____

Cc: Teacher

Student CA 60