



Family Handbook

2025 - 2026

Mon. – Thurs. 8:25 – 3:30

Friday 8:25 – 2:00

Half Days 8:25 – 11:30

The times listed above are the actual
start and end times for classes.

Phone (231) 947-7474 Fax (231) 947-7667

7224 Supply Road, Traverse City, MI 49696

www.woodlandschooltc.org



**Welcome to Woodland School and
the 2025 - 2026 school year!**



Artwork By Gerald Post

This handbook serves as an overview of our program and policies and should answer many of your questions. Please take the time to read through the handbook and call the office should you need more information.

*Thank you for being part of the
Woodland School Family.*

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Staff Listing & Contact Information - Main Line (231) 947-7474

Primary Village	Position	Voicemail Extension	Email
Gorney, Mary	K-2 Teacher	104	mgorney@woodlandschooltc.org
Umstead, Kelsey	K-2 Teacher	103	kumstead@woodlandschooltc.org
Hoepfner, Melissa	K-1 Teacher	106	mhoepfner@woodlandschooltc.org
Milne, Jessie	2-3 Teacher	107	jmilne@woodlandschooltc.org
Middle Village	Position	Voicemail Extension	Email
Goodrick-Scanlon, Lesley	4-5 Teacher	115	lgoodrick@woodlandschooltc.org
Hadd, Sarah	3-5 Teacher	119	shadd@woodlandschooltc.org
Crigier, Carrie	3-5 Teacher	118	cacrigier@woodlandschooltc.org
Upper Village	Position	Voicemail Extension	Email
Ziegler, Nicole	6-8 Teacher	109	nziegler@woodlandschooltc.org
Milne, Ned	6-8 Teacher	121	nmilne@woodlandschooltc.org
Post, Chris	6-8 Teacher	120	cpost@woodlandschooltc.org
Kreykes, Kathy	6-8 Teacher	110	kkreykes@woodlandschooltc.org
Specials & Support Staff	Position	Voicemail Extension	Email
Dowling, Laura	Library/Reading Support	108	ldowling@woodlandschooltc.org
Giem, Kristine	Special Services Teacher	117	kgiem@woodlandschooltc.org
Kreykes, Kathy	Art Teacher	110	kkreykes@woodlandschooltc.org
Rancour, Stephanie	PE & Health Teacher	111	srancour@woodlandschooltc.org
Terhune, Julie	Band/Primary Music/ Special Services Teacher	112	jterhune@woodlandschooltc.org
Owen, Mickey	Band/Choir/Percussion/ Musical Theater	113	mowen@woodlandschooltc.org
Wheeler, Whitney	School Counselor	122	wwheeler@woodlandschooltc.org
Rose Hudson	Math support		rhudson@woodlandschooltc.org
Brian Nefcy	Math Support		bnefcy@woodlandschooltc.org
Office & Administration	Position	Voicemail Extension	Email
Hammerberg, Betsie	Administrative Reception	100	bhammerberg@woodlandschooltc.org
Miller, Amy	Office Manager	101	amiller@woodlandschooltc.org
Watson, Richard	Director	102	rwatson@woodlandschooltc.org
Brewer, Daniel	Maintenance		maintenance@woodlandschooltc.org

Dial 1 (231) 947-7474 to reach the reception office during school hours. To leave a message after hours, dial the school and then press “*” (the star key) and the desired extension when the answering system engages. You will be transferred directly to the voicemail box.

August 2025

S	Mo	Tu	W	Th	Fri	Sa
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September 2025

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28	29	30				

October 2025

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November 2025

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December 2025

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January 2026

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25	26	27	28	29	30	31



2025-2026

August 25-28: Teacher work days

August 28: Back to School Picnic 5:30-7

September 2: 1st day of school for students - Half Day

October 1: Count Day

October 17: Half Day

October 31: Half Day

November 7: No school for students - Professional Development

November 25: Half Day

November 26-28: Thanksgiving Break

December 5: End of 1st Trimester - Half Day

December 19: Half Day

December 22-January 2: Holiday Break

January 5: School resumes

January 16: End of 1st Semester

January 19: No School for students - Professional Development

February 11: Count Day

February 13: Half Day

February 16-17: Mid Winter Break

March 20: 2nd Trimester classes end - Half Day

March 26: Half Day

March 27: No School for Students - Professional Development

March 30 - April 3: Spring Break

April 6: Easter Break

April 7: School resumes

May 22: Half Day

May 25: Memorial Day

June 10: Last day of school for students - Half Day

June 11-12: Make up days

Please visit the Woodland School webpage to view and add the school Google calendar to your phone or computer.

February 2026

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March 2026

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April 2026

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May 2026

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June 2026

S	Mo	Tu	W	Th	Fri	Sa
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Key

- Holiday/Vacation Day
- / Half Day for Students
- ☆ Count Day
- ⬡ Teacher Work Day / PD
- ⊗ Make up days for inclement weather

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE INFORMATION

EMERGENCY CARDS & BACK TO SCHOOL PAPERWORK

It is essential that we have current information on file for each student. Please complete and return a yellow emergency card for each student, as well as the various forms in your back to school envelope. Please notify the office immediately when health or contact information changes.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

School begins promptly at 8:25am. It is important for students to arrive at school on time. Because adult supervision is not available earlier than 8:15am, it is expected that students will not arrive at school any earlier. If a student arrives before 8:15am they are to wait outside until 8:15am. Then head directly to their classroom.

Students who arrive at school after 8:25am must be accompanied to the office by their parent/driver and signed in. Students are required to obtain a tardy slip in the office and present it to their teacher upon arrival.

Primary and Middle Village students can be marked absent am or pm. Upper Village students will have attendance marked for each period.

During school hours, a student will not be released to any person not listed on the emergency card without the written or verbal permission of the parent. The person to whom the child is being released is required to sign the log in the office. Identification will be required if the person is not known to staff. Teachers may only release a child to an adult after receiving notification from the Director or office staff.

School dismisses at 3:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, unless there is a scheduled half-day. It is very important that your child be picked up promptly at the end of the school day, as teachers and other staff have end of the day assignments and meetings. Please be considerate of staff schedules.

For your child's protection and safety, students will be picked up in front of the school's main building. Do not encourage your child to meet you in another location, as you may compromise their safety. If students are not in front of the building at dismissal time, parents are asked to park their car and walk down to escort their child to the vehicle. Students may not walk up to cars without being accompanied by an adult.

If you give permission for someone else to pick up your child at dismissal (other than arranged carpool), please call or send a note indicating the date and with whom they will be riding. You should call the school office if your child will be riding a public bus and they are not a regular rider.

DISMISSAL

Students are required to stay in the designated paved area in front of the building during the dismissal process. A staff member will announce each car as it drives up, and those students will proceed to their car. Students who do not stay in the designated paved area will be sent to the main office and must be picked up by their driver. Unless prior permission has been granted, students should be picked up at dismissal time. Please, notify the office if you will be late. If you are meeting with a teacher after school or attending an after school event, it is your responsibility to be here at dismissal and to be with your child.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Kalkaska Public Transit Authority (KPTA) offers bus transportation for a fee from Kalkaska, South Boardman, and Fife Lake. Call 258-6808 for information. Bay Area Transit Authority (BATA) offers transportation for a fee from the greater Traverse City Area. Call 941-2324 for information.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is a critical part of the learning process. If your child is absent for any reason or will be more than 30 minutes late, please call or email the office prior to 9:00am. If we have not heard from you, a phone call will be made. Parents will be notified if absences and/or tardies exceed 10. A second letter will be sent after 20 absences of any kind and will outline possible courses of action. If you prefer, you may call or email prior to an absence, during non-school hours, and leave attendance related messages on extension 100 or at woodland@woodlandschooltc.org. Please note, if your student is absent they may not attend any after school activities that day.

COMPULSORY SCHOOL LAW

Michigan School Code section 380.1561 states, in part, "...every parent, guardian, or other person in this state having control and charge of a child from the age of 6 to the child's sixteenth birthday shall send that child to a public school during the entire school year. The child's attendance shall be continuous and consecutive for the school year fixed to the school district in which the child is enrolled." Violation of the truancy statute requires school personnel to issue complaints against the student's parent or legal guardian.

ABSENCES DUE TO ILLNESS

Please follow the guidelines below. Your adherence to these policies helps create a healthier learning environment for your children and the entire Woodland community.

- **Notify the office if your child has a confirmed illness that is contagious. For example: strep throat, hand foot and mouth, bronchitis, pneumonia, the flu, pink eye, lice, etc.**
- **Notify the office of symptoms including fever (100.4 or higher), vomiting, diarrhea, eye discharge, and severe cough/sore throat. Students must be free of any of these symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school. In cases of lice and pink eye, please confirm that necessary treatment has begun.**

During certain circumstances a note from a physician may be required.

Every effort will be made to help children stay connected with class curriculum during extended illnesses. However, it is impossible to recreate hands-on lessons and in class instruction. Please notify the office and your child's teachers directly when requesting take-home materials. Often, more than one day notice is required.

When extended illnesses occur, please notify the office in writing and provide a doctor's note when possible.

If a student becomes ill or injured during school, we will contact parents/guardians before seeking medical care. Emergency contacts will be notified if parent/guardians are not able to be reached. In extreme circumstances, it may be necessary to contact 911 first. Accident/injury forms are routinely completed and will be made available to parents/guardians as needed.

EDUCATIONAL VACATIONS WHILE SCHOOL IS IN SESSION

Woodland School expects students to attend classes daily. **Please make it a priority to plan vacations during non-school days.** Such plans must be discussed with and approved by the school Director. In the event that a family decides to vacation at a time when school is in session, the following procedure is in place:

1. Send written notification to teacher(s) stating dates of absence.
2. Fill out the Extended Trip Absence Form (available on the school website)
3. Upon returning, check with the teacher to make up missed assignments.

Teachers will not assume the responsibility to create assignments for children while they are on vacation.

MEDICATION

All medication must be brought to the office by an adult with the Woodland School's prescription medication form (signed by a doctor and parent/guardian) or non-prescription medication form signed by a parent/guardian. Forms are available in the office and on our website. **Please prepare medications and the necessary forms in advance of overnight field trips.**

Students may not carry medication with them at school or on field trips, with the exception of emergency medications such as inhalers and Epi-Pens.

Prescription Medicines:

Must be brought to school by an adult with the proper medical authorization form signed by a doctor and parent/guardian. School personnel cannot administer medication except in accordance with the physician's written instructions indicated on the form.

Prescription medicines must be:

- delivered by an adult.
- clearly labeled with the student's name and dosage instructions.
- in the container provided by the pharmacy.
- accompanied by the prescription medication form, signed by a doctor and parent/guardian.

Included in prescription medications are inhalers and Epi-Pens.

Over-the Counter Medicines:

Over-the-counter medications (ibuprofen, Tylenol, Benadryl, etc) must be:

- delivered by an adult.
- labeled for the student.
- accompanied by a non-prescription form (signed by a parent/guardian) with dosage instructions.

COLD WEATHER RECESS

All students go outside for recess. Students are expected to come to school dressed appropriately for the outside weather conditions. Students will not be sent outside in case of rain or when temperatures are 0° or lower.

On rare occasions, students recovering from illness may stay in from recess for one day with a note from home. More than one day requires a doctor's recommendation.

OUTDOOR BEHAVIOR

Students are not allowed to throw, kick, or propel items such as snow, acorns, sticks, etc. on school grounds. Furthermore, students are not allowed to be outside the school building without permission or supervision. Outdoors, students are expected to:

1. follow directions the first time they are given.
2. use equipment properly.
3. not fight or play fight.
4. not name-call, tease, swear, or be vulgar.
5. stop playing and go inside when signaled by outdoor supervisor.
6. respect all people and property.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION/ SNOW DAY POLICY

Woodland School will follow the lead of the Traverse City Area Public Schools (TCAPS) in making the decision to cancel or delay classes due to weather conditions. Woodland may or may not be listed individually on local public TV and radio stations when there are closings or delays. Please note that if TCAPS is closed or delayed due to weather, then Woodland School will follow their lead.

If TCAPS is not in session on a day that Woodland is in session and the weather conditions are deemed unsafe for travel, we will cancel school. This closure will be announced with the typical media outlets.

If you have joined the REMIND text alert system, you will receive an early morning notification. Generally, we do not close school early if conditions worsen throughout the day. However, please feel free to pick up your child/children as you see fit.

*Please note that we do not follow the Traverse City Public Schools' calendar for such things as teacher work days, conferences, etc. Check the handbook calendar or the always current Google calendar for our scheduled days off during the school year.

PARKING

Employee and visitor cars should be parked in the designated parking area. **For safety reasons, parking is not allowed in front of the school building or on the grass in the turnaround during school hours.**

VISITORS

All visitors to the school, including parent volunteers, must sign in and out on the sheet in the Reception Office and wear the provided visitor or volunteer badge.

Students may not bring a visitor to school without prior written approval of their teacher or the Director. Permission must be given at least **one day prior to the visit**. The parent or legal guardian of a visiting student must fill out an emergency card in the office before their child will be allowed to visit the school. We encourage visits to be scheduled for no more than a half-day. All rules apply to the visiting student.

PET POLICY

Pets are not allowed on the Woodland School property during school hours, during the before-school drop-off or the after-school pick-up, or when students are present for events outside of the school day such as cross-country. When walking the school property at other times, please pick up after your pet and use a leash.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Parental involvement in a child's education is one of the most important factors in their academic success. The most important kind of involvement is associated with the things you do regularly with your children at home, e.g. reading to them, asking them about what they are working on, etc. We encourage you to get involved in your child's education in these sorts of ways.

Woodland School also welcomes and encourages parent involvement as volunteers. We need the enthusiastic and dedicated efforts of parents and others in the community and are fortunate to have many wonderful volunteers. Some of the areas you may want to consider include volunteering in a classroom, assisting with pizza lunch, leading primary electives, driving for field trips, and assisting with costumes, props, and ticket sales at theater productions.

Prior to volunteer activity, all volunteers will be required to complete a Volunteer Agreement, available in the office and on our website, giving the school authority to conduct a criminal background check. Volunteer background checks are updated annually, so new paperwork must be filled out each school year.

Whenever possible, please schedule your volunteer time with your child's teacher or other Woodland staff member. When reporting to the school to volunteer, please do the following:

1. Sign the volunteer log in the office, including date and time of arrival, and pick up a volunteer badge.
2. Attend to your duties and activities.
3. Sign out with the date and time of departure and return volunteer badge.

Parents who are not volunteering but just wish to visit their child's classroom are encouraged to make prior arrangements with the classroom teacher and must check in with the office upon arrival. If you need to bring a younger child with you, please understand that if your child becomes loud or disruptive you will need to leave the classroom so the learning process is not disrupted for our students.

Except for brief interchanges, teachers are not available to talk with parents during school hours. If you require a conference with your child's teacher, they will be happy to schedule a time to meet with you that does not conflict with instructional time.

FAMILY COUNCIL

The Family Council is a group of parents, administrators, and teachers that provides service to the school community in a variety of ways. Every Woodland parent is encouraged to participate. Watch the Woodland School newsletter and the Family Council bulletin board for details on upcoming meetings and ways to be involved.

PARENT/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Woodland staff voicemail accounts are checked daily. Parents are encouraged to use email or the voice mail system when possible to contact staff members. Please note that office staff is limited and the campus is vast. The time periods when school is starting and dismissing are particularly busy. During these times, please limit messages that must be delivered to students and staff to those of an urgent nature.

Stay connected by:

Reading our newsletters.
Joining the REMIND text notification system
Downloading the school Google calendar to your phone/computer.
Joining the Woodland School Family Council Facebook group

FIELD TRIPS

Permission slips will be sent home indicating the date, time, and location of all school field trips. Students who have not returned their permission slip, signed by a parent or guardian, by the date indicated on the permission slip will not be allowed to participate. If there is a fee for the trip, include the correct amount of cash or a check payable to **Woodland School**.

Telephone or send a note to your child's teacher if you are giving permission for someone else to pick up your child from the field trip (beyond normally arranged carpools), **or if you will be picking up your child at the location of the field trip**. Notes should contain the date, child's first and last name, reason for the note, and parent's signature.

Please make sure students are dressed appropriately for weather conditions when preparing for a field trip, as they may be outdoors. Students are encouraged to wear Woodland School logo clothing on field trips. Logo clothing is sold periodically as a fundraising activity.

We often need parent drivers for field trips. In order to drive, a parent must complete a volunteer form, a driver form (available in the office and on the school website) and have on file a copy of their driver's license and proof of insurance. These forms are updated annually. Background checks will be done on all drivers and adults chaperoning school activities. We encourage you to complete this paperwork early in the year, in the event you decide to drive later for a field trip. Throughout the trip, parents are expected to follow all school rules and all directions from the lead teacher(s).

On many of our field trips, parent volunteers are needed. However, more adults typically volunteer to chaperone than necessary. For many reasons, not all who volunteer will be able to participate. Please do not arrive at field trip locations unless you were approved to chaperone.

INTERNET USE POLICY

Woodland School has the internet available for educational purposes only. All computers are protected with web filtering software. Students may use the internet only when there is an adult present. They may not use the internet before or after school or without supervision. Students may only access sites that contain appropriate material for school use. Any attempt to access inappropriate material will subject student to discipline under the school's discipline policies (see Acceptable Use Policy). This policy is located in the back of the handbook and on the school's website.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Woodland students and staff are expected to show respect, use good manners, provide help, be kind, and clean up after themselves. Respect yourself, respect others, and respect property (see Discipline section regarding Anti-bullying Policy).

BRINGING THINGS TO SCHOOL

Personal property that is not needed for educational purposes should not be brought to school (e.g. any electronic devices, toys, or valuable items). Cell phones are not allowed to be used or turned on during the school day. Woodland School will not be responsible for personal property that is lost or stolen.

Snowboards, skateboards, in-line skates, shoes with wheels, and other modes of transportation on wheels are not allowed unless part of an organized school activity. Materials that burn or cause damage, such as matches and lighters, are not allowed. Guns, knives and blades, or other weapons are not allowed.

Michigan law prohibits students from having guns or from having blades longer than three inches in their possession. Possession results in automatic expulsion.

LOST AND FOUND

Woodland School is not responsible for damages to or loss of items left unattended on driveway areas and all sidewalks. Items will be held for one month, and then donated to charity if not claimed. Encourage your child to check the Lost and Found (rack in the hallway outside the lunchroom) for items they cannot locate. Lost items can be easily returned if the student's name is on the item. **Please label everything.**

TELEPHONES

Students may not use a school telephone except in the case of an emergency or the student has permission from a teacher. Students should make arrangements for transportation, homework, instruments, lunch, etc. before coming to school. Student cell phones are not allowed to be used or turned on during the school day. *Please help our students be responsible.*

STUDENT APPEARANCE

Woodland School has basic student appearance principles that support our inclusive community. Any clothing or attire that promotes or encourages drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vaping, exhibits vulgarity, profane comments, marginalizing language, or sexual innuendos is strictly forbidden.

Students must wear tops, bottoms (or the equivalent, e.g. dresses), and shoes at all times. Undergarments or bathing suit attire are not considered a sole top or a bottom. Certain body parts must be covered in *all* circumstances for *all* students at *all* times: genitals, breasts, nipples, or buttocks may not be visible. Clothing must not be see through, and shirts must have fabric on all sides, covering front, back, and both sides of the body. Shoes are required by state law.

Teachers should focus on teaching without the additional and uncomfortable burden of monitoring student appearance. Do not put staff in a position where this becomes an issue. We are asking parents to be sensitive to the attire in which their students are coming to school. If clothing does become an issue, the administration may request a change in attire, if necessary, and parents will be contacted.

LUNCH

Woodland School does **NOT** have a lunch program. All students are expected to bring their own food and something to drink each day. We do have microwaves for student use.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Authorizing Agency: Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU) shall appoint Woodland School Board members, grant final approval to any recommended changes to the Woodland bylaws or charter documents, approve Woodland loans, and provide general oversight of the school's academic and administrative activities.

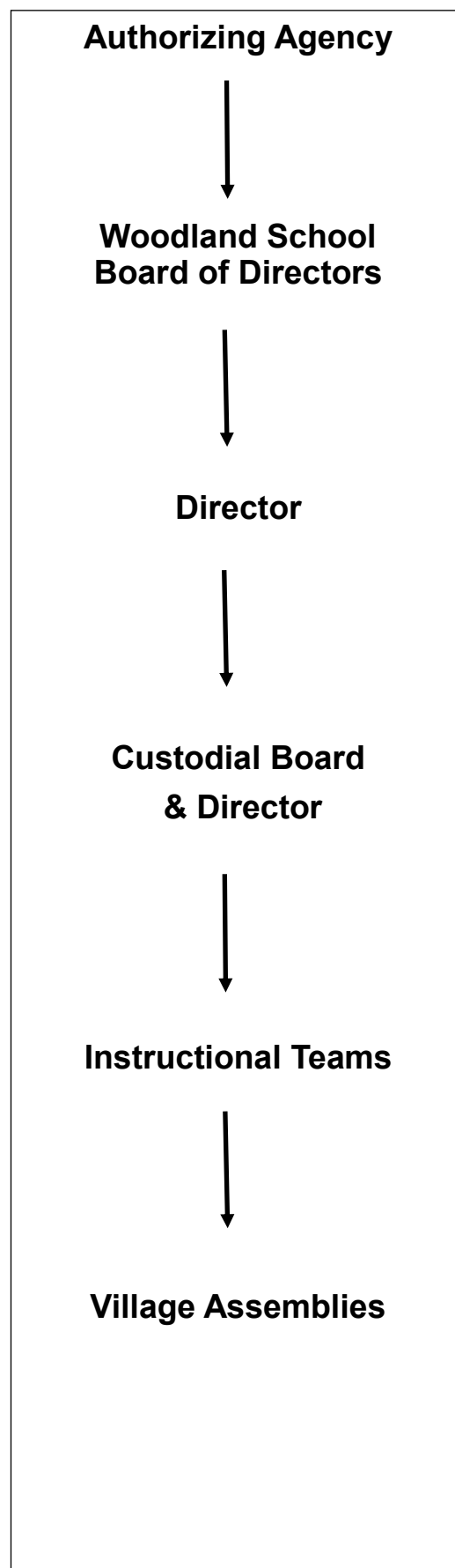
Woodland School Board of Directors (BoD): The Board of Directors provides oversight of school affairs. Some specific duties include the following: hiring and evaluating a school Director; approving the school budget; authorizing expenditures; developing and approving school policies; appointing school custodians; nominating new Board of Director members; selecting, approving, and recommending administrator salaries; and hearing parent concerns.

Director: The Director is the on-site administrator responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the school. The Director serves as agent for both the Custodial Board and the Board of Directors.

Custodial Board (CB): We use the term "custodial" to refer to the duties of "watching over" and "taking care" of the school. The Custodial Board is made up of staff members who have demonstrated a strong commitment to the school and are willing to watch over and care for it. This Board, in collaboration with the school Director, provides the on-site governance authority of the school. Duties include: approving significant changes in school programs, developing and implementing policies and procedures, selecting teaching personnel; recommending improvements to facilities and grounds, fulfilling charter obligations and other legal requirements; and in hearing parent concerns (per communication policy).

Instructional Teams: The Instructional Teams are composed of the full time teaching staff who teaches within a given village (K-3, 3-5, 6-8 each forms a "village"). They are responsible for designing, developing, and evaluating their respective programs consistent with the overall vision of the school. They administer their own budgets within school policies and practices and make recommendations for hiring new teachers and other staff within their programs.

Village Assemblies: Village Assemblies are made up of all students and staff within a given K-3, 3-5, or 6-8 village. The students and staff, within a given village, form a body which is given authority to make certain decisions in specified areas by majority vote. The organization - officers, meetings, powers and duties - is determined by each village assembly through negotiation with the Instructional Team (the teaching staff) and majority of the respective Village Assembly.

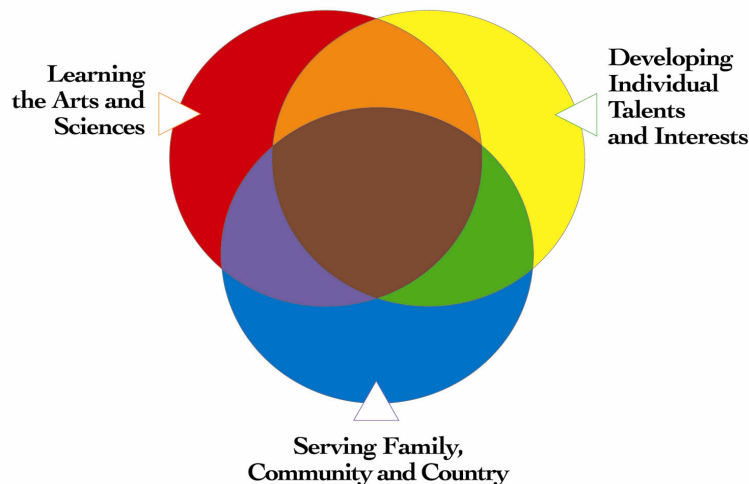


Basic Program Outline and Vision

Our mission is to help students to progressively improve their ability to understand and respond well to others and the world around them. We encourage this by developing, refining, and maintaining a learning environment where students *and* teachers:

- develop their talents and interests,
- mature in their understanding of, and participation in, democratic processes and service to community, and
- acquire the skills and wisdom of the past and present (math, science, history, English, music, art, etc.) to improve their talents, strengthen their potential to serve, and enrich their general ability to respond well to life's opportunities and challenges.

Woodland School Circles of Learning



There are three general, interactive areas that should characterize learning and teaching at Woodland School. We call them Circles of Learning. These "circles" are not separate, but are instead overlapping and supportive of one another.

Free and Responsible Development of Personal Talents & Interests

Our commitment to respecting student freedom and responsibility in the learning process is one of the distinguishing features of Woodland School. All children have unique talents and interests which, if nurtured and allowed to develop, enrich their own lives as well as the lives of those whom they are able to serve.

Choice and Responsibility. We do, and must, and should make many decisions for our children. It is important that they develop the habit of doing things that they may not want to do but which are necessary. However, if they are to learn true responsibility, we must also allow them liberty in choosing for themselves. Students need to have a large measure of freedom in choosing, initiating, and carrying out their learning. This must entail learning from both the positive and negative consequences of their choices.

Our challenge is to find non-coercive ways of helping students become *personally* responsible for their learning.

We Learn Best What We Care About

Besides learning responsibility, there are other bonuses that accompany the freedom to choose one's studies. Children who pursue learning which interests them are more likely to work hard, remain highly motivated, follow through when the road is tough, and retain what they learn along the way. Our challenge is to create learning spaces and learning opportunities where students are able to find and engage in learning about which they really care.

Citizenship & Community Membership

Developing democratic citizenship and worthy community membership have long been goals of public schooling. We embrace these goals, but we believe that they are best reached through direct participation in democratic processes at school rather than by simply studying about such practices.

Reasonable Boundaries.

Establishing reasonable boundaries is vital both to the school community and to individual learning efforts. Establishing these boundaries within a democratic, constitutional governance structure is a key goal of our school.

Learning Good Habits and Basic Duties

We must all learn the basic habits and duties necessary for living together peaceably. Being a citizen, family member, community member, cooperative worker, etc., require careful attention to developing good habits and cultivating a willingness to fulfill basic duties which contribute to peaceful and positive relations among people. Cleaning up after yourself, showing respect, using good manners, providing service, being kind, and so on, are examples.

Creating and Maintaining a Good School Community

Along with community acknowledged boundaries, service is the foundation of a good community. And service is most effective when it is entered into voluntarily. It is an important goal for us to develop options for service that are useful to our school community (and the broader community) and fun and educational for the students.

Authentic Participation in Arts and Sciences

It is our belief that nearly any interest that a student has, if pursued vigorously, will begin to make connections with many of the practices found in art, history, science, engineering, philosophy, politics, etc. This is because most of the knowledge and practices of the arts and sciences were developed by people and communities who vigorously pursued better ways of understanding and responding to life on earth. The wisdom and ways of these disciplines aid children in developing their own unique talents and interests and in refining their service to family, community, nation, and the world.

We Learn What We Do: The Importance of Direct Participation

We can learn some important things by observing, for instance, a skilled athlete. But to become skilled ourselves we must do more than watch, we must also participate in the sporting activity.

Likewise, if children are to become skilled in arts and sciences they need to do more than learn "about" these from textbooks, films, CD's and so forth; rather, they need to have first hand, authentic experience. It is an important goal for us to create more and better opportunities for students to get directly involved in scientific and artistic practices.

Repetition, Routine, and "General Preparedness"

General preparedness, preparing for what we really can't predict, but what we can anticipate, is an important aspect of education. Certain skills, techniques, and competencies need to be developed, extended, and maintained regularly so that learning opportunities are not missed and typical challenges do not overwhelm us. The nature of these is such that if they are not practiced regularly, they are lost. Routine practice and review (even when they are not what we feel like doing) are important when they are done with a purpose. This is the main rationale behind our math/language arts block in the morning and other daily routines.

We believe that if people are having significant experiences in these "circles of learning" described above, they will be more likely to feel confident, happy, and successful.

To facilitate these experiences at school requires the following:

- an environment that is safe and hospitable enough for students to get beyond concerns that cause them to be overly self-conscious or defensive. Getting beyond these concerns allows them to turn outward and engage in a healthy exploration of the world around them.
- a sense of being free to explore and make choices.
- an inviting array of activities, options, teachers, and resources which draw the interest and attention of the students.
- regular routines that develop good habits, appropriate discipline, and generally useful skills.

We incorporate the following general practices into our overall educational program believing they are especially well suited to nurturing our learning goals.

- multi-age groupings
- continuity with teachers from year to year
- small class sizes
- thematic interdisciplinary studies (e.g., special school-wide historical cycle)
- independent studies
- ecology/outdoor learning
- service opportunities
- strong art, music, and drama opportunities
- elective learning experiences
- required daily math and language arts
- alignment of learning activities and classes with Michigan Curriculum Framework standards

COMMUNICATION POLICY

At Woodland School we recognize the central role communication plays in the success of our school. We want to encourage honest, open, responsible, and respectful communication. Consistent and appropriate communication in an organization, especially when one has concerns, is best accomplished when an agreed on order is followed. We ask that as you seek to communicate your concerns to us, please follow the procedures outlined below.

PROCEDURES

1. If you have a question or concern about your child's school experience, please discuss this first with your child's teacher.

or

If you have a question or concern about administrative or other school issues, we ask that you briefly describe the issue to one of our administrative assistants (school secretaries) and they will either resolve the issue or direct you to someone who can.

We expect that most issues will be resolved at this first step with either the teacher or the office staff. However, if your issue is not resolved, please request a meeting with the Director.

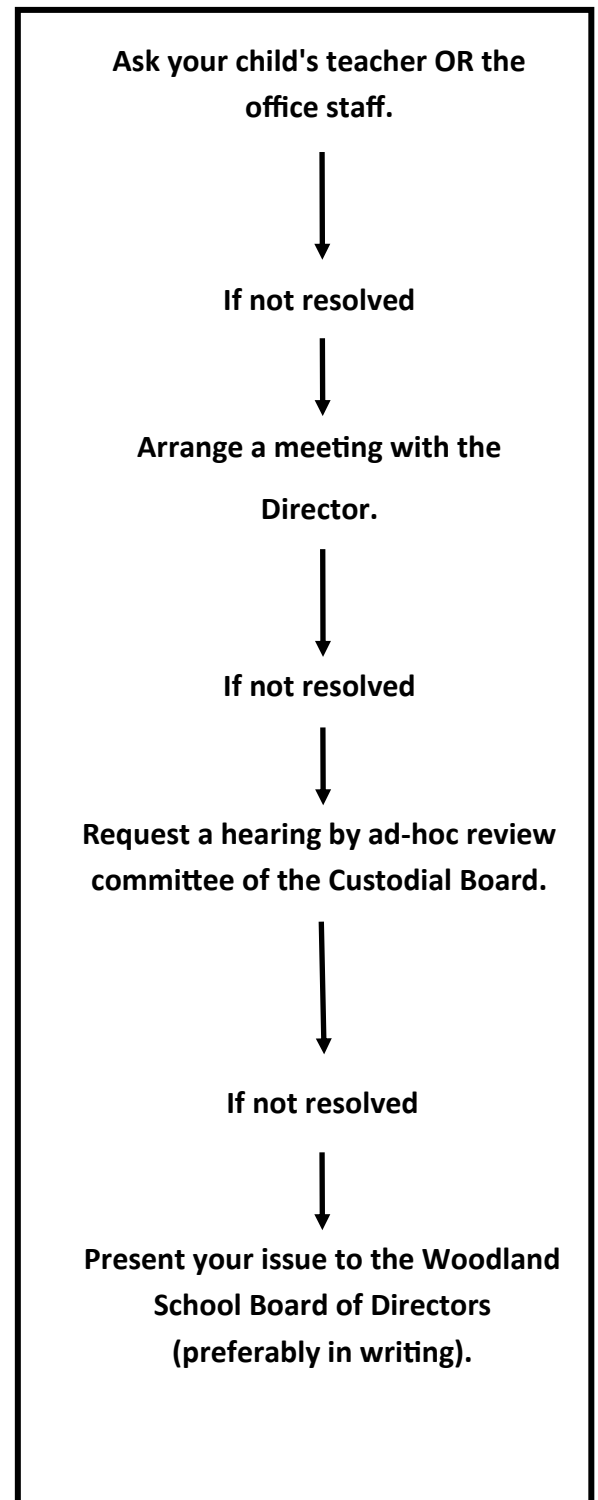
2. The Director will review the issue and will take whatever action is deemed necessary. (The Director may involve teachers or other staff members where appropriate.)

If your issue is not resolved at this step, you may make a request, in writing, for a hearing with the ad-hoc review committee of the Custodial Board.

3. The ad-hoc review committee of the Custodial Board will meet with you, along with the Director, and any other appropriate participants. This committee works to resolve the issue and determines whether or not it is reviewed by the Custodial Board.

If your issue is not resolved at this step, you are free to either submit your concern in writing to the Woodland School Board of Directors, or express your concern verbally during the public comment portion of a board meeting.

4. The Woodland School Board of Directors will hear and respond to your concern.



DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE

Certain standards of conduct are essential to creating and maintaining a good learning environment. The procedures to be followed where there is misconduct are outlined in summary form below (a copy of the full discipline policy is available in the office).

Student misconduct can be divided into two general types: major and minor. Minor misconduct is a situation where physical, emotional, or social safety of students or staff is not seriously threatened but where there is a problem to be resolved such as disputes between students, leaving messes, name calling, yelling, and class disruptions. Major misconduct is defined as willful and wanton acts of disrespect toward school personnel, students, or school property.

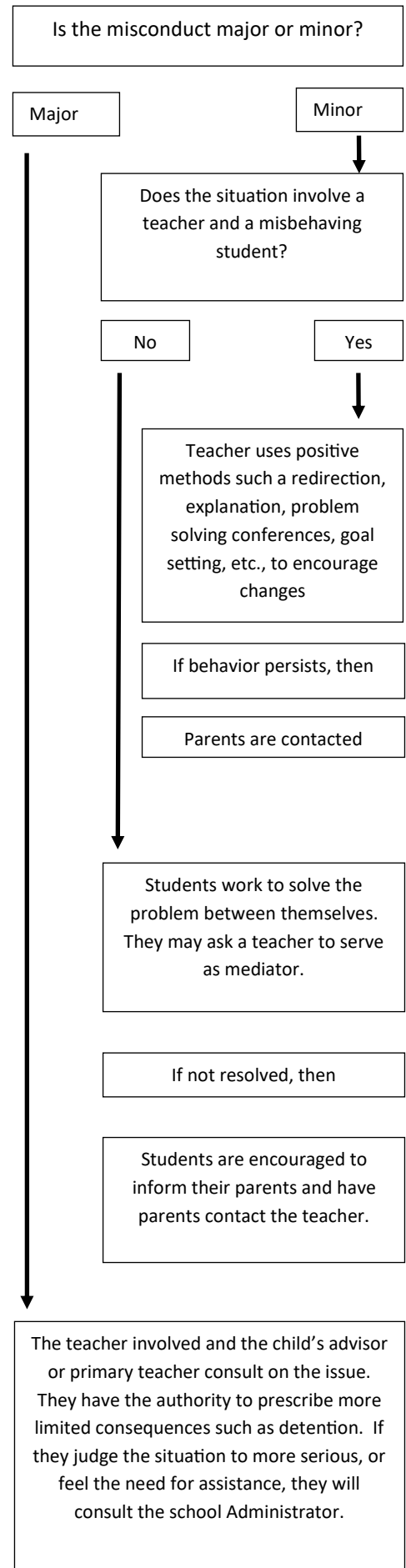
Examples include fighting, acts of defiance, persistent disobedience, blatant disrespect, profane language, willful destruction of school property, and use or possession of alcohol, drugs, or weapons.

In situations where minor misconduct involves a teacher and a misbehaving student, the teacher will use positive methods such as explanation, clarification of expectations, problem solving conferences, goal setting, etc. If the problem persists and is judged to be sufficiently problematic, the teacher will contact parents. Should a student's behavior continue without improvement, the cumulative effect may result in disciplinary action under the category of "major misconduct."

In other minor misconduct situations, the parties involved are expected to work things out with one another by discussing the problem and seeking a solution. Options may include asking a teacher to serve as a mediator. If this doesn't work, students are encouraged to involve their parents and have them contact the teacher. *Major* misconduct is immediately reported to the Director.

If student misconduct falls under the category of major misconduct, the teacher involved will first investigate the situation and consult with the student's advisor or primary teacher. Together they have the authority to administer limited consequences such as a one-day detention or suspension. If they feel that more serious consequences are in order (e.g., longer than one-day suspension or detention), they will consult with the Director. Students and their parents will be notified in writing (and in most cases verbally) of all decisions made. In all cases, the student in question will be given an opportunity to respond to the charges.

If a student is recommended for expulsion, both the Custodial Board and the Woodland School Board must approve the recommendation. Under such circumstances the student and the student's parent/guardian will be given written notice of the intention to expel and the reasons therefore, and will be given an opportunity to appear before the Woodland School Board to answer the charges. The hearing may be private, but Board action will be available to the public.



ILLEGAL DRUGS AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

No member of the Woodland School community may possess or use alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal drug or controlled substance at school or while participating in school functions. No one may encourage or advocate these activities or bring these substances into the school community. This policy includes adults not smoking on the school premises and while driving students in a car during a school function.

WEAPONS

Woodland School will not tolerate possession of a weapon by any individual, other than law enforcement personnel or those otherwise allowed by law (LEGAL REF: MCL 750.237a) while on the school's premises or at a school function. Any individual found in possession of a firearm in violation of the law or in possession of any other dangerous weapon will face discipline and legal action of the highest level. Students violating this policy will be expelled. Others will be dealt with as allowed by law and, in the case of an employee, up to and including discharge.

A weapon is defined as, but not limited to, a firearm, explosives or explosive device, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, brass knuckles, or any other device designed to inflict bodily harm. This policy shall also encompass such actions as look-alike items, false fire alarms, bomb threats, or intentional calls to falsely report a dangerous condition.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

While recognizing that students may require disciplinary action in various forms, the Board cannot condone the use of unreasonable force and fear as an appropriate procedure in student discipline.

Professional staff should not find it necessary to resort to physical force or violence to compel obedience. If all other means fail, the staff members may always resort to removal of the student from the classroom or school through the suspension or expulsion procedures.

Professional staff, as well as support staff, within the scope of their employment, may use and apply reasonable force and restraint to quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to others, to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects upon or within the control of the student, in self-defense, or for the protection of persons or property.

In accordance with state law, corporal punishment shall not be permitted. If any employee inflicts unnecessary, unreasonable, irrational, or inappropriate force upon a student, the student may be subject to discipline by the Board and possibly criminal assault charges. This prohibition applies as well to volunteers and those with whom the School contracts for services.

REQUIRED REPORTING

Woodland School is required by state law to report any suspected child abuse to the Family Independence Agency. Some behaviors must also be reported to civil authorities as violations of civil law. Other behaviors, such as acts of violence, theft, vandalism, arson, possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, weapons, assaults, extortion, and criminal sexual conduct will be reported to the proper authorities for possible prosecution.

The school's policy on **Searches and Seizures** is available for review in the Administrative Office.

Anti-Bullying, Harassment, Intimidation Policy (Title IX)

Harassment of students is prohibited and will not be tolerated. This includes inappropriate conduct by other students as well as any other person in the school environment, including employees, board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers. It is the policy of Woodland School to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school sponsored activities whether on or off school property.

Harassment is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough or is serious enough to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well being. This would include harassment based on any of the legally protected characteristics such as, sex, race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status, or disability. This policy, however, is not limited to these legal categories and includes any harassment that would negatively impact students. This would include such activities as stalking, bullying, name calling, taunting, hazing, and other disruptive behaviors.

Any student that believes they have been or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the teacher and the Director. Complaints will be investigated accordingly following policy. Every student should, and every staff member **must** report any situation that they believe to be improper harassment of a student. Reports may be made to those identified above. If the investigation finds harassment 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 from Board members.

Retaliation against any person for complaining about harassment or participating in a harassment investigation is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment. Intentionally false harassment reports, made to get someone in trouble are also prohibited. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above. The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been harassment, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, the student should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

Telecommunications Acceptable Use Policy

The purpose of the Woodland telecommunication network is to facilitate information exchange in support of the Woodland mission. Internet and network services are provided on school owned computing and networking systems to further the school's mission of research, instruction and public service. Employee and student uses of the network must be consistent with this mission and the specifics of this policy. The school reserves the right to monitor and log all network activity, including e-mail, without notice, and therefore employees and students should have no expectations of privacy in the use of these resources.

Use of the school telecommunications network is a revocable privilege, requiring compliance and conformity with this acceptable use policy. Administrators must enforce this policy and inform their employees, students, and contractors of this policy.

Communications in this medium are protected by the same laws and policies and are subject to the same limitations as communications in other media. However, all users must exercise caution when committing confidential information to electronic media because the confidentiality of such material cannot be guaranteed. For example, e-mail messages can be saved indefinitely on the receiving computer and copies can easily be made and forwarded to others either electronically or on paper.

Additionally, under the Michigan Freedom of Information Act (Public Act 442 of 1976 as amended), electronic files are treated in the same manner as paper files. Any official school documents (as defined by law) in the files of employees of Woodland School are considered to be public and may be subject to inspection through FOIA. In such cases, the Freedom of Information coordinator should inspect files to determine which portions may be exempt from disclosure. Any inspection of electronic files, and any action based upon such inspection, will be governed by all applicable U.S. and Michigan laws and by school policies.

Appropriate Uses of the Telecommunication Network

1. Communication and exchange directly relating to the mission, instructional purposes, and professional work activities of the Woodland School.
2. Announcements of school procedures, policies, services or activities, but not commercial advertising.
3. Use for advisory, standards, research, analysis, and professional society activities related to the user's duties as a school employee.
4. Use in applying for or administering grants or contracts for school research or programs, but not for non-school related fund-raising or public relations activities.
5. Communication and exchange for professional development, to maintain currency or research issues related to the users assigned school activities.

Prohibited Uses of the Telecommunication Network

1. Use that is illegal.
2. Use that violates the security, privacy, and confidentiality of policies, practices of the school and applicable laws of the State of Michigan and release of material that is exempt from disclosure as listed in section 13 of the Freedom of Information Act.
3. Use for access to, display of or distribution of (a) indecent or obscene material; (b) traffic pornographic material; or (c) material in violation of the school policy prohibiting sexual or other forms or harassment.
4. Use for profit-making activities unless specific to the mission of the school.
5. Use for private and personal business transactions or for partisan or non-partisan political activities.
6. Use for playing games or non-business related computer activities that generate traffic.

Procedures for Enforcement

Administrators are responsible for staff compliance with provisions of this policy and for investigating suspected non-compliance. These responsibilities include:

1. Investigation of alleged or suspected non-compliance with the provisions of this policy. These are to be conducted with due regard for the privacy rights of all persons and users involved.
2. Suspension of service to users when deemed necessary for the operation and/or integrity of the network. Use privileges, and/or password access may be withdrawn without notice.
3. Progressive discipline, up to and including discharge or expulsion from school, may be appropriate in some cases of non-compliance with this policy. Criminal or civil action may be initiated in appropriate instances.

Staff Responsibilities for Supervising and Educating Students in the Use of Telecommunications

1. Telecommunications access sites will be identified and their utilization regularly monitored.
2. Telecommunications access sites are to be supervised by instructional staff at all times when students are scheduled to be present.
3. Security of telecommunications equipment will be a priority at all times to prevent unauthorized use.
4. Students will be allowed direct access to on-line resources at the discretion of appropriate school staff and the express written permission of a parent/guardian on the Policy for Acceptable Use of Online Resources document that is to be retained in the student's file. Parents will be informed of this policy in building handbooks as well as in newsletters at least once each year.
5. Use of telecommunications facilities or on-line resources, by staff or students that does not meet the district's specific use guidelines will be considered a matter for disciplinary action, including suspension of access and other disciplinary measures as deemed necessary.
6. Students are to be informed of and reminded regularly regarding the specific use guidelines. The technology curriculum shall include instructional objectives for students to learn the appropriate uses of computers and telecommunications.



Specific Use Guidelines

1. All use of telecommunications and on-line information resources must be in support of education and research and consistent with the purposes and activities of Woodland School.
2. Any use of telecommunications in the district for commercial or for-profit purposes, for personal and private business, or for product advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited.
3. All communications and information accessible via telecommunications should be assumed to be private property and not legal to further copy or disseminate except as permitted by copyright law.
4. No use of telecommunications is to disrupt its use by others. Hardware and software shall not be destroyed, modified, or abused in any way.
5. Accessing multi-user talk sessions or games except as part of a teacher-directed classroom activity is not allowed.
6. Malicious use of telecommunications to develop files that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computing system and/or damage the software components of a computer or computing system is prohibited.
7. The illegal installation or transfer of copyrighted software or files for use on school computers is prohibited. Users may not transfer files, shareware, or software from information services and electronic bulletin boards without the permission of the appropriate staff. The user will be liable to pay the cost of any file, shareware, or software transferred, whether intentional or accidental, without such permission.
8. Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, and other antisocial behaviors are prohibited. The user specifically agrees not to submit, publish, or display on the system any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually-oriented, threatening, racially offensive, or illegal information, or software in violation of any local, state, or federal law. Such action is a breach of school policies subjecting the user to disciplinary action, and the user may be responsible for any loss, costs, or damages, including reasonable attorney's fees incurred by the system, the district, and the system administrators relating to, or arising out of any breach of this section by the user.
9. Use of telecommunications to access or process pornographic material, inappropriate text or other files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the system or material not specifically made available by the district is prohibited.
10. Subscriptions to listservs in schools are restricted to instructional staff. Mail from listservs must be monitored regularly and deleted from the personal mail directory to avoid excessive use of file space.
11. Telecommunications accounts are to be used only by the authorized owner of the account for the authorized purpose. Users shall not intentionally seek information about, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data or passwords belonging to other users, or misrepresent other users on the system.

[DO NOT SIGN THIS COPY. STUDENT WILL BE PROVIDED A SEPARATE COPY]

Student/Parent Contract for Use of Telecommunications

Students may have access to information using telecommunications equipment. Since not all internet materials are suitable for school-age children, the school will implement policies to assure that students have appropriate experiences with on-line resources:

- All telecommunications access sites in school buildings will be monitored, students will only work in those areas under adult supervision, and security in them will be maintained to assure that computers are not used without permission and only for approved purposes.
- On-line resources will not be available to students unless access is allowed by a written parent statement on the policy for acceptable use of on-line resources document. This policy and the parent consents will be reviewed annually. Users will not be allowed to share user accounts. Furthermore, misuse of computer hardware or software of any type will be dealt with as a serious disciplinary offense. Agreement to abide by the stipulations of the Woodland's acceptable use policy will be required of users before access to the Internet is allowed.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS CONSENT

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the Telecommunications Policy for Acceptable Use of On-line Resources at Woodland School, particularly the "Specific Use Guidelines."

**DO NOT SIGN THIS COPY
STUDENT WILL BE PROVIDED A SEPARATE COPY**

Student Signature _____ Date _____

I have read, understand and give my permission for the above-named student to have access to on-line resources provided by Woodland School. I agree 1) that this student will abide by the Policy for Acceptable Use of On-line Resources, 2) that Woodland School will not be held responsible for any effect of the student's use of the system, and that 3) I will accept responsibility for any effect of the student's use of the system.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Adopted: 05/30/13