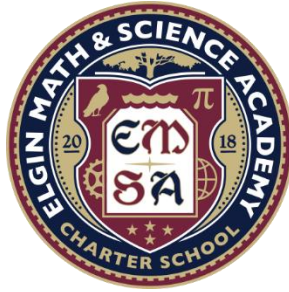




# ELGIN MATH & SCIENCE STUDENT HANDBOOK 2024 - 2025

*We are crew, not passengers!*



July 1, 2024

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students of EMSA:

Welcome to the Elgin Math & Science Academy Charter School! At EMSA, we know that students reach their highest potential through intentional and thoughtful instructional practice. Starting with the leadership of the school, we model the social responsibility to create powerful instructional outcomes for all our students in three dimensions of student achievement: mastery of knowledge and skills, development of character, and the ability to produce high-quality work.

As active contributors to a better world, EMSA students will learn to be engaged citizens through a program that asks for their best each day and shows them the way. Our staff strives to carry out this mission each day. We ask for your commitment to our mission.

This handbook includes policies and procedures to help us accomplish this. Please be sure to read it and keep it for reference. Although it is not comprehensive, we tried to make it helpful and clear. Let us work together to provide a positive atmosphere and the best education possible for our students. Contact us any time if you have questions or concerns.

***We are so excited to bring the WOW and WONDER of this engaging program to our students. Thank you for choosing to be a part of our crew! We are ready to take off!***

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jacquelyn Willer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jacquelyn Willer  
*School Principal*

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# FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL 2024/2025

## FIRST DAY FOR STUDENTS:

August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. FULL ATTENDANCE DAY.

## OUR MISSION AND VISION

### MISSION:

The Elgin Math and Science Academy is an EL Education public charter school.

**We strive to support the whole child and develop socially responsible leaders who aspire to create a better world.**

### VISION:

EMSA will be an inspirational model for K – 8 public education.

**Together, we will equip our students to be successful in a changing world, and we will empower them to think critically with a global perspective while living out our Habits of Scholarship: Respect, Responsibility, Courage, and Creativity.**

## EMSA NORMS

### **Respect:**

1. I can value myself, others, and the environment through the actions of listening, caring, and sharing.
2. I can build mutual trust where all voices are heard and honored.

### **Responsibility:**

1. I can be mindful, prepared, and ready for learning.
2. I can engage in all activities and take ownership of my actions.

### **Courage:**

1. I can grapple with and overcome challenges by believing in myself.
2. I can help others to dive in, get stuck, and push through.

### **Creativity:**

1. I can challenge myself to explore and express new ideas.
2. I can appreciate the unique thoughts and work of others.

## **HABITS OF SCHOLARSHIP**

Traditionally, characteristics such as completing homework or assignments in a timely manner have directly impacted students' grades. In that model, students' grades are affected by their learner characteristics, leaving parents confused as to why their student got a "B" in math when he gets "A's" on all of the tests. Standards Based Grading gives all stakeholders (parents, students, and teachers) a better picture of what the student knows, and separately, how the student is able to use the Habits of Scholarship (HOS). Each grade level may choose to focus on specific learner characteristics that are appropriate to the development of the student at that given age. Our Habits of Scholarship at EMSA are Courage, Creativity, Respect and Responsibility.

## **DISCIPLINE AND CONDUCT**

### **STUDENT UNIFORM POLICY**

A student's appearance, including dress and hygiene, must not disrupt the educational process or compromise standards of health and safety. The EMSA uniform policy is in effect anytime students are in the school building and at most school functions. Faculty and staff strictly enforce the student uniform policy. EMSA does not prohibit hairstyles historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture, including, but not limited to, protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists. A student not in full EMSA uniform or in a uniform that disrupts the educational process or compromises standards of health and safety can be subject to:

- Receiving warnings
- Placed in silent study hall until dress code is corrected
- Sent home if dress code is not correctable

*\*EMSA and EMSA staff will not provide uniform "loaners" or replacements.*

**Shirts and outerwear** (*approved t-shirt/polo vendors: French Toast website, EMSA, EPTC online Spirit Store*)

- Students must wear unaltered navy or maroon, EMSA school t-shirts or polos every day.
- Students may not wear anything over the EMSA t-shirt/polo except for plain navy or maroon sweatshirts.
- Long-sleeved shirts worn under a t-shirt/polo are not permitted.
- Hoodies are not permitted
- Coats, non-navy/maroon sweatshirts, or any other outerwear are not permitted to be worn in school or taken anywhere in the building at any time and must be left in the locker all day with the exception of students that are located in the admin building.

*\*Outerwear outside the EMSA uniform policy is permitted when students are transitioning to another building, during recess, and during outdoor physical education class.*

### **Pants/skirts/shorts**

- Dress and jean pants, shorts, and skirts are the only types of bottoms permitted.
- Athletic shorts, leggings, capri pants/shorts, spandex, and spandex-like shorts/pants, and all non-dress and non-jean bottom types are not permitted.
- Pants, shorts, and skirts must be plain khaki, navy, or black in color with no designs or words.
- Pants must not be too baggy or too tight nor torn or frayed. Pants must be worn at waist level. Other clothing must not be visible underpants.
- The skirt and short length must be six inches from the knee or longer.

### **Shoes and Socks**

- Students are to wear closed-toe shoes appropriate for outdoor and indoor activities.



- Socks must be worn at all times.
- EMSA will require students to change any socks or shoes determined to be inappropriate or distracting to the learning environment.

### **Hats and head coverings**

- No hats or other head coverings are permitted, including hairnets, athletic sweatbands, and bandanas anywhere inside a building at any time, except where mandated by legitimate religious requirements.

### **Water Bottle**

- Clear or see through water bottles are permitted and only water is allowed.

### **Jewelry and make-up**

- Jewelry should be modest and necklaces specifically tucked in. Make-up is not permitted on the school campus and will be confiscated.

### **Distracting Clothing**

- No clothing or jewelry that is determined by any teacher or staff member to distract from the learning process is permitted.

## **SUMMER SCHOOL DRESS CODE**

Same as the school year dress code except:

- Students may wear athletic shorts

## **LOCKERS**

Students in grades 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> are assigned a locker. Students are required to keep belongings in their assigned lockers only. Students may not share lockers at any time. Do not bring valuables to school and only store items necessary for school in your locker. If there is a security issue, student lockers may be searched at any time by EMSA administration.

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR / DISCIPLINE POLICY**

**EMSA’s mission for student behavior is to provide a safe and distraction-free learning environment that will facilitate student achievement.**

This EMSA Student Behavior / Discipline Policy has been designed to provide a positive learning environment and a safe environment for student learning. It has been designed to be used as an instructional and corrective tool. The goal of this policy is to provide students with the necessary tools to develop a sense of self-discipline, self-understanding, self-direction, successful interpersonal skills as well as a sense of self-worth. The academic as well as the discipline expectations of EMSA are high and the Student Behavior / Discipline Policy is designed to give students the best chance to be prepared for academic success and to feel safe and happy at school.

The Student Behavior / Discipline Policy is not intended to address the entire spectrum of student misbehavior; instead, it outlines a range of appropriate responses for certain inappropriate behaviors. School officials retain the discretion to address student misconduct that is not specifically included in this discipline policy. This policy applies to actions of students during school hours, before and after school, while on school property, while traveling on school vehicles funded by EMSA, while participating on any team or group representing the school or attending such activity, at all school-sponsored events, and while using

EMSA IT devices. This policy also applies to actions of students before or after school hours and off school property if those actions disrupt the learning environment in the school.

Staff members shall consider all mitigating circumstances prior to disciplinary action and ensure due process for each student, while consistently following the policies outlined below. Mitigating circumstances include, but are not limited to the following factors: age, health, maturity, and academic placement of a student, the student's discipline record, including previous similar incidents, the student's attitude, and willingness to change, the cooperation of parents/guardians, seriousness of offense and willingness to enroll student in a student assistance program.

***NOTE: While ALL students are expected to comply with the EMSA's discipline and behavior practices, disciplinary actions for special education students will comply with state and federal regulations and provisions of the student's individual education plan and behavior management plan.***

### **Warnings**

A student can be assigned from 1-6 warnings for a rule infraction. Any infraction deserving more than 6 warnings, such as gross disrespect to staff or other students, results in the student being sent to the Principal or Assistant Principal. It is up to the teacher's discretion as to the number of warnings, except as prescribed by the list below:

1. Chewing gum - **1 warning**
2. Eating or drinking outside the lunchroom - **1 warning**
3. Standing, yelling, or throwing anything in the lunchroom - **minimum 1 warning**
4. Not returning a tray or not cleaning up in the lunchroom – **minimum 1 warning**
5. Tardy to school and tardy to class – **1 warning**
6. Unexcused absence from a class (cutting) or leaving class without permission – **6 warnings**
7. In the hallways at any time while classes are in session without staff permission - (except during passing periods or specific times designated by the principal) – **6 warnings**
8. Having or using a cell phone, pager, iPod, headphones, or other electronic devices visible (whether or not in use) or audible anywhere, anytime in school, or without staff permission at any school event - **6 warnings and confiscation**
9. Dress code violations that can be corrected immediately (such as removing hoodie in class) – **1 warning (1 - 6 warning given if not corrected and to Principal or Assistant Principal)**
10. Foul language including curse words and ethnic or other slurs - **minimum 1 warning**
11. Bullying or verbal harassment - **minimum 1 warning**
12. Rowdy or loud behavior anywhere in the school - **minimum 1 warning**
13. Inappropriate public displays of affection – **minimum 1 warning**
14. Disciplinary removal of a student from class – **6 warnings**
15. Academic dishonesty, cheating, or plagiarism – **6 warnings**
16. Writing graffiti anywhere on school property, dirtying or damaging any school property, or possession of a permanent marker or sharpie – **6 warnings and payment for repairs or cleaning.**

### **Detentions/Warning Cycles**

Anytime a student earns 6 warnings within a one-week period, he/she is issued a one-hour detention. Detention may take the form of a silent study period, behavior improvement work, cleaning or maintenance work, or a combination of these. If a student misses a detention without a valid reason (i.e., a doctor's appointment), then the student will receive an additional detention. It is under the discretion of the principal or Assistant principal to determine an acceptable reason for missing a detention. Detentions are served on Tuesdays from 3 - 4, and excusal must be provided no later than

the end of the day on Monday.

Warning cycles reset on Wednesday morning of each week. Thus, if a student receives only one, two, three, four, or five warnings within a one-week period, the warnings reset to zero and he/she will not be issued a detention.

## **CORRECTIVE DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES BESIDES WARNINGS AND DETENTIONS**

### **Discipline Classes**

Students who earn more than 20 detentions in a year or have a violation of the will/can be required to take behavior/restorative classes that teach proper behavior in order to be promoted or to graduate. Typically, each class will be a four-week summer class or a fifteen-week after-school class. The student will also have to serve any detentions or suspension days earned for violations in addition to taking the discipline class(es).

### **Good Standing**

Students who break school rules or fail to serve the penalty for breaking them may lose their good standing status at school. For those who are not in good standing, this could result in not eating lunch with classmates and not being eligible for sports, dances, camps, activities, field trips, promotions, or graduation.

### **Student Conference**

The student is informed of consequences that will be recommended or assigned if inappropriate behavior continues.

### **Parent Conference**

The parent is informed by phone or in person with a conference documented, the incident explained, and future consequences reviewed.

### **Suspension**

Students can receive Out of School Suspension (OSS) and In School Suspensions (ISS). A suspension is when a student is removed from school due to the serious nature of the inappropriate behavior for up to 10 school days. Students who have been suspended may not appear on campus nor attend any school functions (before school, after school, or evening) while suspended. They may, however, enter the school to take or prepare for state assessments. Suspended students will or will not be assigned homework and given the opportunity to make up missed assignments, quizzes, or tests.

Students with disabilities may be suspended for up to 10 school days in one school year for violations described herein. Consequences for special education or disabled students will be adjusted, as required by federal and state laws and regulations, and the student's individual education plan (IEP) or accommodation, when necessary.

A campus official must fill out an appropriate misconduct report anytime a student is suspended. Students must have due process which allows them to hear the charges and respond to them. Parents will be notified as soon as possible but no later than 12 hours after the suspension is administered, through a phone call, a message on an answering machine, a letter mailed home, or an email.

A parent or student may appeal a suspension by requesting a review in writing to the EMSA Executive



Director within two days of the notice of the suspension. The Executive Director will make the final determination of any suspension appeal. An appeal does not halt a student’s suspension. If the suspension is overturned, the suspension will be removed from the student’s record and any remaining days will not have to be served.

**Arrest**

Police may be called to arrest students if there is reason to believe they are involved in any illegal activity. This includes but is not limited to; involvement in a physical altercation or for bringing weapons or illegal substances of any kind to the school. A weapon is defined as anything that can inflict harm including, but not limited to; a firearm, a stick, brass knuckles, a knife, box cutters, bullets, screwdrivers, saws, metal pipes, b.b.guns, toy guns, slingshots, or broken bottles. A campus official must call the parents immediately after the police are called.

***Expulsion***

When the EMSA campus determines that a student has committed an offense(s) which is (are) grounds for expulsion, the Principal or designee will forward the EMSA Board the appropriate misconduct report. The student will be suspended for up to 10 school days pending an expulsion hearing conducted by a hearing officer designated by the Board. After the expulsion hearing, the hearing officer will then make a written report within two (2) days to the EMSA Principal and Board summarizing the grounds for expulsion and the evidence presented at the hearing and making a recommendation as to whether to expel the student and if so, for what period of time. Students can be expelled for periods of time from 10 days to permanently depending on the severity of the offense.

The parent and student will have the right to appeal the recommendation of the hearing officer within 5 days of written notification of the recommendation. The appeal should be in writing and sent along with any additional evidence to the Board designee who will deliver the final decision within 10 days of the recommendation of the hearing officer. The final decision shall be delivered by the most expedient means of communication identified by the Parent/Guardian or student at the hearing (telephone, e-mail, etc.) and shall also be delivered by certified mail.

**UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR & CORRECTIVE DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES OTHER THAN WARNINGS**

<b>Unacceptable Behavior</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Disciplinary Consequences</b>
2-1 Electronic Devices	Min.	Confiscation—for parent release only and detention
	Max.	Confiscation—for parent release only, 1–3 day Suspension
2-2 Failure to Serve Detention or earning any multiple of ten detentions.	Min.	Serving missed detention, penalty Detention, and parent conference
	Max.	Serving missed detention, 1-3 Day Suspension, and parent conference
2-3 Improper use of technology	Min.	Suspend EMSA use privilege, Parent conference

	Max.	1–3 day Suspension
2-4 Leaving class without permission	Min.	Detention
	Max.	1–3 day Suspension
2-5 Profanity/Obscene Gestures and Behavior	Min.	Parent conference
	Max.	1–3 day Suspension
2-6 Forgery/Cheating	Min.	Parent Conference - Alternative assignment will be given
	Max.	1–3 day Suspension
2-7 Disrespect - students, staff/adults, or theft of property of students, staff/adults.	Min.	Parent conference, 1-2 Day Suspension
	Max.	10 Day Suspension
2-8 Harassment/Hazing of other students including harassment on the Internet	Min.	Parent Conference, Counseling
	Max.	1-10 Day Suspension and Summer Behavior Improvement Class
2-9 Arson	Min.	10-day Suspension, Police Report/Citation, and Summer Behavior Improvement Class
	Max.	Referral for Expulsion Hearing
2-10 Assault/Battery	Min.	10-day Suspension, Police Report/Citation, and Summer Behavior Improvement Class
	Max.	Referral for Expulsion Hearing
2-11 Possession, Use, sale of Alcohol or Illegal Drugs, or drug paraphernalia	Min.	5-10 Day Suspension and/or Outpatient Counseling or Summer Behavior Improvement Class
	Max.	Referral for Expulsion Hearing
2-12 Fighting	Min.	1 Day Suspension
	Max.	Referral for Expulsion Hearing
2-13 Gang-Related Activity	Min.	1 Day Suspension
	Max.	Referral for Expulsion Hearing
2-14 Threats, including threats on the Internet	Min.	1-10 Day Suspension
	Max.	Referral for Expulsion Hearing

2-15 Vandalism/Graffiti	Min.	1-5 Day Suspension, Restitution of Property & Cost
	Max.	Referral for Expulsion Hearing
2-16 Possession and/or use of weapons/dangerous objects, including, but not limited to firearms, knives of any kind, pepper spray, and mace.	Min.	Item Confiscated, 5-10 Day Suspension, Police Involvement, and/or Summer Behavior Improvement Class
	Max.	Police Involvement and Referral for Expulsion Hearing
2-17 Repeated violations of the Student Behavior / Discipline Policy including repeated disruptions to the learning process or earning more than 30 detentions in any one school year.	Min.	1-5 Day Suspension
	Max.	Referral for Expulsion Hearing

## **RESTORATIVE PRACTICES**

EMSA has adopted Restorative Practices to resolve any school conflicts that may arise. Restorative Practices may include the VOSP Protocol (Voice, Ownership, Shoes, and Plan), natural consequences, and restorative conversations. These practices are a process that proactively builds healthy relationships and a sense of community to prevent and address conflict and wrongdoing. Restorative practices seek to improve relationships between students and between students and educators. These practices allow individuals who may have committed harm to take full responsibility for their behavior by addressing the individual(s) affected by the behavior. Taking responsibility requires understanding how the behavior affected others, acknowledging that the behavior was harmful to others, taking action to repair the harm, and making changes necessary to avoid such behavior in the future.

*We at EMSA strongly believe that children want to do well. We value working with students and parents in partnership to feel good about going to school.*

If a child's behavior consistently interrupts the education and/or well-being of any other student, the administration will take steps to find a solution including a required parent conference, possible special education referral, and/or the implementation of a behavioral plan. The most severe disruptions or repeated infractions by the same student may result in a school suspension or an expulsion hearing with the Board of Directors.

## **RE-ENGAGEMENT OF RETURNING STUDENTS**

The school principal or designee shall meet with a student returning to school from an out-of-school suspension, expulsion, or alternative school setting. The goal of this meeting shall be to support the student's ability to be successful in school following a period of exclusion and shall include an opportunity for students who have been suspended to complete or make up missed work for equivalent academic credit. EMSA will utilize preventative measures to limit the use of exclusionary practices if possible.

## **STUDENT SEARCHES**

School authorities may search a student and/or the student's personal effects in the student's possession (such as, purses, wallets, knapsacks, book bags, lunch boxes, cubbies, lockers, etc.) when there is a reasonable ground for suspecting that the search will produce evidence the particular student has violated or is violating either the law or the school or district's student rules and policies. The search will be conducted

in a manner that is reasonably related to its objective of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the student's age and sex, and the nature of the infraction.

School officials may require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates the school's disciplinary rules or school district policy. In the course of the investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order for the school to make a factual determination. School officials may not request or require a student or his or her parent/guardian to provide a password or other related account information to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website.

### **SEIZURE OF PROPERTY**

If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the school or district's policies or rules, evidence may be seized and impounded by school authorities, and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, evidence may be transferred to law enforcement authorities.

### **QUESTIONING OF A STUDENT SUSPECTED OF COMMITTING CRIMINAL ACTIVITY**

Before a law enforcement officer, school resource officer, or other school security person detains and questions on school grounds a student under 18 years of age who is suspected of committing a criminal act, the building principal or designee will: (a) Notify or attempt to notify the student's parent/guardian and document the time and manner in writing; (b) Make reasonable efforts to ensure the student's parent/guardian is present during questioning or, if they are not present, ensure that a school employee (including, but not limited to, a social worker, psychologist, nurse, guidance counselor, or any other mental health professional) is present during the questioning; and (c) If practicable, make reasonable efforts to ensure that a law enforcement officer trained in prompting safe interactions and communications with youth is present during the questioning.

### **PREVENTION OF AND RESPONSE TO BULLYING, INTIMIDATION, AND HARASSMENT**

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important district and school goals.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, military status, unfavorable discharge status from the military service, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, academic status, order of protection status, status of being homeless, actual or potential marital or parental status, pregnancy, parenting status, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic **is prohibited** in each of the following situations:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school.

*Bullying* includes cyber-bullying and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to the building principal, nondiscrimination coordinator, district complaint manager or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. All school staff members are available for help with a bully or to make a report about bullying. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the district complaint manager or any staff member. Anonymous reports are also accepted by phone call or in writing.

**Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Manager:**

**Jacquelyn Willer**

1600 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120  
Phone: (630) 883 - 5013  
Email: [jwiller@emsacharter.org](mailto:jwiller@emsacharter.org)

**Tom Mulder**

1600 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120  
Phone: (630) 883 - 5013  
Email: [tmulder@emsacharter.org](mailto:tmulder@emsacharter.org)

A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is prohibited. A student's act of reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the school's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

Students and parents/guardians are also encouraged to read the following school district policies: 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*, and 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*.

Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the school shall make diligent efforts to notify a parent or guardian within 24 hours after the school's administration is made aware of a student's involvement in an alleged bullying incident. The term "bullying incident" includes individual instances of bullying, as well as all threats, suggestions, or instances of self-harm determined to be a result of bullying. Notification to a parent or guardian shall include, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT PROHIBITED**

Sexual harassment of students is prohibited. A person engages in sexual harassment whenever he or she makes sexual advances, requests sexual favors, and/or engages in other verbal or physical conduct, including sexual violence, of a sexual or sex-based nature, imposed on the basis of sex, that:

1. Denies or limits the provision of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or that makes such conduct a condition of a student's academic status; or
2. Has the purpose or effect of:
3. Substantially interfering with a student's educational environment
4. Creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.
5. Depriving a student of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or
6. Making submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for academic decisions affecting a student.

The terms *intimidating*, *hostile*, and *offensive* include conduct that has the effect of humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort. Examples of sexual harassment include touching, crude jokes or pictures, discussions of sexual experiences, teasing related to sexual characteristics, and spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities. The term *sexual violence* includes a number of different acts. Examples of sexual violence include, but are not limited to, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion.

### **MAKING A COMPLAINT; ENFORCEMENT**

Students are encouraged to report claims or incidents of sexual harassment, teen dating violence or any other prohibited conduct to the nondiscrimination coordinator, building principal, assistant building principal, assistant principal, or a complaint manager. A student may choose to report to a person of the student's same sex. Complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible given the need to investigate. Students who make good faith complaints will not be disciplined.

#### **Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Manager:**

**Jacquelyn Willer**

1600 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120  
Phone: (630) 883 - 5013  
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**Tom Mulder**

1600 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120  
Phone: (630) 883 - 5013  
Email: [tmulder@emsacharter.org](mailto:tmulder@emsacharter.org)

*Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to discipline.*

## **ACCESS TO STUDENT SOCIAL NETWORKING PASSWORDS AND WEBSITES**

School officials may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates a school disciplinary rule or policy. In the course of an investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order to allow school officials to make a factual determination.

## **STUDENT USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

The use of electronic devices and other technology at school is a privilege, not a right. Students are prohibited from using electronic devices, except as provided herein. An electronic device includes but is not limited to, the following: cell phone, smartphone, smartwatch, audio or video recording device, personal digital assistant (PDA), iPod®, iPad®, laptop computer, tablet computer, or other similar electronic device. Pocket pagers and other paging devices are not allowed on school property at any time, except with the express permission of the building principal.

During instructional time, which includes class periods and passing periods, electronic devices must be kept powered off and out-of-sight unless: (a) permission is granted by an administrator, teacher, or school staff member; (b) use of the device is provided in a student's individualized education program (IEP); or (c) it is needed in an emergency that threatens the safety of students, staff, or other individuals.

Students are allowed to use electronic devices during non-instructional time, which is defined as before and after school.

Electronic devices may never be used in any manner that disrupts the educational environment, violates student conduct rules, or violates the rights of others. This includes but is not limited to, the following: (1) using the device to take photographs in locker rooms or bathrooms; (2) cheating; and (3) creating, sending, sharing, viewing, receiving, or possessing an indecent visual depiction or non-consensual dissemination of private sexual images (i.e., sexting).

The school and school district are not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage to any electronic device brought to school.

School officials may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates a school disciplinary rule or policy. In the course of an investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order to allow school officials to make a factual determination.



# INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION AND GENERAL NOTICES

## GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

This handbook is a summary of the school's rules and expectations. It is not a comprehensive statement of school procedures.

## THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The current School Board Members are listed below:

Ms. Sue Bennett	<i>Board Chair</i>
Ms. Kerry Kelly	<i>Board Vice Chair</i>
Mr. Paul Stagen	<i>Board Treasurer</i>
Ms. Doree Haight	<i>Board Secretary</i>
Ms. Bethea Lane	<i>Board Director</i>
Ms. Melanie Toth	<i>Board Director</i>
Mr. Akash Gandhi	<i>Board Director</i>
Ms. Hillyn Sennholtz	<i>Board Director</i>
Ms. Jennifer Delgado	<i>Board Director</i>
Mr. Alan Scimeca	<i>Board Director</i>

## BOARD MEETING DATES

Board Meeting dates are listed on our website under Governance. Please see below the following dates for the 2024 – 2025 school year. Additionally, all Board Meetings start at 4:00 p.m. on campus.

- Wednesday, August 21, 2024
- Wednesday, October 30, 2024
- Wednesday, December 18, 2024
- Wednesday, February 26, 2025
- Wednesday, April 30, 2025
- Wednesday, May 28, 2025
- Wednesday, June 25, 2025

## ADMINISTRATION

The Board of Directors has hired EMSA's Executive Director, **Mrs. Kathryn Martinez**, Principal, **Mrs. Jacquelyn Willer**, and Chief Operating Officer, **Mr. Dan Alexander**.

Mrs. Willer has hired the following administrative staff to assist in the operation of the school:

Mr. Tom Mulder	<i>Assistant Principal</i>
Mrs. Paru Heer	<i>Multilingual Coordinator</i>
Ms. Kaitlyn Coventry	<i>Office Manager</i>
Mrs. Becky Caruso-Cortesi	<i>Director of Special Education ISECC</i>

## CHAIN OF COMMAND

The Elgin Math & Science Academy Charter School takes pride in its communication efforts with all stakeholders of the school. To ensure that parent concerns or issues are heard by the appropriate individual who can resolve the issue at the point of origin and provide a direct response, the Board of Directors asks that parents follow the School's Chain of Command outlined below. It is the intent of the Chain of Command to resolve concerns and issues during the earliest steps with the individual (s) directly involved with the concerns.

- Step 1** In the event of a concern, a parent or community member should contact the teacher, supervisor, coach, or staff member who is directly involved with the concern or situation.
- Step 2** If a parent or community member has completed Step 1 and feels that the issue or concerns was not remedied, they should contact the Director/Coordinator of the program, or the Assistant Principal.
- Step 3** If a parent or community member has completed Step 1 and Step 2, and feels that the issue or concern warrants yet further discussion, the parent or community member should then contact the Principal.
- Step 4** If the issue or concern of the parent or community member still remains after the completion of Steps 1, 2, and 3, the parent or community member should contact a School Board member. The Board member in consultation with the Board President and Principal will re-direct the individual back to the appropriate level or request that the concern be placed on the Board of Directors agenda for full Board discussion.

## VISITORS

**Locations:** Neil Building, Gym Building, and Administration Building

**All visitors**, including parents and siblings, are required to enter through the front door of the building and proceed immediately to the front desk. **Adult visitors will need to bring a state identification such as a driver's license to be scanned through our background check system: Raptor. No exceptions will be made for visitors without identification.** Visitors should identify themselves and inform front office personnel of their reason for being at school.

Raptor will print out a badge that the visitor will need to wear during the time they are at EMSA. Visitors are required to proceed immediately to their location in a quiet manner. All visitors must return to the front desk and return their Raptor badge. Visitors are expected to abide by all school rules during their time on school property. A visitor who fails to conduct himself or herself in a manner that is appropriate will be asked to leave and may be subject to criminal penalties for trespassing and/or disruptive behavior.

Any person wishing to confer with a staff member should contact that staff member to make an appointment. Conferences with teachers are held outside school hours or during the teacher's conference/preparation period.

Visitors are expected to abide by all school rules during their time on school property. A visitor who fails to conduct himself or herself in a manner that is appropriate will be asked to leave and may be subject to criminal penalties for trespassing and/or disruptive behavior.

No person on school property or at a school event shall perform any of the following acts:

1. Strike, injure, threaten, harass, or intimidate a staff member, board member, sports official or coach, or any other person.

2. Behave in an unsportsmanlike manner or use vulgar or obscene language.
3. Unless specifically permitted by State law. Possess a weapon, any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon, or looks like a weapon, or any dangerous device.
4. Damage or threaten to damage another's property.
5. Damage or deface school property.
6. Violate any Illinois law or municipal, local, or county ordinance.
7. Smoke or otherwise use tobacco products.
8. Distribute, consume, use, possess, or be impaired by or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug.
9. Be present when the person's alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug consumption is detectible, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred.
10. Use or possess medical cannabis unless he or she has complied Illinois' Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Act and district policies.
11. Impede, delay, disrupt, or otherwise interfere with any school activity or function (including using cellular phones in a disruptive manner).
12. Enter upon any portion of school premises at any time for purposes other than those that are lawful and authorized by the board.
13. Operate a motor vehicle (a) in a risky manner, (b) in excess of 20 miles per hour or (c) in violation of an authorized district employee's directive.
14. Engage in any risky behavior, including rollerblading, roller-skating, or skateboarding.
15. Violate other district policies or regulations, or a directive from an authorized security officer or district employee.
16. Engage in any conduct that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the district or a school function.

### **ANIMALS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

In order to assure student health and safety, animals are not allowed on school property, except in the case of a service animal accompanying a student or other individual with a documented disability. This rule may be temporarily waived by the building principals in the case of an educational opportunity for students, provided that (a) the animal is appropriately housed, humanely cared for, and properly handled, and (b) students will not be exposed to a dangerous animal or an unhealthy environment.

### **SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS**

At least once per school year, there will be a training for any parents interested in volunteering at school in any capacity (academic, supervisory, etc.). All school volunteers must present their ID the first time they arrive on campus each school year to be rapid background checked through our Raptor system. Some teachers utilize parent volunteers in the classroom. The individual teachers make this decision. Teachers who desire parent volunteers will notify parents and the administration. For school-wide volunteer opportunities, please contact the school principal.

### **PARENT VOLUNTEERS AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

School volunteers should understand the importance of confidentiality. Volunteers may see or hear things in the school setting or at school activities (fieldwork, school events, etc.) that are private matters and should be considered confidential. These things should only be discussed with or repeated to the volunteer's supervisor, teacher, or principal. Matters of concern should be reported to the supervisor, teacher, or principal. Of course, volunteers should not take the liberty of reading or browsing through documents that are private. We honor our students and parents' right to confidentiality.

## **STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES**

Student-led conferences (Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade) are scheduled for all parents in October and February. Student-led conferences provide opportunities for parents, students, and teachers to hear from the students about their progress, goals, and self-reflection on their education. The purpose of student-led conferences is:

- To develop a positive relationship between parent and teacher so each may work to the greatest advantage of the child.
- To enable parents, students, and teachers to discuss the child’s progress at home and at school.
- To build ownership of education within each student so that they feel empowered and confident in their abilities to succeed.

*Additional conferences should be scheduled at any time the teacher or parent believes one is necessary.*

## **PARENT ORGANIZATIONS AND BOOSTER CLUBS**

Parent organizations and booster clubs are invaluable resources to EMSA. While parent organizations and booster clubs have no administrative authority and cannot determine District policy, the School Board welcomes their suggestions and assistance.

Parent organizations and booster clubs may be recognized by the Board and permitted to use the district’s name or a District school’s team name, or any logo attributable to the District provided they first receive the Superintendent or designee’s express written consent. Consent to use one of the above-mentioned names or logos will generally be granted if the organization or club has by-laws containing the following:

1. The organization or club’s name and purpose, such as, to enhance students’ educational experiences, to help meet educational needs of students, to provide extra athletic benefits to students, to assist specific sports teams or academic clubs through financial support, or to enrich extracurricular activities.
2. The rules and procedures under which it operates.
3. An agreement to adhere to all Board policies and administrative procedures.
4. A statement that membership is open and unrestricted, meaning that membership is open to all parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school, staff, and community members.
5. A statement that the district is not, and will not be, responsible for the organization or club’s business or the conduct of its members, including on any organization or club’s websites or social media accounts.
6. An agreement to maintain and protect its own finances.
7. A recognition that money given to a school cannot be earmarked for any particular expense. Booster clubs may make recommendations, but cash or other valuable consideration must be given to the district to use at its discretion. The Board’s legal obligation to comply with Title IX by providing equal athletic opportunities for members of both genders will supersede an organization or club’s recommendation.

Permission to use one of the above-mentioned names or logos may be rescinded at any time and does not constitute permission to act as the district’s representative. At no time does the district accept responsibility for the actions of any parent organization or booster club regardless of whether it was recognized and/or permitted to use any of the above-mentioned names or logos. The superintendent shall designate an administrative staff member to serve as the recognized liaison to parent organizations or booster clubs. The liaison will serve as a resource person and provide information about school programs, resources, policies, problems, concerns, and emerging issues. Building staff will be encouraged to participate in the organization.

## **INVITATIONS, GIFTS, BIRTHDAY PARTIES, AND TREATS**

Birthdays are a wonderful celebration, and we want to honor them at EMSA. We will ensure that birthday celebrations are inclusive of all students and model celebrating without food. Families can choose to provide a gift to the classroom in honor of their child's birthday. **Party invitations, flowers, gifts, thank you notes, or treats for classmates should NOT be brought to school to be distributed to other students.** Items such as these are of a personal nature and should be mailed home using the list in the EMSA Parent Teacher Crew directory. The office is unable to release the addresses and phone numbers of students who are not listed in the school directory. Flowers and gifts delivered to the school are discouraged and will be sent home with the parent instead of being delivered to the child. Talking about birthday parties at school should be kept to a minimum to respect all students.

## **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

In cases of bad weather and other local emergencies, please listen to any messages sent through the Parent Notification System as well as local radio or television stations to be advised of school closings or early dismissals. School closings for any reason will be announced as soon as possible. If bad weather or other emergency occurs during the day, please listen to local media stations for possible early dismissal information. Additionally, school closings and early dismissals will be posted on the Emergency Closing Center website which can be found at: <https://www.emergencyclosingcenter.com/>. For your child's safety, make certain your child knows ahead of time where to go in case of an early dismissal. If we dismiss early for an emergency, all after-school functions are automatically canceled.

## **VIDEO AND AUDIO MONITORING SYSTEMS**

A video and/or audio monitoring system may be in use on school buses and a video monitoring system may be in use in public areas of the school building. These systems have been put in place to protect students, staff, visitors, and school property. If a discipline problem is captured on audiotape or videotape, these recordings may be used as the basis for imposing student discipline. If criminal actions are recorded, a copy of the tape may be provided to law enforcement personnel. Videos and audio monitoring can only be viewed by EMSA's administrative staff, and cannot be shared with parents unless their student is the only student on video footage.

## **EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND SEX EQUITY**

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities are available to all students without regard to race, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, status as homeless, immigration status, order of protection status, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy.

No student shall, based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity be denied equal access to programs, activities, services, or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage, or denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities. Any student or parent/guardian with a sex equity or equal opportunity concern should Jacquelyn Willer, School Principal.

## **TREATS AND SNACKS**

Due to health concerns and scheduling, treats and snacks for any occasion must be arranged in advance with the classroom teacher. All treats and snacks must be store bought and prepackaged in individual servings. No homemade treats or snacks are allowed at school. Treats and snacks should NOT require refrigeration and must have a clearly printed list of ingredients on the packaging. We strongly encourage you to select a treat or snack with nutritional value.

## **SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY**

The school has a school wellness policy in accord with federal law that promotes goals for good health, physical activity, and nutrition education. In supporting and promoting good nutrition for students we recommend that parents consider sending nutritional treats for seasonal parties and such. For a full version of our School Wellness Policy, please visit our school website at [www.elginmathandscience.org](http://www.elginmathandscience.org).

## **NUTRITION STANDARDS**

### **Meals**

All reimbursable meals served for the purposes of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) must meet or exceed USDA nutrition standards and regulations. This includes meeting standards for each of the meal pattern components (i.e., Grains, Meat/Meat Alternates, Fruits, Vegetables, and Milk) as well as meeting or exceeding the limitations set for calories, sodium, saturated fat, and trans-fat.

### **Other Foods and Beverages**

The following policy refers to all foods and beverages provided, but not sold to students. The Local Education Agency will prohibit the use of food as a reward or as part of a celebration. Providing alternatives to food as a reward promotes healthier habits by reducing exposure to less nutritious food items and, therefore, the amount of calorie-dense food items consumed (e.g., cakes, cookies, candy, etc.). This helps children develop improved food preferences and hunger cues to carry them throughout life. Instead, schools will implement the following methods for rewards and celebrations:

- Crew Cheers
- Crew Notes
- Celebrations of Learning

## **NUTRITIONAL PROMOTION**

The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement uses behavioral economics to positively influence food choices made by children. Evidence-based techniques implemented through the Movement have been proven to increase children's consumption of nutritious foods. The district shall participate in the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement by utilizing the Smarter Lunchrooms 60-point Scorecard and other educational and promotional tools. The school shall implement the following Smarter Lunchrooms techniques:

- Sliced/cut fruit and vegetables served at all service lines. Fruit and vegetables are per cut and paired with low-fat dip.
- Milk cases are full, white milk is available in all coolers.
- Lunch personnel smile and greet all students. Attractive and healthy posters are hung on the walls.
- Cleaning supplies are not in view. All the lights work. Trash cans are emptied when full.
- Opportunities for student volunteers

## **HEALTHFUL FOOD AND BEVERAGE OPTIONS FOR SCHOOL FUNCTIONS\***

At any school function (parties, celebrations, meetings, etc.) healthful food options should be made available to promote student, staff, and community wellness. Examples of nutritious food and beverages that are consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* are listed below.

- Raw vegetable sticks/slices with low-fat dressing or yogurt dip.
- Fresh fruit wedges-cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon, pineapple, oranges, tangelos, etc. Sliced fruit-nectarines, peaches, kiwi, star fruit, plums, pears, mangos, apples, etc.
- Fruit salad
- Cereal and low-fat milk, 100% fruit or vegetable juice
- Frozen fruit pops with fruit juice or fruit as the first ingredient
- Dried fruits-raisins, cranberries, apples, apricots

- Single serving applesauce or canned fruit in juice
- Peanut butter with apple wedges or celery sticks
- Fruit smoothies made with fat-free or low-fat milk
- Trail mix (*dried fruits and nuts*). Dry roasted peanuts, tree nuts, and soy nuts (*not coconut or palm nuts*)
- Lean meats and reduced-fat cheese sandwiches (*use light or reduced-fat mayonnaise in chicken/tuna salads*)
- Party mix (*variety of cereals, nuts, pretzels, etc.*). Pretzels or reduced fat crackers. Baked chips with salsa or low-fat dip (*Ranch, onion, bean, etc.*)
- Low-fat muffins (*small or mini*), granola bars, and cookies (*graham crackers, fig bars*)
- Mini bagels with whipped light or fat-free cream cheese
- Pasta salad
- Breadsticks with marinara
- Fat-free or low-fat flavored yogurt and fruit parfaits, Fat-free or low-fat pudding cups, and Fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products (*string cheese, single-serving cottage cheese, cheese cubes*)
- Flavored soy milk fortified with calcium
- Pure ice-cold water

*\*This list is not all-inclusive and is meant only to provide parents and school staff with guidance for healthier food and beverage choices.* Not all food and beverage items on this list will necessarily meet district nutrient standards as items vary in sugar, fat, and calorie content from brand to brand. However, all of the items on the list are believed to be consistent with the intent of the wellness policy to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity.

## **SODA AT SCHOOL**

Schools in Illinois may not sell soda to students during the school day. We encourage families to have their children drink nutritious milk at school. If you are sending an alternate drink with your child for lunch, please choose juice, yogurt drinks, or water. Beverages should not be sent in glass containers for obvious reasons. Please see the wellness policy for healthy options.

# **ATTENDANCE AND PROMOTION**

## **ATTENDANCE**

Illinois law requires that whoever has custody or control of any child between six (by September 1<sup>st</sup>) and seventeen years of age shall assure that the child attends school in the district in which he or she resides, during the entire time school is in session (unless the child has already graduated from high school). Illinois law also requires that whoever has custody or control of a child who is enrolled in the school, regardless of the child's age, shall assure that the child attends school during the entire time school is in session.

## **STUDENT ABSENCES**

Subject to specific requirements in State law, the following children are not required to attend public school: (1) any child attending a private school (including a home school) or parochial school, (2) any child who is physically or mentally unable to attend school (including a pregnant student suffering medical complications as certified by her physician), (3) any child lawfully and necessarily employed, (4) any child over 12 and under 14 years of age while in confirmation classes, (5) any child absent because of religious reasons, including to observe a religious holiday, for religious instruction, or because his or her religion



forbids secular activity on a particular day(s) or time of day, and (6) any child 16 years of age or older who is employed and is enrolled in a graduation incentives program.

For students who are required to attend school, there are two types of absences: excused and unexcused. Excused absences include: illness (including up to 5 days per school year for mental or behavioral health of the student), observance of a religious holiday or event, death in the immediate family, family emergency, situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the school board, circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or safety, attending a military honors funeral to sound TAPS, attend a civic event, or other reason as approved by the school principal.

Additionally, a student will be excused for up to 5 days in cases where the student's parent/guardian is an active-duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat-support postings. The Board of Education, in its discretion, may excuse a student for additional days relative to such leave or deployment. A student and the student's parent/guardian are responsible for obtaining assignments from the student's teachers prior to any excused absences and for ensuring that such assignments are completed by the student prior to his or her return to school.

Students who are excused from school will be given a reasonable timeframe to make up for missed homework and classwork assignments.

**All other absences are considered unexcused.** Pre-arranged excused absences must be approved by the school principal. **The school may require documentation explaining the reason for the student's absence.**

In the event of any absence, the student's parent or guardian is required to call the school at (630) 883-5013 before 8:00 a.m. to explain the reason for the absence. If a call has not been made to the school by 10:00 a.m. on the day of a student's absence, a school official will call home to inquire why the student is not at school. If the parent or guardian cannot be contacted, the student will be required to submit a signed note from the parent or guardian explaining the reason for the absence. Failure to do so shall result in an unexcused absence. Upon request of the parent or guardian, the reason for an absence will be kept confidential.

**Students must be in attendance on the school day of an after-school event to participate (i.e. school dances, sporting events, after-school clubs, etc.).**

### **ABSENCE DUE TO ILLNESS**

It is the practice of EMSA to require that if a student is continually sick and repeatedly absent from school due to illness that said student must be under the supervision of a physician in order to receive an excuse from attendance. The diagnosis of the licensed medical professional is used to support the parent in parenting and to support the school with the delivery of services. Without the support of the medical professional, valuable time and resources could be misdirected. **It is the practice of EMSA to require a doctor's excuse after 10 days of excused absence (within an academic year) based on communications from the parent or guardian that their child is ill.** All absences after the 10-day mark are recorded as unexcused unless a remedy is established between the school and the family.

**The school may require documentation explaining the reason for the student's absence, including documentation that student absence has not been caused by an infectious/communicable disease.**

**Students and families who abuse the approved and excused absences policy will be considered to have committed academic dishonesty.** Examples of abuse include falsifying an illness or family emergency, falsely claiming that attendance at the event is required, falsely claiming to have attended an event, or falsely claiming that an absence is approved.

### **PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCES**

Families are encouraged to use the pre-arranged absence process in the event an absence from school can be predicted. This process helps with communication regarding assignments and make-up work.

Forms for approval are available on the website or can be requested via email at [info@emsacharter.org](mailto:info@emsacharter.org). Upon completion of the form, the principal will review the purpose of the pre-arranged absence. The purpose will be evaluated in accordance with the definitions for excused and unexcused absences. After the administrative evaluation, the family will be notified if the pre-arranged absence is an excused absence or unexcused absence.

To obtain a pre-arranged absence, a student's parent/guardian is required to give 48 hours notice in writing to the school office. The written notice should include reasons and dates of absences. The student is to use the form to notify teachers of the absence(s). Upon this notification, appropriate assignments may be given before the absence or after the absence. These assignments may be due before the absence or upon the student's return to school, as determined by the teacher. Credit is not given for assignments that are not submitted. The building administrator may determine that a pre-arranged absence form is necessary for school-sponsored events that take a student out of regular class.

Vacations are encouraged when school is not in session. Vacations during the school year interrupt the educational process and students do not receive adequate instruction from the teacher. When it is necessary for a student to miss school for a vacation, the following procedure must be followed.

1. Student/parent brings written notification to the school.
2. School provides the pre-arranged form to the student/parent.
3. Student/Parent completes a pre-arranged form and submits to the principal for approval. Students follow the building process for notifying teachers of the absence(s).
4. Teachers may provide the assignment before the absence or upon the student's return to school.
5. Upon return to school, the student will have 1 day for each day of absence to complete the assignments.
6. Any schoolwork submitted after the deadline will be considered late and will be subject to the grading policy in place for the school/teacher regarding late work.
7. Pre-arranged absences for vacations will be recorded as unexcused in accordance with the Illinois School Code. If a pre-arranged form is used while a student is on vacation, credit will be given for assignments provided the completed work fulfills the completion policy.

### **TARDINESS**

Students are considered tardy if, **for any reason**, they are not in their assigned classrooms by 8:00 a.m. As a reminder, EMSA doors open at 7:30 a.m. for all students. Tardiness becomes part of the student's official attendance record and will be reported to parents monthly.

Being late not only has a negative effect on the tardy student, but also disrupts the class in progress and puts unnecessary burdens on the teacher's precious time. We ask parents to see that their child arrives "on time" each day. Excessive tardiness may be reported to the truant officer by the principal. If your child must be tardy, please call the school before 8:15 a.m. to let us know.

## TRUANCY

Student attendance is critical to the learning process. Truancy is therefore a serious issue and will be dealt with in a serious manner by the school and district. Students who miss 5% or more of the prior 179 regular school days without valid cause (a recognized excuse) are considered chronic truants. Students who are chronic truants will be offered support services and resources aimed at correcting the truancy issue.

If chronic truancy persists after support services and other resources are made available, the school and district will take further action, including:

- Referral to the truancy officer
- Reporting to officials under the Juvenile Court Act
- Referral to the State's Attorney
- Appropriate school discipline

Parents will receive notice of truancy after 4, 7, and 9 days of unexcused absences. Upon the 4<sup>th</sup> unexcused absence or tardy, a truancy packet is completed and sent to the Truant Officer at the Regional Office of Education. **A parent or guardian who knowingly and willfully permits a child to be truant is in violation of State law.**

## DIAGNOSTIC PROCEDURES FOR IDENTIFYING STUDENT ABSENCES AND SUPPORT SERVICES TO TRUANT OR CHRONICALLY TRUANT STUDENTS

State law requires every school district to collect and review its chronic absence data and determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students and their families to encourage the habit of daily attendance and promote success. This review must include an analysis of chronic absence data from each attendance center.

Furthermore, State law provides that school districts are encouraged to provide a system of support to students who are at risk of reaching or exceeding chronic absence levels with strategies and are also encouraged to make resources available to families such as those available through the State Board of Education's Family Engagement Framework to support and engage students and their families to encourage heightened school engagement and improved daily school attendance.

"Chronic absence" means absences that total 10% or more of school days of the most recent academic school year, including absences with and without valid cause, and out-of-school suspensions.

The School and District use the following diagnostic procedures for identifying the causes of unexcused student absences: Interviews with the student, his or her parent/guardian, and any school officials who may have information about the reasons for the student's attendance problems.

Supportive services to truant or chronically truant students include: parent conferences, student counseling, family counseling, and information about existing community services.

## ACADEMIC INFORMATION

### PROGRESS AND PROMOTION

School report cards are issued to students on a quarterly basis. For questions regarding student progress, please contact the classroom teacher.

Elgin Math and Science Academy wants all students to succeed. If student progress has not met certain standards, they may be held back so that they can achieve success before advancing to the next grade level. The decision to retain a student will be a joint decision with the teachers, administration, other support staff, and the family working toward a solution that is best for the individual student's needs. If an agreement cannot be reached, the decision will be left to the discretion of the principal.

The decision to promote a student to the next grade level is based on successful completion of the curriculum, attendance, and performance on standardized tests and other testing. A student will not be promoted based on age or any other social reason not related to academic performance.

A student may be required to complete summer school courses for academic promotion based on attendance, work completion, or behavior impacting learning.

## **STANDARDS-BASED GRADING**

EMSA follows a Standards Based Grading (SBG) method to better assist teachers, students, and parents with a greater understanding of what a student knows. SBG makes sure that all major assignments (assessments, final projects, etc.) are linked to a grade-level standard. These standards are then graded on a 1-4 scale explained below:

### **STANDARD NOT MET**

A “1” is given when, in the absence of extenuating circumstances (e.g., an excused absence), a student does not demonstrate substantive progress toward meeting the standards or criteria of a given assessment by an established deadline. Oftentimes, this means that the student needed some type of adult support to attempt the task.

### **APPROACHING STANDARD**

A “2” is given when a student has demonstrated a substantive attempt to meet the standards of a given assessment by the established deadline but needs more time to achieve competency. This may mean that a student has met a majority (51%) of the performance indicators or criteria for that assessment. This is a student who can do the task independently but is not consistent and has not mastered the standard and therefore, may make many mistakes.

### **STANDARD MET**

A “3” is given when a student's work fundamentally meets the standard being addressed. It is competent work that demonstrates the essential skills and knowledge for that grade level. All of the criteria are met on the rubric in the Standard Met section.

### **EXCEEDING STANDARD**

A “4” is given when a student's work goes substantially above and beyond the course standards in quality. The work may not be perfect, but it includes complexity, sophistication, originality, depth, synthesis, and application that clearly exceeds what would be expected to meet the standards in this assessment. Sometimes, a student will have to opt to complete a particular task or prompt, not required of all, in order to be eligible for an exceeds the standard rating. All the criteria for exceeds the standard is met on the rubric in the Exceeding Standard section.

At EMSA, our target is for students to achieve a **3 or higher**. Report cards will be given on a quarterly basis. The dates for the end of each quarter are included on the School Calendar.

*For additional questions or concerns regarding Standards Based Grading, please contact the office.*

## **REPORT CARD PICK UP**

Report card pick up is an opportunity for parents and guardians to receive report cards, meet with their child's teachers, and discuss the academic progress of the student. Report card pick up will occur for quarter 1 and 2, and will be aligned with student led conferences. Report card pick up days are required for parents and students.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Progress reports provide parents each student's academic, behavioral standing, and attendance progress every month. They are sent home with each student and must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned. Returned and signed progress reports will factor into a student's eligibility for extracurricular, field trips, field day, and other special events. Progress reports are not report cards: They provide a monthly indicator of how each student is performing.

## **DAILY INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE**

Daily instructional practice can be an in-class learning experience or an out-of-class learning experience assigned by a teacher to further a student's educational development. These assignments are adaptations or applications of the classroom instruction used by the teacher to monitor student learning and how to better direct student understanding of designated learning goals. In alignment with the Common Core Standards adopted by the State of Illinois, classroom teachers will be assessing primarily in the classroom as they look for evidence of skill and concept mastery by students.

## **DAILY INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE AND TIME MANAGEMENT**

Daily practice can be assigned at any time. Teachers are asked to collaborate with other relevant subject teachers to ensure that students have ample time to prepare for workloads relating to the grade-level curriculum. Whenever possible, teachers are encouraged to provide students and their families with advance notice of major projects/assigned work to allow for flexible time management. Teachers are encouraged to have a heightened awareness of holidays and extended breaks from the classroom.

## **SUGGESTED AMOUNT OF TIME TO BE SENT IN DAILY INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM**

Kindergarten – 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	10 – 20 minutes, up to (4) times a week.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	20 – 30 minutes, up to (4) times a week.
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade – 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	30 – 45 minutes, up to (4) times a week.

*\* Parents with students who continually need extended time to complete the assigned daily practice should request a parent-teacher conference at the earliest convenience of the parent.*

## **DAILY INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE DURING EXTENDED ABSENCES**

Teachers shall not be expected to provide detailed classroom work and daily practice assignments for students who are away for extended periods of time as a result of family-or parent-initiated absences. Parents may use the communication sources listed above to acquire the needed information. Depending on the nature of the time period and the timing of the school year, assignments will be made available before or after the absence. *For absences due to extended illness, parents may contact the administration to discuss available options.*

## **HOME AND HOSPITAL INSTRUCTION**

A student who is absent from school, or whose physician, physician assistant or licensed advanced practice registered nurse anticipates his or her absence from school, because of a medical condition may be eligible for instruction in the student's home or hospital.

Appropriate educational services from qualified staff will begin no later than five school days after receiving a written statement from a physician, physician assistant, or licensed advanced practice registered nurse. Instructional or related services for a student receiving special education services will be determined by the student's individualized education program.

For information on home or hospital instruction, please contact the Principal.

## **EXEMPTION FROM PHYSICAL EDUCATION (K – 8)**

In order for a student to be excused from participation in physical education, a student must present an appropriate excuse from his or her parent/guardian or from a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act. The excuse may be based on medical or religious prohibitions. An excuse because of medical reasons must be a signed statement from a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act that corroborates the medical reason for the request. An excuse based on religious reasons must include a signed statement from a member of the clergy that corroborates the religious reason for the request. Upon written notice from a student's parent/guardian, a student will be excused from engaging in the physical activity components of physical education during a period of religious fasting.

A student in grades 7-8 may submit a written request to the building principal requesting to be excused from physical education courses because of the student's ongoing participation in an interscholastic or extracurricular athletic program. The building principal will evaluate requests on a case-by-case basis.

Students with an Individualized Education Program may also be excused from physical education courses for reasons stated in the Handbook Procedure.

Special activities in physical education will be provided for a student whose physical or emotional condition, as determined by a person licensed under the Medical Practices Act, prevents his or her participation in the physical education course.

State law prohibits the School District from honoring parental excuses based upon a student's participation in athletic training, activities, or competitions conducted outside the auspices of the School District.

Students who have been excused from physical education shall return to the course as soon as practical. The following considerations will be used to determine when a student shall return to a physical education course:

1. The time of year when the student's participation ceases; and
2. The student's class schedule.

Exemptions from physical education would also apply and limit recess, co-curricular, field experiences, and extracurricular activities.

## **STUDENT FEES AND MEAL COSTS**

### **FINES, FEES, AND CHARGES; WAIVER OR STUDENT FEES**

The school establishes fees and charges to fund certain school activities. Students will not be denied the opportunity to participate in curricular and extracurricular programs of the school district due to the

inability of their parent or guardian to pay fees or certain charges. Students whose parent or guardian is unable to afford student fees may receive a fee waiver. A fee waiver applies to all fees related to school, instruction, and extracurricular activities.

Applications for fee waivers may be obtained from the school office and may be submitted by a parent or guardian of a student who has been assessed a fee. A student is eligible for a fee waiver if at least one of the following prerequisites is met:

1. The student currently lives in a household that meets the same income guidelines, with the same limits based on household size, that are used for the federal free meals programs;
2. The student's parent is a veteran or active-duty military personnel with income at or below the federal poverty line.
3. The student is homeless, as defined by the Mc-Kinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
4. EMSA will give additional consideration where one or more of the following factors are present:
  - An illness in the family;
  - Unusual expenses such as fire, flood, storm damage, etc.;
  - Unemployment;
  - Emergency situations; or
  - When one or more of the parents/guardians are involved in a work stoppage.

EMSA will notify the parent/guardian promptly as to whether the fee waiver request has been granted or denied. Questions regarding the fee waiver application process or an appeal of the district's decision to deny a fee waiver should be addressed to Administration.

Pursuant to the Hunger-Free Student's Bill of Rights Act, the school is required to provide a federally reimbursable meal or snack to a student who requests one, regardless of whether the student has the ability to pay for the meal or owes money for earlier meals. Students may not be provided with an alternative meal or snack and the school is prohibited from publicly identifying or stigmatizing a student who cannot pay for or owes money for a meal or snack.

Fines for loss or damage to school property are waived for students who meet certain eligibility guidelines.

## **SCHOOL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM**

BREAKFAST: \$ 2.35

LUNCH: \$ 4.90

## **BUS TRANSPORTATION**

The school provides bus transportation to and from school for students in need of transportation to get to EMSA. Bus stops will be assigned as community stops.

While students are on the bus, they are under the supervision of the bus driver. In most cases, bus discipline problems can be handled by the bus driver. In the case of a written disciplinary referral, student bus problems will be investigated and handled by the principal and/or the assistant principal.

Students are expected to follow all school rules while on the bus. Students may be suspended from riding the school bus for up to 10 consecutive school days for violating school rules or for engaging in other gross disobedience or misconduct. The school board may suspend the student from riding the school bus for a period in excess of 10 days for safety reasons. The district's regular suspension procedures shall be used to suspend a student's privilege to ride a school bus.



A student who is suspended from riding the school bus and who does not have alternative transportation to school shall be allowed the opportunity to make up all missed work for equivalent academic credit. It is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to notify the school that the student does not have alternative transportation to school. Parents are not allowed to board the bus for any reason without permission from a school official.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### SCHOOL NURSE

A registered nurse is on staff at school. The time frame the nurse is in the building will vary from year to year. Typically, the nurse will be present from 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. daily. The nurse's office is responsible for medication administration required at school, care of students with acute illness, and care of students who have first aid needs. The nurse will provide comfort measures as available. Please refrain from going to the nurse for problems that should be taken care of at home or in a physician's office.

### REQUIRED HEALTH EXAMINATIONS AND IMMUNIZATIONS

All students are required to present appropriate proof of a health examination and the immunizations against, and screenings for, preventable communicable diseases within one year prior to:

1. Entering kindergarten or the first grade;
2. Entering the sixth grade
3. Enrolling in an Illinois school for the first time, regardless of the student's grade.

Proof of immunization against meningococcal disease is required for students in grade 6. A diabetes screening must be included as part of the health exam (though diabetes testing is not required). Students between the age of one and seven must provide a statement from a physician assuring that the student was "risk-assessed" or screened for lead poisoning.

If a medical reason prevents a student from receiving a required immunization by October 15, the student must present, by October 15, an immunization schedule and a statement of the medical reasons causing the delay. The schedule and statement of medical reasons must be signed by an appropriate medical professional. The appointment should take place within 60 days.

**Failure to comply with the above requirements by October 15 of the current school year will result in the student's exclusion from school until the required health forms are presented to the school, subject to certain exceptions.** New students who register mid-term have 30 days following registration to comply with the health examination and immunization requirements.

### EYE EXAMINATION

All students entering kindergarten or school for the first time must present proof by October 15 of the current school year of an eye examination performed within one year. Failure to present proof by October 15, allows the school to hold the student's report card until the student presents: (1) proof of a completed eye examination, or (2) that an eye examination will take place within 60 days after October 15.

### DENTAL EXAMINATION

All students entering kindergarten, second and sixth grades must present proof by May 15 of the current school year of having been examined by a licensed dentist within the last 18 months.

Failure to present proof allows the school to hold the child's report card until the student presents: (1) proof of a completed dental examination, or (2) that a dental examination will take place within 60 days after May 15.

## **HEARING AND VISION SCREENING - ANNUAL NOTICE**

Vision screening will be done, as mandated. The dates for Vision Screening are to be determined. **All** Preschool children 3 years of age (or older) in any public or private, educational program or licensed Child-care facility. All School Age children who are in kindergarten, second, and eighth grades; in all special education classes; referred by teachers; and all transfer students. Vision screening is highly recommended in grades 4,5,6,10, and 12. Such screening services will be provided in all public, independent, private and parochial schools.

### **Vision screening is not a substitute for a complete eye and vision evaluation by an eye doctor.**

Your child is not required to undergo this vision screening *if* an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months and that evaluation form is **on file at the school.**

**This notice is not a permission to test and is not required to be returned. This is mandatory unless the student has an exam on file, an eye exam and/or an audiogram. If a vision examination report is not on file at the school for your child, your child is mandated to be screened. This is only for those students who are in the specified grades.**

Hearing screening will be provided annually for all preschool children 3 years of age or older in any public or private educational program or licensed childcare facility. Hearing screenings will be provided annually for all children in grades Kindergarten, 1, 2, and 3; special education; teacher referrals; or are transfer students. It is highly recommended to screen grades 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12.

The child **will** be screened unless there is a completed and signed report form indicating that the child has had an ear exam by a physician and an **Audiological evaluation by an audiologist** within the previous 12 months. In cases of know hearing loss, an Audiological evaluation completed by an audiologist within the previous 12 months may be accepted instead of threshold monitoring services.

Eyes 2 Ears Screening does the annual hearing and vision screening for Elgin Math and Science Academy Charter School. Laura Buchanan, Hearing and Vision Coordinator.

## **EXEMPTIONS**

A student will be exempt from the above requirements for:

1. Medical grounds if the student's parent/guardian presents to the building principal a signed statement explaining the objection;
2. Religious grounds if the student's parent/guardian presents to the building principal a completed Certificate of Religious Exemption;
3. Health examination or immunization requirements on medical grounds if a physician provides written verification;
4. Eye examination requirement if the student's parent/guardian shows an undue burden or lack of access to a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches who provides eye

examinations or a licensed optometrist; or Dental examination requirement if the student's parent/guardian shows an undue burden or a lack of access to a dentist.

## **STUDENT MEDICATION**

Taking medication during school hours or during school-related activities is prohibited unless it is necessary for a student's health and well-being. When a student's licensed health care provider and parent/guardian believe that it is necessary for the student to take medication during school hours or school-related activities, the parent/guardian must request that the school dispense the medication to the child by completing a "School Medication Authorization Form." EMSA's school nurse will administer medication as close to the time needed as possible, but medication may not always be administered at the exact time due to unforeseen circumstances or emergency student needs.

No school or district employee is allowed to administer to any student or supervise a student's self-administration of, any prescription or non-prescription medication until a completed and signed School Medication Authorization Form is submitted by the student's parent/guardian. No student is allowed to possess or consume any prescription or non-prescription medication on school grounds or at a school-related function other than as provided for in this procedure.

Please note, we are not allowed to examine or apply medication to private areas of students. If a student complains of itching or pain in a private area, the parent will be called to pick up the student.

All medication must be brought to the school office by a parent or guardian. **Students are NOT ALLOWED TO BRING MEDICINE TO SCHOOL ON THE BUS.** This is for the safety of all students.

Medications must be brought to school in the original container, which is properly labeled.

### **The medication shall display:**

1. *Student's name and prescription number*
2. *Name and dosage of medication*
3. *Date and number of refills*
4. *Licensed physician's name*
5. *Pharmacy name, address, and phone number*
6. *Name or initials of the pharmacist*
7. *Administration route or other directions*

## **SELF-ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION**

A student may possess an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen®) and/or an asthma inhaler prescribed for use at the student's discretion, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed a School Medication Authorization Form.

- Students who are diabetic may possess and self-administer diabetic testing supplies and insulin if authorized by the student's diabetes care plan, which must be on file with the school.
- Students with epilepsy may possess and self-administer supplies, equipment, and medication, if authorized by the student's seizure action plan, which must be on file with the school.
- Students may self-administer (but not possess on their person) other medications required under a qualified plan, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed a School Medication Authorization Form.

The school district shall incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising from a student's self-administration of medication, including asthma medication or epinephrine injectors, or medication required under a qualifying plan. A student's parent/guardian must indemnify and hold harmless the school district and its employees and agenda, against any claims, except a claim based on

willful and wanton conduct, arising out of a student's self-administration of an epinephrine injector, asthma medication, and/or a medication required under a qualifying plan.

## **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICAL CANNABIS**

In accordance with the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program, qualifying students are allowed to utilize medical cannabis-infused products while at school and school events. Please contact the school principal for additional information. Discipline of a student for being administered a product by a designated caregiver pursuant to this procedure is prohibited. The district may not deny a student attendance at a school solely because he or she requires administration of the product during school hours.

## **UNDESIGNATED MEDICATIONS**

The school may maintain the following undesignated prescription medications for emergency use (1) Asthma medication; (2) Epinephrine injectors; (3) Opioid antagonists; and (4) Glucagon. No one, including without limitation, parents/guardians of students, should rely on the school or district for the availability of undesignated medication. This procedure does not guarantee the availability of undesignated medications. Students and their parents/guardians should consult their own physician regarding these medication(s).

## **STUDENTS WITH FOOD ALLERGIES**

State law requires our school district to annually inform parents of students with life-threatening allergies or life-threatening chronic illnesses of the applicable provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and other applicable federal statutes, state statutes, federal regulations, and state rules. **If your student has a life-threatening allergy or life-threatening chronic illness, please notify the school Nurse at [nurse@emsacharter.org](mailto:nurse@emsacharter.org) and [info@emsacharter.org](mailto:info@emsacharter.org).**

Federal law protects students from discrimination due to a disability that substantially limits a major life activity. If your student has a qualifying disability, an individualized Section 504 Plan will be developed and implemented to provide the needed support so that your student can access his or her education as effectively as students without disabilities. Not all students with life-threatening allergies and life-threatening chronic illnesses may be eligible under Section 504. Our school district also may be able to appropriately meet a student's needs through other means.

**Parents, we ask that you choose to send your students to school with food that does not contain nuts as much as possible and remind your students that we shouldn't share food due to known and unknown allergies.**

## **CARE OF STUDENTS WITH DIABETES**

If your child has diabetes and requires assistance with managing this condition while at school and school functions, a Diabetes Care Plan must be submitted to the school Nurse at [nurse@emsacharter.org](mailto:nurse@emsacharter.org).

Parents/guardians are responsible for and must:

- a. Inform the school in a timely manner of any change which needs to be made to the Diabetes Care Plan on file with the school for their child.
- b. Inform the school in a timely manner of any changes to their emergency contact numbers or contact numbers of health care providers.
- c. Sign the Diabetes Care Plan.
- d. Grant consent for and authorize designated EMSA representatives to communicate directly with the health care provider whose instructions are included in the Diabetes Care Plan.

*For further information, please contact the school Nurse at [nurse@emsacharter.org](mailto:nurse@emsacharter.org).*

## EMERGENCY AID TO STUDENTS

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit any school employee from providing emergency assistance to students, including administering medications.

## ILLNESS DURING SCHOOL

Illness symptoms include a body temperature of 100 degrees or higher, repeated vomiting, open wound with drainage that cannot be contained in a dressing, incidence of diarrhea 2 or more times, unexplained rash, or croup-like cough. Students with these illness symptoms should not attend school. If these symptoms occur while at school, the parent/guardian will be contacted and expected to pick up the child as soon as possible. If this is not possible, one of the adults listed on your child's emergency form will be contacted to pick up your child.

In addition, any student who has symptoms of impetigo, pinkeye, scabies, or ringworm will be sent home and should not attend school until they have been under treatment for 24 hours or have a written release from their physician stating they may return to school.

If the student has symptoms other than those already listed, the nurse, principal or designated school staff member will contact the parent/guardian to discuss the best course of action. No student may leave school during the day due to illness unless he/she has permission from the school office. **The student should be free of symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school. Students should be fever-free without the aid of Tylenol or ibuprofen for 24 hours before returning to school.**

Example (for contagious diseases such as impetigo, pinkeye, scabies, etc.): If a student is sent home on Monday, and starts treatment on Monday at 4pm, the 24-hour mark is Tuesday at 4pm, so the student may return to school on Wednesday morning.

Example (fever): If a student is sent home with a fever on Monday, and given Tylenol on Monday at 4:00 p.m., but has no fever Tuesday morning, they still cannot come to school. If Monday at 4pm is the last time they receive Tylenol, and the student is fever free Monday and Tuesday, they can return to school on Wednesday. A student must be fever free without the aid of medication for 24 hours.

Any reasonable suspicion of communicable disease should be reported to the school nurse or principal immediately. This includes chickenpox, mumps, measles, strep throat, diarrhea, flu-like symptoms, pink eye, ringworm, scabies, lice, or unexplained rashes.

## PREVENTION OF ANAPHYLAXIS

While it is not possible for the School or District to completely eliminate the risks of an anaphylactic emergency, the district maintains a comprehensive policy on anaphylaxis prevention, response, and management in order to reduce these risks and provide accommodations and proper treatment for anaphylactic reactions. Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students who desire more information or who want a copy of the district's policy may contact the school principal.

## GENERAL INJURIES

Your student will be taken to the nurse's office if an injury more significant than a scratch occurs. The nurse will assess the student, and if applicable, the student wound will be cleaned and bandaged. The parent will be notified of treatment from a school nurse. An incident report will be filled out and filed at school. Copies of incident reports are available upon request.

## **CONCUSSIONS / HEAD INJURIES**

A concussion is a brain injury, and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. A parent will be notified immediately of a head injury and suspected concussion to be evaluated by a medical professional. A student cannot stay at school after a head injury due to higher risks associated with potential concussions.

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

The school will observe recommendations of the Illinois Department of Public Health regarding communicable diseases.

1. Parents are required to notify the school nurse if they suspect their child has a communicable disease.
2. In certain cases, students with a communicable disease may be excluded from school or sent home from school following notification of the parent or guardian.
3. The school will provide written instructions to the parents and guardian regarding appropriate treatment for the communicable disease.
4. A student excluded because of a communicable disease will be permitted to return to school only when the parent or guardian brings to the school a letter from the student's doctor stating that the student is no longer contagious or at risk of spreading the communicable disease.

## **HEAD LICE**

1. Parents are required to notify the school nurse if they suspect their child has head lice.
2. Infested students will be sent home following notification of the parent or guardian.
3. The school will provide written instructions to parents or guardians regarding appropriate treatment for the infestation.

## **SAFETY DRILL PROCEDURES AND CONDUCT**

All doors to the school building will be locked at 8:00 a.m. when school starts. Parents bringing a student late or picking up a student early need to check in at the front desk. Please do not enter the classroom building if you have not signed in at the front desk and please do not open the school doors for anyone who does not have a visitor's badge. All personnel regardless of identification should enter through the main point of entry and check in at the front desk. If any person is spotted on campus or in the building without a visible visitor's badge, please contact the administration immediately.

Safety drills will occur at times established by the school board. Students are required to be silent and shall comply with the directives of school officials during emergency drills. There will be a minimum of three (3) evacuation drills, a minimum of one (1) severe weather (shelter-in-place) drill, a minimum of one (1) law enforcement lockdown drill to address a school shooting incident, and a minimum of one (1) bus evacuation drill each school year. There may be other drills at the direction of the administration. The law enforcement lockdown drill will be announced in advance and a student's parent/guardian may elect to exclude their child from participating in this drill. All other drills will not be preceded by a warning to students.

## **SUPERVISION ON AN OPEN CAMPUS**

With our open campus and emphasis on outdoor learning, there are situations where students may be in close proximity but out of direct sight lines of a supervising adult. In these situations, the line of sight may be obscured by factors such as vegetation or terrain features. During outdoor field studies, students may be

doing any number of things, such as collecting data, taking measurements, searching for examples of certain phenomena in nature, or other activities where they may pass behind obstructions. When out of the direct sight of an adult, students will be in sight of or partnered with other students at all times.

## **OUTDOOR APPAREL**

Students should dress appropriately for the weather as we go outside every day, if possible. In general, it is a good idea to have layers at school, as the weather changes throughout the day.

Winter weather temperatures combined with wind in northern Illinois can be quite harsh. As part of the educational process and learning experience, students are expected to go outside at recess under most conditions and for PE activities. In the winter, children should dress warmly and wear boots, snow pants, warm jackets, hats and mittens/gloves. It is advisable to store hats/gloves in students' lockers before winter sets in so that they are available on cold days. When children wear proper winter apparel and winter conditions are appropriate, children enjoy recess outside for approximately thirty minutes.

## **THE ADMINISTRATION WILL LIMIT OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES WHEN THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE (NWS) ISSUES WIND CHILL ADVISORIES AND WIND CHILL WARNINGS.**

1. During NWS Wind Chill Advisory (expected to fall below 0F) the students will not be allowed recreational outdoor activity. The students will be limited to no more than fifteen minutes for any outdoor activity.
2. If the temperature is below -20F, all learning and recreational activities will be indoors.

Warmer weather temperatures are ideal for outdoor activities. Still, it is important to prepare for outdoor activities. Students are encouraged to bring sunscreen to school and may also choose to bring insect repellent (non-Aerosol, wipe-on, or pump spray preferred). We will not provide either of these, and adults will not apply these products to your children. Students should also have a reusable water bottle to carry outside on warm weather days. All items should be labeled with your student's name.

**Finally, students should have rain gear stored in their storage space or locker and left there for rainy days. In the event of thunder/lightning, students will not go outside; however steady rain will not cause the cancellation of outdoor activities or transitions.** Due to safety issues, students are not allowed to carry umbrellas.

## **REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED ITEMS:**

- **REQUIRED:** Rubber rain boots for outdoor use to be kept at school.
- **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED:** Proper winter wear (hats, gloves, coats, snow pants, and winter boots).
- **RECOMMENDED:** Rain jacket or reusable poncho (that can layer over a warm jacket in the event of cold rain).

# **INTERNET, TECHNOLOGY, AND PUBLICATIONS**

## **INTERNET/TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE**

All students must sign a technology agreement form before receiving a Chromebook issued by EMSA. This agreement contains all pertinent information regarding acceptable use of technology issued by EMSA, and EMSA's network. The cost of replacing a student damaged Chromebook is \$375.



## **USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

“Artificial intelligence” or “AI” is intelligence demonstrated by computers, as opposed to human intelligence. “Intelligence” encompasses the ability to learn, reason, generalize, and infer meaning. Examples of AI technology include ChatGPT and other chatbots and large language models.

AI is not a substitute for schoolwork that requires original thought. Students may not claim AI generated content as their own work. The use of AI to take tests, complete assignments, create multimedia projects, write papers, or complete schoolwork without permission of a teacher or administrator is strictly prohibited. The use of AI for these purposes constitutes cheating or plagiarism.

In certain situations, AI may be used as a learning tool or a study aid. Students who wish to use AI for legitimate educational purposes must have permission from a teacher or an administrator. Students may use AI as authorized in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Students may not use AI, including AI image or voice generator technology, to violate school rules or school district policies.

In order to ensure academic integrity, tests, assignments, projects, papers, and other schoolwork may be checked by AI content detectors and/or plagiarism recognition software.

## **SCHOOL PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT AS WELL AS PERSONAL EFFECTS LEFT BY STUDENTS**

School authorities may inspect, and search school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school (such as lockers, desks, and parking lots), as well as personal effects left there by a student, without notice to or the consent of the student. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these places or areas or in their personal effects left there.

The principal may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to conduct inspections and searches of lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment for illegal drugs, weapons, or other illegal or dangerous substances or materials, including searches conducted through the use of specially trained dogs.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

### **ACCOMMODATING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

Individuals with disabilities will be provided with an opportunity to participate in all school-sponsored services, programs, or activities. Individuals with disabilities should notify the principal if they have a disability that will require special assistance or services and, if so, what services are required. This notification should occur as far in advance as possible of the school-sponsored function, program, or meeting.

### **REQUEST FOR AN EVALUATION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Elgin Math and Science Academy believes that parents hold great insight into their child and his/her needs. If you suspect that your child has one of the 13 qualifying disabilities as defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, you may request that Elgin Math and Science Academy complete an evaluation for special education services. To request an evaluation of special education services you must submit a

letter to the Principal. The letter must include the student's name, summary of the problem, and the type of evaluation requested.

## **EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

It is the intent of the district to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services.

The school provides a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment and necessary related services to all children with disabilities enrolled in the school. The term "children with disabilities" means children between ages 3 and the day before their 22nd birthday for whom it is determined that special education services are needed, except those children with disabilities who turn 22 years of age during the school year are eligible for special education services through the end of the school year. It is the intent of the school to ensure that students with disabilities are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services.

A copy of the publication "Explanation of Procedural Safeguards Available to Parents of Students with Disabilities" may be obtained from the school district office.

Students with disabilities who do not qualify for an individualized education program, as required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and implementing provisions of this Illinois law, may qualify for services under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 if the student (i) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, (ii) has a record of a physical or mental impairment, or (iii) is regarded as having a physical or mental impairment.

## **RELATED SERVICE LOGS**

For a child with an IEP, the school district must create related service logs that record the type of related services administered under the child's IEP and the minutes of each type of related services administered under the child's IEP and the minutes of each type of related service that has been administered. The school will provide a child's IEP and at any other time upon request. The school will provide a child's parent/guardian with a copy of the related service log at the annual review of the child's IEP and at any other time upon request.

## **ISOLATED TIME OUT, TIME OUT, AND PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

Isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint shall only be used if the student's behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others, and other less restrictive and intrusive measures were tried and proven in effective in stopping it. The school may not use isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint as discipline or punishment, convenience for staff, retaliation, as a substitute for appropriate educational or behavioral support, a routine safety matter, or to prevent property damage in the absence of imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others. The use of prone restraint is prohibited.

## **ACCESS TO CLASSROOM FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION OBSERVATION OR EVALUATION**

The parent/guardian of a student receiving special education services, or being evaluated for eligibility, is afforded reasonable access to educational facilities, personnel, classrooms, and buildings. This same right of access is afforded to an independent educational evaluator, or a qualified professional retained by or on behalf of a parent or child. *For further information, please contact the principal.*

## **SECTION 504 POLICIES**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended 29 U.S.C., Section 794, protects disabled person from discrimination based on their disabled status. The Board of Education recognizes the requirement to provide a free appropriate public education to each disabled student within its jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability.

It is the intent of Elgin Math and Science Academy Charter School to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services. Students may be disabled under this policy even though they do not require special education services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Procedural safeguards are guaranteed for disabled students and their parents at EMSA.

For purposes of compliance with the Act, the principal shall develop and implement appropriate procedures and forms to include evaluation, eligibility, services plan, service delivery and periodic case review. For questions on available services and the process to access services, contact Becky Cortasi, Director of Special Education.

## **GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING**

The school provides a guidance and counseling program for students. The school's counselors are available to those students who require additional assistance.

## **SUICIDE AND DEPRESSION AWARENESS AND PREVENTION**

Youth suicide impacts the safety of the school environment. It also affects the school community, diminishing the ability of surviving students to learn and the school's ability to educate. Suicide and depression awareness and prevention are important goals of the school district. Information can be obtained from the school office.

## **MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS PROGRAM**

Elgin Math and Science Academy provides English Language Proficiency Support and Bilingual services to identified students in grades Kindergarten through fourth grade. All students with a language other than English listed on the Home Language Survey are screened for this program through the WIDA Model (KG and First Semester of First Grade) or WIDA Screener (Second Semester of Grade 1 and up). The process of how students are identified for the program is here.

Highly qualified certified teachers work with small groups and co-teach with classroom teachers in order to provide individualized instruction in English language proficiency skills, as well as provide equitable access to content in an EL education school through English language proficiency support or native language support if needed. We provide an English Language Proficiency Support model for students who qualify for Transitional Proficiency Instruction and Part-Time Bilingual services. We also provide a full-time bilingual program for students with full-time needs. Our service model is listed in detail here.

In addition to working with students, the English Learning and Bilingual certified staff provides professional development to general education teachers to help them support their students more. Families of students in the program are involved in the program through our Multilingual Parent Advisory Crew (MPAC). This is a family engagement organization that serves as a resource to Multilingual Parents.

The program also provides a lending library in English and Spanish to families available for additional practice at home with their families. Parents looking for information about this service can call Mrs. Paru Heer, Multilingual Coordinator, (630) 883- 5013.

## **Multilingual Learners Program Vision**

The Multilingual Learners Program will create a crew experience for students in English Language Proficiency Support and Bilingual Programs that provides them with equitable access to the curriculum in an EL Education school while promoting their cultural and linguistic identities.

## **Multilingual Learners Program Mission**

Students in the Multilingual Learners Program will be able to:

- Have support based on their unique needs to equitably access an EL education school's curriculum.
- Flourish in an environment with a growth mindset that cultivates them for college and career readiness.
- Experience an environment of “wow and wonder” while honoring linguistic and cultural identities.
- Engage in self-discovery and have a forum to express and communicate it in multiple linguistic mediums.
- Feel empowered and heard in a diverse crew.
- Participate in, lead and advocate for a Better World in their communities.
- Have families consistently engaged in the school community and be supported by the entire crew.

## **MTSS MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT**

**MTSS** is a federal and state initiative intended to meet a wide range of individual student needs through general education services. The classroom teacher and other personnel (teacher assistants and educational specialists) collaborate to meet the needs of individual students. The goal of MTSS is to provide students with the help they need to be successful as early as possible in their school career.

### **How does MTSS work?**

When a child begins to have some area of concern affecting his/her school progress the classroom teacher will create an intervention plan designed to improve the student's performance. If the child continues to have difficulty, the teacher will meet with a team of other staff members to discuss the child's needs, consider other interventions, and outline a method to carefully monitor the child's progress\*\*. The child's progress is measured over time. If he/she makes acceptable progress the interventions may be discontinued (if sufficient progress is made) or continued (if the team feels the interventions are needed to help the student succeed). If the child continues to struggle, then more intensive interventions may be tried.

\*\*This team — referred to as the “Student Support Team” — uses the insight and expertise of several different school staff members. Student Support Team members contribute in different ways to the MTSS process: offering suggestions, gathering data, and communicating with other staff and/or parents. The Student Support Team meets regularly to discuss and monitor student concerns.

### **What is the role of the Parent in MTSS?**

EMSA upholds the philosophy that parents are a child's first teachers as well as their lifetime coach. Therefore, EMSA greatly values the important role of the parent in the MTSS process.

When a child is not responding to the core curriculum, classroom teachers will communicate concerns regarding the student's performance to the parent and invite parent to participate in telephone conversations and/or team meetings regarding their child. Parents will most often be given an active role in the intervention plan for their student.

Parents provide insight into a child's learning and development to understand the problem and why it occurs, design and implement an intervention plan, and measure and evaluate its effectiveness. Parents should contact their child's teacher with any concerns regarding academics or behavior.

# STUDENT RECORDS AND PRIVACY

## STUDENT PRIVACY PROTECTIONS

### Surveys

All surveys requesting personal information from students, as well as any other instrument used to collect personal information from students, must advance or relate to the district's educational objectives, or assist students' career choices. This applies to all surveys, regardless of whether the student answering the questions can be identified or who created the survey.

### Surveys by Third Parties

Before a school official or staff member administers or distributes a survey or evaluation created by a third party to a student, the student's parent/guardian may inspect the survey or evaluation, upon their request and within a reasonable time of their request. This applies to every survey: (1) that is created by a person or entity other than a district official, staff member, or student, (2) regardless of whether the student answering the questions can be identified, and (3) regardless of the subject matter of the questions.

Parents who object to disclosure of information concerning their child to a third party may do so in writing to the Building Principal.

EMSA contracts with certain K-12 Technology Providers, which act under the control of EMSA to maintain certain student Data as relevant and necessary for educational purposes, effectively as School Officials. EMSA has executed Data Privacy Agreements with such Providers, to mandate they take industry-standard measures to prevent the release or disclosure of such Data. Copies of these Agreements are attached to EMSA's website. Parents have the right to inspect Data particular to their student(s), kept by the school, and its designated Providers and their subcontractors. For many categories of Data, parents have the right to identify inaccurate Data for correction. Questions and concerns about student Data should be directed to EMSA's School Administrator or Principal.

### Surveys Requesting Personal Information

School officials and staff members will not request, nor disclose, the identity of any student who completes any survey or evaluation (created by any person or entity, including the school or district) containing one or more of the following items:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family.
3. Sexual behaviors or attitudes.
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students have close family relationships.
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.
8. Income other than that required by law to determine program eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.

The student's parent/guardian may (1) inspect the survey or evaluation upon, and within a reasonable time of, their request, and/or (2) refuse to allow their child to participate in the survey. The school will not penalize any student whose parent/guardian exercised this option.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL**

Parents or guardians have the right to inspect all instructional materials used as a part of their child's education. If you believe that curriculum, instructional materials, or programs violate rights guaranteed by any law or Board policy, you may file a complaint under the district's uniform grievance policy.

Parents or guardians with other suggestions or complaints about curriculum, instructional materials, or programs should complete a Curriculum Objection Form, which is available from the school office. A parent or guardian may also request that their child be exempt from using a particular instructional material or program by completing a Curriculum Objection Form.

## **PROHIBITION ON SELLING OR MARKETING STUDENTS' PERSONAL INFORMATION**

No school official or staff member may market or sell personal information concerning students (or otherwise provide that information to others for that purpose). The term *personal information* means individually identifiable information including: (1) a student or parent's first and last name, (2) a home or other physical address (including street name and the name of the city or town), (3) a telephone number, (4) a Social Security identification number or (5) driver's license number or State identification card.

Unless otherwise prohibited by law, the above paragraph does not apply: (1) if the student's parent/guardian have consented; or (2) to the collection, disclosure or, use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions, such as the following:

1. College or other postsecondary education recruitment, or military recruitment.
2. Book clubs, magazines, and programs providing access to low-cost literary products.
3. Curriculum and instructional materials used by elementary schools and secondary schools.
4. Tests and assessments to provide cognitive, evaluative, diagnostic, clinical, aptitude, or achievement information about students (or to generate other statistically useful data for the purpose of securing such tests and assessments) and the subsequent analysis and public release of the aggregate data from such tests and assessments.
5. The sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education-related activities.
6. Student recognition programs.

Under no circumstances may a school official or staff member provide a student's personal information to a business organization or financial institution that issues credit or debit cards

A parent/guardian who desires to opt their child out of participation in activities provided herein or who desires a copy or access to a survey, or any other material described herein may contact the Building Principal.

The school expects to administer the following surveys that request personal student information on the following approximate dates:

A complete copy of the District's Student and Family Privacy Rights policy may be obtained from the Superintendent's office or accessed on the district's website.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

A school student record is any writing or other recorded information concerning a student and by which a student may be identified individually that is maintained by a school or at its direction or by a school employee, regardless of how or where the information is stored, except for certain records kept in a staff

member's sole possession; records maintained by law enforcement officers working in the school; video and other electronic recordings (including electronic records made on school buses) that are created in part for law enforcement, security, or safety reasons or purposes; though such electronic recordings may become a student record if the content is used for disciplinary or special education purposes regarding a particular student.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Illinois Student Records Act afford parents/guardians and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's school records. They are:

1. **The right to inspect and copy the student's education records within 10 business days of the day the district receives a request for access.** The degree of access a student has to his or her records depends on the student's age. Students less than 18 years of age have the right to inspect and copy only their permanent record. Students 18 years of age or older have access and copy rights to both permanent and temporary records. A parent/guardian or student should submit to the building principal a written request that identifies the record(s) he or she wishes to inspect. Within 10 business days, the building principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. In certain circumstances, the district may request an additional 5 business days in which to grant access. The district charges \$.35 per page for copying but no one will be denied their right to copies of their records for inability to pay this cost. These rights are denied to any person against whom an order of protection has been entered concerning the student.
2. **The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent/guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate, irrelevant, or improper.** A parent/guardian or eligible student may ask the district to amend a record that is believed to be inaccurate, irrelevant, or improper. Requests should be sent to the building principal and should clearly identify the record the parent/guardian or eligible student wants changed and the specific reason a change is being sought. If the District decides not to amend the record, the district will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and advise him or her of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian, or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. **The right to permit disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the FERPA or Illinois School Student Records Act authorizes disclosure without consent.** Disclosure without consent is permitted to school officials with legitimate educational or administrative interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board. A school official may also include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of personally identifiable information from education records (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or educational technology vendor); or any parent/guardian or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility or contractual obligation with the district.

Upon request, the district discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student has enrolled or intends to enroll, as well as to any person as specifically required by State or federal law. Before information is released to these individuals, the parents/guardians or eligible student will receive prior written notice of the nature and substance of the information, and an opportunity to inspect, copy, and challenge such records.

Academic grades and references to expulsions or out-of-school suspensions cannot be challenged at the time a student's records are being forwarded to another school to which the student is transferring.

Disclosure is also permitted without consent to: any person for research, statistical reporting or planning, provided that no student or parent/guardian can be identified; to another school district that overlaps attendance boundaries with the District, if the District has entered into an intergovernmental agreement that allows for sharing of student records and information with the other district, any person named in a court order; appropriate persons if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons; and juvenile authorities when necessary for the discharge of their official duties who request information before adjudication of the student.

4. **The right to a copy of any school student record proposed to be destroyed or deleted.** The permanent record is maintained for at least 60 years after the student transfers, graduates, or permanently withdraws. The temporary record is maintained for at least 5 years after the student transfers, graduates, or permanently withdraws. Temporary records that may be of assistance to a student with a disability who graduates or permanently withdraws, may, after 5 years, be transferred to the parent/guardian or to the student if the student has succeeded to the rights of the parent/guardian. Student temporary records are reviewed every 4 years or upon a student's change in attendance centers, whichever occurs first.
5. **The right to prohibit the release of directory information.** Throughout the school year, the district may release directory information regarding students, limited to:
  - Name
  - Address
  - Grade level
  - Birth date and place
  - Parent/guardian names, addresses, electronic mail addresses, and telephone numbers
  - Photographs, videos, or digital images used for informational or news-related purposes (whether by a media outlet or by the school) of a student participating in school or school-sponsored activities, organizations, and athletics that have appeared in school publications, such as yearbooks, newspapers, or sporting or fine arts programs.
  - Academic awards, degrees, and honors
  - Information in relation to school-sponsored activities, organizations, and athletics
  - Major field of study
  - Period of Attendance in school

*Any parent/guardian or eligible student may prohibit the release of any or all of the above information by delivering a written objection to the building principal within 30 days of the date of this notice.*

6. **The right contained in this statement: No person may condition the granting or withholding of any right, privilege or benefits or make as a condition of employment, credit, or insurance**



**the securing by any individual of any information from a student's temporary record which such individual may obtain through the exercise of any right secured under State law.**

**7. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA.**

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

U.S. Department of Education  
Student Privacy Policy Office  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington DC 20202-8520

## **STUDENT BIOMETRIC INFORMATION**

Before collecting biometric information from students, the school must seek the permission of the student's parent/guardian. Biometric information means information that is collected from students based on their unique characters, such as a fingerprint, voice recognition or retinal scan.

## **PARENTAL RIGHT NOTIFICATIONS**

### **TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS**

Parents/guardians may request information about the qualifications of their child's teachers and paraprofessionals, including:

- Whether the teacher has met State certification requirements;
- Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency permit or other provisional status by which State licensing criteria have been waived;
- The teacher's college major;
- Whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and, if so, the subject of the degrees; and
- Whether any instructional aides or paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

*If you would like to receive any of this information, please contact the school office.*

### **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

Students and parents/guardians should be aware that students in grades 3 - 8 will take standardized tests on Reading, Math, and Science. Parents are encouraged to cooperate in preparing students for the standardized testing, because the quality of the education the school can provide is partially dependent upon the school's ability to continue to prove its success in the state's standardized tests. Parents can assist their students achieve their best performance by doing the following:

1. Encourage students to work hard and study throughout the year;
2. Ensure students get a good night's sleep the night before exams;
3. Ensure students eat well the morning of the exam, particularly ensuring they eat sufficient protein;
4. Remind and emphasize for students the importance of good performance on standardized testing;
5. Ensure students are on time and prepared for tests, with appropriate materials;
6. Teach students the importance of honesty and ethics during the performance of these and other tests;
7. Encourage students to relax on testing day.

## ANNUAL ACADEMIC TESTING

Each year students take tests designed to provide teachers and parents' information about their **individual** academic ability and achievement. The **group** results of some tests are reported to the public.

- **IAR TEST:** These tests, designed by the state to provide information about how well the students of a school are doing in various basic subjects, are given to students in **grades 3 - 8** (both Reading and Math grades 3 - 8, Science grade 5). IAR tests are given in **April**. Individual results are sent to parents when available from the State of Illinois.
- **NWEA MAP TEST:** This is a computerized test that students take three times a year in the areas of reading and mathematics. This test is designed to show the levels that students are functioning in each subject area. Third grade students will also take the science assessment.
- **ACCESS** – This is a computerized test that Multilingual students take once a year to determine whether they continue to be eligible for Multilingual services.
- **ISA** – This is a computerized test that 5<sup>th</sup> and 8th grade students take to determine their science skills.

***TESTING DATES ARE SENT HOME IN THE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER.***

## RIGHT TO EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS IN TEMPORARY LIVING SITUATIONS

When a child loses permanent housing and becomes a homeless person as defined by law, or when a homeless child changes his or her temporary living arrangements, the parent or guardian of the homeless child has the option of either:

1. continuing the child's education in the school of origin for as long as the child remains homeless or, if the child becomes permanently housed, until the end of the academic year during which the housing is acquired; or
2. enrolling the child in any school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMPACT (TITLE I)

The school annually has a meeting for all Parents/Guardians, which takes place during the September Parent meeting. At the meeting, the school will discuss parental involvement, and opportunities for Parents/Guardians to get involved in the education of their children. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to attend the meeting and participate in the discussions that occur. Parents/Guardians should use the meeting as an opportunity to ask questions, make suggestions, and learn about all of the opportunities and programming available for Parents/Guardians to be fully involved in the educational process.

The school and its teachers provide meetings, including parent/teacher conferences, at flexible times to accommodate a variety of parent schedules. Parents/Guardians will be given notice of meeting availability at the beginning of each year, and at least two weeks before conferences or other regularly scheduled meetings, to provide sufficient opportunity to schedule and attend meetings with teachers. Additionally, teachers are available regularly to meet with parents/guardians to discuss the success of their child. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to inquire about available meeting times, and to work with teachers. Parents/Guardians will be involved in an organized and timely way when any programs are created, considered, or altered, and will be continually involved in the ongoing development of programming, curriculum, and policy.

The school provides Parents/Guardians with access to:

1. school performance profiles required by Federal law and their child's individual student assessment results, including an interpretation of such results;

2. a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet;
3. opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions, share experiences with other Parents/Guardians, and participate as appropriate in decisions relating to the education of their children if such Parents/Guardians so desire; and
4. timely responses to suggestions.

Everyone is responsible for the success of the students of the school. While the school provides the best education we can, it is critical to the success of students that parents assist us in meeting the goals of education set forth by the state, the federal government, and ourselves.

In order to better assist in educating the students, we need the help of all parents and guardians. We ask that you help us educate children by monitoring attendance, homework completion, and television watching; by volunteering in your child's classroom; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of children and positive use of extracurricular time.

The school endeavors to do its best to provide all information in the language best understood by parents and guardians. Questions about language alternatives should be directed to the building principal.

Parents/Guardians of participating children have a right to appeal the contents of this policy. The district will submit any parent comments when this plan is submitted to the State. Any questions or concerns should be directed to the building principal.

The state's resources on parental involvement can be located at <http://illinoisparents.org/>. The state's website on parental involvement provides information, training, and support for parents and schools on various websites which may be useful or interesting to parents and students and provides advice and information about how to get involved and participate in the educational process. Resources are provided by search, by county, and by categorical query.

## **SCHOOL OPERATIONS DURING A PANDEMIC OR OTHER HEALTH EMERGENCY**

During a pandemic or other health emergency, you will be notified in a timely manner of all changes to the school environment and schedule that impact your child. Please be assured that even if school is not physically in session, it is the goal of the school and district to provide your child with the best educational opportunities possible.

Additionally, please note the following:

1. All decisions regarding changes to the school environment and schedule, including a possible interruption of in-person learning, will be made by the superintendent in consultation with and, if necessary, at the direction of the Governor, Illinois Department of Public Health, local health department, emergency management agencies, and/or Regional Office of Education.
2. Available learning opportunities may include remote and/or blended learning. Blended learning may require your child to attend school on a modified schedule.
3. Students will be expected to participate in blended and remote instruction as required by the school and district. Parents are responsible for ensuring the participation of their child. Students who do not participate in blended or remote learning will be considered truant.
4. All school disciplinary rules remain in effect during the interruption of in-person learning. Students are subject to discipline for disrupting the remote learning environment to the same extent that discipline would be imposed for disruption of the traditional classroom.

5. Students and parents will be required to observe all public health and safety measures implemented by the school and district in conjunction with state and local requirements.
6. During a pandemic or other health emergency, the school and district will ensure that educational opportunities are available to all students.
7. School personnel will work closely with students with disabilities and other vulnerable student populations to minimize the impact of any educational disruption.
8. Students who have a compromised immune system, live with an individual with a compromised immune system, or have a medical condition that may impact their ability to attend school during a pandemic or other public health emergency should contact school officials.
9. During a pandemic or other health emergency, teachers and school staff will receive additional training on health a safety measures.
10. In accordance with school district mandates, the school may need to conduct a daily health assessment of your child. Parents and students will be notified of the exact assessment procedures if this becomes necessary.
11. Parents should not send their child to school if their child exhibits any symptoms consistent with the pandemic or other health emergency.
12. Please do not hesitate to contact school or district officials if you have any concerns regarding your child’s education, health, or safety.

### **PESTICIDE APPLICATION NOTICE**

The district maintains a registry of parents/guardians of students who have registered to receive written or telephone notification prior to the application of pesticides to school grounds. To be added to the list, please contact:

Dan Alexander, Chief Operating Officer  
Phone: (630) 883 – 5013  
Email: [dalexander@emsacharter.org](mailto:dalexander@emsacharter.org)

Notification will be given before application of the pesticide on our website as well as the school calendar. Prior notice is not required if there is an imminent threat to health or property.

### **SEXUAL ABUSE RESPONSE AND PREVENTION RESOURCE**

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) maintains a resource guide on sexual abuse response and prevention. The guide contains information on and the location of children’s advocacy centers, organizations that provide medical evaluations and treatment to victims of child sexual abuse, organizations that provide mental health evaluations and services to victims and families of victims of child sexual abuse, and organizations that offer legal assistance to and provide advocacy on behalf of victims of child sexual abuse. This guide can be accessed through the ISBE website at [www.isbe.net](http://www.isbe.net) or you may request a copy of this guide by contacting the school’s office.

### **AWARENESS AND PREVENTION OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE, GROOMING BEHAVIORS, AND BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS (FAITH’S LAW)**

Child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and boundary violations harm students, their parent/guardian, the district’s environment, its school communities, and the community at large, while diminishing a student’s ability to learn. Please see our board policy for more information.

If you believe you are a victim of child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, or boundary violations, or you believe that your child is a victim, you should immediately contact the principal, a school counselor, or another trusted adult employee of the school.

**Additional Resources include:**

- National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800.656.HOPE (4673)
- National Sexual Abuse Chatline at [online.rainn.org](http://online.rainn.org)
- Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Hotline at 1.800.25.ABUSE (2873)

**FAITH’S LAW NOTIFICATIONS**

School districts are required to include in their student handbook the District’s Employee Code of Professional Conduct. These standards, in part, define appropriate conduct between school employees and students. A copy of these standards can be found on the district’s website or requested from the administration office.

**HEARING IMPAIRED: REQUEST FOR AN INTERPRETER**

Families with hearing impaired members may request an interpreter. EMSA will provide interpreters for all school functions you wish to attend including parent/teacher conferences, community club meetings, open houses, etc. **PLEASE** make the request two weeks in advance, if possible.

**SEX OFFENDER AND VIOLENT OFFENDER COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION LAW**

State law requires schools to notify parents/guardians during school registration or parent-teacher conferences that information about sex offenders and violent offenders against youth is available to the public on the Illinois department of State Police (ISP) website.

**The ISP website contains the following:**

- Illinois Sex Offender Registry, <https://isp.illinois.gov/Sor>
- Illinois Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registry, <https://isp.illinois.gov/MVOAY>
- Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Sex Offenders, <https://isp.illinois.gov/Sor/FAQs>