2026-2027

Fieldstone Elementary
5255 Jansen Ave NE
St. Michael, MN 55376
763-497-0904

Big Woods Elementary
13470 Frankfort Pkwy NE
St. Michael, MN 55376
763-497-8025

St. Michael Elementary
101 Central Ave W
St. Michael, MN 55376
763-497-4882

www.stma.k12.mn.us

Student~Parent Handbook

Big Woods Collaborative Vision

We build a positive culture of trust and respect through collaboration to help all students achieve.

At Big Woods Elementary School, we strive to teach all students about positive character traits in order for them to develop lifelong learning skills that nurture positive attitudes and self-worth. We utilize the Character Strong curriculum which centers around nine monthly traits; Respect, Responsibility, Gratitude, Empathy, Perseverance, Honesty, Cooperation, Courage, and Creativity.



Students and Families,

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year. I am so excited to begin another school year as your Big Woods principal. It is an honor to serve you. I am happy to include you in the Big Woods community and encourage your participation in school events and activities. Education is truly a partnership between school, the home, and the community.

Big Woods is a high performing school with a highly skilled and caring staff. We dedicate ourselves to provide the very best education for our students.

This handbook is designed to help families develop an understanding of Big Woods' procedures and expectations. Please take time to read and discuss the information with your child. Join us in working together to help each child become a successful learner.

Respectfully,

Mr. Jesse Peterson
jessep@mystma.org
763.497.6565

BIG WOODS OFFICE

Principal	Mr. Peterson
Dean of Students	Mrs. Miller
Planning Room Support	Miss Beattie
Administrative Assistant	Mrs. Newman
Office Support	Ms. Jacobs
Health Office Staff	Mrs. Hemmesch
District Elementary Nurse	Mrs. Steffens
Student Hours	7:45 AM - 2:15 PM
Student Drop Off Time	7:20-7:40 AM
Office Hours	7:00 AM - 3:30 PM
Telephone	763-497-8025
Fax	763-497-6563
Website	www.stma.k12.mn.us
Attendance	763-497-8025 x1

DISTRICT STRATEGIC ROADMAP

DISTRICT MISSION *Our core purpose*	CORE VALUES *Drivers of our words and actions*	VISION *What we intend to create*	STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS *Focus of our improvement efforts*
The mission of STMA Schools is to provide a safe educational environment where students develop lifelong learning skills that nurture positive attitudes and self-worth. This will be accomplished when all graduates function as: • Self-directed individuals who set goals, think creatively and critically, use inquiry, and manage a process for achieving these goals. • Effective communicators who work well independently and in groups and who use available resources to access, process, and share information and ideas. • Active, responsible, and respectful community members.	**Students first** Committed to students first. **Excellence** Be our best in academics, arts, activities, and athletics. **Relationships** Foster strong relationships and collaborate with our students, staff, families, and community. **Integrity** Do what we say we are going to do. **Transparent** Provide accurate, timely, and accessible information and communication regarding key district decisions. **Kindness** Honor the uniqueness of individuals, treating others as we expect to be treated. **Purposeful** Be forward thinking, fiscally responsible, resourceful, and make educated decisions.	**STMA Schools will be the pride of our community, educating the whole student, with excellence in academics, arts, activities, and athletics through the empowerment of a world-class staff.**	**A** Engage in continuous improvement of teaching and learning **B** Engage in continuous improvement of student support systems and programs **C** Cultivate family and community connections and increase advocacy in support of the district mission **D** Align people and organizational resources to sustain district success

School Board Approved 04-05-2021 in partnership with TeamWorks International

STUDENT~PARENT HANDBOOK TABLE OF CONTENTS

DISTRICT 885 STRATEGIC ROAD MAP (2)
GENERAL INFORMATION (4-8)
Candy, Gum, Pop, & Treats
Chain of Command
Change of Parent Information
Classroom Deliveries
Dress
Electronic Devices
Emergency Closing
Emergency Drills
Fees & Fines
Field Trips
Fundraisers
Lockers & Desks
Lost & Found
Movies
Pets
Picking Up Children Early
Playground Equipment, Collectables, & Prohibited Items
Publication of Student Images & Pictures of Students
Recess
Release of Directory Information
School Hours & Schedule
Telephone Use
Visitors & Visitor Registration System
Volunteers, Chaperones, & Background Checks
ACADEMICS (8)
Assessments
Conferences
Grades, Report Cards, & ParentVUE
Homework
Participation
ATTENDANCE (9-10)
Absences & Tardies
Truancy
Vacations
BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS & DEFINITIONS (10-13)
Character Counts & Knight Way Pledge
Expectations
Above the Line, Below the Line, & Bottom Line
Knight Way Expectations
Voice Level, Line Basics, Body Basics, & Give Me 5
Language & Gestures
Teasing, Bullying, & Harassment
Threats
Vandalism
BEHAVIOR CONSEQUENCES (13-14)
Data Privacy Statement
CBGs, GNCs & FYIs
Cheating/Academic Dishonesty
Consequences
Detention
Planning Room
Reasonable Force
Removal from Class
Suspension
COMMUNICATION (15-16)
Complaints
Newsletters, Web Pages, & Facebook
ParentVUE
Student Planners
Telephone & Email
POLICIES (16-18)
Alcohol & Drugs
Assault
Bullying
Harassment & Violence
Interaction Between Staff & Public
Internet Use
Nondiscrimination
Pledge of Allegiance
Protection & Privacy of Pupil Records
Weapons
STUDENT SERVICES (18-20)
Food Service
Health Office
Media Center
Response Services
Social Work & Counseling
Special Education, Child Study, & 504s
TRANSPORTATION (20-21)
Bicyclists & Walkers
Bus
In-District Transportation & Walks
Student Bus Behavior
Student Bus Safety Training
Transportation Change, Day Care, & Address Form
VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES (22)
SCHOOL CALENDAR (23)
STATEWIDE TESTING (24-25)

This handbook was approved by the District 885 Board of Education in Spring 2025.
Its contents may be amended and will be kept in the principal's office.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

Students who ride the bus will unload and enter the building via door A. If you prefer to drop off your child, please follow the one-way road off of Naber Avenue which leads to the back of Big Woods (Door D). Students should sit on the right (passenger) side of the vehicle and be prepared to exit the vehicle. Students may be dropped off between 7:17-7:40 AM. If you arrive after approximately 7:40 AM and no staff members are outside along the sidewalk, you will need to drive to the front of Big Woods and walk your child into the office to sign her/him in.



Birthday Treats, Candy, Gum, and Pop

Due to the increasing number of students with food allergies, we ask families not to send treats to school to celebrate their child's birthday. Students may bring in non-edible items to share on their birthday such as pencils or stickers or a classroom book. Gifts are not expected. Please keep items to a minimum. **Staff encourages healthy snacks and will not use candy or 'junk food' for rewards.** Healthy treat ideas include 100% juice boxes, yogurt, string cheese, whole fruits & veggies, fruit smoothies, popcorn, and baked chips.

Chain of Command

Parents with classroom concerns or questions are encouraged to directly contact teachers first. If there is no resolution, contact the building principal.

Change of Parent Information

Office personnel update addresses after parents provide documentation. Parents may update telephone numbers, email addresses, and emergency contacts in *ParentVUE*. For instructions, go to the STMA web page, and click on *ParentVUE/StudentVUE*.

Classroom Deliveries

School personnel or student designees deliver academic and essential items to classrooms when time allows. They do not deliver gifts, balloons, for example. Non-essential items remain in the office until the end of the day.

Dress (Policy 504)

Students are expected to dress and groom appropriately for school. Grooming which presents a safety or health hazard or causes disruptions is prohibited; clothing with inappropriate slogans, pictures, or language is not permitted. Students may be asked to reverse or exchange clothing, or to remove items such as costume headbands, chains and hanging belts. Students must store headwear, outerwear, book bags, knapsacks, and purses in lockers during the school day.



- Face Paint & Hair Paint: Face and hair paint are prohibited.
- Headwear: Hats, bandanas, kerchiefs, and costume headbands must be removed upon entering school and stored in lockers. Costume headbands are defined as those with cat ears, rabbit ears, unicorn horns, large bows, and etcetera. Headbands that rest flush on the head are acceptable.
- Shirts & Tops: Tank straps must be three finger-widths. Students may wear spaghetti strap tops or transparent tops provided they wear a tank underneath.
- Shoes: PE teachers require tennis shoes with ties or Velcro; laces are preferred. Recess supervisors require closed toe shoes. No flip flops! Shoes with rollers are prohibited.
- Undergarments, Midriffs, & Cleavage: Students who wear clothing that expose undergarments, midriffs, and/or cleavage are required to change or wear additional clothing.
- Skirts & Shorts: The hem of a skirt or shorts must be finger-tip in length.
- Winter Wear: Students are required to wear winter jackets, head wear, and mittens/gloves for recess when the weather is cold. Students who play in the snow are required to wear snow pants and boots.

Electronic Devices
To support a focused learning environment, personal electronic devices should not be used during the school day unless approved by staff. This includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, smartwatches with communication features, headphones/earbuds, gaming devices, and similar items. All personal electronic devices must be turned off and stored in the student's locker during the school day.

* Such devices may be confiscated and returned to the parent/guardian.

* All offenses are principal discretion.

Emergency Closing



School closing information is posted on the STMA web site, and the district sends automated messages. Information is also announced on radio stations WCCO AM 830, KRWC AM 1360 (Buffalo), and television channels 4, 5, 9, and 11. If students are dismissed early, they are sent to their usual destination. Parents should plan ahead for emergency school closings. Due to the large volume of phone calls during these situations, office staff will not call parents.

STMA Flex Learning Day Plan provides an opportunity for teaching and learning to continue when school cancellations are necessary. The Flex Learning Day Plan provides a viable option to continue student learning even when weather conditions are unsafe to transport our students. It also negates the need for the district to add additional days to the school calendar in the event there are more inclement weather days. A Flex Learning Day will be implemented if we have a third school cancellation day. Students will complete one Flex Learning Day Choice Board and return it to school the next day, signed by a parent/caregiver. More specific information about the district's Flex Learning Plan can be found on our district website.

Emergency Drills
Fire, tornado, and lockdown drills are practiced as required by law.

Fees and Fines
Fees are charged for field trips, admission to school events, after school activities, and for lost or damaged books, planners, textbooks, workbooks, and other materials.

Field Trips
Field trips are considered part of the school day to which school policies and procedures apply. Generally, each grade plans two optional fee-based field trips. Parents with financial concerns should contact the principal. Due to student safety and enjoyment, chaperones and students must ride the bus to and from the field trip destination. Meeting students at the field trip is strongly discouraged. If a parent chooses to drive to the destination s/he will be permitted to shadow his/her child along with the assigned chaperone as long as there is no disruption to the learning environment. Tickets and all costs will not be covered by the school.

Fundraisers
Students are not allowed to sell fundraising items during the school day.

Lockers and Desks



Lockers and desks are the property of District 885. School personnel may inspect both at any time without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. Students are expected to keep assigned lockers orderly. Personal locks are not allowed.

Lost and Found
Lost & Found items are temporarily stored and then donated to charity. Parents are encouraged to **clearly label** coats, boots, notebooks, lunch boxes, and book bags.

Movies
Movies rated G or PG may occasionally be shown. PG 13 movies will not be shown. Parents who do not want their children to view G or PG rated movies should contact the classroom teacher.

Pets
Students are not allowed to bring pets to school.

Picking Up Children Early
Parents who pick up their children early are encouraged to send notes to planners and to arrive ten minutes early. This allows time for children to be excused from class, gather their belongings, and sign out in the office. Please call the office for transportation changes **before 10:30 AM**.

Playground Equipment, Collectables, and Prohibited Items
Students may bring clearly labeled playground equipment to school such as jump ropes, and footballs – no baseballs, softballs, or bats. Students may not bring collectable items or any type of trading cards to school. Risks are too great for damage, loss, or theft. Collectables may be confiscated and returned to parents; they may be banned if deemed distracting. Weapons, look-alike weapons, toy weapons, ammunition, and sharp or dangerous items are prohibited. (See Weapons Policy 501.)

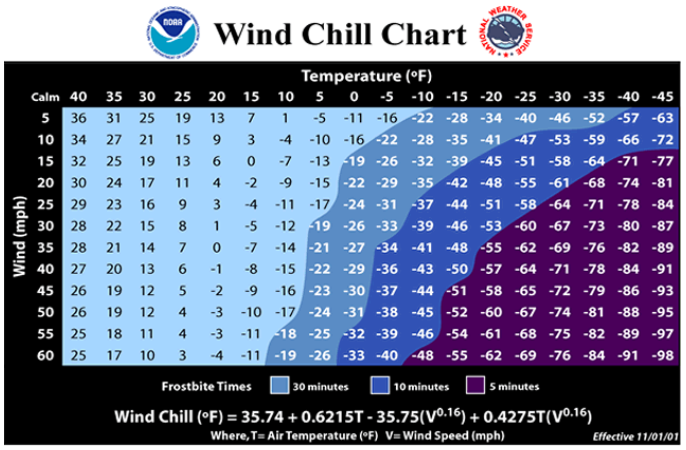


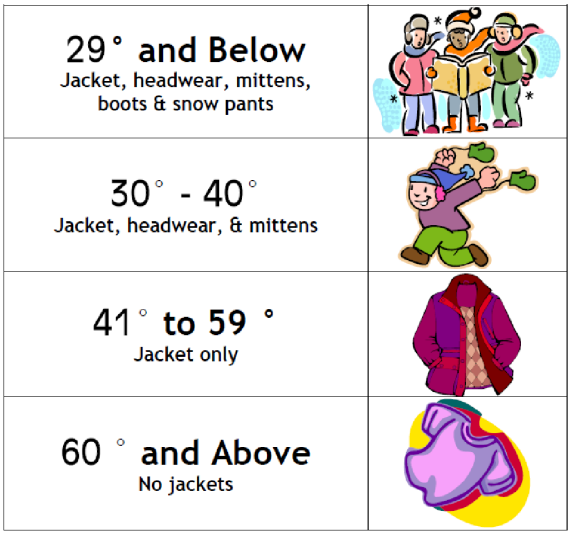
Publication of Student Images and Pictures of Students
Images of students taken in the **public arena** such as sporting events or fine arts public performances may be released on public media and may identify students by names, grade, or in any other personally identifiable manner.

In addition, because of classroom or activity participation throughout the school year, pictures and videos of students may be used for displays, photo albums, community newspaper articles, school newsletters, calendars, news broadcasts, movies, the yearbook, and etcetera. Student names, grade, and other personally identifiable information may accompany the student images. These images may be posted on the Internet through the STMA website, online newspapers, Twitter, and Facebook. Parents with concerns or questions about photographs and videos may contact office personnel to request that their child not be included in media presentations.

School staff may take pictures of students. Parents and visitors may not take pictures of students. This includes assemblies, field trips, lunch, and other events during the school day.

Recess
If students are well enough to attend school, they are expected to go outside for recess and abide by safety guidelines. Weather permitting, students will go outside; there is no supervision for individuals to stay inside. Students are expected to dress appropriately for each season. Parents are encouraged to check the weather and monitor children's dress.





There are circumstances in which we would allow indoor recess on a short-term, long-term, or daily basis. Medical documentation is required. Students with documented medical conditions may stay inside. Examples include broken bones, recovery from surgery, or illness, chronic illness, etc.

Release of Directory Information

The school district may disclose directory information from the education records of a student and information regarding parents without prior written consent of the parent or eligible student. Contact the building principal for the procedure for obtaining nondisclosure of directory information.

Directory information means information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes, but is not limited to: the student's name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, grade level, enrollment status (i.e. full-time or part-time), participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, degrees, honors and awards received, and the most recent educational agency or institution attended. It also includes the name, address, and telephone number of the student's parent(s).

School Hours and Schedule

School begins at 7:45 AM and ends at 2:15 PM. Students should be at school by 7:40 AM. The office is staffed from 7:00 AM-3:30 PM.

Telephone Use

Classroom telephone use is at the teacher's discretion. Office staff will not interrupt instruction with outside calls. Families need to arrange after school plans at home prior to the school day. Office personnel will assist parents with voicemail. Parents may call the office to have emergency messages relayed to students.

Visitors and Visitor Registration System (VRS)

Student safety is our priority. Guests are required to abide by district and school policies and expectations. School visits are a privilege, and guest privileges may be revoked by administration.

Visitors are required to **state their names, their children's name, and their purpose** before being admitted to the office. Upon entrance, guests who travel beyond the office are required to present a government-issued picture ID. Office staff scan the ID in the VRS. The VRS verifies identity, tracks check-in and check-out times, and prints visitor labels with photo IDs. The VRS also provides custom alerts and screens visitor information with a national and local database. **Visitors must park in the front lot, not along the emergency lane.**

For security purposes and to keep classroom disruptions to a minimum, visitors are not allowed beyond the office before school begins. When parents drop off items, the office staff or students will deliver them or, if necessary, call students to the office. Parents who wish to observe classrooms must obtain prior approval from the principal.

Students are not allowed to bring friends or relatives to school.

Students and their family guests will eat at a visitor table. A parent, grandparent, older sibling, aunt or uncle must be present to eat at the visitor table. Families may not invite other students to the table. All other students will eat at designated classroom tables. This practice assists with safety by helping supervisors better monitor adults in the cafeteria and the children with whom they have direct contact. It also allows staff to better manage life-threatening food allergies and food borne illnesses.

Volunteers, Chaperones, and Background Checks

Adults are welcome and encouraged to volunteer and chaperone. However, non-school aged children are not allowed in classrooms, in educational areas, or on field trips. To further increase safety, all volunteers and chaperones will be required to complete and pay for **district background checks**. For information about background checks, refer to the STMA web site.

ACADEMICS

Assessments

State-required assessments in mathematics and reading measure student performance relative to MN academic standards. State assessments are one measure of how well students understand content that is part of daily instruction. These assessments also measure how well the district and school personnel align curriculum with standards. Parents/guardians have a right to opt their children out of state assessments. Please read the *Parent/Guardian Guide to Statewide Testing* document, located on the STMA website (*Teaching & Learning-Assessments-Parents*) and on page 21, to better understand the effect of student participation in statewide assessments.

Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences are held twice per year. Each student/family is allotted one time slot.

Grades, Report Cards, and ParentVUE

Grading scales are posted on teachers' web pages. Grades may be viewed on *ParentVUE* at any time, and report cards may be viewed at the end of each trimester. Parents and teachers are encouraged to contact one another when concerns arise.

Homework

Students are required to complete quality work which is thoughtful, accurate, and completed on time. Students record assignments in planners. Parents are encouraged to monitor homework for quality and completion; it may or may not be graded.

Teachers send make-up work home on the second day of an absence provided that office personnel are contacted by 9:00 AM. Students are given two school days to complete work for an excused absence. One additional school day is allowed for each day missed thereafter. When family vacations are scheduled when school is in session, **make-up work will be assigned upon return** and may be modified by the teachers. See **Vacations on page 9.**

Participation

When students are in school, they are expected to attend physical education class and to **go outside for recess**. Exceptions apply to students with current medical excuses signed by physicians.

ATTENDANCE



School attendance is mandatory in order to participate in school activities during the day or in the evening. Students must be at school for a minimum of ½ school day or provide a doctor's appointment note.

School attendance is mandated by state law, is the responsibility of the student and parents, and is essential to the success of children's education. Students are expected to be in school unless there is an excused reason.

Absences and Tardies

For the safety of students, it is important to verify absences. Parents should confirm school absences by calling the attendance line before 7:30 AM. **If contact does not occur before the school day concludes on the day of the absence**, the absence is unexcused. Families have 24 hours to change the absence from unexcused to excused. If parents do not verify absences and their child does not arrive at school, school personnel will attempt to contact parents. Absences are considered unexcused when the student is absent with the consent from the parent but the reason is unacceptable.



Students who are tardy must report to the office for a pass, and the pass must be presented to the teacher. Students are tardy when they do not arrive in class by 7:45.

Examples of Excused absences and tardies:
- court appearances
- death or serious illness of a family member
- family vacations**
- illness*
- medical appointments which cannot be scheduled outside of school

Examples of Unexcused absences and tardies:
- babysitting
- cold & inclement weather when school is in session
- family vacations
- hair appointments
- oversleeping, "sleeping in" & missing the bus
- running late
- shopping
- working at home

Consistent school attendance is best fostered when parents support the school and require their children to attend. Parental request places no obligation on the school to excuse absences. School personnel may make referrals to Wright County Human Services when tardies or absences are deemed excessive.

Parents may be required to provide a doctor's note when their children's absences and/or tardies meet or exceed 10. Students must present the doctor note within two days of the return to school, or the absence is unexcused. *If a student is late due to minor medical symptoms such as coughs and headaches, attendance may be recorded as an unexcused tardy or absent.

Students who are in classrooms by 7:45 AM are on time for school. The attendance clerk uses the following guidelines to record student absences and tardies:
- Arrives 7:46 – 8:45 – Student is tardy
- Arrives 8:46 – 1:00 PM – Student is ½ day absent (AM)
- Leaves before 1:00 – Student is ½ day absent (PM)

Excessive absences are recorded in the following manner:
- 3 unexcused absences = 3 Day Truancy Letter
- 5 unexcused absences = 5 Day Truancy Letter
- 7 unexcused absences = 7 Day Truancy Letter - Educational Neglect/Child Protection Referral to Wright County

Truancy

Students are truant when they miss any portion of the school day without approval from parents or school administrators. Students will be considered truant if they:
1. Do not attend school without knowledge of a parent.
2. Leave the building or school grounds anytime during the school day without authorization.

3. Are absent from class without permission or do not attend class while in school.
4. Do not report to detention.
5. Falsify or forge an absence note.

Consequences for truancy may include a meeting with the principal, a parent meeting, a county truancy referral, and detention or suspension.

Vacations**
Parents are encouraged to schedule family vacations when school is not in session. Vacation may be excused or unexcused* depending on attendance history. Teachers will not pre-teach lessons and may not assign work in advance for students who go on vacation. When students return and make-up work is assigned, most work is completed at home. Parents are responsible for helping their children with assignments.

Parents who vacation without their children are encouraged to complete a *Temporary Emergency Information* form. Contact school office personnel for a copy.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS & DEFINITIONS

(Refer to School Board Policy #506)

Character Strong
At Big Woods Elementary School, we strive to teach all students about positive character traits in order for them to develop lifelong learning skills that nurture positive attitudes and self-worth. We utilize the Character Strong curriculum which centers around nine monthly traits; Respect, Responsibility, Gratitude, Empathy, Perseverance, Honesty, Cooperation, Courage, and Creativity. This curriculum will teach students to Be Kind, Be Strong, and Be Well as they work to develop good character.



Knight Way Pledge
R-E-S-P-E-C-T
The Knight Way Beliefs for you and me!
RESPECT YOURSELF
RESPECT OTHERS
And
Remember to RESPECT all PROPERTY
It's not easy but OWN YOUR ACTIONS.
Let's do it all together. It will give you satisfaction!
R-E-S-P-E-C-T
Do it the Knight Way for you and me!



Expectations
The Big Woods staff is committed to the education, well being, and safety of all students. Our student management program is based on clear expectations where students are responsible and accountable for their behavior. Staff use a common approach to discipline that includes:

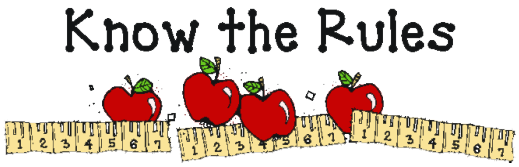
• Clear positive expectations & behaviors
• Procedures for teaching & encouraging expected behavior
• Procedures for encouraging expected behavior and for discouraging inappropriate behavior



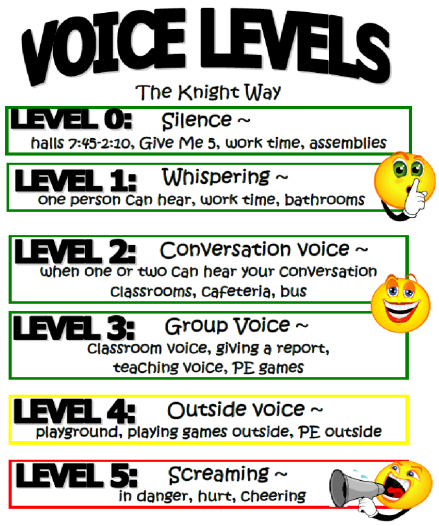
Big Woods staff uses the motto ***Do things the Knight Way***. *Knight Way Expectations* include specific behaviors and are introduced to students in September and reinforced throughout the school year.

Above, Below, and Bottom Line Behaviors

ABOVE THE LINE EXAMPLES	BELOW THE LINE EXAMPLES	BOTTOM LINE EXAMPLES
Being fair	Altering planners	Aggression
Being trustworthy	Arguing	Bullying - chronic
Caring	Bullying - circumstantial	Cheating & lying
Demonstrating responsibility	Calling names	Fighting
Following classroom expectations	Cutting in line	Forging
Listening the first time	Disturbing classes	Harassment
Showing citizenship	Eating or taking others' food	Hitting/kicking/pinching
Showing respect	Littering	Insubordination
Using line basics	Out of seat	Racist remarks
Using body basics	Play fighting	Spitting/biting
Character Strong	Playing with food	Stealing
	Pushing	Swearing or gestures
	Rolling eyes	Teasing - chronic
	Running	Threats* (including gestures)
	Teasing - circumstantial	Vandalism
		Weapons & look-alike weapons



KNIGHT WAY EXPECTATIONS					
Way to Respect:	**ARRIVAL**	**HALLWAYS**	**BATHROOMS**	**CAFETERIA**	**PLAYGROUND**
Others	• Walk • Greet others • Pass the door • Remove hats • Use Body Basics in halls	• Use Line Basics • Use pass as required • Keep hands & feet to self	• Use pass with permission • Use quiet voice • Flush toilet • Honor privacy • Keep areas clean	• Use Line Basics • Wait for turn • Say please & thanks • Sit in assigned area	• Listen to adults the 1st time • Line up at signal • Play safely by the rules • Use kind words & actions • Include everyone
Yourself	• Make good choices	• Walk	• Wash hands with soap	• Hang coat on hook • Wash hands • Eat lunch • Use napkins	• Stop & think • Wear appropriate clothing
Property	• Open & close lockers quietly • Organize lockers & desks	• Keep school clean • Keep hands & feet to self	• Leave pass & materials in commons • Throw trash in garbage	• Clean table & floor • Return trays & silverware	• Use equipment as intended • Return equipment
Respect *yourself*. Respect others. Respect property. OWN YOUR ACTIONS!					

Voice Level guides individual and group volume. Students should recognize phrases such as *Voice Level 0* and gestures when a staff member signals *0* for silence.	***Line Basics, Body Basics, & Give Me 5*** provide common language and strategies for managing groups of students.
	**LINE BASICS** Stand directly behind person in front Face forward Keep hands and feet to self Remain quiet Walk on the right side of the hall **BODY BASICS** Bottom on floor Legs crossed Hands to self Voice quiet **GIVE ME 5** Eyes on speaker Ears listening Body still Brain engaged Mouth quiet



Language and Gestures

Disrespectful language and gestures are not tolerated in school, on school property, or on the bus. Consequences apply.

Teasing, Bullying, & Harassment

Teasing occurs in two major forms, playful and hurtful. Students may be teased based on appearance, weight, behavior, abilities, clothing, and etcetera.

- Playful-friendly, reciprocal teasing between peers
- Hurtful-upsetting, unkind, cruel, wounding, or insensitive from the victim's point of view, regardless of the intention of the teaser

An action is considered teasing when: □it is unwelcomed from the victim's point of view □it is verbal □it is a single incident □the motivation is not to exert power or control over the victim



Bullying means intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and: (1) there is an actual or perceived imbalance of power between the student engaging in prohibited conduct and the target of the behavior and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or (2) materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.

Cyberbullying means bullying using technology or other electronic communication, including, but not limited to, a transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data, including a post on a social network Internet website or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or another electronic device.

Bullying can be **circumstantial or chronic**. It might be the result of a situation such as being the new student at school, or it might be behavior that has been directed at the individual for a long period of time. Circumstantial bullying is a single incident. Chronic bullying is repeated or ongoing.

Bullying Prohibition Form 514F is used to report and document bullying.

Intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct may involve, but is not limited to, conduct that causes physical harm to a student or a student's property or causes a student to be in reasonable fear of harm to person or property; under Minnesota common law, violates a student's reasonable expectation of privacy, defames a student, or

constitutes intentional infliction of emotional distress against a student; is directed at any student or students, including those based on a person's actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, national origin, immigration status, sex, marital status, familial status, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation, including gender identity and expression, academic status related to student performance, disability, or status with regard to public assistance, age, or any additional characteristic defined in state statute. However, prohibited conduct need not be based on any particular characteristic defined in this paragraph or state statute.

The behaviors include: □unwelcome conduct such as verbal abuse, name-calling, slurs □graphic or written statements threats □physical assault

Harassment: The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and Department of Justice (DOJ) have made the **distinction between bullying and harassment** in that when the bullying behaviors listed above are **directed at a protected class** the behavior then becomes harassment. District 885 Policy 413 identifies a protected class as race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, and/or disability.

BULLYING	PEER CONFLICT	RUDE or MEAN
Imbalance of power, not friends	Equal power or friends	Happens **once or twice**
Repeated negative actions	Happens occasionally	Not thinking, may be accidental
Purposeful	Accidental	On purpose, once or twice
Serious with threat of harm	Not serious	Hurtful
Seeking power, control, or things	Not seeking power or attention	
Attempt to gain material things or power	Not trying to get something	Examples: budging in line, bragging
No remorse – blames victim	Remorse – will take responsibility	about getting the highest grade, burping
No effort to solve problem	Effort to solve the problem	in someone's face, and etcetera
Strong emotional reaction from victim Little or no reaction from bully	Equal emotional reaction	"Are you seriously wearing that sweater again?" "Your handwriting is sloppy."

Threats



A threat is an intention to cause harm or loss to another person or property. A threat is made verbally, in writing, by gesture, and/or by innuendo or suggestion. Threats are assessed individually based on age, viability, and degree.

Vandalism

Students who damage or destroy school property will be charged for repairs or replacements. Additional consequences may include detention and suspension. Unintentional damage to property, such as broken windows or damaged lockers, may be the financial responsibility of students and parents.

BEHAVIOR CONSEQUENCES

Due to data privacy, school personnel are only allowed to share student information with parents and guardians. School personnel may not share information about students with other parents. This includes student names and behavior consequences.



CBGs, GNCs, and FYIs

Staff mails *Caught Being Good* (CBG) postcards to students who demonstrate the *Knight Way,* or above the line behavior. Likewise, Good News Calls (GNC) are made to parents of students who demonstrated character and exceeded *Knight Way* expectations.

Staff issues *For Your Information* (FYI) forms to students who display inappropriate behavior outside of the homeroom. This encompasses the bus, hallways, cafeteria, rest rooms, specialists' classrooms, and outside areas. When staff issues FYIs, students will be informed, and staff will staple a copy in students' planners. When students receive three FYIs, they will complete a Planning Sheet. A fourth FYI results in further disciplinary action.

Cheating/Academic Dishonesty



Students who plagiarize, cheat, or alter scores receive a consequence. Classroom teachers notify the parent/guardian and may report the situation to the principal or dean of students. Further disciplinary action may be taken.

Consequences

Students who do not comply with expectations receive consequences ranging from simple reminders to detention or suspension. The severity of consequences depend upon the degree and frequency of the student's behavior.

Consequences include but are not limited to the following:

- verbal or written reminder
- apology
- problem solving & plan
- privilege loss
- restitution
- phone call to parents
- meet with principal or dean
- meet with School Resource Officer
- detention
- in-school suspension/reflection
- out-of-school suspension
- expulsion

Detention

Detention may be assigned for below the line and bottom line behavior. Most often, detention will be assigned by an administrator. It may be scheduled before school, during school, and after school. Students who skip detention are truant.

Planning Room



The Planning Room is staffed by a trained paraprofessional who helps students work through situations and develop behavior plans. Students share plans with parents, obtain parent signatures, and return the plans to school the following school day. The Planning Room is also used for academic support, breaks, and detention & suspension supervision.

Reasonable Force

Staff may use reasonable force to restrain or correct a student in order to prevent injury to self or others.

Removal from Class

Disruptive or insubordinate students may be removed from class and sent to the office. Staff contacts parents when this occurs.

Suspension

The suspension process follows the provisions of the *Pupil Fair Dismissal Act of 1974*. Examples of why students may be suspended are assault, bullying, harassment, insubordination, continuous display of poor behavior, racist remarks, profanity, violence, weapon possession or violation, fighting, spitting, biting, inappropriate touching, threats, theft, vandalism, and possession or use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco. Following an out-of-school suspension, the principal schedules a re-admittance meeting with parents.

COMMUNICATION

School Board Policy 907 established a standard as to what parental or public behaviors are unacceptable at conferences, meetings with staff, in telephone conversations, in written communications to school staff, and at school activities and athletic events.






Complaints: Students, Employees, Parents & Other Persons

The school district takes all concerns or complaints by students, employees, parents, or other persons seriously. While written reports are encouraged, a complaint may be made orally. A person may file a complaint at any level of the school district; i.e., principal, superintendent or school board. However, persons are encouraged to file a complaint at the building level when appropriate. It is best to discuss concerns or complaints with the person most familiar with the incident and, if the concern or complaint is not satisfactorily addressed, to the principal or supervisor, superintendent, and school board.

Federal law requires that school districts designate specific individuals and procedures for disability discrimination, sex discrimination, equal education and employment opportunity, homeless and harassment. Contact information is as follows:

Student Disability Discrimination: ADA/504 Coordinator - Director of Special Services Dr. Amy Larkin, 763-497-3180, District Office in Middle School West, 11343-50th St. NE, Albertville, MN

Homeless Compliance: District Homeless Coordinator - Director of Special Services Dr. Amy Larkin, 763-497-3180, District Office in Middle School West, 11343-50th St. NE, Albertville, MN

Student Sex Discrimination: Human Rights Officer - Director of Administrative Services, Douglas Birk, 763-497-3180, District Office in Middle School West, 11343-50th, St. NE, Albertville, Minnesota

Student Sex Nondiscrimination Program Compliance: Title IX Coordinator - Director of Administrative Services, Douglas Birk, 763-497-3180, District Office in Middle School West, 11343-50th, St. NE, Albertville, Minnesota

Student or Staff Harassment: Human Rights Officer - Director of Administrative Services, Douglas Birk, 763-497-3180, District Office in Middle School West, 11343-50th, St. NE, Albertville, Minnesota

Equal Education Opportunity/Equal Employment Opportunity: Human Rights Officer - Director of Administrative Services, Douglas Birk, 763-497-3180, District Office in Middle School West, 11343-50th, St. NE, Albertville, Minnesota

Newsletters, Web Pages, and Facebook



School staff communicate information regarding students and school activities in teacher & principal newsletters, on the Big Woods web page & Facebook page, and through automated messages.

To access web pages, go to www.stma.k12.mn.us: *Our Schools-Big Woods*. The Big Woods Facebook page may be accessed at https://www.facebook.com/bigwoodsknights/.

ParentVUE

Parents may check attendance, grades, and test results via ParentVUE. To access it, go to the STMA web at www.stma.k12.mn.us. **1.** Click on the *Families* link found on the top of the page. **2.** Click on *ParentVUE/StudentVUE.* **3.** A user name and password are required.



Student Planners

Planners are provided to all students at no cost. Lost or damaged planners may be replaced for $5.00. The purpose of the planner is to help students become organized, to be responsible, and to communicate with parents. Students take home planners daily and share them with parents, obtain parent signatures, and bring them to school the following day.

Parent signatures verify that the planner has been read and that parents are aware of homework. Planners should be signed on a daily basis, **not in advance**. If homework is not complete, parents should document the reason. Likewise, the teacher will note incomplete or late work.

If planners are not signed and/or returned for two consecutive days, students will attempt to call parents. If planners are not signed and/or returned for three consecutive days, detention may be assigned. **If a student alters a planner, a consequence will be assigned. This includes removing school documents from planners.**

Telephone and E-mail
Parents are encouraged to call or email staff with questions or concerns. Office staff will route parent phone calls to voicemail between 7:45-2:15.

POLICIES



District 885 School Board Policies are listed in entirety on the St. Michael-Albertville school web site at www.stma.k12.mn.us. Policies are also available for review in the elementary and district offices.

Alcohol and Drugs
Possession, use, or sale of any chemical substances, which includes tobacco products, is prohibited and illegal.

Assault (Policy 413)
Assault is defined as a threat of bodily harm or death to another person, without material physical contact. Students who threaten bodily harm or death without material physical contact while in possession of a weapon shall be dealt with under the weapon policy.

Students who engage in fighting or assault may be suspended from school for up to ten days. Fighting is characterized by a violent aggressive behavior by two or more individuals with the intent of inflicting physical harm upon one another and is differentiated from poking, pushing, shoving, or scuffling.

Bullying Prohibition Policy (Policy 514)



The purpose of this policy is to assist the school district in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, and other similar disruptive behavior. An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited on school district property or at school-related functions. This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying.

"Bullying" means intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and:(1) there is an actual or perceived imbalance of power between the student engaging in prohibited conduct and the target of the behavior and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or (2) materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.

"Cyberbullying" means bullying using technology or other electronic communication, including but not limited to a transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data, including a post on a social network Internet site or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device.

Intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct may involve but is not limited to conduct that causes physical harm to a student or a student's property or causes a student to be in reasonable fear of harm to person or property; under Minnesota common law, violates a student's reasonable expectation of privacy, defames a student, or constitutes intentional infliction of emotional distress against a student; is directed at any student or students, including those based on a person's actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, national origin, immigration status, sex, marital status, familial status, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation, including gender identity and expression, academic status related to student performance, disability, or status with

regard to public assistance, age, or any additional characteristic defined in state statute. However, prohibited conduct need not be based on any particular characteristic defined in this paragraph or state statute.

Harassment and Violence (Policy 413)
The purpose of this policy is to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from religious, racial, or sexual harassment and violence. The school district prohibits any form of religious, racial, or sexual harassment and violence. If harassment occurs, students must report the situation to an adult, and school personnel will make every effort to stop the harassment.

Interaction Between School Staff and the Public (Policy 907)
Every employee is the school system's point of contact with the public. The Board encourages every employee to assume responsibility for the public image of the school system. Similarly, each and every staff member should be treated with respect and dignity by parents and members of the public.

Internet Use (Policy 524)
The purpose of district-provided Internet access is to facilitate communication and information gathering which supports research and education. Internet usage will be subject to all provisions of the District Selection of Instructional and Library Materials policy.

Student Access
In making decisions regarding student access to the Internet, the teachers of the St. Michael-Albertville School District 885 will consider the District mission, goals, and curriculum outcomes. It is expected that the staff will blend thoughtful use of the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in its use. As much as possible, access from school to Internet resources will be structured in ways which point students to those sites which have been provided with guidelines and lists of resources particularly suitable to learning objectives.

Internet Use Agreement – Student/Computers – Form (Policy 524 F1)

Student Computer/Internet Use Agreement
Access to the Internet must be for educational purposes. Inappropriate Internet or computer use may result in the loss of privileges and consequences. Inappropriate activities on school computers include but are not limited to the following: sending or displaying offensive messages, pictures, or threats; damaging/altering computers, computer systems, or software; trespassing in others' work, folders, or files; using others' passwords; accessing sites not approved by an adult or "free" surfing on the Internet.



Nondiscrimination (Policy 521)
It is the policy of the St. Michael-Albertville School District 885 to provide a free and appropriate public education to each disabled student within its jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability.

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 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services. Students may be disabled under 504 even though they do not require services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Inquiries regarding compliance with 504 policies may be directed to the 504 Coordinator.

Pledge of Allegiance (Policy 531)


Students in District 885 will recite the Pledge of Allegiance one or more times each week. Students will be instructed in the proper etiquette for the recitation. Students or staff may decline to participate.

Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records (Policy 515)
The school district shall give parents of students currently in attendance and eligible students currently in attendance annual notice. See the school calendar for details.

Weapons (Policy 501)
Bringing a dangerous weapon to school is a violation of Minnesota Law. It is a serious violation called a felony. Students may not possess a dangerous weapon at any time on school property.

Possession of a weapon may result in an initial suspension for up to ten school days; confiscation of the weapon; contact with the school resource officer; and a recommendation to the Superintendent that the student be expelled.
"Possession" refers to having a weapon on one's person or in an area subject to one's control on school property, at a school activity, school sponsored bus trip, or at/near a school bus stop during bus loading and departure.

"Weapon" means any firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, any device or instrument designed as a weapon which is capable of threatening or producing great bodily harm or death, or any device or instrument that is used to threaten or cause bodily harm or death. Some examples of weapons include but are not limited to: guns (including pellet guns, look-alike or toy guns, and non-functioning guns that could be used to threaten others), knives, clubs, metal knuckles, numchucks, throwing stars, explosives, stun guns, and ammunition.

STUDENT SERVICES

Food Service (Policy 730)
The kitchen staff serves **breakfast** (to students only) from 7:20-7:30 AM, and students may eat from 7:20-7:40. Students must eat breakfast in the cafeteria, and students are expected to be in classrooms by 7:45. The kitchen staff serves a complete **hot lunch and milk** during designated lunch times.



Lactose-free milk is provided for lactose-intolerant students upon completion of a lactose-free milk request form. The form is on the district web site. Juice and soy milk are NOT substitutes for milk. For more information regarding school meal programs, visit www.stma.k12.mn.us; and click on Departments then Food and Nutrition Information.

Account Information
- Students receive individual lunch account numbers; siblings have separate accounts.
- Parents may charge their lunches on their child's account.
- Parents should include children's first and last names and account numbers on checks and deposit envelopes.
- Parents may make on-line lunch payments through MySchoolBucks at www.stma.k12.mn.us.
- Students may purchase additional food or beverages if funds are sufficient.
- Once lunches are purchased, refunds are not issued.

Free and Reduced Priced Meals
- Applications for Educational Benefits are available in school offices or on the district web site at www.stma.k12.mn.us – Departments - Food & Nutrition.
- Students who qualify for Educational Benefits are charged for additional food or beverages, not included in the posted menu for the day.
- Applicants **must apply yearly** to be considered for educational benefits.

General Information
- **Students who have lunch visitors eat at a guest table. Due to allergies and food borne illnesses, other students are not allowed to eat at guest tables.**
- Students are not allowed to share lunches or eat other students' lunches for health and sanitation reasons.
- Food and all beverages purchased in the cafeteria must be consumed in the cafeteria.
- At the discretion of cafeteria supervisors, 4th graders may purchase seconds, with a positive lunch balance.

Health Office



A health assistant will be on site during the school day to administer medications and attend to students with illnesses and injuries. To assist the school nurse with emergencies and illnesses, parents are requested to complete and return the *Health Information* form. Chelsie Steffens, Licensed School Nurse, provides services and is available for consultation with parents at 612-221-3141.

**If your child is ill or has a health-related issue, school staff will contact families to have their child picked up from school. When this occurs, families are asked to have a plan in place to have their child picked up from school within 60 minutes.*

Hearing and vision screenings will be conducted, and parents will be informed if there is a concern. For illnesses, please review *Is Your Child Well Enough to Go to School* and other documents that are available on the District 885 web site at www.stma.k12.mn.us; *District–Department –Health Services–Communicable Illnesses.*

Anaphylaxis Treatment

MN statute 121A.2207 permits school districts to possess epinephrine auto-injectors (EpiPens) for a student or other individual experiencing anaphylaxis regardless of whether the student or individual has a prescription for an EpiPen. Therefore, the school nurse or health paraprofessional will administer stock epinephrine to a student/individual if in good faith it is determined that person is experiencing a life-threatening reaction; and will call 911 for an ambulance and the student's parent will be contacted. The emergency epinephrine will be stored in the school health office and accessible during school hours. It will **not** be sent on school-based field trips or available before or after the instructional day. This anaphylaxis protocol is not intended to replace student specific orders or parent/guardian provided medications for students with known allergies; therefore parents of children with a prescription for an EpiPen must still provide an EpiPen (or preferably two) to the school. If you do not want your child to receive epinephrine if he/she is experiencing a life-threatening allergic reaction, please send a letter to the school health office.

Medications (Policy 516)



A Medication Authorization Form is on the District 885 web site and is available in the Health Office. See the policy for distribution of medications and parents' responsibilities. The policy does not cover medications taken before or after school or during summer school. It is the parent's responsibility to contact the supervisor or coach if their child has a medical concern and/or needs medication during these times.

Media Center



The Media Center and computer labs are available to classes and students with passes during the school day. Computers and programs are not available before or after school for student use without administrative permission and staff supervision. Books and materials may be checked out but must be returned or renewed by the due date. Students are charged for damaged or lost materials.

Response Services

The Response program provides supplemental research based reading interventions delivered by a reading specialist and trained support staff in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and/or comprehension. Response services typically occur during the language arts block but not during whole group instruction.

Students who qualify for Response are below grade level reading benchmarks in fluency & accuracy measures and classroom assessments & work. When students meet grade level criteria, they may exit the program. Teachers notify parents when their child enters or exits Response.

Social Work & School Therapist

The school social worker and school therapist provide services to students who meet eligibility criteria. On occasion, students with whom they work with have the opportunity to invite someone from their class to join them as a friend and role model. They meet for 20 minutes during a time that does not interfere with regular classroom learning or specials. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the social worker or school therapist with questions. STMA partners with Solutions Counseling to provide on-site services.

Special Education, Child Study, and 504



Students who need individual assessments may be referred to the special education team, the child study team, or the 504 Coordinator. Referrals are a team process with parental notification and involvement. To be eligible for services, students must meet criteria. Section 504 allows qualified students to receive accommodations in the classroom and school. A qualified student has (1) a physical or mental impairment that (2) substantially limits (3) a major life activity. If there is a reason to believe that, because of a qualifying disability, a student needs reasonable accommodations or services; the school district must evaluate the student and develop and implement an accommodation plan for the delivery of any services. The school typically receives referrals from school personnel and parents. For additional information about Section 504 including whether a student may qualify, contact the school 504 Coordinator.

TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation is a privilege – not a right. (Policy 707)

Bicyclists and Walkers

Students who bike or walk to school are asked to follow traffic safety rules and to use designated areas. Bicycle racks are available. The school is not responsible for thefts of or damages to bikes.

Bus



Vision Transportation provides transportation for STMA. Parents with questions should contact the bus company. For more information regarding transportation, go to the STMA web site at www.stma.k12.mn.us; *click on Our District - Departments - Transportation*. Students may only ride the bus to which they are assigned. Exceptions may be granted for emergencies when a caretaker is not home. Call the bus company for information and approval.

In-District Transportation and Walks

Staff notifies parents when students are transported to in-district locations such as other schools. Parent permission is required when students are being transported out-of-district for field trips or activities. Please note that students participate in outdoor activities and *wellness or nature walk*s which may be routed off school property. Teachers may not notify parents in advance since walks are dependent on the weather.

Student Bus Behavior



Bus transportation is a privilege which provides convenience and safety. To maintain this privilege, students must exhibit appropriate behavior and obey school district bus rules and regulations. Staff inform parents about bus incidents via a bus referral form that is sent home in student planners. Parents are required to sign referrals, and students return referrals to the office on the following school day. To retain transportation privileges, students must modify their behavior.

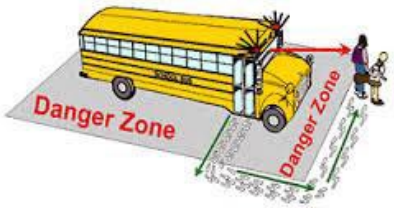
Violations of bus rules may result in:

- a verbal or written warning, a bus referral, an FYI, an assigned seat, a bus suspension, or complete loss of transportation privileges
- a conference with student, parent, bus company representative, and school representative

Student Bus Safety Training

Bus safety training will be provided in classrooms and on buses. Students are expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following concepts:

1. District policies for student conduct and school bus safety
2. Appropriate conduct while riding busses
3. Danger zones surrounding busses
4. Procedures for safely boarding and exiting school busses
5. Procedures for safe vehicle lane crossing
6. Procedures for evacuation and other emergencies



Transportation Change, Day Care, and Address Form

Please visit the STMA web page and click on *Our District - Departments - Transportation*. **Arrangements and changes must be in writing and take at least one week to go into effect.**

BIG WOODS VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES
Excellence Is Our Tradition

Welcome to Big Woods! Please read the information for volunteer expectations and school expectations.

Volunteer Expectations

- **Cancelling or Late:** Please call the office at your earliest convenience so office staff may inform the teacher.
- **Register:** Bring your MN driver's license; check in upon entering the building; and wear a photo ID badge.

- **Cell Phones:** Silence cell phones. Do not take pictures or record anything while in the building.
- **Treats:** Do not give students food, candy, gum, or pop.
- **Assignment:** If the task is not what you expected or you cannot complete it at a high level, inform the teacher.
- **Neighborhoods:** Stay in the neighborhood to which you are assigned. Do not travel to other areas of the building or go to classrooms to which you are not assigned.
- **Confidentiality:** Respect the privacy of anything you see and/or hear regarding students and staff. The only information you may share outside of school are the activities that you do.
- **Siblings:** Do not bring non school-age children when you volunteer.

Tips for Volunteers

Working with Students **Dos**:

- Learn children's names.
- Accept each child.
- Respect children's privacy.
- Encourage children to do their own thinking by giving them time to answer.
- Use tact and positive reinforcement.
- Be consistent with the teacher's expectations and schedule.
- Adhere to your commitment.
- Enjoy yourself.

Working with Students **Don'ts:**

- Discipline students.
- Diagnose students' needs.
- Evaluate progress or achievement.
- Counsel students.
- Discuss progress or lack of with parents or anyone except the teacher.
- Access students' records.

Volunteer Confidentiality Statement

Data Privacy

Most data about students is private including academic, personal, attendance, medical, disability, special education, and discipline. Remember that information regarding a student is bound by data privacy laws.

To avoid data privacy violations, remember that educational data can only be shared with staff members who have a "professional need to know." Best practice is refraining to discuss a student with anyone except the classroom teacher.

Confidentiality

I understand that Big Woods personnel respect students', staff, and volunteers' rights with regard to privacy of information. I agree to respect the rights of Big Woods staff & students and to maintain confidentiality in my statements at school, in the community, and outside the school district.

2026-2027 School Calendar

CALENDAR LEGEND

Days in Classroom

Trimester 1	57
Trimester 2	57
Trimester 3	59
Total School Days	173
Total Teacher Days	13
Grand Total Days	**186**

Calendar Legend

- Start Trimester
- End Trimester
- Teacher Workshop
- No School All
- Gr. K-4 Early Release

Make-Up Days

STMA built an extra 3 days into the calendar for emergency school closings.
If emergency weather cancellations exceed the extra 3 days built into the calendar, the School Board has designated 3 additional days as scheduled make-up days:
In order of use:
- June 3, 2027
- June 4, 2027
- June 7, 2027

The dates are indicated in gray.

Labor Day	Sept 7
Rosh Hashanah	Sept 11-13
Yom Kippur	Sept 20-21
Election Day	Nov 3
Veterans' Day	Nov 11
Thanksgiving Day	Nov 26
Hanukkah Begins	Dec 4-12
Christmas Day	Dec 25
Kwanzaa	Dec 26
New Year's Day	Jan 1
Martin Luther King Jr.	Jan 18
Presidents' Day	Feb 15
Ramadan	Feb 7-Mar 8
Good Friday	Mar 26
Easter Sunday	Mar 28
Passover	Apr 21-29
Memorial Day	May 31
Juneteenth	June 19

Board approved 10-21-2024, modified 08-04-2025

M	T	W	TH	F
AUGUST 2026				
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				
SEPTEMBER 2026				
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		
OCTOBER 2026				
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30
NOVEMBER 2026				
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				
DECEMBER 2026				
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	
JANUARY 2027				
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29
FEBRUARY 2027				
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
MARCH 2027				
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		
APRIL 2027				
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30
MAY 2027				
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				
JUNE 2027				
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

DATE	EVENT
Aug 18-20	New Teacher Workshop
Aug 24-27	Teacher Workshop
Sept 1	Trimester 1 Starts [5-9]
Sept 2	Trimester 1 Starts [10-12]
Sept 3	Trimester 1 Starts [K-4]
Sept 7	No School All
Oct 15-16	No School All
Oct 22	Elementary Early Release
Nov 3	No School - Teacher Workshop
Nov 24	Trimester 1 Ends
Nov 25	No School - Teacher Workshop
Nov 26-27	No School All
Nov 30	Trimester 2 Starts
Dec 24-Jan 1	No School All
Jan 18	No School - Teacher Workshop
Feb 11	Elementary Early Release
Feb 26	Trimester 2 Ends
Mar 1	No School - Teacher Workshop
Mar 2	Trimester 3 Starts
Mar 8-12	No School All
Mar 26	No School All
Apr 16	No School - Teacher Workshop
May 31	No School All
Jun 2	Trimester 3 Ends-Last Student Day
Jun 3	No School - Teacher Workshop
Jun 4	Graduation

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Statewide Assessments:

Parent/Guardian Participation Guide and Refusal Information

Your student's participation in statewide assessments is important as it allows your school and district to ensure all students have access to a high-quality education. In the past, students with disabilities and English learners were often excluded from statewide assessments. When all students participate in statewide assessments, schools and educators have more information to see how all students are doing. This helps schools continuously improve the education they provide and identify groups, grades, or subjects that may need additional support.

Assessments Connect to Standards

Statewide assessments are based on the Minnesota Academic Standards or the WIDA English Language Development Standards. These standards define the knowledge and skills students should be learning in K-12 districts and charter schools. Minnesota prioritizes high-quality education, and statewide assessments give educators and leaders an opportunity to evaluate student and school success.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs)
MCA and the alternate assessments (Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)/Alternate MCA) are annual assessments in reading, mathematics, and science that provide a snapshot of student learning aligned to the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards.

WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS for English Learners
The WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS are the annual assessments for English learners that provide information about their progress in learning academic English, based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards.

Statewide Assessments Help Families and Students

Participating in statewide assessments gives families a snapshot of their student's learning so they can advocate for their success in school. High school students may use MCA results for:

- Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) enrollment eligibility in grade 10.
- Course placement at a Minnesota State college or university. If students receive a college-ready score, they may not need to take a remedial, noncredit course for that subject.

English learners who take the WIDA ACCESS or WIDA Alternate ACCESS and meet certain requirements have the opportunity to exit from EL services.

Taking Statewide Assessments Helps Your Student's School

Statewide assessments provide information to your school and district about how all students are engaging with the content they learn in school. This information helps:

- Educators evaluate their instructional materials.
- Schools and districts identify inequities between groups, explore root causes, and implement supports.
- School and district leaders make decisions on how to use money and resources to support all students.

Student Participation in Statewide Assessments

Student participation in state and locally required assessments is a parent/guardian choice. If you choose to have your student not participate in a statewide assessment, please provide a reason for your decision on the following page. Contact your student's school to learn more about locally required assessments.

Updated March 2026

Consequences of Not Participating in Statewide Assessments

- The student will not receive an individual score. For WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS, the student will not have the opportunity to exit from EL services.
- School and district assessment results will be incomplete, making it more difficult to have an accurate picture of student learning.
- Certain statewide assessment calculations include all eligible students, including those who do not participate. Non-participation impacts accountability results, which may affect the school's ability to be identified for support or recognized for success.

Check with your local school or district to see if there are any additional consequences for not participating.

Explore the Statewide Testing page for more information.

(education.mn.gov > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing)

Additional Information

- On average, students spend less than 1% of instructional time taking statewide assessments each year.
- Minnesota Statutes limit the total amount of time students can spend taking other district- or school-wide assessments to 11 hours or less each school year, depending on the grade.
- School districts and charter schools are required to publish an assessment calendar on their website by October 1 each school year. Refer to your district or charter school's website for more information on assessments.

Statewide Assessments: Parent/Guardian Decision Not to Participate

By completing this form, you are acknowledging that your student will not participate in statewide assessments and will not receive individual assessment results. **This form must be submitted to your student's school or district office prior to testing.**

First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____ Last Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Current Grade in School: _____ Student ID Number (if known): _____

School: _____ District: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Reason for Refusal: _____

Please indicate the statewide assessment(s) your student will not participate in this school year:

☐ Reading MCA/Alternate MCA ☐ Science MCA/Alternate MCA

☐ Mathematics MCA/MTAS ☐ WIDA ACCESS/WIDA Alternate ACCESS

Contact your school or district for more information on participation decisions for local assessments.

(Note: This form is only applicable for the 20___ to 20___ school year.)

Updated March 2026