

PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK 2025 - 2026



COLOMA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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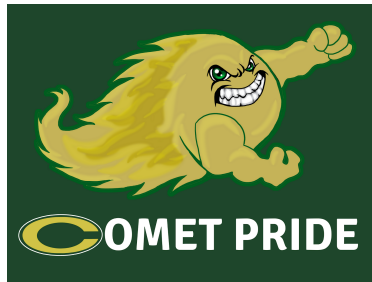
Inspire to Achieve

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Empower for Success

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Immunizations	10	The Coloma Community School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation or transgender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, military status, ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, "Protected Classes") in its educational programs or activities. The following person(s) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:	
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Culture of Trust + Comet Pride = Student Success

We believe...

Students and staff thrive in **a culture of trust and respect** that **values individual differences**.

We believe...

School and community involvement develops students' full potential and **builds compassion, character, empathy, and Comet Pride**.

We believe...

A high quality, nurturing, and collaborative staff inspires student success.

A quality education addresses the **academic, cultural, artistic, physical, social, and emotional needs** of each student.

A well-maintained, safe, and secure environment is **essential to student success**.

High expectations for all and celebrating goal-oriented growth and success **inspires student achievement**.

INSPIRE TO ACHIEVE - EMPOWER FOR SUCCESS

Notice:

The student handbook is not intended to be all-encompassing, and it does not create a contract between the school and parents or students. School officials may revise this handbook to implement the education program and ensure student wellbeing. In addition, school officials are responsible for interpreting this handbook and if a situation is not specifically addressed, the school/administrator will make decisions based upon staff discretion, applicable board policies, and state and federal statutes and regulations, consistent with the school's best interest.

School Hours

The state law requires that your child be in attendance on school days unless he/she is ill. Help your child develop good attitudes about promptness and dependability by teaching him/her to be on time. School begins at 8:10 a.m. and dismisses at 3:12 pm. Dismissal is 11:49 am on half days.

There is no supervision before 7:45 a.m; therefore, students are not allowed in the building or on the playground before that time for safety reasons. Parents of children who walk to school should have a plan in place so that their children will not arrive more than fifteen (15) minutes before the start of the school day.

All students should be out of the building and on their way home no later than ten (10) minutes after school is out. Parents need to encourage their children to leave the school grounds at the end of the day and go directly home.

Absence/Attendance

The major responsibility for student attendance lies with the individual family. **It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to contact the school office via telephone, email or in person to verify the student's absence. This contact must be made daily, prior to 9:00 am**, except in the case of extended absences.

When you call the school, please leave the following information:

- Student's name
- Grade
- Teacher's name
- Reason for the absence (symptoms)
- Expected length of time your child will be unable to attend school
- Your name

Tardiness

Students arriving after the 8:10 am start time will be counted as tardy and need to be checked in at the office by the parent. Students who arrive after 9:25 am are counted as absent for the morning. Any class time instruction missed is detrimental to the student's learning. Therefore leaving early is treated the same as arriving late. Students leaving after 2:00 pm will be considered an "early leave" and count towards truancy equally with morning tardies.

Absence—Long Term

Extended absences should be reported immediately to enable teachers to assist in scheduling student assignments or arranging for homebound instruction. Excused absences for vacations must be pre-approved by the principal.

Discipline/Code of Conduct

As a PreK-3rd grade school we believe that we have a responsibility to teach and reinforce positive behavior as well as correct misbehavior. We have defined school-wide expectations for different areas of the school using the acronym of CARE: Coloma Comets are **A**lways responsible, **R**espectful, and **E**xceptionally safe. The CARE expectations are described in the following charts. In determining whether disciplinary action set forth in this handbook/code of conduct is to be implemented, District Administrators shall use a preponderance of evidence standard which is defined as the burden of proof being met when the administrator determines that there is a greater than 50% chance the student committed the act for which he or she is accused.

Building Expectations

Coloma Comets	<u>Arrival</u>	<u>Hallway</u>
Always Responsible	● Go directly to your classroom using walking feet ● Check in with classroom teacher before going anywhere else ● Walk on the right side of the hallway	● Walk on the right side of the hallway ● Use a hallway hook-up
Respectful	● Voice level 1 or 2 while walking to your classroom	● Voice level 0 while walking ● Use silent waves
Exceptionally Safe	● Use walking feet ● Use a hallway hook up ● Walk on right side of the hallway	● Walk with your eyes forward ● Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself using hallway hook-up ● Use stop signs when in a line

Coloma Comets	<u>Bathroom (In Classroom)</u>	<u>Bathroom (Hallway Unsupervised)</u>
Always Responsible	● Flush after use ● Wash your hands ● One squirt of soap ● Use the proper amount of paper towel ● Throw the paper towel in the garbage can ● Return promptly to class when finished ● Report any problems to the classroom teacher	● Walk directly to bathroom ● Flush after use ● Wash your hands ● One squirt of soap ● Use the proper amount of paper towel or dryer ● Throw the paper towel in the garbage can ● Return promptly to class when finished ● Report any problems to the classroom teacher
Respectful	● Wait outside if shared classroom bathroom is full ● One person in a shared classroom bathroom at a time ● Voice level 0-2 in the bathroom ● Take care of bathroom needs quickly so that others can have their turn	● Wait in hallway if stalls/urinals are full ● One person in a stall/urinal at a time ● Voice level 0-2 in the bathroom ● Take care of bathroom needs quickly so that others can have their turn

Exceptionally Safe	● Use walking feet ● Close the door while in use ● Keep feet on the floor (e.g., no climbing on sinks/stalls/urinals)	● Use walking feet ● Lock the stall door while in use ● Keep feet on the floor (e.g., no climbing on sinks/stalls/urinals)
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Coloma Comets	<u>Playground</u>	<u>Bus</u>
Always Responsible	● Use playground equipment as intended and return to designated spot after use ● Ask an adult for help with concerns and if you need to use the bathroom ● Three short whistles means look for an adult as they need your attention ● Line up right away when one long whistle is blown ● Wear what you came to school with ● Toys stay at home or in classroom	● Keep your items on your seat or in your lap ● Up to 3 students in a seat ● Eating is not allowed on the bus
Respectful	● Use kind words and kind actions ● Be assertive (calm, firm, and respectful) ● If someone is unsafe/hurtful to tell them what you want or need. If the problem continues, report the problem to the adult on duty. ● Follow the directions of the adults the first time they are given ● Use a voice level of 0 once you enter the building	● Use a voice level of 1 or 2 (0 at railroad crossings) ● Follow the driver's instructions right away

Coloma Comets	Dismissal	Car Rider Line
Always Responsible	- Coats are on and items are in backpacks before you leave the classroom - Use the bathroom before you leave your classroom - Walk in a single file line with your backpack on to your designated area	- Walk directly to your assigned line - Sit facing forward in designated line with backpack and coat on - All items remain in backpacks during dismissal
Respectful	- Use a voice level of 1 or 2 until the quiet signal is given - Walk on the right side of the hallway - Listen for directions from adult	- Walk in the hallway with a voice level 0 during dismissal - Enter quietly, single-file line; go directly to grade level line; coats/backpacks on; nothing in hands - Use a voice level of 1-2 while sitting in grade level lines until the quiet signal is given - Once dismissal begins and names are ready to be called, voice level is 0 and remains at 0 during the remainder of dismissal
Exceptionally Safe	- Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself - Walk facing forward in line	- One classroom enters MPR at a time - Keep hands, feet, and belongings to yourself

Coloma Comets	Lunch in Classroom	Assembly
Always Responsible	- Voice level 0-2 in the classroom - Raise your hand for a need (forgot food or utensils) - Remain seated until given permission to get up (20 minutes minimum) - Food may not be shared	- Sit on your pockets with your hands and feet to yourself - Follow all directions the first time given - Stay seated until you are told to stand
Respectful	- Demonstrate respect by using manners (please, thank you, no thank you, excuse me)	- Use a voice level of 0 entering and exiting the assembly - Use a voice level of 0 when the guest is speaking

		● Use the bathrooms for emergencies only ● Follow listening rules: eyes watching, ears listening, voice quiet, body still ● Respond to the speaker appropriately (clap, laugh..) ● Respond appropriately to attention signal (voice quiet, hand raised, one finger on lips)
Exceptionally Safe	● Keep hands, feet, and objects to self	● Walk in and out of the assembly ● Again, keep hands, feet and objects to self

Problem Behaviors

- Defiance/Disrespect: Willfully disobeying authority or showing a lack of respect toward teachers, staff, or peers.
- Disruption: Interfering with the normal flow of classroom activities, causing a disturbance that affects teaching and learning.
- Robbery: The act of taking someone else's property without permission with the intent to permanently keep it.
- Physical Aggression: Intentional use of force or destructive physical behavior that is not directed at another person, rather at objects, oneself, or the environment.
- Fighting: Engaging in physical conflict with another person.
- Physical Assault: Intentionally causing physical harm.
- Threat: Any verbal, written, or physical action intended to harm, intimidate, or cause fear in others.
- Swearing / Obscene Language: The use of inappropriate or offensive words that may hurt others or disrupt the learning environment.
- Harassing Others: The delivery of disrespectful messages in any format that may or may not be related to gender, ethnicity, sex, race, religion, disability, physical features, or other protected class.
- Inappropriate: Engaging in actions that violate school policies (including technology) or target others in a harmful way.
- Excessive Skipping: Leaving (or refusing to leave) a designated area without permission or supervision.
- Vandalism: Intentionally harming or defacing school property or someone else's belongings.

Possible Responses to Behaviors

Classroom-Managed	Office-Managed
● Reteach and practice of expected behaviors ● Model and practice expectation ● Precorrection	Previous responses plus: ● Meeting between staff/parent/admin/student ● In-school suspension

● Proximity ● Change location (cool down corner) ● Verbal redirection ● Planned ignoring ● Planned discussion with student ● Non-verbal cues (e.g., eye contact) ● Conference or discussion between student and staff member ● Individualized instruction of expectations ● Parent contact ● Time out ● Lunch detention ● Loss of privilege (recess) ● Restitution	● Out of school suspension ● Community service ● Bus Suspension ● Alternative placement ● Expulsion
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Emergency Removal, Suspension, and Expulsion

(From Board of Education Policy 5610)

The Board of Education is continually concerned about the safety and welfare of District students and staff and, therefore, will not tolerate behavior that creates an unsafe environment, a threat to safety or undue disruption of the educational environment.

Factors to be Considered Before Suspending or Expelling a Student:

The Board of Education also recognizes that exclusion from the educational program of the schools is a severe sanction that should only be imposed after careful and appropriate consideration. Except as otherwise noted below with respect to possession of a firearm in a weapon-free school zone, if suspension or expulsion of a student is considered, the Board (Superintendent) shall consider the following factors prior to making a determination of whether to suspend or expel:

- A. the student's age
- B. the student's disciplinary history
- C. whether the student has a disability
- D. the seriousness of the violation or behavior
- E. whether the violation or behavior committed by the student threatened the safety of any student or staff member
- F. whether restorative practices will be used to address the violation or behavior
- G. whether a lesser intervention would properly address the violation or behavior

Transportation

Please note that cameras may be installed on buses and can be used to review events that occur on the bus as well as can be used as evidence of such occurrences.

Late Buses

During the winter months there are occasionally times when snow and ice cause traffic to be delayed. When this happens, our buses may be delayed. No child is counted tardy who is delayed in arriving for the school day if the child rides the bus regardless of how late the bus may be.

Picking Up Children from School

No child is permitted to leave or to be taken from the school by anyone other than an authorized parent or guardian or designee. We cannot accept telephone requests for children to leave the school building unaccompanied. They must be picked up in the office.

Unless we have a court order on file, students are released to either parent. Please make sure that we have copies of all official custody, no contact orders, or any other legal papers that would prohibit a parent or legal guardian from contact with your child.

To ensure student safety, children who are car riders are to be picked up at the school parking lot. Parents should assume a position in the car rider line and students will be escorted to their vehicles. **Students who need to be picked up early from school must be picked up before 2:30 pm; otherwise you will need to wait in the car rider dismissal line.**

We encourage parents/guardians to arrange appointments after school hours when possible. Any student leaving the building before dismissal will be required to be signed out through the office and must be picked up in the office. This procedure will guarantee the accountability of all children during the regular school day.

Changing Daily Routine

If it is necessary for your child to ride a different bus or have some other change in his/her normal routine, please send a note with the student, or contact the office staff prior to 3:00 pm. **We do not accept changes over the phone after 3:00 pm.** The office must be notified if there are any of the following changes for your student:

1. They are not riding the bus home.
2. They are riding a different bus.
3. They are getting off at a different place.
4. They are going home with someone--in such cases both families must send permission notes. Please keep in mind that most buses are full and the office can not issue bus passes to full buses. Please call ahead of time to make sure the bus will be able to accommodate.

Unscheduled Early Dismissal

Please discuss with your child the procedure to follow if no one is home when he/she arrives. In the event of extreme weather or emergency situations, school may be dismissed before the regular dismissal time. You and your child, as well as the school, will feel more at ease if you have a planned procedure to follow.

What To Do If You Are Moving or Leaving the District

Parents who plan to move to another school should follow this procedure:

1. Notify the classroom teacher and the office.
We need to know:
 - a. New address
 - b. Date you are moving
 - c. Name of school where your child will be enrolled (if possible).
2. Make arrangements to return all textbooks and library books.
3. Take home all personal items.
4. Pick up a "Withdrawal Form" from the office for the new school.

The records will be sent by mail when requested by the new school. We are not permitted to give the original records to a parent.

Illness and Accidents

If it is necessary for a child to be sent home because of an accident or illness, the office will notify the parents to come and pick up the child. If a parent cannot be reached, the person designated as an emergency contact will be notified. If neither is available and the principal determines that the child needs immediate medical attention, 911 will be called.

In all cases, every effort will be made to reach and notify the parent of the child. Parents should notify the school of any changes of phone numbers listed in the school database. If a child becomes ill or injured, it is the parent's responsibility to arrange transportation home. **Students must be vomit and fever free for 24 hours (without medicine) before returning to school in order to protect other students from infection.**

Taking Medication

Children are not permitted to bring medicine to school or take medicine while at school unless **written permission by a physician is on file in the school office on the form provided. A signed statement from the parent is also necessary.** Once the physician has completed the required form, the medication will be kept in the school office and administered by the authorized staff member.

Head Lice

The school will observe the following protocols regarding head lice.

1. The student's parent/guardian is required to notify the school office if their child is suspected of having head lice.
2. Infested students will be sent home following notification to the parent/guardian.
3. The school will provide written instructions to the parent/guardian regarding appropriate treatment for the infestation.
4. A student excluded because of head lice will be permitted to return to school only when the parent/guardian brings the student to school to be checked by the school nurse or designee of the building principal and the child is determined to be free of the head lice and eggs (nits). Infested children are prohibited from riding the bus to school until it is determined by school officials he/she is free of head lice.

Immunizations

Since 1978, the state of Michigan has required that each student entering kindergarten or a new school district in grades 1-12 have a certificate of immunization or valid waiver at the time of registration or no later than the first day of school. A waiver may be obtained at the Berrien County Health Department if there are objections to obtaining the required immunizations. **Students may not attend school without proof of immunizations or a valid waiver.**

Physical Education

Physical Education is required for all students and is an important part of learning motor skills, following directions and cooperative peer interaction. Children meet regularly each week under the direction of a physical education teacher. Exclusion from physical education is allowed only for health reasons, therefore we must have a physician's order requesting the exclusion.

Recess Outside

All children will participate in short recess periods. This opportunity gives students a very necessary change of pace, which should enable them to be more receptive to the school program. When it rains or the combination of temperature and wind chill goes below 10 degrees, we have an indoor recess. We cannot honor requests for students to stay inside. Normally, students who are too ill to take part in outdoor play are

too ill to be in school. **Notes to stay inside for recess or noon play will be honored only upon a doctor's recommendation.**

Therefore, if an unusual medical condition exists which permits attendance at school, but makes participation in recess or gym inadvisable, a call, note or fax from the physician will be acceptable and arrangements for supervision of the child will be made. Otherwise, a child should remain home an extra day to fully recover.

Reminder: coats, snow pants, boots, hats and mittens in winter and/or rainy weather are a must! Please make sure your child's name is on these items.

Emergency Plans/Preparedness/Drills

We are required by law to have practice emergency drills throughout the year. We treat these drills as if real disasters are occurring for the safety and security of your children. Procedures have been checked with officials of the Coloma Fire Department and the Berrien County Office of Civil Defense. We are required to have 5 fire drills, 2 tornado drills and 3 lockdown drills. We hope we never need any of these procedures, but if we do we will be as prepared as possible to ensure the safety of our staff and students.

Emergency Pick-Up Procedures

During a real emergency it is understood that you, as a parent, may wish to pick-up your child from school. The following procedure will apply in an emergency situation. For safety purposes, only the main entrance can be used to enter the building.

1. If the students are evacuated from the building, you will need to locate the child's teacher or one of the school secretaries to inform them of your child's pick-up.
2. In some emergency situations, the students would be evacuated to the High School Gym and then you would need to locate your child's teacher or one of the school secretaries.

School Closings

The radio stations announce school closings because of weather conditions as early as 6:00 am. If you take advantage of this announcement system, the school will be relieved of hundreds of phone calls questioning school closing. If we are going to delay the start of the day or dismiss the children early because of weather or other emergencies, we will put it on the radio as soon as possible so that you can make arrangements.

Coloma Schools uses an alert system called SchoolMessenger. SchoolMessenger will notify all families when school is closed or delayed due to inclement weather. The local radio stations announce all school closings: WSJM (94.9 FM), WYTZ (97.5 FM), WCXT (98.3), WCSY (103.7 FM), WIRX (107.1 FM), WSJM (1400 AM). The TV stations are WWMT Channel 3, WNDU Channel 16, WSBT Channel 22 and WBND Channel 57.

****Please keep the school updated with current contact information to receive these alerts****

Students' Accident Insurance

Inexpensive school insurance can be purchased for students. The coverage is quite broad, insuring the student against accidents occurring during times and activities which are a part of the school's operation. Insurance information and applications are available on our website: www.ccs.coloma.org.

Students' Use of Telephone

Students may use the office phone only in the case of an emergency.

Our staff is in close contact with anywhere from 200 to 360 children before school starts and during the noon hour. We would greatly appreciate it if calls of a non-emergency nature were made to us after 9:00 am until 11:00 am, and after 1:00 pm. If a child is going to be absent parents should call in by 9:00 am.

Teachers and students are not called to the telephone during class time unless it is an emergency.

Telephone messages for teachers and staff will be given to them and they will return the call at their earliest opportunity. We do want a chance to follow up on your concerns.

Student cell phones are not permitted in school. If a student has a cell phone for emergency contact with parents it must be kept inside the student's backpack **AT ALL TIMES**. If the cell phone is ever removed from the backpack, it will be confiscated and can only be returned to the student's parent or guardian.

Change of Address or Phone Number

Please notify the school promptly of any change in address, phone number, name, or any other information that might be pertinent to school records. Promptness is necessary to facilitate communication between home and school.

Lost and Found

Parents are urged to mark all personal belongings of students with the child's name in permanent marker or with a nametape. The school maintains a lost and found area where children may claim their articles. Many times items presumed to have been "taken" are located in our lost and found.

Visitors at School

All visitors are required to sign in with the office and pick up their personal badge. Non-staff access to students and classes must be limited, and only in accordance with a schedule determined by the principal after consultation with the teacher whose classroom is being visited. Classroom visitations must be non-obtrusive to the educational process and should not occur on an excessive basis.

There have been times that the school receives requests to allow non-attending children to visit. As much as the school would like them to visit, we must turn down these requests. In case of an accident or emergency our liability coverage does not include visitors. The school hopes that parents can understand this position and will help by not making such a request of the school.

Textbooks and Other Educational Materials

Textbooks and workbooks are supplied by the school district. Children are held responsible for the condition of all learning materials checked out to them. Normal use will carry no assessment, but loss or damage beyond repair, or abuse beyond the usual wear and tear will be assessed on textbooks and library materials.

Breakfast & Lunch

Coloma Elementary participates in the Community Eligibility Option. This program is available to Coloma Community Schools by our participation in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. **All enrolled students of Coloma Elementary are eligible to receive a healthy breakfast and lunch at school at no charge to your household.** This program is reviewed yearly and could be subject to change.

Pets in School

Board policy establishes conditions under which animals are permitted in school. In all cases, parents must contact and consult the principal before bringing any animals to school. Animals must be properly caged at all times. At no time will animals be permitted on the school buses.

Field Trips

School is for learning and field trips provide an excellent opportunity for children to learn outside the classroom. Teachers select trips that will extend the learning of topics being taught in the classroom.

Parent permission is required for children to participate on field trips, except when we are going to another school building within the district. Teachers will send home permission slips to be signed and returned prior to the trip. Parents who have completed and passed the required background check may be asked to help chaperone.

Money turned in for field trips will **NOT** be reimbursed by Coloma Community Schools if a child misses the event. Due to having to submit monies prior to the date of the field trip, any reimbursement will have to come from the establishment of the event. Parents will be responsible for contacting those individuals/agencies for reimbursement.

Bicycles & Scooters

Students who normally walk to school, may ride their bicycles and/or scooters. Parents should discuss with their children the need for safety when riding bicycles or scooters.

1. Bicycles are to travel on the side of the road with the traffic.
2. Bicycles may only be ridden on sidewalks on school property. Otherwise they must be walked.
3. Bicycles should be parked in the bicycle rack during school hours.
4. For security reasons, the school recommends that bicycles and scooters be locked during the school day. The school cannot assume responsibility for loss.
5. Violation of these rules can result in a suspension of bike riding privileges.

Money and Other Valuables

In case money is being sent to school, parents should realize the responsibility the child will have. It would be wise to:

1. Place the money or checks in an envelope.
2. Include a note stating the reason for the money being sent.
3. Place the teacher's name and the child's name on the outside of the envelope.
4. Advise the child not to leave money in school desks, lockers, etc.

The school would like to discourage parents from allowing children to bring large amounts of money to school. Large amounts of money or unusual items of value brought to school are normally questioned by members of the staff. In most cases, the school will call or contact the home for verification if this situation occurs. Please do not allow your child to bring electronics or toys of any kind to school. Your cooperation in this matter is appreciated.

Students Selling Products at School

Only projects approved by the school board are allowed in any school. Elementary students are not permitted to sell any item to other students.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Our most effective way of communicating progress to parents is through our scheduled parent-teacher conferences, which are held throughout the year. Parents of children who have given us concern because of academic or behavioral difficulties will receive more frequent communication from the teacher.

Parents may initiate conferences with the teacher should they have some concern regarding their child's progress. It is urged that this be done as early as possible to correct a situation before it becomes a serious problem.

Retention Policy

Our school board adopted a promotion/retention policy for all grades. The decision to retain a student is determined jointly by the teachers, building principal, and parents.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The PTO is the heart of our Coloma Elementary and Intermediate buildings and also a communication liaison between the school and our families. Check out the Coloma PTO Facebook page for more information regarding meetings and many fun events and programs sponsored by our PTO.

Visitor/Volunteer Opportunities

At Coloma Community Schools, we pride ourselves on providing a safe learning environment for all of our students. As such, we require all volunteers and visitors to complete and pass a **FREE** background check via a designated online provider.

It can take up to two weeks to process requests for background checks. All visitors and volunteers need to have a completed background check prior to the activities. Once completed, you will be notified via email upon completion of the background check and status for visiting or volunteering at Coloma Community Schools, and if you are approved, you will need to pick up your badge from your chosen building prior to any activities in which you are volunteering.

The background check is valid for the school year. A new background check must be completed each school year. You will be issued a badge that stays in the school office that you will pick up and wear during your visits and volunteering. Any questions can be directed to info@ccs.coloma.org.

If you are intending to **volunteer or visit**, you need to click [here](#) to be redirected to our [iChat Background Check](#) form to begin the process of the background check.

Library Book Fines

Students are allowed to check out books from the library. We do ask that all library books be returned in good condition. If a book is damaged, we assess a fine to repair the book. If a book is damaged beyond repair we charge a replacement cost. If a book is lost we send home a notice to the parent. We would much rather find the book than have you pay to replace it. We are trying to teach the children responsibility and we hope that you will help us.

Lockers

Lockers are provided for personal belongings. Students are not allowed to put stickers or posters inside or outside locker doors. Locks are not permitted.

Classroom Assignments

Questions sometimes arise as to how students are assigned to classrooms. Many elements are involved in this process. The primary concern is what students need. To help determine these needs, information is gathered from the previous classroom teacher and any specialized personnel who have worked with the child. Once this information is obtained, the class is developed using the following considerations:

- academic achievement (test scores, reading level, etc.)
- boy/girl ratio
- relationship with other students
- behavioral characteristics, special needs

These considerations are used to arrive at a heterogeneously balanced class. This practice has been effective and we intend to maintain this successful process. The following procedures shall be followed in a transfer of a student within a school:

1. A written request shall be made to the principal by the parent of the student, a professional staff member, or by a student. Transfer requests may also be initiated by the principal.
2. After consultation with the appropriate personnel, a determination regarding the validity of the request shall be made by the principal.
3. If the transfer request is initiated by the District or a minor student, parents shall be advised of the request and the reasons it will be beneficial to the student or is necessary to maintain program effectiveness. They shall be advised of their rights of appeal if they do not agree with the transfer.

Dress Code

The intent of the board of education in enacting a dress code is to promote a good academic environment, maintain discipline, and prevent disruption of the educational process. While the Board of Education recognizes that each student's mode of dress and grooming may be a manifestation of personal style and individual taste, any type of dress or hairstyle that is disruptive, distracting, unsanitary or unsafe is prohibited.

1. Students are prohibited from wearing distracting clothing, which is disruptive to the educational setting. Examples of such clothing include, but are not limited to:
 - a. See-through clothing
 - b. Clothing which exposes the torso, pubic or genital area
 - c. Garments that provoke or distract students or school employees.
Example: spandex, tank tops, holes in clothing etc.
 - d. Headwear may not be worn inside the building.
2. For safety and health reasons, students are required to wear shoes or soled footwear.
3. Clothing patches or buttons displaying profane, vulgar or obscene suggestions are prohibited. Profane, provocative, vulgar or obscene suggestions include, but are not limited to: descriptions or representations of sexual acts, excretory functions, nudity, expletives or offensive language or symbols.
4. Students with hair or wearing apparel which substantially interferes with the educational process may create classroom or school disorder. Distracting the attention of another student in any class from the lesson being presented, or from any assigned classroom activity will not be permitted.
5. Hair or wearing apparel which constitutes a threat to health or safety is prohibited.

6. It is the policy and obligation of the school board to encourage a drug free environment in the school setting, thus reducing the pressures to use drugs, and promoting respect for rules and laws prohibiting drugs. Drug use among students creates a climate that is destructive to learning and disrupts the maintenance of an orderly and safe school. Therefore, tee shirts and other garments, buttons and patches, which advocate the use of alcohol and illegal drugs are prohibited.

If a student violates the dress code the student will be given an opportunity to correct the offense. In addition, school personnel will arrange to meet with the student and his or her parents or guardians regarding the violation.

A student who continues to violate the dress code will be subject to disciplinary measures including up to a ten (10) day suspension. A suspension will not be imposed upon the student without affording the student appropriate due process as provided in the student handbook for this type of offense.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT
ANNUAL NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS AND
DESIGNATION OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Each year Coloma Community Schools is required to give notice of the various rights accorded to parents or students pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"). Parents and eligible students have a right to be notified and informed. In accordance with FERPA, you are notified of the following:

1. **RIGHT TO INSPECT:** You have the right to inspect and review substantially all of your education records maintained by or at Coloma Schools within 45 days of the request. This right extends to the parents and to any student 18 years of age or older. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent(s) or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. **RIGHT TO REQUEST AMENDMENT:** You have the right to seek to have corrected any part(s) of an education record, which you believe to be inaccurate or misleading. The request for amendment must be forwarded in writing to the principal, and clearly state the part of the record to be changed and the reason(s) you believe it to be inaccurate or misleading. This right includes the right to a hearing to present evidence that the record should be changed, if a designated official of Coloma Schools decides not to alter the education records according to your request. If no change is made to the education record after the hearing, you have a right to place a written rebuttal in the record.
3. **RIGHT TO PREVENT DISCLOSURES:** You have the right to prevent disclosure of education records to third parties with certain limited exceptions. It is the intent of the Board of Education to limit the disclosure of information contained in your education records to those instances when prior written consent has been given for the disclosure, as an item of direct information of which you have not refused to permit disclosure, or under the provisions of FERPA which allow disclosure without prior written consent. One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.
4. **RIGHT TO COMPLAIN:** You have the right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning the alleged failure of the Coloma Community Schools to comply with FERPA. Your complaint should be directed to: Family Policy Compliance Officer, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20202-4605.

5. RIGHT TO OBTAIN POLICY: You have the right to obtain a copy of the policy adopted by the Board of Education in compliance with FERPA. A copy may be obtained in person or by mail from:

Office of the Superintendent, Coloma Community Schools

302 West St. Joseph Street Coloma MI 49038 / P.O. Box 550, Coloma, MI 49038-0550

6. RIGHT TO OBJECT TO RELEASE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION: Generally, school officials must have written permission from the parent of a student or an eligible student before releasing any information from a student's record. However, FERPA allows school districts to disclose without consent, "directory" type information. The Board of Education of Coloma has designated the following personally identifiable information contained in a student's education record as "directory information": Student Name, Address, Telephone Number, Electronic Mail Address, Photograph, Date and Place of Birth, Dates of Attendance, Grade Level, Participation in Activities, Sports, Weight, and Height of Athletes, Honors Awards Received. Unless you advise the District that you do not want any or all of this information released, school officials may release personally identifiable information which has been designated as directory information. Upon such objection, this information will not be released without prior consent of the parent or eligible student. You have until September 15 to advise the District in writing of any or all of the types of student information which you refuse to permit the District to release as directory information. Your objections should be addressed to: Coloma Community Schools Administration Office, P.O. Box 550, Coloma, MI 49038-0550.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE
FOR COLOMA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964
TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENT ACT OF 1972
TITLE II OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITY ACT OF 1990
SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973
AGE DISCRIMINATION ACT OF 1975

Section I

Any person believing that the Coloma Community School District or any part of the school organization has inadequately applied the principles and/or regulations of (1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, (2) Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, (3) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, (4) the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and (5) Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 may bring forth a complaint, which shall be referred to as a grievance, to the local Civil Rights Coordinator at the following address:

Craig Fisher
300 W. St Joseph St.
Coloma, MI 49037
cfisher@ccs.coloma.org
269-468-2400

Wendy Tremblay
302 W. St. Joseph St.
Coloma, MI 49037
wtremblay@ccs.coloma.org
269-468-2405

Section II

The person who believes a valid basis for grievance exists shall discuss the grievance informally and on a verbal basis with the local Civil Rights Coordinator, who shall in turn investigate the complaint and reply with an answer to the complainant within five (5) business days. The complainant may initiate formal procedures according to the following steps.

Step 1

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

Step 2

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

Step 3

If unsatisfied, the complainant may appeal through a signed, written statement to the Board of Education within five (5) business days of receiving the superintendent's response in step two. In an attempt to resolve the grievance, the Board of Education shall meet with the concerned parties and their representative within forty (40) days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within ten (10) days of this meeting.

Step 4

If at this point the grievance has not been satisfactorily settled, further appeal may be made to the Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202.

Inquiries concerning the nondiscriminatory policy may be directed to Director, Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202.

The local Coordinator, on request, will provide a copy of the district's grievance procedure and investigate all complaints in accordance with this procedure.

A copy of each of the Acts and the regulations on which this notice is based may be found in the Civil Rights Coordinator's office.

Dissemination of Grievance Procedure

Adopted grievance procedures should be disseminated to students, parents/guardians, employees, organizations and others to effectively inform them about the processing of grievances. The information must be provided on a continuing basis through the distribution of written materials and/or through periodic briefings.

Written materials through which grievance procedures may be disseminated include:

- Student/Parent-Guardian/Employee Handbooks
- Faculty Handbooks
- Newspaper/Newsletter articles
- Memoranda
- Bulletins
- Pamphlets/brochures
- School catalogs
- Course offering booklets/curriculum guides

Periodic briefings on grievance procedures can be done in:

Regular Student/Parent-Guardian/Staff meetings
Special meetings or assemblies
Classroom presentations
Seminars

Maintenance of Grievance Records

The maintenance of grievance records is recommended for the purpose of documenting compliance. Records should be kept for each grievance filed and, at a minimum, should include:

1. The name of the grievant or complainant and their title or status.
2. The date the grievance was filed.
3. The specific allegation made and any corrective action requested by the grievant.
4. The name of the respondents.
5. The levels of processing followed and the resolution, date and decision making authority at each level.
6. A summary of facts and evidence presented by each party involved.
7. A statement of the final resolution and the nature and date(s) of any corrective or remedial action taken.

Bullying and Harassment

The terms “bullying” and “harassment” are commonly used in our vocabulary, but the actual meaning of the terms differ from person to person. Under the law here are the definitions of bullying and harassment that we must adhere to.

Bullying: any written, verbal, or physical act that is ***intended*** or that a ***reasonable person would know is likely to harm*** one or more students either directly or indirectly. The act must be part of a ***repeated pattern*** of behavior that is ***targeted*** against a student.

Harassment: any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of technology, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student that:

- Places the student in reasonable fear of harm;
- Has the effect of ***substantially*** interfering with a student’s educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or
- Has the effect of ***substantially*** disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

Both bullying and harassment are violations of the Student Code of Conduct. While a behavior may not rise to the level of bullying under the law, it may still be a violation of the Code of Conduct as harassment or another infraction and thereby subject to consequences.

Weapons

The Board of Education prohibits students from possessing, storing, making, or using a weapon in any setting that is under the control and supervision of the District for the purpose of school activities approved and authorized by the District including, but not limited to, property leased, owned, or contracted for by the

District, a school-sponsored event including athletic events, or in a District vehicle without the permission of the Superintendent.

The term "weapon" means any object which, in the manner in which it is used, is intended to be used, or is represented, is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage, as well as endangering the health and safety of persons. Weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, guns of any type whatsoever, including spring, air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded) that will expel a BB, pellet, or paint balls, knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, ammunition, and explosives or any other weapon described in 18 U.S.C 921.

This policy shall also encompass such actions as look-alike items, false fire alarms, bomb threats, or intentional calls to falsely report a dangerous condition.

The Superintendent is authorized to establish instructional programs on weapons which require students to immediately report knowledge of weapons and threats of violence by students and staff to the building principal. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the student to discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion from school.

The Superintendent will refer any student who violates this policy to the student's parents or guardians and to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system. The student may also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

Policy exceptions include:

- weapons under the control of law enforcement personnel;
- items pre-approved by the building principal as part of a class or individual presentation under adult supervision, if used for the purpose and in the manner approved; (Working firearms and any ammunition will never be approved as part of a presentation.)
- theatrical props that do not meet the definition of "weapons" above, used in appropriate settings.

This policy will be published annually in all District student and staff handbooks. Publication is not a precondition to enforcement of this policy.

Communicable Disease

Use the following links to read our specific policies:

- [PO 8450 - Control of Casual Contact Communicable Diseases](#)
- [PO 8453 Direct Contact Communicable Diseases](#)

Due Process Rights

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

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

A. Students Subject to Short-Term Suspension

Except when emergency removal is warranted, a student must be given at least oral notice of the charges against him/her and the opportunity to respond prior to the implementation of a suspension. When emergency removal has been implemented, notice and opportunity to respond shall occur as soon as reasonably possible. The Superintendent or other designated

administrator shall provide the opportunity to be heard and shall be responsible for making the suspension decision. An appeal may be addressed to the Superintendent whose decision will be final.

B. Students Subject to Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion

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

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

McKinney Vento Information

The McKinney-Vento Act states that children and youth who lack “a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence” will be considered homeless.

McKinney-Vento eligible students have the right to:

- receive a free, appropriate public education;
- enroll in school immediately, even if lacking documents normally required for enrollment, or having missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness;
- enroll in school and attend classes while the school gathers needed documents;
- continue attending the school of origin, or enroll in the local attendance area school if attending the school of origin is not in the best interest of the student or is contrary to the request of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth;
- receive transportation to and from the school of origin, if requested by the parent or guardian, or by the local liaison on behalf of an unaccompanied youth; and
- receive educational services comparable to those provided to other students, according to each student’s need.

Information above is from [McKinney-Vento Homeless](#), you may visit the site for more information.

For additional information you may contact the district McKinney Vento Liaison:

Wendy Tremblay

wtremblay@ccs.coloma.org

269-468-2405

NOTICE AND STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Notice of Nondiscrimination

The District's notice of nondiscrimination shall read as followings:

The Board of Education of the Coloma Community School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment.

Inquiries about Title IX (or other Civil Rights issues) may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights ("OCR"), or both.

The District's Title IX/Civil Rights/504 Coordinators are:

Craig Fisher
Principal, CHS
300 W. St. Joseph St., Coloma, MI 49038
complaint@ccs.coloma.org
269-468-2400

Wendy Tremblay Principal, CJHS
302 W. St. Joseph St., Coloma, MI 49038
complaint@ccs.coloma.org
269-468-2405

The Board designates Craig Fisher, CHS Principal as the coordinator who is ultimately responsible for oversight over the Board's compliance with its responsibilities under Title IX.

The Board's nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures can be located at ccs.coloma.org.

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to ccs.coloma.org.

The OCR's regional office in Cleveland has jurisdiction for all of Michigan:

Cleveland Office
Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
1350 Euclid Avenue, Suite 325
Cleveland, Ohio 44115-1812
Telephone: 216-522-4970

FAX: 216-522-2573

TDD: 800-877-8339

E-mail: OCR.Cleveland@ed.gov

Web: <http://www.ed.gov/ocr>

Statement of Nondiscrimination

It is the policy of Coloma Community Schools that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, disability, height, weight, marital status, or any other status covered by federal, state, or local law shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to, discrimination during any program, activity, service, or in employment. Any person suspecting a discriminatory practice should contact our compliance officers, Wendy Tremblay and Craig Fisher at 302 W. St. Joseph Street, Coloma, MI 49038, 269.468.2424 or via email at complaint@ccs.coloma.org.