

Dear Excelsior Elementary Family:

On behalf of our staff, I take pleasure in welcoming you to a new school year at Excelsior Elementary. Our staff makes every effort to provide a happy, safe and challenging place for your child to learn and grow.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a reference for parents and students regarding general policies, information and events at our school. I hope you and your child will read it carefully and keep it in a convenient place for quick reference. I also encourage you to consult our school website for up-to-date information. Additional information about specific events will be communicated on a regular basis. Please contact the principal regarding any of the policies contained in the handbook.

We look forward to providing an outstanding educational experience for your child at Excelsior Elementary. I hope you feel pride and ownership for the programs we provide this year. Education is a cooperative effort between staff, parent and child. Please be active in making a difference in your child's life by being involved. Ask questions, come to events and show your child that school and learning matters!

Stacy DeCorsey  
Principal

# Excelsior Elementary

# Parent

# Handbook



## 2019-2020

Revised 08/27/2019

### FAST FACTS

#### Excelsior Elementary Website

[www.minnetonkaschools.org/schools/elementary/excelsior](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/schools/elementary/excelsior)

#### Phones

Main Office: (952) 401-5650

Absence: (952) 401-5655

Fax: (952) 401-5657

Explorer's Club: (952) 401-5631

#### School Hours

Grades K - 5: 8:00 am - 2:40 pm

School Office Hours: 7:00 am - 3:30 pm

#### School Colors

Blue and White

#### PTO President

Katie McCartney: [katie.mccartney@yahoo.com](mailto:katie.mccartney@yahoo.com)  
734-754-3659



# Minnetonka School District

## Beliefs

*A statement of our organization's fundamental convictions, its value, its character*

We believe that:

- An educated populace is integral to a democratic society.
- Families have the primary responsibility to ensure the education of their children.
- All adults are responsible for the care and welfare of all children.
- All people deserve the opportunity to pursue their individual potential.
- A person's attitude is the most significant determinant of success.
- Personal fulfillment comes from finding and pursuing one's passion.
- All people have fundamental, intrinsic worth.
- The dignity of each person is sacred.
- All people need to love and be loved.
- All people have a right to live and work in a safe environment.
- The uniqueness of each individual enriches the community.
- All people have the right to express matters of conscience, in a respectful and responsible manner.
- Open and sincere communication results in mutual understanding and commitment to purpose.
- Integrity is essential to a meaningful relationship.

## Mission

*A statement of our highest aspirations*

The mission of the Minnetonka School District, a community that transcends traditional definitions of excellence and where dreams set sail, is to ensure all students envision and pursue their highest aspirations while serving the greater good, through teaching and learning which:

- Value and nurture each person,
- Inspire in everyone a passion to excel with confidence and hope, and
- Instill expectations that stimulate extraordinary achievement in the classroom and in life.

## Vision

*The following statements are a small sampling of the Board's comprehensive vision for the School District. For the full text, please visit our web site.*

As a world-class organization dedicated to child-centered excellence, the Minnetonka School District will:

- Challenge and support all students in the pursuit of their highest levels of academic and personal achievement
- Practice prudent and innovative management of public resources
- Advocate for strong academic and strong co-curricular programs
- Demand the highest standards of professional excellence in every level of the organization
- Create, pursue and champion outstanding early childhood education opportunities so that all children enter kindergarten ready to learn and succeed
- Tailor learning experiences to the needs of individual learners
- Create positive, enjoyable learning environments
- Foster the development of good character and social responsibility
- Instill an abiding appreciation for the rights, privileges and values of America's system of government
- Produce outstanding graduates who are ready to contribute and thrive in a wide array of future pursuits and engage in life-long learning
- Earn and maintain broad-based community support

## ATTENDANCE: ABSENCE OR TARDY

Please refer to the policy section of our website ([www.minnetonkaschools.org](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org)) for more detailed information on attendance.

According to Minnesota State law, **children must attend school regularly**. The only excused absences from school are for:

- Illness
- Religious holiday
- Death of a family member
- Vacations less than 5 days total. Absence Request form must be filled out and turned in prior to absence in order for absence to be excused. (See next page)

The absence should be reported to the school between 3:00 pm and 8:00 am by calling the Attendance/Health Line at (952) 401-5655. State the child's name, teacher and reason for absence. Repeated tardiness or absences can be considered truancy and may result in an intervention by Hennepin County.

Please always check in at the office if you are visiting school after 7:30 am. **It is very important that if your child arrives late to school that he or she go to the office to check in and receive a pass.**

### Definitions:

Tardy: school start time – 3 hours  
Half-day absence: 3 – 4.5 hours  
Daily absence: greater than 4.5 hours

### **Skyward**

Skyward is our district system for parents to access grades and other data about your child. It is also an option for attendance. If you do not have a login name and password or you have questions please go to [www.minnetonkaschools.org/lets-talk](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/lets-talk) and submit your questions.

If you wish to report an absence you can do so via our Skyward web based system.

To report your child's absence now or in the future:

1. Log into Skyward with your parent/guardian username and password for Single Sign On (My Minnetonka) to access Skyward Family Access.
2. Click on Attendance.
3. Then Click on the Attendance Notification Tab
4. Click on "Add Notification"
5. Enter dates, reason and comments(optional) then click "Save"

### **Taking a student on vacation?**

**Avoid unexcused absence by completing a prior approval form (see next page)**

## Absence Request

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher

(m/d/y) \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, a total of \_\_\_\_\_ school days

**My child will be involved in a family activity. I understand that up to 5 days per year of family activities/vacations may be counted as excused absences and that any days in excess of that are counted as unexcused absences. I also understand that when a student accrues 10 or more unexcused absences in a year, the district is required to file neglect/truancy reports.**

**Parent Printed Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Principal Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Copy given to Teacher** \_\_\_\_

## Absence Request

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher

(m/d/y) \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, a total of \_\_\_\_\_ school days

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**Parent Printed Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Principal Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Copy given to Teacher** \_\_\_\_

## APPOINTMENTS

**Please make every effort to make appointments outside of the school day.**

If you need to remove your child from school during the school day:

- You must notify the classroom teacher in advance by note; state the date and time for early dismissal or late arrival. By sending a note, this increases the chance of your child being ready when you pick them up.
- **Please avoid calling the school at the end of the day with schedule changes as this is a particularly busy time!**
- For the protection of our students, no child is allowed to leave with anyone unless the parent or guardian notifies the school. Children must be signed in and out of school through the health office.
- Please do not go to the child's classroom due to safety reasons as well as our wish to keep learning time uninterrupted.
- If your child usually rides the bus but you need to pick them up for an appointment send a note or email your teacher, then go to the office to sign them out. If plans change during the day and you must sign them out and email **the teacher**.
- Please make doctor and dental appointments after school when possible.

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE BY CAR

**If you are dropping off or picking up by car, please follow the procedures below:**

- **Register for pick up/drop off at Open House. Only registered parents can pick up on a regular basis. Parents without a placard will be asked to park and register. Please help keep our children safe.**
- To have your child in class when school starts we ask that you always drop off between 7:30 am and 7:50 am. All doors are locked at 8:00 am. Please use only designated drop off areas.

### **Drop Off – Grades 3-5 (7:30 am-7:50 am)**

- Families of students in **grades 3, 4 and 5 and Navigators** will drop their children off via the **George street entry**.
- Families will enter the two-way road via George and Water Street to drop their children at the turnaround adjacent to the playground.
- You will then exit the school property via George Street.
- This drop off will be supervised by staff starting at 7:30 AM until 8:00 AM. **For safety, please only drop off and pick up your child at the supervised turnaround location.**
- Once dropped, students will enter the building via the side door near between the 2 and 3 story buildings.
- *Pick up is the same as morning drop off. Please display your placard in the right side of your dashboard when you are picking up. Remain in the car, wait for your child to be sent to you via staff.*

### **Drop Off – Grades K-2 and siblings (7:30 am-7:50 am)**

- **Students in K-2 will enter via our Oak Street/19 entry.**
- You will enter the parking lot from Oak Street/19 and stay to the right of the median.
- You will circle around the east side of the building and proceed to the west entry.
- Please keep in mind you must yield to buses at all times.

- Also, when waiting to drop off in times of congestion, please be sure to stay as close to the parked cars on the east side of the building to allow for mini bus drop off at that door.
- *Pick up is the same as morning drop off. Please display your placard in the right side of your dashboard when you are picking up. Remain in the car, wait for your child to be sent to you via staff.*

**If you have children in both K-2 and 3-5, we ask you to drop off and pick up via the Oak Street/County Road 19 entry.**

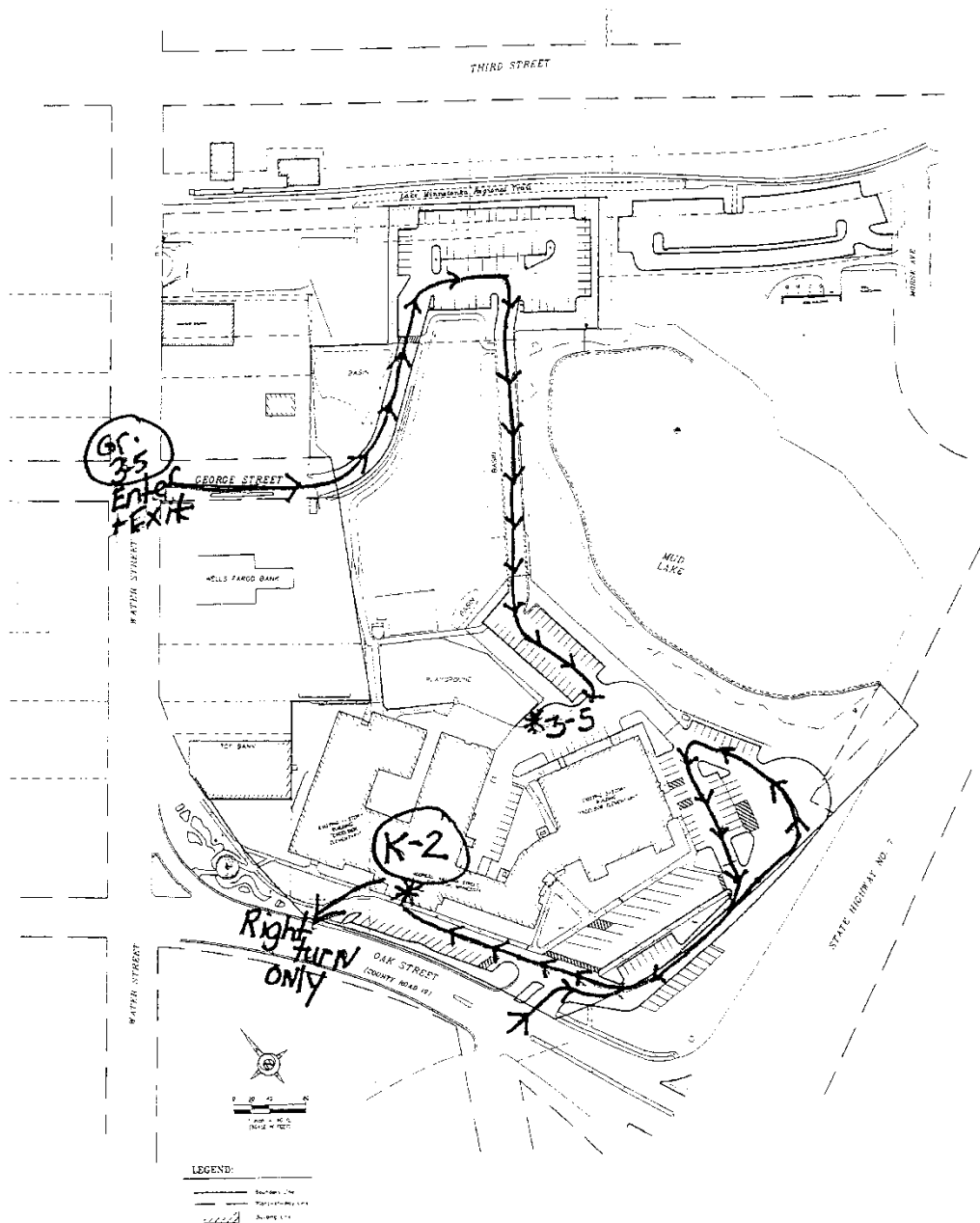
**Other reminders:**

- No drop off is ever allowed at our east entry or the front of the building after 8:00 am as this area is not supervised and the doors are locked.
- If your child usually rides the bus but you need to pick them up for an appointment send a note or email your teacher then go to the office to sign them out. If plans change during the day and you must sign them out and **email the teacher**. Please **do not call less than one hour before appointments or when school ends to inform us of a change** as sometimes we have difficulty locating your child in a timely manner.
- Please make doctor and dental appointments after school when possible.
- **All parents must register for drop off/ pick up by car to obtain a window placard for their car. This name placard should be displayed at pickup each day on your dashboard for easy identification. Registration is available at our Open House held the week before the start of school.**

(See map included for procedures)

## Pickup and Drop Off Procedures

George Street entry  
Drop Off - Grades 3-5, all Navigators



Oak Street / County Road 19 Entry  
Drop Off - Grades K-2 and siblings

## ASSIGNMENT BOOKS (PLANNERS)

Students in Grades 3 through 5 and Navigators are asked to purchase a planner (PTO Webstore) and write in their assignments each day. Parents should check this book daily as well as discuss homework to be completed. Some teachers may ask that you initial that you have seen the assignments in the planner.

## BEHAVIOR

### Guidelines for Building Character

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#### Our Beliefs...

At Excelsior Elementary School, we are committed to providing a welcoming, safe environment that is supportive, caring, diverse, responsive and respectful learning community for all of our students; a positive environment where children may become socially, academically, and behaviorally confident children. We use proactive as well as reactive strategies to keep our learning community healthy and successful. Our children will feel a sense of belonging to a group, a belief that they have something vital to contribute, and experience fun each day. We will have a community where all adults and children care for themselves and each other.

#### Responsive Classroom Approach to Classroom and School Interactions

We believe teaching and learning that fosters safe, challenging, and joyful classrooms and schools will have a positive impact on children's well-being and academics. Our program, developed by classroom teachers, consists of practical strategies for bringing together social and academic learning throughout the school day. Some of the teaching practices included are:

- Morning Meeting: A daily routine that builds community, creates a positive climate for learning and reinforces academic and social skills.
- Rules and Logical Consequences: A clear and consistent approach to discipline that fosters responsibility and self-control.
- Guided Discovery: A format for introducing materials that encourages inquiry, heightens interest and teaches care of the school environment.
- Academic Choice: An approach to giving children choices in their learning that helps them become invested, self-motivated learners.
- Classroom Organization: Strategies for arranging materials, furniture, and displays to encourage independence, promote caring, and maximize learning.

### Classroom Guidelines and Procedures

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#### Classroom Meetings

It is recommended that each day a Classroom Meeting takes place. The purposes of these meetings are:

- To build social skills;
- To build a caring, inclusive community;
- To build academic readiness;
- To enhance the day's academic learning;
- To integrate social, emotional, and intellectual learning.



Classroom Meetings include:

- Greeting
- Sharing
- Activity
- News and Announcements

The signal we use at Excelsior Elementary is the *BINGO clap* followed by the *High Five Signal*:

1. Eyes on speaker
2. Mouth silent
3. Listen
4. Hands in lap
5. Body still

### Hopes and Dreams

Hopes and Dreams will be completed by the second week of school. These help students to set goals as a classroom community.

### Classroom Contract of Understanding

- Classroom rules are developed together, democratically. Students are asked “What are some rules that we need to follow to make sure that everyone can meet his/her Hope and Dream?”
- Contracts are placed in a prominent place in the classrooms.

### School-Wide Expectations

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#### Above the Line

Listen quietly	Be respectful	Raise your hand
Walk in the halls	Work well with others	Good use of time
Quality work	Give your best effort	

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#### Below the Line

*Teacher Discretion: Take a Break, Apology of Action, Cooperating Room, Principal Referral*

Teasing/name calling	Cheating	Disrespect of property
Stealing	Lying	Blurting out
Leaving the classroom without permission		
Throwing objects (including snow)		
Items/behaviors that disturb the class		
Overly rough play during sports/games		

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#### Bottom Line – Automatic Principal Referral

Swearing	Talking back to adults
Weapons/look-alike weapons	Hitting/kicking/fighting
Physical/verbal threats/harassment	Disrespect of staff member
Leaving the building/school grounds without permission	Vandalism of school property

## **Logical Consequences**

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- Take a Break: Students take a short break in the classroom from an activity or lesson to restore themselves to self-control so they can follow the classroom rules.
- Apology of Action: You break it, you fix it! The student must, with words or action, set things right.
- Loss of Privilege: Taking away the privilege that has been abused.
- Cooperating Room: Cooperating Rooms are used when “Take-a-Breaks” are not working. Students are sent to the room of another staff member for a short time.
- Social Conference: An opportunity for the student to discuss the issue with the teacher.

## **Referring a student to the Principal**

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A referral to the Principal is made when:

- Classroom Strategies (Take a Break, Apology of Action, Loss of Privilege and Cooperating Room are ineffective)
- Student refuses to go to Cooperating Room
- Student’s behavior is BOTTOM LINE (unsafe behaviors)
- A phone call home will be made by the Principal when a child is referred to the Principal.

## **Guided Discovery of Materials**

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Guided Discovery is a teaching technique used to introduce materials, working areas or learning processes in the classroom. It can help children make a variety of good choices, use materials successfully, and take better care of themselves, each other, and the classroom.

## **Hallways**

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- Coats, jackets, scarves, hats, headbands and other head wear, as well as backpacks, and other items that are not required for class must be put into lockers/coat area as students enter their classrooms.
- Students who are being disruptive or who have a difficult time in the hallway may lose the privilege of walking independently to class and may be asked to walk next to an adult.

## **Playground**

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The playground is a special place that requires extra attention be paid to safety and respect due to the unstructured nature of recess time and the number of children at play.

- Para-professional staff and teachers establish rules and guidelines for behavior on the playground.
- Students may be directed to a positive “Take a Break” place for a few moments if they break a rule on the playground.
- If students show repeated misbehavior on the playground, they may lose the privilege of playing on the playground for a day.
- Supervising adults on playground will be available at various locations in order to view the entire playground.

## **Rules**

Please review the following with your child:

Respect others:

1. Use proper language.
2. Treat others the way you want to be treated.
3. Share materials.
4. After using playground equipment, return to the cart
5. Do not push, shove or fight.
6. Use equipment safely, including do not climb high or jump from slides, fences or equipment.
7. Do not leave grounds without permission.

## **Lunchroom**

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Students go to recess before going to lunch. They are called from recess by a paraprofessional and walked to the lunchroom. Coats and boots are hung in an assigned area. Students are called at specific times from the lunchroom and meet teachers at assigned locations to proceed to their classrooms.

- Table Manners: Students are expected to use good table manners while eating.
- The Silent Signal: Lunchroom staff will use the silent signal. Students may be asked to move to another seat if they are having difficulty.
- Trash: When students are finished eating they should follow recycling and trash procedures.

## **Bus**

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- Be on time. Be at the bus stop 5 minutes before the bus is due so the bus stays on schedule.
- Board and depart from the bus correctly.
- Follow the driver's instructions promptly and courteously.
- Remain in your seat until the bus arrives at your stop.
- Do not endanger yourself or others. Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
- Do not bring food, beverages, animals, tobacco, chemicals or hazardous objects on the bus.
- Speak and act courteously. Speak in a quiet voice. Your voice should not be heard above others. Do not use profanity, including words or gestures. Do not tease or harass others.
- Help to keep your bus clean and safe. Do not throw objects inside the bus or out the window. Do not spit. Do not vandalize the bus. Pick up after yourself.
- The bus driver has the authority to assign seats.

## **Assembly**

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The following are expectations of students during assemblies:

- No talking
- Hands and body to self
- Sit on floor with legs crossed in front
- Raise hand to ask question
- Applause is the only appropriate way to show appreciation
- Stagger the dismissal of students
- Students leave in a quiet, single file line

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Beginning fall 2007, Excelsior Elementary adopted the “Healthy Celebration” program. This means we ask parents **not** to bring in treats for their student’s birthday celebration. Non-food celebrations are an excellent way to support the schools, commitment to promoting healthy behaviors. By implementing this plan, we provide our students a consistent message about the importance of their health and support the classroom lessons on the positive impact of a healthy lifestyle. Our teachers are excited to be bringing many fun and creative ways to celebrate your child’s birthday with their classmates. We know that you will be respectful and supportive of this positive change to Excelsior Elementary and we thank you for your continued support.

## **BULLYING POLICY**

# **MINNETONKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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## **Policy #514: BULLYING PROHIBITION POLICY**

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### **I. PURPOSE**

A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with a student’s ability to learn and/or a teacher’s ability to educate students in a safe environment. The Minnetonka School District cannot monitor the activities of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when students are not under the direct supervision of school personnel. However, to the extent such conduct affects the educational environment of the District and the rights and welfare of its students and is within the control of the District in its normal operations, the District intends to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond, remediate, and discipline those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented. The purpose of this policy is to assist the District in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, reprisal, retaliation, and other similar disruptive and detrimental behavior.

### **II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

- A. An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited on school premises, on District property or at school-related functions or activities, or on school transportation. 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. This policy also applies to any student whose

conduct at any time or in any place constitutes bullying or other prohibited conduct that interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the District or the safety or welfare of the student or other students, or 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. This policy also applies to an act of cyber-bullying regardless of whether such act is committed on or off District property and/or with or without the use of District resources.

- B. No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the District shall permit, condone, or tolerate bullying.
- C. Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen or negate the prohibitions contained in this policy.
- D. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited.
- E. False accusations or reports of bullying against another student are prohibited.
- F. A person who engages in an act of bullying, reprisal, retaliation, or false reporting of bullying or permits, condones, or tolerates bullying shall be subject to discipline or other remedial responses for that act in accordance with the District's policies and procedures, including the District's discipline policy. The District may take into account the following factors:
  - 1. The developmental ages and maturity levels of the parties involved;
  - 2. The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature of the behavior;
  - 3. Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior;
  - 4. The relationship between the parties involved; and
  - 5. The context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

Consequences for students who commit prohibited acts of bullying may range from remedial responses or positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. The District shall employ research-based developmentally appropriate best practices that include preventative and remedial measures and effective discipline for deterring violations of this policy, apply throughout the District, and foster student, parent, and community participation.

Consequences for employees who permit, condone, or tolerate bullying or engage in an act of reprisal or intentional false reporting of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or discharge.

Consequences for other individuals engaging in prohibited acts of bullying may include, but not be limited to, exclusion from District property and events.

- G. The District will act to investigate all complaints of bullying reported to the District and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the District who is found to have violated this policy.

### **III. DEFINITIONS**

For purposes of this policy, the definitions included in this section apply.

- A. “Bullying” means intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and:
  - 1. an actual or perceived imbalance of power exists between the student engaging in the prohibited conduct and the target of the prohibited conduct, 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.

The term, “bullying,” specifically includes cyber-bullying as defined in this policy.

- B. “Cyber-bullying” 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 other electronic device. The term applies to prohibited conduct which occurs on school premises, on District property, at school functions or activities, on school transportation, or on school computers, networks, forums, and mailing lists, or off school premises to the extent that it substantially and materially disrupts student learning or the school environment.
- C. “Immediately” means as soon as possible but in no event longer than 24 hours.

- D. "Intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct" means, but is not limited to, conduct that does the following:
1. 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;
  2. 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; or
  3. 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 the Minnesota Human Rights Act (MHRA). However, prohibited conduct need not be based on any particular characteristic defined in this paragraph or the MHRA.
- E. "On school premises, on District property or at school-related functions or activities, or on school transportation" means all District buildings, school grounds, and school property or property immediately adjacent to school grounds, school bus stops, school buses, school vehicles, school contracted vehicles, or any other vehicles approved for District purposes, the area of entrance or departure from school grounds, premises, or events, and all school-related functions, school-sponsored activities, events, or trips. District property also may mean a student's walking route to or from school for purposes of attending school or school-related functions, activities, or events. While prohibiting bullying at these locations and events, the District does not represent that it will provide supervision or assume liability at these locations and events.
- F. "Prohibited conduct" means bullying or cyber-bullying as defined in this policy or retaliation or reprisal for asserting, alleging, reporting, or providing information about such conduct or knowingly making a false report about bullying.
- G. "Remedial response" means a measure to stop and correct prohibited conduct, prevent prohibited conduct from recurring, and protect, support, and intervene on behalf of a student who is the target or victim of prohibited conduct.
- H. "Student" means a student legally enrolled in the Minnetonka School District.

#### **IV. REPORTING PROCEDURE**

- A. Any person who believes he or she has been the target or victim of bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying or prohibited conduct under this policy shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate District official designated by this policy. A person may report bullying anonymously. However, the District may not rely solely on an anonymous report to determine discipline or other remedial responses.
- B. The District encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from the principal or building supervisor of each building or available in the District office, but oral reports shall be considered complaints as well.
- C. The building principal, or the principal's designee, or the building supervisor (hereinafter the "building report taker") is the person responsible for receiving reports of bullying or other prohibited conduct at the building level. Any person may report bullying or other prohibited conduct directly to the District Human Rights Officer or the Superintendent. If the complaint involves the building report taker, the complaint shall be made or filed directly with the Superintendent or the District's Human Rights Officer by the reporting party or complainant.

The building report taker shall ensure that this policy and its procedures, practices, consequences, and sanctions are fairly and fully implemented and shall serve as the primary contact on policy and procedural matters. The building report taker or a third party designated by the District shall be responsible for the investigation. The building report taker shall provide information about available community resources to the target or victim of the bullying or other prohibited conduct, the perpetrator, and other affected individuals as appropriate.
- D. A teacher, school administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other school employee shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events that might include bullying. Any such person who witnesses, receives a report of, observes, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying or other prohibited conduct shall make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the bullying or prohibited conduct and shall inform the building report taker immediately. District personnel who fail to inform the building report taker of conduct that may constitute bullying or other prohibited conduct or who fail to make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the bullying or prohibited conduct in a timely manner may be subject to disciplinary action.
- E. Reports of bullying or other prohibited conduct are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or confidential investigative data and will not be disclosed except as permitted by law. The building report taker, in conjunction with the responsible authority, shall be responsible for keeping and regulating access to any report of bullying and the record of any resulting investigation.
- F. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying or other prohibited conduct will not affect the complainant's or reporter's future employment, grades, work assignments, or educational or work environment.



- G. The District will respect the privacy of the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the District's obligation to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any legal disclosure obligations.

## **V. DISTRICT ACTION**

- A. Within three days of the receipt of a complaint or report of bullying or other prohibited conduct, the District shall undertake or authorize an investigation by the building report taker or a third party designated by the District.
- B. The building report taker or other appropriate District officials may take immediate steps, at their discretion, to protect the target or victim of the bullying or other prohibited conduct, the complainant, the reporter, and students, or others, pending completion of an investigation of bullying or other prohibited conduct, consistent with applicable law.
- C. The alleged perpetrator of the bullying or other prohibited conduct shall be allowed the opportunity to present a defense during the investigation or prior to the imposition of discipline or other remedial responses.
- D. Upon completion of the investigation that determines that bullying or other prohibited conduct has occurred, the District will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination, or discharge. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to try to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited conduct. Remedial responses to the bullying or other prohibited conduct shall be tailored to the particular incident and nature of the conduct and shall take into account the factors specified in Section II.F. of this policy. District action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements; applicable statutory authority, including the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act; the student discipline policy and other applicable District policies; and applicable regulations.
- E. The District is not authorized to disclose to a victim private educational or personnel data regarding an alleged perpetrator who is a student or employee of the District. School officials will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of students who are targets of bullying or other prohibited conduct and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of alleged perpetrators of bullying or other prohibited conduct who have been involved in a reported and confirmed bullying incident of the remedial or disciplinary action taken, to the extent permitted by law.
- F. In order to prevent or respond to bullying or other prohibited conduct committed by or directed against a child with a disability, the District shall, when determined appropriate by the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team or Section 504 team, allow the

child's IEP or Section 504 plan to be drafted to address the skills and proficiencies the child needs as a result of the child's disability to allow the child to respond to or not to engage in bullying or other prohibited conduct.

## **VI. RETALIATION OR REPRISAL**

The District will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the District who commits an act of reprisal or who retaliates against any person who asserts, alleges, or makes a good faith report of alleged bullying or prohibited conduct, who provides information about bullying or prohibited conduct, who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation of alleged bullying or prohibited conduct, or who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such bullying or prohibited conduct. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, harassment, or intentional disparate treatment. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to deter violations and to appropriately discipline the individual(s) who engaged in the prohibited conduct. Remedial responses to the prohibited conduct shall be tailored to the particular incident and nature of the conduct and shall take into account the factors specified in Section II.F. of this policy.

## **VII. TRAINING AND EDUCATION**

- A. The District shall discuss this policy with school personnel and volunteers and provide appropriate training to District personnel regarding this policy. The District shall establish a training cycle for school personnel to occur during a period not to exceed every three school years. Newly employed school personnel must receive the training within the first year of their employment with the District. The District or a school administrator may accelerate the training cycle or provide additional training based on a particular need or circumstance. This policy shall be included in employee handbooks, training materials, and publications on school rules, procedures, and standards of conduct, which materials shall also be used to publicize this policy.
- B. The District shall require ongoing professional development, consistent with Minn. Stat. § 122A.60, to build the skills of all school personnel who regularly interact with students to identify, prevent, and appropriately address bullying and other prohibited conduct. Such professional development includes, but is not limited to, the following:
  - 1. Developmentally appropriate strategies both to prevent and to immediately and effectively intervene to stop prohibited conduct;
  - 2. The complex dynamics affecting a perpetrator, target, and witnesses to prohibited conduct;

3. Research on prohibited conduct, including specific categories of students at risk for perpetrating or being the target or victim of bullying or other prohibited conduct in school;
  4. The incidence and nature of cyber-bullying; and
  5. Internet safety and cyber-bullying.
- C. The District annually will provide education and information to students regarding bullying, including information regarding this District policy prohibiting bullying, the harmful effects of bullying, and other applicable initiatives to prevent bullying and other prohibited conduct.
- D. The Administration of the District is directed to implement programs and other initiatives to prevent bullying, to respond to bullying in a manner that does not stigmatize the target or victim, and to make resources or referrals to resources available to targets or victims of bullying.
- E. The Administration is encouraged to provide developmentally appropriate instruction and is directed to review programmatic instruction to determine if adjustments are necessary to help students identify and prevent or reduce bullying and other prohibited conduct, to value diversity in school and society, to develop and improve students' knowledge and skills for solving problems, managing conflict, engaging in civil discourse, and recognizing, responding to, and reporting bullying or other prohibited conduct, and to make effective prevention and intervention programs available to students.

The Administration must establish strategies for creating a positive school climate and use evidence-based social-emotional learning to prevent and reduce discrimination and other improper conduct.

The Administration is encouraged, to the extent practicable, to take such actions as it may deem appropriate to accomplish the following:

1. Engage all students in creating a safe and supportive school environment;
2. Partner with parents and other community members to develop and implement prevention and intervention programs;
3. Engage all students and adults in integrating education, intervention, and other remedial responses into the school environment;

4. Train student bystanders to intervene in and report incidents of bullying and other prohibited conduct to the schools' primary contact person;
  5. Teach students to advocate for themselves and others;
  6. Prevent inappropriate referrals to Special Education of students who may engage in bullying or other prohibited conduct; and
  7. Foster student collaborations that, in turn, foster a safe and supportive school climate.
- F. The District may implement violence prevention and character development education programs to prevent or reduce policy violations. Such programs may offer instruction on character education including, but not limited to, character qualities such as attentiveness, truthfulness, respect for authority, diligence, gratefulness, self-discipline, patience, forgiveness, respect for others, peacemaking, and resourcefulness.
- G. The District shall inform affected students and their parents of rights they may have under State and Federal Data Practices laws to obtain access to data related to an incident and their right to contest the accuracy or completeness of the data. The District may accomplish this requirement by inclusion of all or applicable parts of its protection and privacy of pupil records policy in the student handbook.

## **VIII. NOTICE**

- A. The District will give annual notice of this policy to students, parents or guardians, and staff, and this policy shall appear in the student handbook.
- B. This policy or a summary thereof must be conspicuously posted in the administrative offices of the District and the office of each school.
- C. This policy must be given to each school employee and independent contractor who regularly interacts with students at the time of initial employment with the District.
- D. Notice of the rights and responsibilities of students and their parents under this policy must be included in the student discipline policy distributed to parents at the beginning of each school year.
- E. This policy shall be available to all parents and other school community members in an electronic format in the language appearing on the District's or a school's Web site.

- F. The District shall provide an electronic copy of its most recently amended policy to the Commissioner of Education.

## **IX. POLICY REVIEW**

To the extent practicable, the Board shall, on a cycle consistent with other District policies, review and revise this policy. The policy shall be made consistent with Minn. Stat. § 121A.031 and other applicable law. Revisions shall be made in consultation with students, parents, and community organizations.

**Legal References:**     *Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act)*  
                              *Minn. Stat. § 120A.05, Subds. 9, 11, 13, and 17 (Definition of Public School)*  
                              *Minn. Stat. § 120B.232 (Character Development Education)*  
                              *Minn. Stat. § 121A.03 (Sexual, Religious and Racial Harassment and Violence)*  
                              *Minn. Stat. § 121A.031 (School Student Bullying Policy)*  
                              *Minn. Stat. § 121A.0311 (Notice of Rights and Responsibilities of Students and Parents under the Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act)*  
                              *Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)*  
                              *Minn. Stat. § 121A.69 (Hazing Policy)*  
                              *Minn. Stat. Ch. 363A (Minnesota Human Rights Act)*  
                              *20 U.S.C. § 1232g et seq. (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)*  
                              *34 C.F.R. §§ 99.1 - 99.67 (Family Educational Rights and Privacy)*

**Cross References:**     *Policy 414: Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse*  
                                  *Policy 423 (Employee-Student Relationships)*  
                                  *Policy 427: Harassment and Violence*  
                                  *Policy 501: School Weapons Policy*  
                                  *Policy 506: Student Discipline*  
                                  *Policy 515: Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records*  
                                  *Policy 521 (Student Disability Nondiscrimination)*  
                                  *Policy 524 (Electronic Technologies Acceptable Use and Safety Policy)*  
                                  *Policy 709: Student Transportation Safety Policy*

*Approved: November 5, 2009*

*Reviewed and Approved: August 7, 2014*

## BUS RIDERS

Bus service is available for children who live at least 2 miles from the school free of charge. Students who live within 2 miles of school must pay a fee to ride the bus. All students are required to carry a bus pass in order to ride the bus. Students designated for bus transportation must ride the bus to and from home. Parents must send a note to the teacher to indicate a change in bus plans. Please include the bus number and bus stop where your child will be getting off. **If you do not send a note, your child will be sent home on his/her regular bus route; therefore, it is critical you notify the school of any change in schedule. For your child's safety, please send a note with your child rather than call the school. We have no way to verify that it is the parent calling. Notes sent with the child are the safest and most convenient way to inform staff of changes.**

Riding the bus is a privilege. Regulations are firmly enforced for the safety of all passengers. Parents will be notified of any serious violations on the bus or bus stop area in writing or via the telephone. In some cases, your child may lose his/her right to ride the bus for one or more days. If your child is bothered by another on the bus, please refer them first to the driver. If they do not receive assistance, please call the principal to have the issue addressed.

***Remember to send your child's bus pass with your child if he/she rides another bus.***

For complete district transportation information, please go to:  
[www.minnetonkaschools.org/district/departments/transportation](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/district/departments/transportation).

## CHANGING FAMILIES

If your family has experienced a difficult change in family circumstances due to illness, death or divorce, please contact the school. Many resources as well as small group discussions are available to assist your child to manage these changes. Please speak to the principal, classroom teacher or social worker.

## CHECK IN PROCEDURES

Any visitor who wishes to enter the building must sign in prior to going to classroom areas. Parents, volunteers and visitors are all asked to wear a nametag that is clearly visible when in the building. Please obtain a nametag, available at the main office, when you sign in. Our security system requires a driver's license to obtain a visitor badge with your name on it.

## CLOSING OF SCHOOL

The calling system that informs you of school cancellations, late starts and early dismissals for all Minnetonka Area Schools enables us to communicate directly with every family in the District virtually simultaneously about our decisions regarding evolving weather conditions. We continue to post announcements on WCCO-TV, WCCO/830 AM radio, KSTP-TV channel 5, KARE-11 television.

The directive to close school comes from the superintendent when weather or other emergencies pose danger for students. In most cases, the decision for school cancellations or late starts will be announced by 6 am. It is important for parents to make arrangements for their children in case of early dismissal from school. Please be sure to communicate this plan carefully to your child and to complete the Emergency Release Plan form from school in order to avoid confusion for your child in the extremely rare event that school closes early.

## COMMUNICATION / QUESTIONS ABOUT SCHOOL

All staff at Excelsior Elementary are very interested in promoting communication between staff, parents and students. We encourage you to call if you have concerns or questions in the following order:

- Start with the person who is directly working with the concern or program — in most cases the classroom teacher or specialist. Please state your concerns to the teacher and let them know you'd like to work out a plan to resolve the concern.
- If a conference with that individual does not resolve the issue, your next step is to contact the principal. The principal will arrange an opportunity to meet with each party.
- If you still feel that a problem exists, the next step is to contact the Education Service Center (401-5000). The next contact would be Dennis Peterson, Superintendent.

Please keep us informed of the following important circumstances by sending a written signed note to your child's teacher:

- If your child is riding another bus or getting off at another stop
- If your child will be picked up early or arrive late
- If you wish your child to stay inside for recess due to illness
- If your child will be going home with another child
- If your child will be going home with another adult

***Remember to send your child's bus pass with your child if he/she rides another bus.***

## CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in the spring and fall. The fall conference provides an opportunity for parents and the teacher to share information about the child and develop an individual learning plan as well as learn about their child's academic progress to that point. During the spring conference, the teacher informs parents about their child's success in school. In addition, parents or teachers may request special conferences at any time during the school year. A few weeks before fall and spring conferences, parents will be notified via email when conference time signup is open online using Skyward.

Please make every attempt to attend conferences during the designated time. School is not in session during these days for the sole purpose of conferences. If you are unable to attend conferences due to vacation, your child's teacher may arrange a telephone conference with you upon your return or in limited cases may be able to arrange a conference during school hours.

## CURRICULUM

*See Learning Programs on page 28.*

## CUSTODY

In cases where parents are separated or divorced and only one parent has legal custody of a child, the school should be given a copy of the court order that determines custody and visitation rights. The school must have legal documentation in order to comply with any limiting court order. The school is unable to keep a non-custodial parent from picking up a child unless a valid restraining order or other appropriate legal documents are supplied to the school. State and federal data privacy laws recognize the right of a natural parent, regardless of child custody, to have access to the school records of his or her child. A non-custodial, natural parent may arrange to review the

school record of his or her child as well as arrange to have materials from school, such as newsletters, mailed to them.

### **CYCLE DAYS**

Our school follows a schedule of cycle days one through six. This is due to the need to keep a constant schedule even when we have holidays on Mondays or Fridays. This assures that no child misses any class such as art, music, or physical education consistently.

### **DISASTERS/BUILDING EMERGENCIES**

In the event of a national or local disaster we adhere carefully to the plans developed at the district level. The principal is in continual communication with the staff to keep them aware of the conditions and to direct actions appropriate to the situation. In the case of a dangerous intruder, staff and students have practiced carefully developed procedures with and without students. In the event of an evacuation, students will be immediately transported to an alternative location.

### **DOCTOR APPOINTMENTS**

*See Appointments on page 5.*

*See Illness and Sending a Child to School on page 27.*

### **DRESS CODE**

We would like parent support for appropriate dress. Students should dress according to the weather and occasion. Please encourage students to wear proper footwear to be ready to participate in Physical Education or outdoor play. No inappropriate or questionable symbols or language will be permitted on clothing. In times of warmer weather, shorts are permitted. During warm weather please have your child dress appropriately by discouraging wearing of halter tops, spaghetti straps or bare midsections, in upper grade levels especially.

Once we are going outside in cold weather on a consistent basis, it is very important that students dress warmly. This includes coats, boots, hats and mittens for all students and snow-pants. Please write students names in clothing that is taken off at school. When snow is on the playground field, students must wear snow pants and boots in order to play in those areas.

Please refer to our district policy on Student Dress and Grooming Code for more details:

[www.minnetonkaschools.org/uploaded/Documents/Policy/504.pdf](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/uploaded/Documents/Policy/504.pdf).

### **DROPPING OFF**

*Please see Arrival and Departure by Car on page 5.*

Parents are encouraged to have students ride the bus if possible.

### **EARLY RELEASE DAYS**

During the school year, a few early release days will be held to allow teachers to plan for educational purposes. In rare cases, school is closed early due to inclement weather. Please make alternate arrangements for your child on these days and discuss them with your child ahead of time. It is very important that you complete the early release information so that your child's teacher knows where to send your child at the end of the day.



## **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

Please be sure to keep up-to-date information in your child's health and emergency records. This is our first contact should your child become ill or injured at school. Information about student health is collected and maintained by the health office. This information is confidential and is available only to staff who need to be aware of health concerns.

Our school maintains careful emergency procedures that are updated and reviewed with staff on a yearly basis. If you would like to review these procedures contact the principal.

## **END-OF-YEAR RECOGNITION**

At the end of the year, student accomplishments will be highlighted. Special activities celebrating fifth grade and moving on to middle school will also take place.

## **ENTRANCE PROCEDURES**

If your child arrives before 7:50 am, he or she will be asked to wait in the front or side lobby. Children are encouraged to be here from 7:30 am – 7:50 am to be in their classroom seats on time.

## **FEES**

Occasionally, fees will be collected for field trips or other school activities. If you are unable to afford any fee please contact your child's teacher, the social worker or the principal and a scholarship will be made available. Bus fees are also collected for those students who are bussed within 2 miles of school.

## **FINANCIAL NEED**

If you or anyone you know is unable to participate in a school activity due to financial concerns, please contact the school social worker. Special funds have been set aside for students who need financial help in order to participate. If your family is experiencing difficulties, the social worker has many resources available in the community to help.

## **FIRE/SEVERE WEATHER DRILLS & LOCK-DOWN PROCEDURES**

By law, schools conduct 5 fire drills and 5 lockdowns each year. Students will immediately evacuate the building in the event of a drill or actual fire. Students will exit the building to designated areas as practiced during fire drills. If an intruder poses a dangerous situation, a lock-down occurs. All classroom doors are locked and staff and students are kept in classrooms until notified. During a severe weather drill, students will practice procedures for moving to safe areas in the building.

## **FUNDRAISERS**

One major fundraising event occurs in the fall of each year. This fundraiser enables the PTO to support learning and enrichment in the school that would be otherwise out of reach. The PTO also accepts donations in lieu of fundraiser purchases.

Several "painless fundraisers" are available to support activities at school. Collect General Mills' Box Tops, Tyson A+ labels, Campbell's Labels, and Mabel's Labels ([www.campaigns.mabelslabels.com](http://www.campaigns.mabelslabels.com)). While shopping at Amazon.com, go to [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com) and select Excelsior Elementary PTO to earn a percentage of each purchase for our school. While shopping for groceries at Kowalski's, deposit your receipt in the Excelsior PTO box on your way out and Kowalski's will give our school a percentage of every purchase.

## **GUM/CANDY/POP**

Students should refrain from bringing treats and soda pop in lunches or snacks. Please encourage your child to bring water or juice in his or her lunch rather than pop. Milk is always available to purchase.

## **HALLOWEEN PARADE AND PARTY**

Excelsior Elementary has held a parade through the town of Excelsior for decades. It is a much anticipated community event that merchants and families look forward to each year. Our students (and staff) parade through the streets dressed in fun and creative costumes. In order for this unique tradition to continue we require parents and students to adhere strictly to the costume guidelines below.

Do not send your child, or dress yourself:

- In costumes that depict religious figures such as witches or devils.
- In costumes that are violent or frightening to young children.
- In costumes with look-alike guns, knives, swords, etc.
- In costumes that depict racial, gender or ethnic stereotypes.

Do use your creativity to come up with costume ideas that are FUN!

Parents are not allowed to take students home directly from the parade. All parents must come back to the school and sign your child out of the classroom. This allows us to track students and how they have gone home after school. Classroom teachers will have sign-out sheets in their rooms.

## **HEALTH REQUIREMENTS**

The Minnetonka School District participates in the “No Shots, No School” program. Students are required to provide proof of up-to-date immunizations, or documentation exempting them from specific immunization, upon entering school each year. Here is a link to the required immunizations as outlined here by the Minnesota Department of Health:

[www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/immunize/readykidswhento.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/immunize/readykidswhento.pdf). Parents are also strongly encouraged to inform the health office of any health issues which are either short or long term.

Additional information regarding CareDox, a cloud-based, portable immunization records system which interfaces with the Minnesota Immunization registry and is used by the Minnetonka Public Schools to collect immunization records, can be found here:

[www.minnetonkaschools.org/district/programs/health/immunizations](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/district/programs/health/immunizations).

## **HIGH POTENTIAL**

Every Minnetonka elementary school has a full-time High Potential (HP) teacher, who leads specific HP programs and serve the classroom teachers as additional resource. The school district offers three levels of High Potential Services to elementary students and teachers. Level 1 service consists of the Wings program, which provides intellectually gifted students from 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade who need additional enrichment beyond what is available in the classroom setting. Level 2 service offers students with specific talents and/or interests, such as Independent Investigations, where students investigate a specific area of interest of their choosing under the guidance of an HP staff member, and present their project to their class. Level 3 service is available to all students and teachers, offered by the HP teacher in the form of a special lesson on critical/creative thinking skills

in the mainstream classroom. Additional HP services include accelerated math and reading. Finally, the Navigator Program serves the exceptionally gifted students in grades 2 through 5.

Here is a quick summary of the HP services:

[www.minnetonkaschools.org/uploaded/Documents/Dist/HP/High-Potential-Services.pdf](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/uploaded/Documents/Dist/HP/High-Potential-Services.pdf).

If you believe your child needs services beyond those provided in the classroom, please contact your child's homeroom teacher and the HP Teacher for Excelsior, Amy O'Neill. For complete, in-depth information on identification of students for these HP services, including Wings and Navigator Program, please refer to district website on Elementary High Potential Services: [www.minnetonkaschools.org/academics/specialty-programs/high-potential/elementary](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/academics/specialty-programs/high-potential/elementary).

## **HISTORY OF EXCELSIOR ELEMENTARY**

Our school began as Excelsior High School in 1915. It was remodeled extensively in 1993 and in subsequent years to accommodate the needs of elementary age children. Modifications were also made to update the building to meet fire and safety codes.

## **HOMEWORK**

WE BELIEVE:

1. Homework should be purposeful and at the appropriate level for students.
2. Homework should be able to be completed without excessive adult help, time, or resources.
3. Homework should foster responsibility, organization, and time management skills.
4. Homework should allow for family time and extracurricular activities that nurture the whole child.
5. Homework should include nightly reading.
6. Work not completed in class, when given time, will be completed at home.

## **ILLNESS AND SENDING A CHILD TO SCHOOL**

*See also Appointments on page 5 for information related to doctor's appointments.*

One of the goals of health services is to assure a healthy environment. Many students and families are frequently concerned about when students should stay home or attend school. The following information is intended to help with this decision.

- If a student has a fever of 100 degrees or more, he/she should stay home for 24 hours after the temperature returns to normal without fever-reducing medication and he/she feels well enough to participate in classroom activities. Please report to the health office if your child has a recent onset of a cough or sore throat with that fever.
- If a student has vomited or had diarrhea, the student should stay home until 24 hours after the last episode.
- If a student has any rash that may be disease-related or the cause is unknown, check with your family physician before sending the student to school.
- If a student is ill at home, please call the school attendance line daily to report the reason for absence. It is helpful if specific symptoms and/or diagnosis are reported to the Health Office.

**It is very important that you notify the health office as soon as possible in the event your child has one of the following illnesses:**

Chicken Pox	Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	Encephalitis
Fifth Disease	Influenza (Flu)	Head Lice
Hepatitis	Impetigo	Measles
Meningitis	Mononucleosis	Mumps
Pertussis	Pneumonia	Ringworm
Rubella	Scabies	Scarlet Fever
Shingles	Strep Throat	

## LEARNING PROGRAMS

Information about the curriculum is also available via the district website at:  
[www.minnetonkaschools.org/academics/elementary/curriculum](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/academics/elementary/curriculum)

### Art

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Students receive visual arts instruction from a specialist for one 50-minute period per six-day cycle. This program is based on a discipline based program philosophy that balances learning art production, concepts of design, appreciation and history.

### Band

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The band director at Excelsior Elementary gives instruction on brass, woodwind and percussion instruments. The band program is open to all fifth graders who wish to enroll. The instrumental instructor meets the band members in a class lesson with other instruments of the same kind. The band experience is based on the sequential instrumental program of instruction for grades five through twelve.

### Reading and Language Arts

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The language arts curriculum in Minnetonka Area Schools is an integrated program in which students expand their abilities to think, listen, speak and write as they engage in the reading process. The adopted curriculum is Houghton Mifflin. Essential skills are tested for mastery. A wide variety of award-winning literature, kits and games are used to provide motivation, enrichment or remediation. Our main objective is to produce lifelong readers. We also encourage extensive library reading. All students are encouraged to read books everyday outside of school.

### Health

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Our health program provides knowledge and experiences in the requirements necessary for living a healthy life. Students learn skills for increasing physical, mental and social health. Health education is a responsibility shared between home and school.

### Mathematics

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Students use the *Everyday Mathematics* series along with other resources for the mathematics curriculum. The elementary mathematics program builds from a strong conceptual base and strives to maintain a high level of interest while developing computational and problem-solving skills. Student motivation is encouraged through work in many mathematical problem-solving situations

that reflect real-life math use. Students are continually challenged to explain reasoning and to justify their thinking.

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## **Media**

The media center houses both print and non-print materials for student use. Depending upon grade level, students receive various levels of instruction regarding information skills for accessing, processing and communicating information. Students also have extensive opportunities to use technology to acquire skills in word processing, use of software and production.

While staff members work directly with students using technology, students who use technology in inappropriate ways risk losing user privileges. It is each user's responsibility to inquire if he or she is unsure of the appropriateness of technology use.

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## **Orchestra**

Orchestra is a progressive curriculum for students in grades four through twelve. Lessons are given in a small group, based upon type of instrument and ability level.

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## **Physical Education**

Students in grades one through five meet with a physical education specialist 1-2 times per week. Classes provide opportunities to make physical demands on themselves, to explore and experiment with activity. Students also learn to work cooperatively with peers. Students are expected to participate and wear proper gym shoes.

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## **Science and Health**

The science program is a blend of hands-on experiments and traditional science lessons or units. Science classes focus on learning process skills of science such as observation, classification, gathering data and hypothesizing.

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## **Social Studies**

The K-5 social studies program, *Social Studies Alive*, seeks to develop sensitive, informed individuals prepared for effective citizenship in our increasingly complex world. The program includes development of basic skills of research in the study of the inter-relationships of people with their environment that includes anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science and sociology. The program is implemented through use of teaching strategies that actively involve learners in the process of inquiry.

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## **Vocal Music**

A variety of music skills are introduced and reinforced through singing, playing instruments (designed especially for this age), listening, movement and music reading. Students will present a program during the school year to demonstrate students' musical growth. Through these programs, students learn important social skills, such as working together toward long-term goals.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost and Found is located around the corner from the main office to the right, before the stairway. Parents are encouraged to check Lost and Found often and to write student's name in clothing. Lost and Found items are donated at the end of every month so it is very important to check this area if you have a lost item. At the end of the month all the unclaimed items will be donated to charity.

Items left in Lost and Found at the end of the year will be sent to charity after the last day of school.

## **LUNCH AND PIN NUMBER INFORMATION**

Lunches are available for all children in our school. Lunch may be purchased from the school or brought in from home. Students may purchase lunch credits on a daily or weekly basis. Applications for free and reduced-price meals are available in the school office. Menus are available on the district web site: [www.minnetonkaschools.org/district/departments/nutrition/menus-and-prices](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/district/departments/nutrition/menus-and-prices).

### **2019-2020 Elementary Meal Prices**

Lunch - \$2.85

Milk - 50¢, Water - 50¢

Adult Lunch - \$3.95

As a part of the computerized lunch accounting system at school, students in grade 3-5 will enter a "PIN" number on a keypad. Students in kindergarten through grade 1 will have lanyard with their PIN number on it. Pin numbers for all students can be found in the Skyward system by accessing the Minnetonka web page and then accessing the My Minnetonka Sign On and then selecting FOR PARENTS. Returning students will keep the same PIN numbers as last year. Any lunch money left in your child's lunch account will be kept in their account for the following year.

Lunch may be purchased by sending a check in an envelope to school. Please write the check to: *Minnetonka Food and Nutrition Services*. Students may bring the checks to the cafeteria and deposit them in the lock box across from the cafeteria. Please be sure to put your child's name and PIN number on the memo line of your check.

All parents are welcome to come eat lunch with their child any day. If you wish to have a school prepared lunch, it is helpful to let us know ahead of time.

## **MEDICATION**

Prescription and over-the-counter medications are administered only with written authorization from the child's physician and parent. All medicine brought to school must be kept in the health office and it must be contained in a labeled bottle from the pharmacist. Parents are to pick up their child's prescriptions that are kept in the Health Office at the end of the school year.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Minnetonka Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap in admission, treatment or access to its programs and activities or in employment of programs and activities.

## **OFFENSIVE BEHAVIOR / RESPECT FOR OTHERS**

Students in the Minnetonka Schools have the right to learn and grow in an environment free from religious, racial or sexual harassment. A student or adult who believes he or she has been the victim of offensive behavior should immediately report the incident to the principal or teacher. They will then contact the appropriate staff member to begin the steps of investigation immediately.

Our school is committed to practices that are respectful of all persons regardless of gender, religion, ethnicity or economic status. If you feel you or your child has been the recipient of disrespect please contact the principal.

## **PARKING**

Parking is limited at our school. Please be observant of parking restrictions and time limits. It is especially critical that parents refrain from parking in drop off lanes or bus areas particularly at drop off and dismissal times. Parents who are parked in west side drop off lane will be asked to move their car.

## **PARTIES**

Students participate in classroom parties a couple of times per year. These parties are optional and are funded through parent donations. If you prefer that your child not participate due to religious or other reasons, please inform your child's teacher and an alternate activity will be arranged. All celebrations adhere to state and federal guidelines with regard to religion in the schools. We do so in order to respect all children and the diverse beliefs many of their families hold. Parties are determined by grade level teachers. In some cases, parties may differ by grade level.

## **PEACEFUL CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

All students will learn to solve conflicts through lessons taught in the classroom. We want all students to know strategies for resolving disputes and problems constructively. If your child has been involved in a fight or disagreement, all parties will have an opportunity to talk out the problem and develop alternate ways to solve the problem in the future. If your child is involved in a serious incident, he or she will have the opportunity to have a problem solving conference but will also need to fulfill any consequences from actions taken.

## **PEER MEDIATORS**

Some students will receive additional training in assisting others to solve conflicts. These students will be available to assist students on the playground in resolving minor conflicts.

## **PERMISSION SLIPS**

Students must bring a signed permission slip to participate in any activity that takes place off campus. It is very important that parents return the permission slip to school because students without a signed slip will be unable to attend the event.

## **PETS**

Please call ahead and make special arrangements with your child's teacher prior to bringing pets to school. Some students may have special allergies that limit exposure to animals. If your child has any allergies that might be affected by classroom pets, please inform the classroom teacher.

## PICTURES

Photographs are taken in the fall of the year. Individual photographs are available for purchase.

## PHONE CALLS

The school telephone number is (952) 401-5650. Telephones are located in all classrooms. In all cases your call will be transferred to voice mail unless it is an emergency to minimize classroom disruptions. If you must reach your child or the classroom teacher, please call the office directly and ask that a message be given to the teacher.

Students will be discouraged from calling home for items they have forgotten unless they have permission from the teacher and it is of extreme importance. Students may not use phones for extracurricular uses, only for educational purposes. Calls to staff and students during school should be kept to a minimum. The best time to reach staff is 7:30-7:55 am or after 2:45 pm until 3:30 pm each day.

## PLAYGROUND AND RECESS

Students have the opportunity to play outside on equipment before lunch and for a short break during the day in some grade levels. On most days, children will go outside. The guidelines for recess are:

Warmer than 0°	Outside
Between 0° and 10° below	Recess may be shortened
Colder than 10° below	Indoor Recess

Children will be expected to go outside on outside recess days. It is very important that your child be dressed appropriately for the weather. As soon as it snows, send your child to school with snow pants until snow melts completely. If students must stay inside for recess due to health issues, they must have a doctor note (**Rev. 12/9/16**). They will be supervised in the office. Students are allowed to stay inside only for health reasons.

## PTO

Excelsior Elementary has a parent teacher organization (PTO) that is actively involved in all aspects of our school program. The PTO meets regularly at designated times. All parents are welcome and encouraged to attend. There is no fee for membership.

### Excelsior Elementary Parent Teacher Organization

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*Who is the PTO?* If you are a parent or guardian of an Excelsior Elementary Student, you are members of the PTO and are invited to attend the meetings and vote on all matters.

*What is the PTO?* It is a volunteer organization of parents and guardians who want to assist our teachers and staff in making Excelsior the best school it can be! The PTO raise money for field trips, classrooms, teacher grants, staff appreciation, and much more. It also organizes many school events throughout the school year to help enrich the students' education experience and build communities within the school.



## **Mark Your Calendar**

2019-2020 Excelsior Elementary State of the School Meetings:

- November 15                      11:30-1:00 pm – everyone welcome
- April 7                                7:00-8:30 pm – everyone welcome

Everyone is welcome to our state of the school meetings which features information on all the happenings in our school, the district, and the PTO. All meetings are held in the Media Center.

Please contact the PTO President if you have any questions. More information can also be found on the PTO webpage, [www.minnetonkaschools.org/schools/elementary/excelsior/parents/pto](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/schools/elementary/excelsior/parents/pto).

## **REGISTRATION**

All registrations are taken at the District Service Center. In most cases, students will not start until the day after they are formally registered. This will enable the school to prepare the classroom for their welcome.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued twice a year, accessible online on Skyward. This report reflects the student's performance. Student achievement is graded by subject. Student progress is also reported in effort, work habits, social growth and behavior.

## **RETENTION**

If retention is considered for a child, this subject should be discussed with the principal and the teacher at spring conferences. This concern will be referred to our special education team to determine if the child may benefit from additional assessment or interventions. The final decision to retain a child should be made cooperatively between the parent, teacher and principal.

## **ROOM PARENTS**

Excelsior Elementary classrooms have volunteer Room Parent(s) assigned to assist the teacher with a variety of events and activities such as classroom parties throughout the school year. You can sign up during Back to School Open House or on Curriculum Nights. If you are interested in volunteering in other ways, please contact the PTO Volunteer Coordinator to indicate your interest.

## **SCHOOL BOARD**

The School Board transacts matters pertaining to the maintenance and operation of Minnetonka Public Schools. Members are elected to terms during the general election in November. Authority and responsibility is granted by the Minnesota Legislature and State Board of Education to:

- Develop school policy
- Employ a superintendent
- Provide materials and facilities for effective education
- Represent the community regarding school issues
- Provide equal education opportunities for every child

The School Board generally conducts regular business meetings the first Thursday of every month at 7 pm at the District Service Center in Minnetonka. Meetings are open to the public, unless specified as closed or executive session. For specific meeting dates, see our district web site [www.minnetonkaschools.org/district/leadership/board/meetings](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/district/leadership/board/meetings).

## **SNOW DAYS**

*See Closing of School on page 22.*

## **SCHOOL SPIRIT DAYS**

Students at Excelsior celebrate fun days throughout the year. Tonka Pride is celebrated the first Friday of the month. Students are encouraged to wear Tonka clothing or blue and white all Fridays.

## **SNACK CART**

All students are encouraged to have a daily healthy snack, either brought from home or from the Snack Cart program, which offers the convenience of a school-provided, healthy snack choices each day for students who participate in the program. Some Healthy Snack Cart selections include fresh fruits (such as bananas, oranges, apples, grapes, pears), dairy choices (yogurt, string cheese), or other choices (baby carrots, hard boiled eggs, sunflower seeds, pretzels, graham crackers). Payments are made during the Back to School Open House event. You can also purchase a snack cart pass anytime during the school year in the main office. Questions: contact the main office.

If the student is bringing snacks from home, please make sure that they are healthy and nut-free (peanuts or tree nuts) in consideration for other students who may have food allergy concerns. Classroom teachers will be able to provide more guidance regarding which specific food allergy is a concern for their classrooms.

## **STUDENT DIRECTORY**

Excelsior Elementary School uses MySchoolAnywhere ([www.myschoolanywhere.com](http://www.myschoolanywhere.com)), a secure and searchable electronic directory that can be accessed from your home computer or mobile device. Before every school year begins, a confirmation email will be sent out to each Excelsior family to update and confirm their contact information and add any additional details to be included in the student directory for the coming school year. It is very important to complete and confirm the information at that time because all previous information from last year will be deleted. While families have the option to opt out of being listed in the student directory, **the more families participate, the more complete the Excelsior Elementary Student Directory will be.** For any questions on MySchoolAnywhere and how to use the school directory, please go to: [msa-parents-guide.helpscoutdocs.com](http://msa-parents-guide.helpscoutdocs.com). To contact the Excelsior Elementary PTO Directory Committee with any questions or feedback regarding the content in the Directory, email [excdirectory@gmail.com](mailto:excdirectory@gmail.com).

## **STUDENT PLACEMENT AND CLASS REQUESTS**

The assignment of a child to a teacher is an important decision for the school and family. Many variables are considered. Parent input is considered as one factor in making a placement decision. Other factors include balance of gender, ability, social factors and class size.

Parents will receive a parent input form via email in the spring. It will be used as important information considered for student placement.

Classroom teachers record parent points of view on an intake form and use this written reference as input to the process. Staff will not make specific teacher recommendations at any time. If a parent has concerns or prefers not to have their child assigned to a specific teacher, the request must be made in writing to the Principal in April. The request will be honored when possible.

A welcome letter is sent to parents in August indicating the placement and teacher of each child.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

If at any time you wish to review your child's records, please call to make an appointment with the principal.

## **SUPPLIES**

A list of school supplies for each grade level is provided in June so families may take advantage of the summer sales. You can find hard copies in the wooden box in our front lobby. School supply lists can also be found online at the Excelsior School webpage, under School Office heading: [www.minnetonkaschools.org/uploaded/Documents/EX/EXC\\_Supply\\_Lists.pdf](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/uploaded/Documents/EX/EXC_Supply_Lists.pdf). Students are to bring their school supplies to their classrooms at the annual Back to School Open House. All students should also bring a daily healthy snack, tennis shoes for gym, and a school bag/backpack.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

Students at Excelsior Elementary with additional or special needs have the opportunity to receive support for learning. Services may be delivered in the classroom, in small groups within or outside of the classroom or in an individual tutoring session.

Special education staff members have been trained to provide services. To receive special services, students are assessed through an extensive testing process. All parts of the process including service are conducted with parent involvement.

Support services are available in speech and language, health, physical, vision, hearing, learning, social, emotional and behavioral needs.

If you think your child has special needs in one of these areas, please contact the classroom teacher.

## **TREATS**

Holiday treats provided by families to classes can only be purchased from a commercial bakery or store. No homemade treats can be consumed by students. *See Birthdays on page 12.*

## **VACATION**

Please contact the classroom teacher if your child will be gone for more than two days and the principal if your child will be gone for more than one week due to vacation during regularly scheduled school times. *See Attendance on page 3.*

In some cases, your child will be asked to complete alternate assignments in their absence. It is not possible to prepare all assignments that will be completed during the period of absence ahead of time but every effort will be made.

## **VALUABLES FROM HOME**

It is not advised that students bring items from home on a regular basis such as trading cards or other toys (such as Pokemon, Beanie Babies, Crazy Bones, etc). These items are distracting and, if

lost, can be very disappointing for students. Trading of objects, toys or cards is not allowed on the playground.

### **VISITS TO CLASSROOMS**

Parents and visitors are always welcome in our building; however, you should seek permission from the teacher if you wish to spend time in the classroom, unless you have prearranged to volunteer on a regular basis. Classroom volunteering opportunities generally do not begin until after October 1. Visits should be limited to short periods and for the purpose of volunteering. Parents are welcome to eat lunch with their children in the cafeteria any day. If you wish to speak to or visit a staff member we ask that you call ahead to schedule an appointment so as not to interrupt learning. You must always check in before going to the learning areas. For safety reasons, please do not go directly to the classroom area to collect your child for appointments.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteering can help you learn about your child's school in new ways, and help connect you with teachers and other parents. Many rewarding volunteer opportunities are available at our school, whether it is classroom-specific or school-wide through school events. Please contact the PTO Volunteer Coordinator to learn how you can help make our school year more successful and fun for the students!

To ensure the safety of the students, volunteers who chaperone students on fieldtrips and possibly other events/activities must go through a background check process. The classroom teachers will notify volunteers their need to do so. This process does not need to be done every year. For more details on the volunteer background check and the link to complete the process, please go to: [www.minnetonkaschools.org/schools/elementary/excelsior/parents/volunteer](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/schools/elementary/excelsior/parents/volunteer).

### **WALKING FROM SCHOOL**

It is strongly recommended that all students ride the bus, if possible. If parents desire to have a child walk to or from school, which is different from their usual going home routine (bus or car pickup), please send a written note each time. All walkers will exit the building from the George Street back exit. This is a much safer route for them to leave the building to walk home. If a note is not provided, your child will be sent home on regularly assigned transportation. In no case may a child walk across Highway 7.

### **WEAPONS**

Weapons or instruments that have the appearance of a weapon are strictly prohibited within school property. Weapons are objects or substances that can or have potential to do physical harm to others or self. These include but are not limited to guns, knives, brass knuckles, arrows, chains, sharp objects, explosives, fireworks or any object which modified or used incorrectly to hurt another becomes a weapon. Look-alike weapons such as toy guns or knives are also prohibited.

This prohibition extends to all school grounds and activities including field trips. Violations of this policy will result in a police report, confiscation of the object and disciplinary action in accordance with district policy.

### **WEATHER RELATED EARLY CLOSING**

Early dismissals for all Minnetonka schools are announced via our telephone notification Connect Ed and on WCCO 4 Channel/830 AM radio, KSTP-5 channel 5 and KARE-11 television stations.

Please also check the district web site ([www.minnetonkaschools.org](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org)) for information about closings.

The directive to close school comes from the superintendent when weather or other emergencies pose danger for students. In most cases, the decision for school to be closed will be made by noon. It is important for parents to make arrangements for their children in case of early dismissal from school. Please be sure to have an early dismissal plan on file at school, and discuss it with your child so he/she are aware of the plan.

## WEB PAGES

Excelsior Elementary maintains a web page that includes information about our learning program. Our web page can be found at: [www.minnetonkaschools.org/schools/elementary/excelsior](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/schools/elementary/excelsior).

Parents may access staff members via the staff directory at:  
[www.minnetonkaschools.org/schools/elementary/excelsior/about/staff-directory](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/schools/elementary/excelsior/about/staff-directory).

Be sure to read the information about the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) under Parents tab when you visit our school web site at:  
[www.minnetonkaschools.org/schools/elementary/excelsior/parents/pto](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/schools/elementary/excelsior/parents/pto).

A great link for useful information:  
[www.minnetonkaschools.org/schools/elementary/excelsior/parents/pto/resources](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org/schools/elementary/excelsior/parents/pto/resources)

The district web page can be found at: [www.minnetonkaschools.org](http://www.minnetonkaschools.org).