

***Welcome to Columbus Elementary!***  
***“Providing a foundation of skills to prepare students for life.”***

Dear Parents and Students,

Hello there! Welcome back to school. I am so excited to get the year started. The teachers have already been hard at work getting their classrooms ready for their new group of students. I hope everyone had a relaxing and fun summer vacation and is ready for our year to start.

Please take a few minutes to read through this handbook with your child. (There are small changes every year!) In it you will find information about school procedures, rules, grading information, and forms that will need filled out. Of course not every situation can be covered in a handbook, but I have tried to hit the high points. Our rules and procedures are for the purpose of helping us provide a quality education for your child while keeping all of the children in our school safe.

This is an exciting year for us. We are adding several new staff members to our team. I truly believe we have an outstanding staff at Columbus Elementary that cares about your child and their education. Staff members are active in our community and support our kids in many different ways! Often times you will see them watching students wrestle, playing football, soccer, basketball and baseball. At Columbus Elementary, our goal is to give your child the best possible foundation of educational knowledge! We cannot do that without you. Teachers are most successful when they have you as a partner. Please communicate early and often with your child’s teacher about any concerns you may have.

This time of year I am anxious for the students to get back in the building. It is so fun to watch them grow and change during the year. I do believe I have a great job and I love coming to work here! Thanks for sending your child to Columbus Elementary! Please know the “WELCOME” sign is always on my door. Thanks for your help and support! Here’s to a great school year!

Sincerely,

Marlene Deis  
Principal

***The Goals of Columbus Elementary School***

As our mission statement says, our number one goal is to provide students with a foundation of skills that will prepare them for life. We recognize that our students are individuals with their own unique learning styles and learning rates. We promise that during the 2016-2017 school year, we will work hard to create a learning environment which encourages risk taking and inspires a life-long love of learning. We will do everything in our power to provide an educational experience that will guide our students toward a

rewarding, happy, and prosperous future. We know we are not in this alone and can only be successful when we have parents and students as part of our team.

### **School Personnel**

#### **Board of Trustees:**

\*\*School board meetings are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at the HS Library.\*\*

Steffanie Moodry	Robert Smith	Debbie Crutcher
Jason Wells	Joe Morse	

#### **Administrative Staff:**

Jeff Bermes	Superintendent
Marlene Deis	Principal
Merridy Gauthier	District Clerk

#### **Columbus Elementary Special Services:**

Monica Pugh	Director	Kim Behrent	Guidance
Bill Nicholson	Psychologist	Sharron Bruesch	Music/Band
Maureen Culbertson	Title I	Stephanie Johnston	Library
Ali Morgan	Special Education		

#### **Elementary School Faculty:**

Jennifer Crago	Kindergarten	Gerri Barta	Grade 2
Pam Carlson	Kindergarten	Kelly Davis	Grade 3
Buffy Chamberlin	Kindergarten	Tara Ralph	Grade 3
Cassie Kouba	Grade 1	Pam Aumueller	Grade 3
Laurie Martin	Grade 1	Joni Meier	Grade 4
Jenny Miller	Grade 1	Ted Miller	Grade 4
Maureen Hemphill	Grade 2	Tom Kurtz	Grade 5
Denyse Vanek	Grade 2	Nicole Means	Grade 5

#### **Elementary School Personnel:**

Melissa Anderson	Secretary	Joe Kern	Computer Tech
Vickie Gibson	Computer Tech	Henry Conner	ComputerTech
Wendy Hould	Paraprofessional	Judy Ruprecht	Paraprofessional
Colleen Ryker	Paraprofessional	Carrie Kluthe	Paraprofessional
Heidi Hogstad	Paraprofessional	Janelle Holten	Paraprofessional

Leo Teske	Head Maintenance	Jim Morris	Maintenance
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John Wegner  
Bob Hogg

Custodian  
Custodian

**Daily Schedule:**

Students walking to school should not arrive at the school before 8:10 a.m. **The building will not be unlocked until 8:05 a.m.** We especially need your cooperation in regard to this matter, as **we do not provide teacher supervision on the playground until 8:05 a.m.**

School begins:           **8:15 a.m. Kindergarten – 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
                                  **8:10 a.m. 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>**

Recess:	Morning	Afternoon
Grade 4	9:45-10:00	Grade K           1:45 – 2:00
Grades 1 & 2	10:05-10:20	Grades 1 & 2       2:05 – 2:20
Grades K & 3	10:25 – 10:40	Grades 3 & 5       2:25 – 2:40

Noon Break (recess and lunch):

Grade K	12:00 – 12:45	Grade 3	11:25 – 12:10
Grade 1	11:15 – 12:00	Grade 4	11:35 – 12:20
Grade 2	11:15 – 12:00	Grade 5	12:00 – 12:45

School Dismissal:

Grades K-3	3:15
Grades 4-5	3:25

**\*\*Please Note: All students will be dismissed at 2:30 each Wednesday in order for teachers to attend meetings and training sessions. Please pick your child up promptly!\*\***

\*Supervision for students will be provided for a reasonable amount of time following dismissal each day. If you know that you will not be able to pick up your child upon dismissal, please communicate this with your child’s teacher or call Melissa in the main office.



### **Entrance Requirement:**

**Only children who live in the Columbus School attendance area may attend this school without approval of the School Board.**

Kindergarten students must be five years old or older on or before September 10 to be eligible. All students must present a birth certificate and proof of immunizations at registration. All immunizations must be complete before a child will be placed in a classroom. First graders must be six years old or older on or before September 10 according to Montana state law.

### **Immunization Requirements:**

Montana law requires that all children attending school to be immunized against diphtheria, pertussis, polio myelitis, tetanus, measles and rubella. This includes:

*DTaP-----at least 4 doses, one of which occurs after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday*

*Polio-----at least 3 doses, one of which occurs after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday*

*Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)-----2 doses, 1<sup>st</sup> dose on or after 1<sup>st</sup>*

*birthday and 2<sup>nd</sup> dose prior to*

*Kindergarten*

*Varicella-----2 doses before entering school*

**Proof of immunization must be provided upon initial entry or enrollment will be denied.**

### **Building/Grounds Security:**

**Visitors and Volunteers:** – For the protection of our students, **all persons entering the building from, for any reason, are required to be “buzzed” in by office personnel. Everyone must stop at the main office and sign in with Melissa or Mrs. Deis.** Visitors and volunteers will be given a special sticker that will let everyone know they have been “officially” checked in. We encourage you to visit Columbus Elementary and help out when you can. Items such as: lunches, money, instruments, books, assignments, etc., will be delivered to the students by office staff to minimize disruptions to the classroom.

**Student Visitors to School:** - Pupils who are enrolled in other schools may not visit classrooms, nor may they attend assemblies, parties or excursions without permission from the principal.

**Early Student Check Out:** All students who need to leave during the school day must have a parent or authorized person check them out at the office before they are released. **Students will only be released to parents and those listed on the emergency contact list.** Parents must notify the school for others to check out the student. All students will remain in class until they are checked out.

**Picking up your children after school** - For the safety of all students and faculty, we ask that you do not enter the building to pick up your child. **Please wait for them outside** the building at a prearranged, designated area. **All students exit through the main doors.**

**Bus Transportation Loading/Unloading** – We realize situations arise that may require a bus student to not ride the bus. **Please send a note to the classroom teacher letting them know when your child should not ride the bus.** If it is a last minute situation, please call the office. We have many young students that may get told what to do in the morning, but forget after a long day at school. **We will be putting children on the bus when we are not able to verify where they belong.**

We ask that students not be dropped off or picked up on the south side of the playground while buses are loading or unloading. It creates an unsafe environment when students run between the buses to get to a vehicle. **Vehicles that use this area will be ticketed.**

Thank you for your understanding, as we are all interested in the safety and welfare of our students and staff.

**Security Cameras:** - A security video/audio system is present throughout the school system and on all buses. It is considered to be a part of our overall security and safety system. The video/audio system is used to monitor activity in and around the school facilities. All information gathered from this system can be used as documentation for disciplinary and/or legal proceeding purposes. Tampering with the system will result in severe penalties up to and including expulsion from school.

**School Resource Officer:** - Columbus Public Schools employs a school resource officer. He is available to provide security, education, and assist in issues when requested by the Principal or other school personnel.

**Automatic Call System:** Columbus Schools have an automated call system. This system will send out calls in the event of an emergency to each family in the school. Please be sure to **keep us updated with your most current phone number and email address.**

**Building Conduct:** - Students are expected to act responsibly while in the building. Running, scuffling, profanity, obscenity, vulgarity, and excessive noise will not be permitted. Violations will result in the minimum of a loss of recess up to out of school suspension.

All students will remain outside the building during recesses unless they have special permission from the teacher to stay in their classroom to work.



### **Lunch and Milk Procedures:**

The Columbus School provides a hot lunch program for our students. In the lunchroom students are expected to practice the general rules of good manners. If students are incapable of using good manners, they will be asked to eat elsewhere. The students will walk to and from the cafeteria with teacher supervision. **Due to the increase of food allergies and special diets, students will not be allowed to share or trade lunches.**

Hot lunch accounts are set up and students may add to their account by bringing money to the classroom teacher. Parents may write 1 check and tell the office how to divide it between their children in the elementary. Hot lunches include one milk. Extra milks are available for purchase for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. If you do not want your child to have extra milk at all, please let us know and we will make a note of it. Cold lunch students may purchase milk in the lunchroom. **Because of our emphasis on health and nutrition, we do not allow soda pop with cold lunches.**

**Cost of Lunches:**

**Student lunch - \$2.00**

**All Guest lunches - \$3.25**

**Extra Milk - \$0.45**

Columbus Elementary is a closed campus. This means students will not be allowed to leave the school grounds during the lunch break unless you pick them up at school or they have a signed note to go home for lunch. Lunch away from school needs to be supervised by you or someone you designate. (For example: If your child will be eating lunch with another child and their parent, you need to send a note stating that they may leave with that person.)

**Snack Milk**

Snack milk will be available for Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2nd grades at a cost of \$0.45 per day. This is separate from the milk they get at lunch. This money will be deducted from the child's lunch account on days they wish to receive snack milk. Students who receive Free or Reduced lunches will be required to purchase snack milk if they desire to participate in the snack milk program.



**Health:**

If your child is ill, (ie: coming down with a cold, throwing up, or fevered) he/she is better off at home. The first stages of many diseases are dangerous for your child and others in the class. Sending them sends the virus to everyone. If a child's temperature is 100 or higher, they should not be in school. We will send home students that are running a fever or throwing up. Your child should be fever free for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

Children should be dressed according to weather conditions, as they will be expected to play outside during inclement weather, unless conditions are severe. It is helpful to mark your children's coats, boots, and snow gear with their names.

Columbus Elementary does not have a school nurse. Health services in Columbus schools are provided by a nurse from the county. The nurse serves more than one school and will not be available when minor injuries or illnesses occur. First aid is immediate and temporary and parents are responsible if further care is required. **It is very important that school records include current home phone numbers, parents' work numbers and phone numbers of a designated relative or neighbor.** Please be sure to keep these updated! Parents should advise the school of any allergies, chronic illnesses or serious physical or emotional problems of the student. Upon request, the county nurse is available to provide parents with information on medical and financial resources available in the community.

#### ***Vision and Hearing Screenings:***

The Stillwater/Sweetgrass Cooperative staff checks the visual acuity of all students (unless notified by parents) in Grades K, 1, 3, 5 each year. Students in other grades will be screened if they are new to our school or if they are referred by teachers or parents.

Hearing screening is conducted at Columbus Elementary and is mandated for students in grades K, 1, and 9 or 10. Students in other grades will also be screened if they are new to the school, on the annual hearing recheck list, or referred by the school or parent/guardian. The initial hearing screening consists of pure tones and may also include immittance screening, which measures the movement of the eardrum by putting positive and negative pressure into the ear canal. If your child is absent, unable to complete the initial screening, or does not pass the initial screening, they will be referred for a hearing rescreen. The Hearing Conservation Program audiologist will conduct the hearing rescreen and, in addition to the pure tone and immittance screening, may also conduct an otoacoustic emission screening, which is a measure of cochlear (inner ear) function that does not require the child to respond.

***Medication Procedures: All medications (prescription and over-the-counter) have to be in the original container and brought to the office. (No baggies allowed.) All medication will be given according to the label on the container unless specifically ordered to do differently by the doctor.***

Short Term medication: Students who are on short-term medication (such as antibiotics) or require an over-the-counter medication (such as Tylenol) must deposit it at the main office, in the original container. Parents should be advised that it is against the policy of this district for the school or staff to administer or dispense any medication (including aspirin) without parental permission. Please send a detailed note about how and when the medication is to be dispensed. Columbus Elementary **will not** provide pain relieving medication, this must come from home.

Continuing Daily medication: The school should be informed of students normally under medication for such things like diabetes, epilepsy, or ADHD. If continuing medication is required during school hours, special arrangements must be made with the school. **Parents must send the medicine in the original prescription container with detailed instructions including dosage, times, and possible side effects.** Medications will be kept locked up and a form with written consent, from the parent, must be completed and on file. **(Please see form at the end of the handbook.)**

Students with asthma are now allowed to carry their inhalers with them. If your child has asthma medication to use at school, you and your physician will need to fill out the asthma form in the back of the handbook.

### **School Absences and Tardies:**

**Absenteeism is a significant educational problem. Please make every effort to schedule vacations on school holidays or breaks.** Students miss much more than just the paperwork when they are gone. We are confident that with your help we can address this issue and make a positive difference for our students.

In the event of an absence, please call the school office. The 49<sup>th</sup> Montana legislature passed a law requiring schools to contact parents or guardians of absent students. If your child is absent, contact us at 322-5371 or 322-5372 before 9:00 a.m. We have a voice mailbox, so you can call at any time. When your child returns, we would appreciate knowing whether special consideration is needed. In most cases a child, who is too ill to go outside at recess time, is too ill to be at school.

Children that leave during the day for doctor or dentist appointments need written permission sent from home. If your child is absent from school for two (2) or more days, please contact your child's teacher to make arrangements for assignments missed.

Any student who willfully stays away from school with or without the knowledge of his/her parents, guardians, or the school administration will be considered truant. The student will receive a grade of zero in each class missed because of the truancy and will also be liable for any disciplinary action the school administration deems advisable. Our school resource officer is available to check on the welfare of these students.

**Tardiness:** Being on time for school is very important. Students who are habitually late for school will be assigned time to make up work. This may be done during recesses or after school. **Students who arrive late, regardless of the reason, cause a disruption to everyone's' learning time.**

### **Retention for Excessive Absences:**

According to school policy, **students in grades K-8 will be in jeopardy of being retained in the current grade level when lack of attendance exceeds 15% (13 and ½ days per semester).** Successful completion of a summer school session for a K-8 student with excessive absences may be required in order to progress to the next grade level. The school district is under no obligation to provide this service to students.



### **Student Dress Code:**

The following regulations are to be observed by Columbus Elementary students during school hours or at activities sponsored by the school, unless otherwise designated. These regulations are to be observed and are made in an effort to make Columbus Elementary a better school for students and community. **Violation of these guidelines will result in the student being detained in the office until suitable clothing is obtained.** All staff members will enforce the following rules.

- 1) All attire shall be neat, clean and not in shreds. Low cut collars and armholes are not acceptable dress. Midriff exposing tops and spaghetti strap tops are not allowed.

- 2) Clothing advertising alcoholic beverages, drugs, tobacco or containing obscene or immoral slogans will not be acceptable.
- 3) Hats or bandanas will not be worn during school hours.
- 4) Shoes are mandatory. No “wheely” shoes may be worn at school.
- 5) Shorts may be worn year round, but remember that all children will be expected to go outside at recess time. Short shorts and biker shorts are not allowed. In general, shorts and skirts must be at least mid-thigh in length.
- 6) Hair shall be kept clean and well groomed.

\*\*The administration reserves the right to determine if clothing not addressed by these guidelines is disruptive to the educational process or offensive in nature.



### **Grading and Student Progress:**

The fundamental purpose of any method of evaluating and reporting student performance is to establish and maintain a flow of communication among the school and the home in the interest of providing feedback and guidance. The school, the student and the home share this responsibility, and each has a role in helping the student achieve to the highest possible degree.

The reporting of student progress in the form of a grade should focus primarily on academic achievement, yet should also reflect student effort and individual rates of learning.

**Parent/Teacher Conferences** – Parent/Teacher conferencing has a direct, positive impact on student achievement. Conferences are scheduled for all students after the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of school. Teachers may schedule other conferences with you, or you may schedule conferences with them throughout the year. **We ask that parents in divided homes please plan on attending the same conference, if possible. We want to talk to you about your child and feel it is very important for both parties to hear the same information at the same time.**

**Recording of grades** – There will be regular entries made in the teachers’ grade book for each subject. Teachers of students in grades 4-5 are required to enter 2 scores/grades per subject each week. Parents can access their student’s grades through the Parent Portal on Infinite Campus at any time. If you do not see new grades entered please contact the teacher or Mrs. Deis.

**Grades K-3** will track progress on grade level bench marks. The following grading scale will be used.

- 1 – Novice (no understanding of material and concepts)
- 2 – Nearing Proficiency (beginning to grasp new material and concepts)
- 3 – Proficient (basic mastery of material and concepts)

**Grades 4-5** will use the grading scale listed below and the benchmark scale from above.

98-100 A+	88-89 B+	78-79 C+	68-69 D+	Below 60 F
93-97 A	83-87 B	73-77 C	63-67 D	
90-92 A-	80-82 B-	70-72 C-	60-62 D-	

**Report Cards/Midterms:**

A report of your child's achievement will be sent home each nine weeks. A mid-term progress report will also be sent home half way through each quarter in order for you to be better informed about your child's progress. We will try to make this report as informative as possible. If you have any questions during the nine-week grading period, please contact the teacher. We encourage you to contact the school at the first sign your child is achieving below his/her level. Grades for students in grades 4-5 can be checked at any time by logging into Infinite Campus. Please contact the school if you need help.

### Homework:



Educational research states that student achievement rises significantly when teachers regularly assign homework and students conscientiously complete it. Homework is an important part of student learning, and may be assigned regularly by your child's teacher. Homework may consist of reading at home, completion of school assignments, and the review/reinforcement or practice of skills your child can complete independently. Time guidelines for homework are approximately ten minutes per grade level:

- K-1 – 10 minutes
- 2<sup>nd</sup> - 20 minutes
- 3<sup>rd</sup> - 30 minutes
- 4<sup>th</sup> - 40 minutes
- 5<sup>th</sup> - 50 minutes

Please remember these are approximate times and occasionally your child may have to spend a little more time on a project. If students are exceeding the time guidelines regularly, please contact your child's teacher.

Students in grades 3-5 will use planners to record and keep track of daily homework. Please check these daily for assignment information. Students will have consequences for homework not being completed and turned in on time.

### **Homework tips for parents:**

At CES, homework is usually made up of assignments that were not finished during class. When your students works at home make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place to do the homework. Be sure it is stocked with all of the supplies they may need.

**Be a motivator:** Homework provides a great opportunity for you to tell your child how important school is. Be positive about homework. The attitude you express about homework will be the attitude your child acquires.

**Be a role model:** When your child does homework, don't sit and watch TV. If your child is reading, you read too. If your child is doing math, balance your checkbook. Help your child see that the skills he or she is practicing are related to things you do as an adult.

**Be a monitor:** Watch your child for signs of failure and frustration. If your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers. If frustration sets in, suggest a short break. If frustration continues, contact your child's teacher.

**Be a mentor:** When the teacher asks you to play a role in homework, do it. If homework is meant to be done alone, stay away. Homework is a great way for kids to develop independent life-long learning skills. Parental over-involvement can have negative effects on student learning. (\*Taken from The Battle Over Homework by Harris Cooper)

**Incomplete, Missing, or Failing Work -** It is very important that we stay on top of incomplete and failing assignments in order to track whether the skills to successfully complete the assignment were present or just not used. Students that do not turn in their homework or have work that is failing will have to complete the work or redo the assignment during the teacher's free time. This may be after school, before school, or during recess. **Multiple missing or failing assignments will have an impact on quarter grades.** If you have questions, please contact any of the teachers.

**Make-up Work** – When a student has an excused absence from school, they will be given two days for every day absent to make up the work. Students who do not make up the work within this time frame will be kept in until the assignment is completed in a satisfactory manner. Late work will be penalized.

Whenever an advanced absence is planned, the school will accommodate the students with as much advanced homework as possible upon proper notification (several days prior to the absence).

**Individuality of the teacher** – The following items will be left to the individual teacher to be subject to their personal discretion.

- 1) Study time given during the school day;
- 2) Percent of the total grade assigned to daily work, quizzes and tests.
- 3) Reteaching opportunities on substandard work.

**Retention:**

Any student achieving below his/her grade level may be considered for retention. Any such cases will be communicated to the parent/guardian at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> semester, in an effort to correct the deficiencies. Communication will continue between parent and teacher in the form of phone or personal conferences, midterm reports, and quarterly report cards. Documentation of this communication will be made available. The school will notify parents of the final decision after the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter mid-term progress report. Parents who do not agree with the retention are invited to attend the June school board meeting to express their concerns.

**Requests for Classroom Placement for the next school year:**

Although requesting classrooms for the following year is regarded as administrative policy, we do feel that parent input is important. At Columbus Elementary, we will use the following procedure when making placement decisions.

1. The building principal will place students in classrooms in the spring of the school year.
2. The building principal will meet with the students' current classroom teachers as well as specialists for their input as to the best placement for each child.

3. Parent requests may be honored if:
  - A. The building principal receives a written request with valid reasons for the placement no later than May 1.
  - B. Change in the student's placement will not disrupt the chemistry of a classroom.

**\*\*\*Changes in classroom placement during the school year will not be allowed.**



**Discipline:**

**General Rules to follow at Columbus Elementary School:**

Classroom and playground discipline is primarily the duty of the classroom teacher and elementary staff. More serious discipline problems are handled by the office. Students should fully understand that any school employee in the building has the authority to correct misconduct at any time.

All students are expected to follow the guidelines listed below. Failure of a student to comply with these constitutes an infringement upon the rights of other students. An office referral will be made whenever necessary.

1. Respect and work cooperatively with students and staff.
2. No fighting or other abusive behavior directed toward any student, or staff member.
3. Respond positively and promptly to direction by staff members.
4. Be punctual and regular in school attendance.
5. No throwing objects with the potential of causing harm (snowballs, ice blocks, rocks, backpacks, etc.).
6. No swearing or vulgar language.
7. No possession or use of explosives, dangerous chemicals, weapons, or anything that resembles the previously mentioned items on school property or at a school function.
8. Students will be held responsible for any theft, misuse, or damage of personal and school property.
9. No unauthorized entry into or misuse or damage of school property.
10. Schools are a tobacco free environment. No tobacco or e-cigarettes of any kind are allowed on campus.
11. Possession, use, and/or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol on school premises, or as part of any school-sponsored activity are strictly prohibited.
12. Avoid disruption, on or off school property, of the educational process or other school functions.

**Disciplinary Action:** - Disciplinary action may consist of:

- 1) DETENTION – a period of time the student is assigned to stay after school or at recess for any infraction of unacceptable behavior. Students will make up detention time within one day of assignment of the time. Failure to do so may result in in-school suspension.
- 2) IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION – a period of time, ranging from one-half (1/2) day to three (3) days, during which the student is assigned to isolation.
- 3) OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION – (may be initiated instead of detention or in-school suspension, if warranted) – a period of time ranging from one (1) day to ten (10) days during which the student is denied admission to the school or its activities. Any work missed during out-of-school suspension cannot be made up. Teachers will assign zeros (0) to any missed work.
- 4) EXPULSION – the permanent removal of a student from the school system. Expulsion proceedings can be started only by the Board of Trustees.

In the event a student is suspected of an infraction that could ultimately result in expulsion from school, the student and his/her parents will be notified in writing of the infraction(s) of which the student is suspected. If the student's parents want a hearing on the matter, they must request, in writing, a hearing with the school principal within five (5) days after notification of the infraction(s). The Principal will schedule the hearing and will inform the student's parents of the time and place of the hearing. He/she will inform the student and his parents of their right to have counsel of their choosing (at parents' expense) and to confront and cross-examine any witness against the student. If the student and parents are dissatisfied with the decisions at the Principal's hearing, they may appeal the decision(s), using the same procedure, to the Superintendent of Schools, and hence, the Columbus School Board of Trustees.

Students or parents have the right to appeal decisions beyond school authority (i.e., County Superintendent of Schools, State Office of Public Instruction, or District Court, whichever applies).



### **Miscellaneous Information:**

**Emergency Evacuation Site** - In the event of a tragedy, emergency or other major incident that would require us to evacuate the school for any length of time, the children and staff would go to the Middle School gymnasium. Parents will need to go there and wait for school personnel to release their child. This is **VERY** important as we need to account for every single child in the event of an emergency. Please do not just grab your child and go. The secondary evacuation site for Columbus Elementary will be the gym at the Evangelical Church.

#### **You can help us by:**

**Always filling out/update the Student Information Forms** that are sent home from school at the beginning of the year. The information on these forms will be used in emergencies. (Please note that only those people listed on the forms will be allowed to pick up your child.)

**Always inform the school of any phone number changes** as the numbers on the forms will be the numbers called in an emergency. It is especially helpful to identify which phone number you want called first.

**Adverse Weather Conditions:** - There are times when the weather does not permit the children to stay outside. **Our recesses are only 15 minutes long. Often times by the time a child gets bundled up, they will have less than 10 minutes of outside time.** With the vast differences we have affecting each child; we will certainly not have any absolutes. **However, at CES we will go by the following general rule of thumb:**

**Above 10 degrees – recess with no restrictions**

**0 – 10 degrees – recess with possible restrictions (depending on conditions) A restriction might be shortened recess.**

**Below 0 degrees – inside recess**

**Wind chill will be taken into consideration when determining whether students will go out to recess. All duty teachers may bring students in at any time if the weather conditions become severe.**

**Severe Weather = School Closing:** - In case of severe weather – snow, low temperatures, ice, etc., the official announcement for school closing may be heard over radio station KCTR, FM 102.9, in Billings and FM 99, The Mountain, in Red Lodge beginning at 6:00 a.m. We will also use our automated school messaging service to contact households regarding closures or bus delays. We will attempt to have school for those who can make it.

**Library Rules:** The library is a place to gain information, do research, do recreational reading and check out materials. Because the library is very close to many classrooms, students are expected to behave respectfully while in the library. Noise must be kept to a minimum. The school librarian will be there to assist both students and teachers. A circulation system will track books that have been checked out. An overdue list will be distributed to classroom teachers periodically. Regular check-out of books will be for a two week period. Books can be renewed. Lost or damaged books will be replaced or paid for at current market price. Report cards will be held at the end of the year until all books have been returned or paid for. Refunds will be made for books that have been paid for and then found at a later date.

**Telephone Usage:** - Students will not be allowed to use the telephone unless their homeroom teacher or school personnel give permission. Permission will be given only when necessary; such as a child forgetting his/her lunch, missing the bus, or illness. **Students will not be allowed to make play arrangements after school with their friends.** These types of arrangements should be made at home in order to keep our phone lines open for school business.

Students will be called to the phone only in extreme emergencies. Routine messages will be delivered to the student by the office.

### **Cell phones and Other Personal Media Devices:**

At Columbus Elementary we discourage cell phones and other personal media devices on the school campus. This includes the playground and school buses. **If a student must bring a cell phone or other personal media device to school, it is to be kept off and in his/her locker for the school day.** Exceptions can be made in the event of an unusual circumstance as long as the office and classroom teacher have been contacted by the student's parent. E-readers will be allowed as long as the teacher is made aware of the intent to use them. Anyone who uses an E-reader must follow the technology policy already in place at the school.

1<sup>st</sup> offence: Phone or media device will be kept in the office until the end of the day.

2<sup>nd</sup> offence: Phone or media device will be kept in the office for 1 day and parent notified.

3<sup>rd</sup> offence: Phone or media device will be kept with Mrs. Deis until parents are able to pick it up.

### **Candy, Gum and Pop:**

As a rule, gum, candy, pop, and sunflower seeds are prohibited. Exceptions to this rule may occur under special circumstances when allowed by the classroom teacher. Please do not send your child to school chewing gum. It ends up everywhere but in your child's mouth!

### **School Volunteers:**

We welcome classroom volunteers into our school with open arms. Any amount of time (daily or weekly) that you can give to us is greatly appreciated. If you would like to be a regular helper in our school, please contact the office or the classroom teacher. The legislature has made it a requirement that all volunteers must be fingerprinted. This can be done locally. Fingerprints are then submitted to the district clerk. Please see the form in the back of this handbook if you are interested in being a regular volunteer. Volunteers are asked to not bring their younger children with them. This creates a distraction for both you and the child or children you may be working with. It also can create issues for the teacher because they may have to change what they were going to ask you to do for them.

### **Field Trips and School Related Off Campus Activities:**

When school related off campus activities are scheduled, you will be sent a form informing you of the activity, its purpose, a description of the supervision, how the children are to be transported, requirements for the children, times and dates, etc.

The students are expected to do exactly what she/he is instructed to do by the supervisors, to follow all school rules and regulations and any additional rules pertaining to this activity. You will also be able to insert special instructions or information. By signing the document, you are acknowledging that you are aware of the off campus activity. (Please see form at the end of the handbook.)

**Student Teachers and Interns:**

Columbus Elementary works with the local universities to help train future teachers. Students in our classes may be observed or taught by these individuals while under the supervision of the regular staff. All student teachers will be approved by the Superintendent before being allowed to begin their work.

**Pets in School:** - Advance approval must be given by the classroom teacher or principal before bringing animals to school for show and tell.

**Lost and Found:** - Unclaimed clothing and other articles are kept in the Lost and Found Box. All unclaimed articles are given to Project Hope or Good Will at the end of the school year. Labeling coats and other items is a great way to help us keep track of who belongs to what.

**Students are asked not to bring valuable items to school.** We will not accept responsibility for any lost or stolen items.

**Fire/Safety Drills:** - It is State Law that we have periodic fire/safety drills. These will be scheduled throughout the year. The drills are generally announced the first time and then are randomly scheduled after that. If your child has special considerations, which should be noted, please contact the Principal's office.

**Internet Policy:**

Students will be provided with a copy of the district's internet use policy when they start school. Parents/guardians and students must return the final page (complete with signatures) before the student will be allowed access. Failure to comply with the use policy will result in suspension of the student's access to the internet for the remainder of the school year.



## COLUMBUS ELEMENTARY PLAYGROUND RULES:



### General Rules:

- Do what the duty teacher tells you to do quickly and without comment.
- No unnecessary body contact (pushing, shoving, pulling clothes) or tackling.
- No throwing rocks, snowballs, wood chips, or objects other than balls.
- Line up immediately and quietly at the bell. Enter the building quietly.
- **Do not bring personal items**, other than balls or jump ropes, from home to play with. **This includes card collections, truck collections, and all electronic equipment except e-readers.**
- No fighting, not even play fighting.
- No leaving the playground.
- Please play away from the building entrances and classroom windows.
- No swearing or obscene gestures.
- Do not enter the building except for an emergency or with permission.
- No spitting, gum chewing, suckers or other candy on the playground.

### Swing Rules:

- Sit in swings and swing in a regular way. (No stomach swinging or jumping out )
- Only 1 person per swing.
- No twisting, hand holding, feet joining, or flipping in swings.
- No running under swings.

### Big Toy and New Toy Rules:

- No climbing on the outside of the toy. (except on the rock wall)
- No playing tag or running games on the toy.
- No climbing on top of the monkey bars.

### Slide Rules:

- No running or climbing up the slides.
- Sit on your bottom when sliding.
- Go down one person at a time.
- No flipping on the bar before going down.

### Winter Extras

- Snow pants and snow boots must be worn to play on the unplowed areas of the playground; otherwise you must play on the basketball court area that has been cleared.
- No sliding on the ice.
- Brush off snow before entering the building.

### **The School and the Law:**

All school buildings and campuses are tobacco free. No use of tobacco (including E-cigarettes) will be permitted in or on school facilities, vehicles, property, or grounds.

This school will not tolerate the use of prohibited drugs by any of the students. Any student apprehended using or in possession of prohibited drugs will be suspended and the police notified. Any students who use or possess any tobacco product (including E-cigarettes) on the school grounds will be given a two (2) day in-school suspension.

No student, staff member, or member of the public shall unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, or use on school property any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, or any other controlled substance or alcohol, as defined by regulation at 21 CFR 1300.11 through 1300.15.

“Property” includes any school building or any school premise; any school-owned vehicle, or any other school-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities; off school property during any school-sponsored or school approved activity, event or function, such as a field trip or athletic event, where students are under the jurisdiction of the school district.

### **COLUMBUS SCHOOLS STUDENT HEALTH POLICY ON CHEMICAL USE, ABUSE, AND DEPENDENCY**

District #6 recognizes that chemical dependency is a treatable health problem. Health problems of youth are primarily the responsibility of the home. Community and schools share in that responsibility because chemical health problems often interfere with behavior, learning, and the fullest possible development of each student.

District #6, wishing to intervene early, will have designated personnel contact students manifesting signs of misuse and make an effort to both educate and aid them.

District #6 recognizes that chemical dependency is a family problem and offers services to students from families where there is a member who is or is believed to be chemically dependent. Services may include individual counseling for the student, in-school support group activities, assistance in locating an Alateen for group support and assistance for the family in dealing with a chemical dependency problem.

The following are courses of action for cases involving students who have been identified as possessing, selling and using chemicals:

1. Student may be removed from school until a satisfactory course of action is established by the building administrator.

2. Parents or legal guardians shall be contacted unless such information would be detrimental to the student's welfare.
3. School administrators should consult with the school's chemical dependency personnel to determine the appropriate action to be taken. The following is a list of possible actions that may be recommended: (a) the involvement of law enforcement officials; (b) whether home-bound courses be set up for the chemical dependent student; (c) the involvement of counselors; (d) the course of treatment.
4. Additional appropriate actions may be taken according to provisions within the District #6 Student Discipline Policy.
5. Any student engaging in drug traffic, "pushing" or "peddling" will be expelled.

**DISCIPLINE:**

Code of Conduct: Drugs, Alcoholic Beverages of Intoxicants

NOTE: In lieu of invoking any of the disciplinary procedures listed in this section, the principal may extend the offer of participation in an approved substance abuse program. Failure to comply with the requirements of the program would cause the appropriate disciplinary procedures of this code to be enforced. Any expense incurred in attending a substance abuse program will not be the responsibility of School District #6.

**Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination:**

Columbus Public Schools is committed to equality of employment opportunity. The District shall provide equal employment opportunity and treatment for all applicants and staff in recruitment, hiring, compensation, retention, assignment, transfer, promotion and training.

Such equal employment opportunity shall be provided without discrimination with respect to race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, marital status, veteran status, religion or other protected class, unless based upon reasonable grounds of valid bona fide occupational qualifications (BFOQ's) as provided by law.

No qualified disabled person shall, solely by reason of a disability, be subjected to discrimination or limitations, unless bona fide occupational qualifications exist. The District may make reasonable accommodation to the known limitations of an otherwise qualified disabled applicant or employee. While the District will not make pre-employment inquiry as to whether an applicant has a disability, nor as to the nature and severity of any such disability, it may inquire into an applicant's ability to perform essential job-related functions.

All inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination should be directed to the Superintendent of Schools, 433 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Columbus, MT 59019. Complaints will be processed in accordance with the District procedures established and maintained by the Superintendent.

Persons wishing to file complaints with outside regulatory agencies may reach them at the following address: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, Federal Building, 1224 Speer Blvd., Suite 310, Denver, CO 80204.

In compliance with federal regulations, the District will notify students, parents, staff and community members of this policy and the designated compliance officer (Superintendent or designees).

### Commitment to Civil Rights

Columbus Public schools affirms that all students, staff, parents, legal guardians, volunteers, visitors and members of the public shall have an equal opportunity to participate in, and accrue the benefits of all educational programs or activities provided by the District.

The District has appointed a coordinator to assist any employee, student, parent, or legal guardian with a Title VII/Title IX /Section 504/Title II ADA concern. Inquiries concerning the Title VII/Title IX/Section 504/Title II ADA may be referred to Superintendent of Columbus Public Schools, 433 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Columbus, MT 59019, or may be made by calling 322-5373.

Procedures established and maintained by the Superintendent address questions, concerns, and the resolution of conflicts relating to Title VII, Title IX/Section 504/Title II ADA that may be raised by a student, staff, parent, legal guardian, volunteer, visitor or member of the public in Columbus Public Schools.

### **Resolution of Complaints/Grievances Regarding Harassment or Discrimination:**

Columbus Public Schools recognizes the importance of establishing reasonable and effective means for resolving difficulties, which may arise among individuals, to reduce potential areas of grievances and to establish and maintain recognized channels of communication between individuals.

The District intends to expedite the process for all concerned parties. Individuals are urged to use the prescribed grievance procedures (negotiated in some instances) whenever they feel that an action has aggrieved them. The procedures are established to secure a proper and equitable solution to a complaint at the lowest possible supervisory level and to facilitate an orderly procedure within which solutions may be pursued.

A grievance must be a claim by an individual based upon an alleged violation, misinterpretation or a misapplication of existing language within an appropriate collective bargaining agreement or within existing language of district policies and procedures, including any alleged act of discrimination based on a race, color, creed, physical or mental disability, sex, marital status, political beliefs, religion, parental status, age, or national origin. The grievance must cite the specific violation and a remedy must be identified that is suitable.

All documents, communications and records dealing with the processing of a grievance regarding harassment or discrimination shall be maintained in a separate file and shall not be kept in the permanent records of the aggrieved.

### **Sexual Harassment Prevention:**

The Board of Trustees of the Columbus Public Schools is committed to provide a positive and productive environment free from sexual harassment. The Columbus Public Schools will not tolerate sexual harassment in any form.

“Sexual Harassment” means: a) sex discrimination within the meaning of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Montana Human Rights Act; and b) unwelcome sexual advances, requests for favors and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonable interfering with an individual’s work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. An intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment includes unwelcome sexually-oriented jokes, innuendoes, obscenities, pictures or any action with a sexual connotation that makes an employee feel uncomfortable in the workplace; or any aggressive, harassing behavior in the workplace or that affects the workplace, whether or not sexual in connotation, is directed toward an employee based on the employee’s sex.

Reporting Procedure: Students who believe they are being subjected to sexual harassment by anyone connected with their work should report the matter promptly to their immediate supervisor or to the first level supervisor who is not involved in the alleged harassment; or to the Columbus Public Schools’ Superintendent.

No student, staff, group or organization will suffer a reprisal or reduction in status as a result of having presented a grievance for review or having represented someone in a grievance.

Violations of this policy: Substantiated violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

### **Student Records-Procedure:**

The District shall annually afford parents and students over 18 (eligible students) certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are the right to:

1. Inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the District's receiving a written request from the parent/eligible student for record access. The written request identifying the specific records they wish to inspect should be submitted to the building principal. The principal will make arrangements for access and the parent/eligible student will be notified of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. Seek amendment of the student's educational records that the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights by submitting a written request to the building principal of the specific information challenged. If the District decides not to amend the record as requested, the District will notify the parent/eligible student of that decision, advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment and provide additional information on the hearing procedures.
3. Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records except when disclosure is permitted without consent to include:

- \*school officials or representatives with legitimate educational interest in the record, including financial aid for which the student has applied or received;

- \*authorized representatives for the enforcement of compliance with federal, state or local legal requirements;

- \*directory information including the student's name, address, telephone (unless unlisted has been specified), date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance and awards received. The parent(s) or eligible student may specify, in writing to the principal, refusal to disclose any or all types of directory information when that notice has been received prior to the publication or release of information.

- \*that the District forwards the education records to other schools that have requested the records and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.

- \*organizations conducting studies for the District;

\*the parent or eligible student;

\*emergency situations when information is necessary to protect students.

4. This District will maintain a permanent record of a student's name, address, and phone number, his or her grades, attendance record, classes attended, grade level completed, the year completed, and immunizations without time limitation.
5. File a complaint concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) with the Department of Education at 400 Maryland Avenue S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

Be notified that rights are transferred from the parents to the eligible student at the age of 18.