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ELM PLACE MIDDLE SCHOOL

2011 – 2012

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Elm Place Middle School

Student Handbook

2010 – 2011

Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to inform students and parents of the procedures and responsibilities required by the student body at Elm Place Middle School. Our student handbook, however, is only a summary. District 112 is governed by Board of Education Policies, which are available to the public at the administrative offices and online. While we wish to maintain consistency, any provisions in the handbook may change without notice during the year if there is sufficient reason to do so.

District 112 Mission Statement ***Why do we exist?***

The mission of the North Shore School District, a community partnership committed to a world-class education, is to nurture every child to become an inspired learner, a well-rounded individual and contributing member of a global community by striving for excellence within an environment that fosters innovation, respect, engagement and intellectual inquiry.

Elm Place Vision Statement ***What must our school become to accomplish our purpose?***

We strive to create an environment of optimal learning, where students are challenged to reach their potential academically, creatively, and in the development of their character.

Elm Place Value Statements ***What actions must we take to achieve our vision?***

- We will partner with our community of students, parents, and colleagues to achieve optimal learning for all students.
- We will maintain a culture of rigor and inquiry for all students.
- We will promote an environment where students seek to make a positive difference in the lives of others.
- We will uphold a climate that nurtures students in meaningful tasks and accountability with the use of constantly developing technology.
- We will respect the variety of learning styles and diverse backgrounds of our students.

Middle School Bell Schedule

First Bell 7:50 a.m. Students dismissed to lockers to prepare for the day

Non-Block Days

(Typically Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays)

Advisory	7:55 - 8:04
Period 1	8:08 - 8:48
Period 2	8:52 - 9:32
Period 3	9:36 - 10:16
Period 4	10:20 - 11:00
Period 5	11:04 - 11:44
Period 6	11:48 - 12:28
Period 7	12:32 - 1:12
Period 8	1:16 - 1:56
Period 9	2:00 - 2:40

Block Days

(Typically Wednesdays and Thursdays)

Period 1	7:55 - 8:34
Period 2	8:34 - 9:13
Period 3	9:17 - 9:56
Period 4	9:56 - 10:35
Period 5	10:39 - 11:18
Period 6	11:22 - 12:01
Period 7	12:05 - 12:44
EXB	12:48 - 1:18 (30 min.)
Period 8	1:22 - 2:01
Period 9	2:01 - 2:40

Busses depart Elm Place at 2:50 daily

Advisory

District 112 middle school students are assigned an advisory teacher with whom to meet on a regular basis from sixth through eighth grade. The first nine minutes of our non-block days are reserved for students to meet with this adult advocate and a group of grade level peers. Several times each year, students participate in service learning or character building projects within an extended advisory period. This model provides ongoing advocacy and support for students throughout their middle school experience.

After School

Once school ends at 2:40 p.m., students are asked to leave the building unless they are involved in an after school club or sport, are attending Homework Club in the library, or are meeting with a teacher. Homework Club is an open space available for students after school to play board games, do their homework, or use the computer lab for academic assignments only.

Elm Place provides a 4:00 p.m. late bus to any student who stays after school for school-sponsored activities. Students must have a daily bus pass signed and dated by their club sponsor or supervisor in order to ride this bus. On those special days where school ends before 2:40, there is no late bus.

Elm Place supports many extracurricular opportunities for students. The following list represents a typical offering, although certain years may have more or less depending on student interest.

Art Club	Intramurals	Stock Market Club
Basketball	Jazz Band	Student Council
Book Match	Reach for Change	Wood Rats
Chess Club	School Newspaper	Volleyball
Cross Country	Soccer	Yearbook Club
Estudiante to Student	Spring Musical	
Homework Club	Spirit Squad	

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to maintain consistent daily attendance from 7:55 a.m. to 2:40 p.m. during our school year. For information on when school will be held, please visit the Elm Place calendar on our website: <http://www.nssd112.org/elmplice/calendar.html>

Students absent without valid cause for 10% or more of the previous 180 regular attendance days are considered chronically truant (Board Policy 7:70). We believe that removing students from school for non-emergency, non-illness related activities runs contrary to the high value placed on education and may create obstacles to ideal student learning. We appreciate parental support in scheduling family vacations and other non-emergency events during the vacation days designated in our school calendar. *Please note the attendance expectations under Physical Education Guidelines (pg. 9) and our Tardy Policy (beginning on pg. 9).*

Before School Activities

We ask that students arrive after 7:20 a.m. unless previous arrangements have already been made. After this time, students are directed to meet in the gymnasium until school begins, or if parents in the North Parking Lot drop them off, they may wait inside near the auditorium. Students may always visit the band and orchestra rooms to drop off instruments.

Students may also visit the AM Homework Club in the library without any previous arrangements any day of the week from 7:20 to 7:50 a.m. If students are interested in meeting with particular staff members, they will only be granted entry to see them if they have a written pass from the staff member OR students' parents.

Behavioral Expectations

Our goal at Elm Place is to provide a safe, orderly, and respectful learning environment in which all of our students may achieve success and feel comfortable. We ask our students to always demonstrate good judgment and courtesy when using our hallways, bathrooms, classrooms, and facilities. Specific basic expectations for appropriate student behavior are as follows:

PREPAREDNESS

Students should report to school and class on time and should have all necessary materials required for the particular class or activity they are attending.

RESPECT, COURTESY, AND GOOD MANNERS

Students should demonstrate respect, courtesy, and good manners at all times to peers, staff members, and others. As continual representatives of the Elm Place community, we wish to showcase the very best of our students at all times. The use of profanity or abusive language toward others, physical contact for pain or pleasure, and any form of harassment is not allowed. This includes but is not limited to the following:

Verbal harassment – this includes bullying, name-calling, put downs, teasing, or making racial, ethnic, and/or religious slurs, etc.

Physical harassment – this includes play fighting, real fighting, pushing, touching or grabbing, tripping, poking, bullying, etc.

Sexual harassment – this includes touching or grabbing; comments made about another's body; sexual remarks or suggestions; conversations that are too personal; obscene gestures, pornographic pictures, drawings or stories; dirty jokes; offensive displays of sex-related objects; or staring in a way that seems too personal.

SCHOOL PROPERTY AND THE PROPERTY OF OTHERS

Students are expected to care for school property and respect the property of others. Students may not damage school property or tamper with fire alarms, fire extinguishers, or any electrical systems. Textbooks are the property of the district and fines are assessed for unreturned or damaged books. The property of others is to be left alone at all times.

LUNCHROOM EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students should demonstrate good judgment and courtesy while eating in our lunchroom. In order to ensure a safe environment, students should arrive to lunch on time and remain seated at tables unless they are disposing of trash or purchasing food. Students are expected to remain quiet and attentive during lunchtime announcements, and not carry any food items out of the cafeteria.

Students are also expected to help maintain the cleanliness of the cafeteria. While all students are expected to clean up after themselves, each table will also have two designated roles on a daily basis, which includes one “sweeper” and one “topper,” who will ensure the table and surrounding area have been properly cleaned. These roles are assigned by a lunch supervisor, who maintains a list to ensure each student is assigned only four times during each quarter. Sponges, brooms, and other cleaning utensils are available for student use. Students must present a pass signed by a staff member in order to leave the lunchroom.

RECESS EXPECTATIONS

All students should expect to go outside for recess on a daily basis, directed per the announcements at the end of fourth period. Students will be held inside when the temperature is 20 degrees or below or there is inclement weather, such as snow, sleet, hail, rain, or low wind chill. Students should plan ahead and come to school prepared with weather-appropriate clothing and outerwear, as all students will participate in recess unless they have a pass from a teacher to attend another activity. Students will not be allowed to retrieve coats and other winter gear once they are in the lunchroom.

While outside, students are expected to stay on Elm Place fields and away from Indian Trail students and their playground. Students should refrain from physical contact with others while playing and are not allowed to carry or utilize any electronic devices, per the guidelines given above.

GANG ACTIVITIES

Students must refrain from any and all gang or gang-like activities while on Elm Place or any other District 112 property. This includes but is not limited to hand gestures, symbols, and the flagging of colors. These and other behaviors are subject to severe disciplinary action and will not be allowed under any circumstances.

Bus Transportation and Behavioral Expectations

Bus transportation is provided at no cost to families living 1 ½ miles or more from school and is provided for a fee to families living closer. Buses are boarded immediately following dismissal, and depart from school at approximately 2:50 p.m. each day.

Students are expected to conduct themselves while riding our school buses in the same manner as expectations that are held while in school. Bus drivers are responsible for the safety of all students both on and around the bus, so they should receive the utmost cooperation from all passengers. Inappropriate behavior that is distracting, disruptive, or may cause potential injury to students, staff, or others is not allowed.

Students must ride their assigned bus to and from school. Students may not ride a different bus home from school to visit friends, attend lessons, etc. unless they have brought a written note from a parent to the office so that permission can be granted. This helps the office keep track of who is riding which bus and if a problem with a particular route is

occurring. Bus drivers have been asked to not accept these types of notes from students, as again they must go through the office.

Contacting Staff Members at Elm Place

All staff members are available by phone or email. To contact us by phone, please do so at (224) 765-3300. To contact us by email, please visit the Elm Place website at www.nssd112.ort/elmplace/index.html, for a complete list of addresses and extensions.

Dress Code

We always ask that students demonstrate good judgment in choosing clothing, remembering that as a school we seek to have our students dress in attire that does not distract from the learning environment or that which is not appropriate for school. To help students make wise choices, we ask the following:

- Tank top straps are expected to be at least two inches wide with a reasonable underarm cut that does not expose torso or chest.
- On average, skirts and shorts must reach the mid-section of the thigh, however, if administration judges the length to be inappropriate, they will ask the student to change. Pants or shorts must be worn at the waist.
- Hats are only allowed on designated spirit days.
- Advertisements, slogans, pictures, etc. must be school appropriate and should not promote or display images of drugs, alcohol, or sexually provocative material.
- Should a student be in violation of any of the above guidelines, parents will be contacted to secure a change of clothes, or the student will wear a PE uniform for the remainder of the school day. Students will remain in the office until a change occurs.
- Student Council spirit days or special holidays, such as Halloween, may carry their own guidelines but will always be in accordance with this policy.

Electronic Devices

While cell phones, iPods, and other electronics are allowed for students both before and after school for communication and enjoyment, these devices must be kept in the hallway locker and turned off during the school day. Students are not allowed to make phone calls or send text messages during school hours. Teachers may take these items away from students and turn them into the main office. The electronic item will be kept in the office until the end of the day when the student can come and pick it up. Multiple transgressions, however, will include parental involvement.

Grades and Report Cards

The school year is divided into four grading quarters, and report cards are provided at the end of each quarter. Our system provides families with 24 hour online access to student attendance, assignments, and grades through the use of individual usernames and passwords. Should parents experience problems with the system, they should contact the school office. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring, although teachers and parents may request additional meetings throughout the school year.

Lockers, Hallway

Students at Elm Place are assigned two lockers: one in a hallway that will hold most of their academic and personal belongings, and a physical education locker in the locker room that will house their gym and street clothes. Students are asked to not share the locker combinations with anyone other than family members for security purposes and to keep in mind that once a locker is closed, it is only considered locked if the dial is turned.

Students may not share or change lockers without permission, and while the inside of the locker may be decorated with temporary items, the outside of lockers may not be decorated with any items, even on birthdays. Students are expected to demonstrate proper behavior when using school lockers. Kicking, slamming, and opening other students' lockers for any reason is not permitted.

Lockers, Physical Education

In the locker room, students are assigned a small/large locker combination. The small locker is used to house the PE uniform while the student is away, and the large locker is to place street clothes and other school supplies while in the PE class. Students are issued a padlock at the beginning of 6th grade to be used through graduation, which can be used to keep both lockers secure. We urge all students to please utilize the locker system appropriately. All cases of stolen items have occurred when students have left their lockers open or unlocked. Just as with their hallway lockers, students are expected to demonstrate proper behavior when using their PE lockers.

Medications

ALL medications (prescription and over-the-counter) must be stored in the nurse's office. The nurse or an administrator may only distribute medications.

Passes

All students must have a pass when moving throughout the building during school hours, with the obvious exception of passing periods. This may be the standard yellow pass, which all teachers possess, or a personal pass of a teacher.

Physical Education Guidelines

Students must wear their gym uniform daily as part of their physical education requirements. Students will be given one pass for not having their gym uniform. If students do not have their uniform two or more times in one quarter, they will be required to participate in a mandatory gym class during their recess supervised by a PE teacher.

Students are also required to attend physical education classes just as they are required to attend any other class in their school day. Students with three or more *excused or unexcused* absences will be required to make up those missed classes in a mandatory gym class during their recess supervised by a PE teacher.

Students that cannot participate due to medical conditions will be provided modified physical education activities. For example, if a student has a broken foot or a sprained ankle, they will be offered the option to use the Upper Body Rotary Exercise machine or other equipment that provides cardiovascular workouts and strength training that focuses on other muscle groups. If a student has a broken wrist or arm, he/she can walk on the treadmill for 20 minutes or around the gym/field.

Pictures and Yearbooks

Student photographs are taken by a professional service. Students and parents are provided the opportunity to purchase a variety of picture sets. One photo will appear in the yearbook, which is distributed at the end of our school year.

Social Workers

The primary responsibility of our social workers is to assist students with concerns related to school. Social workers typically loop with students from sixth through eighth grade to provide ongoing and focused support. These staff members contact students early in the school year to explain their services and how students may access them. Students are always encouraged to ask questions and seek assistance from this team.

Tardy Policy

The school day begins at Elm Place at 7:55 a.m., at which time all students should be present in their advisory class. Students not present in advisory at 7:55 a.m. are marked *absent* for the day by the classroom teacher. Students who arrive after 7:55 a.m. should report to the main office, so that proper attendance can be noted.

We often receive questions from parents, attempting to understand why we make such a push for having our students arrive to school on time. The answer is twofold. The first reason is that we are attempting to teach students good behaviors about responsibility and the skill of being on time. As adults we are expected to arrive to work on time, to doctor's appointments on time, to social gatherings on time, etc. We want our students to develop these important skills for life.

The second reason we ask students to arrive on time is that the tardiness of students does cause a disruption for both late students and others. Students who miss class or come late detract from others who have arrived on time. Teachers need to meet with these students separately to get them caught up on missed learning, it creates more for secretaries with clerical work, and the most impact is on the students themselves who are not present for the full education opportunity.

Since parents may not always realize their children are arriving late to school, the office will contact parents when a student has received three unexcused tardies during the school year. A fourth unexcused tardy for the year will result in students receiving an after school detention, and every tardy after that will earn the same consequence.

We do understand, however, that there are times when legitimate circumstances may cause students to arrive late. In order to avoid receiving an unexcused tardy, students must bring a parent note to the office explaining the reason for their tardiness each time it occurs, sign the logbook indicating what time they arrived, and receive a pass from the office in order to gain entry into class.

Traffic Safety

School grounds are designed for pedestrian traffic only. While students may use wheeled transportation to and from school, they should stop and walk with such materials once they reach school grounds. This includes but is not limited to biking, skating, and skateboards. Doing “tricks” on any of these devices is also not allowed on school property. Students are also expected to follow standard traffic safety procedures. We believe it is unsafe to skateboard on the streets around the school or in the parking lot of the Community House across the street.

Visitors

All visitors to the school are asked to please sign in the office before proceeding to any other part of the building. At the office, visitors will be given badges to wear for security measures, so they can be identified while spending time with us. Former students are also asked to follow these guidelines and to refrain from visiting during school hours.