

Middle School Student/Parent Handbook 2025-2026

“The mission of the Estherville Lincoln Central Community School District is to ensure that all students maximize their learning potential in becoming confident, independent, productive citizens with good character.”

Andrew Armstead, Superintendent (362-2692)
Brad Nelson, Principal (362-2335)
Christine Hooper, Guidance Counselor (362-8454)
Lee Evans, MS Success Coordinator (362-2335)
Christina Dunlavy, District School Nurse (362-8402)

Estherville Lincoln Central Board of Education:

Jeff Soper- President, Sandy Fandel-Vice President,
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Table of Contents

General Expectations/Student Conduct; Pages 1-4

Cheating/Plagiarism	1
Disciplinary Actions	1
Dress Code	2
Electronics / Cell Phones	2
Fighting	2
Food and Drink	2
Guest Teachers	3
Illegal Items	3
Initiations, Harassment	3
Insubordination	3
School Lockers	3
Threats of Violence	3-4
Wheeled Items/Mopeds	4

General Parent/Guardian Information; Pages 8-11

Communication	8
Disaster Drills	9
Grading Policy	9
Homework	9
Parent Conferences	9
Parent/Student Grievance	9
Release of Information	9
Standardized Tests	9
Student Fees	9
Student Transferring	10
Use Policy, Internet	10-11

Athletics for 7th and 8th Graders; Pages 4-6

Academic Eligibility	4
Good Conduct Policy	4-6
Physicals/Insurance	6
Possession of Equipment	6

Additional Information; Pages 11-12

Allegations of Abuse	11
Crisis Plan	11
Educational Equity	11
Homeless Definitions	11
Open Enrollment	11
Tobacco Free Environment	12
School Bus Seat Belt Policy	12

General Student
Information; Pages 6-8

Attendance Policy	6-7
Cafeteria / Meals	7
Guidance/Counseling	7
Health Information	7
Library Policy	8
Criteria for HS Algebra	8
Music	8
Chess Club	8
Dances	8

It is the policy of the Estherville Lincoln Central Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or socioeconomic status in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to the policy, please contact the district's Equity Coordinator, Andrew Armstead, Superintendent, 1814 7th Ave. S., (712) 362-2692, andrew.armstead@elc-csd.org

GRADE LEVEL HOMEROOM TEACHERS

- 5-1 Lesly Friesner
- 5-2 Claire Boyd
- 5-3 Carole Reinhardt
- 5-4 Kris Weisman
- SpEd Brenda Poss

- 6-1 Kristi Frederick
- 6-2 Jenny Christensen
- 6-3 Matt Gruhlke
- 6-4 TBD
- SpEd Teagan Alger

- 7-1 Carol Solberg
- 7-2 Doug VanDerWilt
- 7-3 Danielle Hart
- 7-4 Tamara Thompson
- SpEd Leah Volkert

- 8-1 Nate Hansen
- 8-2 Angela Larson
- 8-3 Hallie Clayton
- 8-4 Andrea Love
- SpEd Mara Kindwall

HIGH SCHOOL SHARED PERSONNEL

- Jordyn Cummins Health Teacher
- Joan Enockson 5-8 Talented & Gifted
- Laura Giebler 7/8 Band/Lessons
- Ethan Hexamer MS/HS Choir
- Matthew Schroeder 7 VoAg

DISTRICT SHARED PERSONNEL

- Officer Ryan Arends School Resource Officer
- Christina Dunlavy District Nurse
- Brandi Glanzer District Librarian
- Brandon Harder Technology/Network
- Jason Kollasch Maintenance Director
- Kevin Richardson Technology Director

MIDDLE SCHOOL PERSONNEL

- Jill Arends SpEd Aide
- Craig Began 5-8 Band/Lessons
- Alyssa Boeke Attendance Secretary
- Emilee Burmeister MS Principal's Secretary
- Lee Evans Success Coordinator
- Murray Gafkjen Level 2 / 3 SpEd
- Cassidy Hatland SpEd Aide
- Toni Hazen Evening Custodian
- Andrea Hecht SpEd Aide
- Jacob Heinrichs 5-8 PE
- Christine Hooper School Counselor
- Alex Inman SpEd Aide
- Alex Jensen SpEd Aide
- Jason Karsten Daytime Custodian
- Amy Looft SpEd Aide
- Reeann Marra ELL
- Lisa Mustard SpEd Aide
- Lori Olberding 5-8 Art
- Jannete Ruiz MS Library Aide
- Laura Sidles SpEd Aide
- Joe Smith Evening Custodian
- Meredith Spykerman Reading Interventionist
- Jennifer Will Math Interventionist

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS / STUDENT CONDUCT

ELC Middle School feels each student should expect to be free from harassment in class, in hallways, in locker rooms, on the bus, and on school grounds. Each student should be treated with respect and in turn has the responsibility to treat others the same. Each student has the privilege to participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities as long as they meet the District's requirements. Each student should bring their concerns about school matters to the attention of the staff or Administration. In turn, students should be respectful by using manners, treating others as they would like to be treated, using an appropriate tone of voice, and being cooperative with teachers, staff, and fellow students. Students should be responsible by listening, engaging in day-to-day activities and lessons, staying on-task, using self-control, asking questions, and following through on tasks and assignments. We expect students to conduct themselves in a manner fitting to their age level/maturity, and with respect and consideration for the rights of others. The school has the duty to create an atmosphere where self-discipline is approached positively and productively, and where students are aware of their rights and the responsibilities accompanying those rights. Expectations:

- After a student has arrived at school, they may not leave school grounds without permission and must sign in and out from the office.
- Middle School has a closed noon hour. Students may not go home to eat at noon unless a parent or guardian notifies the office. Students may not eat in the community unless accompanied by a parent.
- Each student is responsible for the good care and return of all equipment and books received from the school. Payment must be made for lost or damaged books and equipment.

Cheating/Plagiarism: Students are expected to do their own schoolwork. Cheating by looking at another student's schoolwork, providing information to other students, copying others work, copying from other sources including electronic and technological sources, or similar forms of cheating is not tolerated. This includes the use of AI sites such as CHATGPT and others. Cheating incidents will be investigated. Discipline may include a failing grade for a specific assignment, loss of class credit, suspension, detention, or any other action as deemed appropriate by Administration. Students allowing others to copy their work will face similar consequences.

Disciplinary Actions: The middle school strives to have firm, fair, and consistent discipline tailored to address the individual(s) involved. Disciplinary actions will range from verbal reprimands and detentions to making restitution and in- or out-of-school suspensions. The administration's discretion will be used.

- **After School Detention:** Staff may keep students after school for inappropriate behavior, violation of classroom/building-wide rules, and /or incomplete assignments. Students will be expected to stay after school either the day they are informed to do so or when arrangements make it possible.
- **In-School Suspension:** Staff may send a student from class when the student's continued presence interferes with the ability of other students to learn. This disruption could be for excessive talking, insubordination, disrespect, refusal to work or participate properly, as well as other reasons. Upon being sent out of class, a student should go directly to the guidance/student success office. The student will meet with the principal or his designee and it will be their determination if the student may return to class. In-School Suspension is reserved for significant or repeated inappropriate behavior. Parents will be notified of the suspension and a letter sent from the office. Students who receive a period of in-school suspension (1/2 day or full day) will complete all assigned school work and not be allowed to participate in a game or event that occurs on the day of the suspension. Students will be expected to attend any practices occurring on the day of suspension.
- **Out-Of-School Suspension and Expulsion:** The principal may temporarily dismiss any student for violation of the rules and regulations set down by the district, especially when students are engaged in violent, dangerous or threatening behavior, or as part of a documented progressive discipline step. Whenever the presence of a student is detrimental to the best interests of the school, administration will temporarily dismiss the student and may recommend to the Board of Education that such student be expelled. Procedures are:
 - Before a student is suspended, they will meet with the principal and be told the reason for suspension. The student will have an opportunity to tell his or her version of the incident if the student denies the charges.
 - Parents will be notified of the suspension by immediate phone call, if possible. Parents/guardians will also be notified in writing the reasons and dates of the suspension.
 - Students who receive out-of-school suspension will not be allowed to participate in a game or event that occurs on the day of the suspension. They are not allowed on school grounds or in the building until the determined date and time of OSS completion. **All school work must be made up.**

Dress Code: All students are expected to dress in a clean and respectable manner. The school's intent with establishing limits is for students to understand that school is a workplace and what may be acceptable outside the workplace may not be appropriate at work. Any article of clothing which is excessively revealing or disruptive is considered inappropriate. Students will be asked to change or turn the clothing inside out. A staff member may take a student home to change clothes. If a student refuses, the student's parent may be contacted to pick up the student for the remainder of the day. The principal or his designee will make the final determination of the appropriateness of the student's appearance and whether it is a distraction to the educational environment. Examples that will result in a student being asked to change clothing include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Low-cut, see-through, or unduly tight items, bare midriff and/or backs, halter tops, tube tops, cutoffs, short shorts, low-riding pants, muscle shirts, undershirts, masks, temporary tattoos, face paint, or non-permanent hair color; shirts should have one strap on each shoulder; undergarments should not be visible
- Clothing containing vulgarities or obscenities, are controversial, have double meaning or inappropriate slogans, promotes or advertises alcohol or establishments that sell alcohol, promotes tobacco or illegal drugs of any kind, or have any symbolism connected with these products
- Caps/hats, headgear, sunglasses, chains, bandanas, or hoods may not be worn in the building; costumes are not allowed during holidays /celebrations
- Clothing symbolizing gang affiliation, or disrupts the educational environment of the school. Appropriate footwear should be worn at all times. **Students need to wear clothing appropriate for weather conditions.**

Electronics:

- **Cell phones** may be brought to school but usage is limited according to House File 782 to the following times: before school, after school, lunch, and passing time. All cell phones, cameras, and other recording devices are strictly prohibited at any time in a locker room and/or restroom. Any cell phones, cameras, or other recording devices found in a locker room or restroom will be confiscated. Violators will be suspended and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. The use of a cell phone to take pictures or video of a teacher or student without their permission will violate the policy and will be dealt with accordingly. The classroom teacher will handle cell phone violations. When this happens, the student will call and inform their parents of the violation. First Offense, the student will be given the device back at the end of the school day. Second Offense, parents will need to come in and the device will be handed to the parent. Third Offense, a conference with student and parent/guardian will be arranged. Habitual violators will be referred to the office. Refusal to give up the cell phone is considered insubordination and could result in suspension.
- **Personal electronic items** such as electronic readers, handheld devices, or laptop computers may be brought to school, but must be used for educational purposes or only at times when approved by school personnel. The Appropriate Use policy shall apply to devices brought from home. Any personal electronic device is brought at the student's own risk. ELC is not responsible for repair or replacement of any device belonging to students/families
- **Social Media** -Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, and various gaming sites are a few examples of social media. The ELC staff encourages parents to set home guidelines for their students and to monitor their use of the various sites. Parents are encouraged to know their student's passwords, monitor website use, and know who their student is chatting with on the web and texting on their phones.

Fighting: Fighting is never permitted at Middle School. No student may be involved in the act of fighting, instigating a fight, creating ill feelings between students, or engaging in rough and/or unnecessary horseplay. Students are expected to walk away from situations which could develop into a physical confrontation. A student who has an opportunity to walk away from a situation but chooses to stay and get involved in the fight will be held as responsible for the fight as the person who instigated the disagreement. Students who choose to fight will be suspended from school and a complaint with law enforcement may be filed.

Food and Drink: Students are not allowed to have soda pop, carbonated beverages, coffee, energy drinks, or like beverages during school hours unless permission has been given. **Water bottles are allowed.** No food is allowed outside the cafeteria area unless permission is given or other arrangements are made. Gum chewing will be based on teacher discretion, but students will be asked to remove the gum if it becomes disruptive. Gum will not be allowed if found in drinking fountains, on the floor, on walls, under tables/desks, etc.

Guest Teachers: It is necessary at times to have guest teachers (substitutes) in our building. Students are expected to treat these educators as guests in our building and cooperate with them as they would their classroom teacher. If students misbehave with a guest teacher, they will be removed from the class and given appropriate discipline for their actions.

Illegal Items found in School or in Students' Possession: Students are prohibited from distributing, dispensing, manufacturing, possessing, using, and being under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or look-alike substances and possessing or using tobacco, tobacco products, or a look-alike substance. Weapons are not allowed on school grounds or at school activities, with the exception of weapons in the control of law enforcement officials. Parents/Guardians of students found in violation of this policy will be contacted and the students may be reported to law enforcement officials. A suspension of up to 12 months may be incurred.

Initiations, Hazing, Bullying, or Harassment: Harassment, bullying, and abuse are violations of school district policies, rules and regulations, and may also be a violation of criminal or other laws. The school district has the authority to report students violating this rule to law enforcement officials. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to: verbal, physical, or written harassment or abuse; pressure for sexual activity; repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications; and suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats. Harassment or bullying based upon factors other than sex include, but are not limited to: verbal, physical, or written harassment or abuse; repeated remarks of a demeaning nature; implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, etc; and demeaning jokes, stories, or activities. Harassment or bullying on the basis of age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status or familial status includes conduct of a verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass, distress, agitate, disturb or trouble persons when:

- places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property;
- has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
- has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.
- If comfortable doing so, students who feel they have been harassed or bullied should talk to the harasser and say the behavior should stop. If the student needs help, they may ask a teacher, counselor, or principal. The student should write down exactly what happened: what, when and where it happened; who was involved; exactly what was said or what the offender did; witnesses to the behavior; what the student said or did; how the student felt; how the offender responded.

Insubordination: Defined as "refusing to obey", insubordination includes belligerent and/or blatant disrespect to adults and refusal to comply with an adult's request. After a request has been repeated and the student still does not comply, they are choosing to be insubordinate. They will be referred to the office immediately. Students who are insubordinate will receive suspension and on-going insubordination will result in a student/parent meeting.

School Lockers: Student lockers are the property of the school district. Students shall use the lockers assigned to them for storing school materials and personal items necessary for attendance at school. Any expense to repair damage done by the student to their assigned lockers will be charged to the student. School-issued padlocks are available if a student wants to use one during the school year.. If a padlock is not returned at the end of the year, students will be required to pay a \$5 fine. **Students are NOT TO KEEP VALUABLES OR MONEY IN THEIR ASSIGNED LOCKERS.** The school is not responsible for items stolen from student lockers.

A student's locker can be searched whenever an administrator or teacher has a reasonable suspicion that a criminal offense or a school district rule or regulation has been violated and there is a reasonable belief the search will produce evidence of such. Items found in violation of school district policies, rules, or regulations are confiscated. Illegal items may be given to law enforcement officials.

Threats of Violence: All threats of violence, whether oral, written, or symbolic against students, staff, or to school facilities, are prohibited. All such threats will be promptly investigated. Law enforcement may be contacted. Threats issued and delivered away from school or school activities may be grounds for disciplinary action if the threat impacts the orderly and efficient operation of the school.

Students engaging in threatening behavior will face disciplinary consequences up to and including expulsion. The following will be considered in determining the extent a student will be disciplined for threatening or terrorist-type behavior: background of the student (any history of violence or threatening behavior); student's access to weapons;

circumstances surrounding the threat; age of the student; mental and emotional maturity; cooperation of the student and their parent/guardian; existence of juvenile or criminal history; degree of legitimate alarm or concern created by the threat; and any relevant information from any credible source.

Wheeled Items: Students may not use rollerblades, skateboards, **or any version of these** on school property.

- **Bicycles:** Students may ride bicycles to school if parents approve. Students are asked to park bicycles in racks provided and encouraged to secure them with a lock. The school is not responsible for any theft or damage done to a student's bicycle. Students may not ride their bikes on school grounds at any time during the school day.
- **Mopeds:** Mopeds and other motorized vehicles are not allowed on school grounds. Students who drive one of these vehicles to school are encouraged to park in the parking lot. They will be expected to follow the same traffic laws and regulations as other drivers. The school does not assume any liability for damaged or stolen vehicles.

ATHLETICS FOR 7TH AND 8TH GRADERS

ALL students are encouraged to join middle school athletic programs. At this level, the major emphasis will be on skill development and participation. The following guidelines ensure all students choosing to participate have an opportunity to do so:

- During practices, all players will receive instruction and training in basic fundamental skills and strategies and be given an opportunity to demonstrate their skill level. Developing these strategies and skills will lead directly to game participation.
- Commitment is a very important part of any athletic team. Students are required to attend all practices/games unless excused, with the coach taking attendance. Excuses for illness and family emergencies are understandable. If students know in advance they will be absent, coaches should be notified. Detentions and In-School Suspensions are not excused absences. The final decision of whether any absence is excused or unexcused will be made by the athletic director and/or the principal. Unexcused absences may directly affect a student's playing time. Students with habitual unexcused absences may be dismissed from the team.
- Players will be grouped according to skill levels to maximize each individual's development, both physically and mentally (example: A, B, and C teams). An attempt will be made to schedule A, B, and C games in volleyball and basketball, and A/B games in football. Numbers of participants on our teams and/or on our opponent's teams may not always allow for B and C games.
- Students are expected to ride home with the team when attending away games. Athletes must have permission from a coach to ride home with their parents. Athletes wanting to ride home with parents other than their own must have a signed note turned in prior to noon on the day of an event.

Athletic Academic Eligibility: The Middle School's policy requirement for academic eligibility states that students in 7th and 8th grade who participate in athletic / extracurricular events may not have a failing grade when mid-term and quarter grades are posted. Classes include Core and current Exploratory classes, but not band, choir, or intervention. If this criterion is not met, the student must sit out for **10 academic days** but should continue to attend practices. They will not be allowed to travel with the team to away games. Ineligible students must meet with teachers in the subject area(s) they are failing to determine the reason(s) for failure and to complete assignments and improve grades. Any 8th Grade students participating in HS baseball or softball will be subject to the No Pass No Play HS guidelines and will not be eligible for 30 days.

ELC Middle School Good Conduct Policy: STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY: The middle school staff, administration, and school board believe participation in extracurricular activities by students can have a positive effect on the development of constructive attitude for future citizenship. During these activities, students have an opportunity to develop leadership, principles of justice, fair play, sportsmanship, respect for rules and regulations, respect for others, respect for one's own health and physical well-being, group pride, teamwork, self-discipline, and the values of self-sacrifice. The middle school recognizes rules and regulations concerning the conduct of the students will vary with the times. It is our belief the individual's family should be the guiding influence and determinate of student behavior. It is also the belief of the school district that participation in an extracurricular activity is a privilege. Therefore, certain types of conduct shall be deemed inappropriate of the generally accepted standards subscribed to by the school district. In view of this statement, the Estherville Lincoln Central Middle School will enforce the following policies and procedures relative to standards for participation in extracurricular activities throughout the school year. The activities affected are middle school interscholastic athletics.

- Ineligibility: A student who becomes ineligible must remain as a member of the activity, continue to practice throughout the duration of the suspension, and successfully complete the activity in good standing. Failure to do so shall be deemed as not to have served the prescribed period of suspension and the student shall remain on suspension until the ineligible period is properly completed.
- Attendance Regulations: A student shall be in school one-half day on the day of practice or scheduled contest. If the event is after school or in the evening, the half-day shall be the afternoon. Any exception must be cleared in advance through administration. If a student will miss a class or classes because of a contest, they must make arrangements for assignments with teachers involved.
- Violations of Local, State, or Federal Laws: Any student who admits to or is found guilty of a violation of any local, state, or federal law shall be ineligible to represent the school in a scheduled contest until reinstated by the principal. However, those violations listed in the State of Iowa Compendium of Scheduled Violations and Scheduled Fines shall not be included or considered in enforcing the Good Conduct Policy.
- Any student found guilty of a violation of the discipline code as found in the student handbook shall be disciplined as stated
- Any student suspended out-of-school for violation of school rules will be ineligible to participate in any extracurricular practice or performance until reinstated by the principal or activity director. In-school suspensions will be handled by administration.
- Rules Concerning Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs: Because of the adverse effects of the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other dangerous drugs as listed in the State Code, no student shall procure for his or other's use, be in possession of, or use any of these substances during the calendar year. A violation of this rule shall result in the student being declared ineligible to represent the school in any scheduled contest for the minimum period described in the following:
 - **1st offense:** 5 events suspension, reduced by 2 if you self report
 - **2nd offense:** 10 Event Suspension, reduced by 2 if you self report, suspension served during the next few weeks in which competitions are held, and the student agrees to comply with any recommendations of the Problem Solving Team in regard to possible counseling services dealing directly with substance abuse or seek counseling services through an approved outside organization.
 - **3rd offense:** One Year Suspension in which competitions are held, and the student agrees to comply with any recommendations of the Problem Solving Team in regard to possible counseling services dealing directly with substance abuse or seek counseling services through an approved outside organization.
 - To avoid second and/or third offense punishment, a student must be violation free for a period of one calendar year. The date of a violation is determined by the date on which the violation actually occurred.
 - Determination of Violation: A student is said to have violated any of the above if
 - Found so by a court of law
 - Admits to violating one of the standards
 - Witnessed breaking one of the standards by one or more staff members
 - Accused upon signed, sworn, written testimony by one or more citizens to the appropriate principal's or activity director's office within thirty days of said violations. If the accused claims innocence, a three-member panel appointed by the principal will, within five school days, conduct a hearing to determine guilt or sustain innocence
 - Upon thorough investigation, school personnel determine the student, beyond a reasonable doubt, committed the act
 - Participates in a diversion or other educational program required by Juvenile Court Services
- Appeal Process: STEP 1: A student or parent contesting the declared ineligibility based on these rules shall be required to schedule an oral hearing with the principal and two faculty members selected by the superintendent within five days of receiving notice of declared ineligibility. The student shall have in writing their objections to the decision. The committee shall consider the evidence and make a decision within 24 hours of the hearing and shall forward in writing its finding and decision to the student and parent. STEP 2: A student may appeal to the superintendent in writing within three days and the superintendent shall then schedule a hearing with two school board members present. The committee shall consider evidence and statements made by the student, and make a written finding of its decision within three days of the hearing, sending a copy to the student and parent.
- Rumors: If information comes via the "rumor route" about violations, it will be investigated by the appropriate administrator. The student will be informed of the situation and given the opportunity to explain their side of the story. Parents/guardians shall be invited to attend these meetings.

- Transfer Students: If a student transfers in from another school or school district and the student has not yet completed a period of ineligibility for a violation of a Good Conduct Rule in the previous school or school district, the student shall be ineligible until the full period of ineligibility has been completed.

Physicals and Insurance: All students participating in ELC athletic programs must have a current physical. In addition, all participants must have proof of insurance to cover them if they are injured. Verification of such insurance, as well as any other required forms, must be on file with the athletic director before they may practice and participate.

Unauthorized Possession of School-Owned Equipment/Uniforms: No ELC student shall have in their possession any school-owned equipment/uniforms from ELC or any other school. At no time is school equipment to be worn in public, except for practice, games/meets/performances, and on game days with the permission of the coach. Students will be ineligible to practice or compete in another activity until all obligations are satisfied which includes return of all equipment/uniforms and payment for lost or damaged equipment/uniforms. The school may also prosecute students for stolen equipment.

GENERAL MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT INFORMATION

7:45 AM – Students admitted into the building / breakfast is available

8:05 AM – Morning Bell – Students report to their first class for attendance count

8:10 AM – Bell rings for students to be in homerooms / Tardy Bell

3:30 PM – Dismissal time

To maintain a safe environment for students and staff, the middle school will implement the following:

- Beginning at 8:15 AM, **only** the middle school office doors will be unlocked.
- Visitors will be required to check in at the middle school office and receive a visitor’s badge to be worn/visible at all times while in the building. The staff member being met will be called to escort the visitor to their meeting place. Upon leaving, all visitors need to check out at the middle school office and return the visitor’s badge.
- The front inside foyer doors will be unlocked at the end of the school day. Note: The middle school is equipped with break-away fire doors. **At all times people will be able to exit the building. NOTE: The middle school utilizes security cameras for 24 hour surveillance of the facility.** Cameras are located both inside and outside the building.

Attendance Policy: ELC Middle School believes daily attendance is based on the fact something important happens in class every day. Parents are encouraged to plan for appointments outside the school day when possible. The following pertain to absences:

- Students who know they will be absent must notify the office with a note containing their name, date(s) or class periods missed, reason for absence, and signature of parent/guardian
- If advance notice is not possible, parents should call the office on the day of the absence before 8:00 AM (362-2335).
- If notice is not received, an attempt will be made to contact families. If contact cannot be made, the Success Coordinator/law enforcement may be notified and the student may be picked up and brought to school.
- Any student absent from school without the knowledge and consent of his or her parent/guardian is **truant** from school. Leaving the building during the day without permission is truancy. If a student is found truant, a meeting will be held between the parent/guardian and principal, with appropriate discipline to be determined. If a student is ill, they must first check with nurse/office personnel and sign out before leaving.
- **Re-admittance and Make-up Work:** If a child is gone for several days and able to do work at home, parents may call the office and request homework. Students also need parents/guardians to send a note or call to be admitted to class **after** an absence. Students are responsible for completing make-up work and will receive full credit for work completed within the number of days missed plus one. (Three days missed=four days to make up the work.) Weekends and non-school days will be included in the time allowed to make up work. Individual circumstances may extend the deadline.
- **Excessive Absence:** Absences for any reason that accumulate to **ten days** are considered excessive. The middle school tracks daily attendance and attempts to intervene before a student may get to this point. When a student is absent five days, he or she will meet with the Success Coordinator. Should absences continue to accrue, a letter is sent to parents/guardians and a meeting may be called. Parents, teachers, interventionists, guidance counselor, success coordinator, community supports, AEA personnel, and the principal may meet with the student in order to determine the reasons and causes of poor attendance. Intervention will be implemented responding to the needs of the student.

- **Tardies:** Middle school staff expects students to be on time each day. If a student is tardy at the start of the school day, they must check in with the office. Any student who receives five tardies will be referred to the Success Coordinator. If tardiness persists, a letter will be sent home and a meeting may be set up to explore other options to support the student in arriving on time.

Chronic Absenteeism Senate File 2435 4.19.24 Reference

Establishes that a child of compulsory attendance age who has been absent from school, for any reason, for at least 20.0% of the days or hours in a grading period will be considered truant.

Chronic Absenteeism:

- Defines "chronically absent" as missing more than 10.0% of the school days or hours in a grading period established by a public school. Establishes a definition for "school official."
- Requires a school official to send notice to the county attorney and the child's parent, guardian, or legal or actual custodian when a child becomes chronically absent. Requires a school official to initiate and participate in a school engagement meeting if a child is absent from school 15.0% or more of the days or hours in a grading period to determine the child's barriers to attendance and the interventions that may be used to improve the child's attendance. A school official may initiate a school engagement meeting prior to the student being absent from the 15.0% threshold. Provides criteria for the structure and resolution of the school engagement meeting.

Cafeteria/Student Meals: The middle school serves both breakfast and lunch every school day. No outside restaurant or convenience store food is permitted in the lunchroom during breakfast or lunch times. All cold lunches must be brought to school with students before school starts. Children from families who meet the state income guidelines or are eligible in other programs need to complete, **each year**, an application for free and reduced-price meals. This form may be obtained from the school office. **Lunch Policy:** As of July 1, 2017, in accordance with state and federal law, the ELC Community Schools adopted the following policy to ensure school district employees, families, and students have a shared understanding of expectations regarding meal charges at school. **Payment of Meals:** All students have use of a family meal account. When the balance reaches \$0.00 a family may charge no more than \$25.00 to this account. When an account reaches this limit, a student shall not be allowed to charge further meals or a la carte items until the negative account balance is paid in full. Families may add money to student accounts through the JMC Parent Portal found through the district website www.estherville.k12.ia.us or by paying at the school office in cash, money order, or personal check. Students who qualify for free meals shall never be denied a reimbursable meal, even if they have accrued a negative balance from previous charges (extra milk, etc.). ALL students with outstanding meal charge debt shall be allowed to purchase a meal if the student pays for the meal when it is received. Due to privacy issues and concerns, an alternative meal *will not* be served and parents with a negative family meal account shall provide a suitable meal for their child(ren). *NOTE: Students who have free/reduced pricing ONLY receive this pricing for the first meal charged. Any additional meals are at the regular cost and require money to be in the account for these charges to occur.*

Guidance and Counseling: Guidance services are available for every student in the middle school. The counselor is especially concerned with helping students with their personal, social, school, and home problems. Parents wishing to meet with the counselor may call to schedule an appointment.

Health Information: Parents should update health and emergency information at the beginning of each school year with current phone numbers and emergency contacts. All students must meet state requirements on immunizations. Hearing screenings are done by the AEA and vision screenings are scheduled by the school nurse or may be requested at any time. Communicable illnesses should be reported, as well as any chronic illnesses or special health problems.

- **Medication** may be given in school if the medicine is brought in by a parent/guardian in the original prescription bottle, along with a note from the parent. An authorization and release form must be filled out for the administration of prescription medication to students on a daily or as needed basis. This form is available in the office. It is the parent's responsibility to provide the medication in the original prescription bottle and replenish the supply as needed. Authorization is also needed for pain relievers. Treatments that may be used for students without parental permission are chloraseptic spray, antibiotic ointment, and/or lotion.
- **If a student complains or shows signs of illness in the morning**, please keep them home for observation. Students who have a temperature of 100 degrees or above or have symptoms of illness should stay home from school until their temperature returns to normal. **It is recommended to keep your student at home until they have remained fever free for 24 hours. If a student vomits during the night, they should stay home the next day.** If a student becomes ill at school (a fever of 100 degrees or above, vomiting, and/or at the judgment of school personnel), a parent will be called and the student sent home. If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called. Students must sign out and exit through the office.
- **Any injury or accident** which may require further treatment will be brought promptly to the attention of parents/guardians. At the judgment call of the nurse, parents may not be notified of minor injuries. Parents should call the nurse (362-8402) if there are any concerns or questions. **If you feel your student must be excused from gym or recess for more than two days, you will need an excuse from your physician.**

MS Library Media Center - ELC District Media Library information available on the school website and at each building. Contact Info: Ms. Brandi Glanzer, Teacher Librarian, 712-362-2335, brandi.glanzer@elc-csd.org

Core Values:

- Community of Diversity
- Equity in Access to Resources
- Student-Centered
- Continuous Growing and Learning

General Information:

- The library is open from 7:45 am to 4:00 pm each day. Students also have access to their online Destiny Library account, which includes the library card catalog, online databases, other digital resources, and the ability to renew books and view their checkouts.
- A Scholastic Book fair will be held during spring conferences. Students will also have an opportunity to browse the book fair during their reading class times. More information will be sent out to families prior to the fair.

Checking Out Materials:

- Students may have a total of three books checked out to their account at one time.
- Each book is due two weeks from the checkout date. All books may be renewed indefinitely unless another student is waiting for the book.
- Books may be borrowed from any of the libraries in the district.
- If a student loses a book or returns it damaged, they will be asked to pay a fine or work in the library to compensate for the cost of the book.
- Students and parents are welcome to request books for the library by using the Materials Request Form. These forms are available in the library, on the media center's website, or by emailing Ms. Glanzer.

Criteria to Advance to High School Algebra from 7th Grade: For a 7th grader to attend HS Algebra class for their 8th grade year, the requirements are: **1.** Advanced on ISASP tests (575 or greater) **2.** Achieve College pathway on the aMath screener (233 or above) **3.** Earn an A in 7th Math **4.** 7th Math Teacher signs off concerning reliable work ethic.

Music: The Middle School music program includes band and choir. Both are commitments made by students for at least a semester at a time. The decision to join or quit these programs must be made within the first two weeks of each semester. Instrumental lessons are scheduled during the school day for each band member. 7th and 8th graders are eligible to participate in the high school marching band.

Chess Club: All middle school students are encouraged to join this activity which allows students to learn and play the game of chess. Meetings will be held after school on designated days, as determined by supervising staff.

School Sponsored Dances for Grades 7 & 8: The ELC Middle School may hold dances sponsored by the Student Council. These dances are intended for currently enrolled Middle School students. Students who take classes at Middle School may attend with prior approval from administration. A list of those approved will be given to chaperones. All others will be denied admittance. Parents are asked to pick up students immediately following the dance. Chaperones will enforce the following rule: Students will be allowed to be in the gym and the commons area outside the gymnasium; all other parts of the building are off limits. Students shall adhere to the Middle School Dress Code. Inappropriate language, physical violence, and inappropriate dancing will not be tolerated. Students will be asked to leave if this occurs. Students who choose to leave the dance must sign out and may not return to the dance.

GENERAL PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION

Communication Tools: A variety of communication tools are in place for parents and students. All teachers have a school gmail account: firstname.lastname@elc-csd.org and parents are encouraged to email teachers for homework updates, reminders, and grade checks. Parents/guardians may access JMC to view attendance, grades, and work completion by signing up at registration. Daily announcements are posted on the ELC School website (www.estherville.k12.is.us). All families will receive school communications through School Messenger by way of voice mails, emails, and/or text messages. For more information and other helpful links, please visit the ELC website.

Disaster Drills: Disaster drills are held throughout the school year. Disaster instructions are posted in each room of the middle school and teachers periodically review them with students.

- **Fire/Evacuation Drill:** The alarm warning for evacuation of the building is a steady signal. Students should walk in single file, refrain from talking, and follow their teacher's instructions.
- **Disaster/Tornado Drill:** The tornado warning signal is accompanied by flashing lights. Students should walk in single file, refrain from talking, and follow their teacher's instructions.

Grading: Letter grades of A, B, C, D, and F are used in the 5-8 grade levels. Report cards will show the letter grades, attendance records, and teacher comments. The middle school will use the following scale in determining student grades:

97-100-A+	87-89-B+	77-79-C+	67-69-D+
93-96-A	83-86-B	73-76-C	63-66-D
90-92-A-	80-82-B-	70-72-C-	60-62-D- Below 60-F

- **Mid-term Grades:** At mid-term of each quarter, mid-term grades will be assigned to show student's progress. Parents are encouraged to call their student's teacher for additional information or a conference.
- **Honor Roll:** Honor Roll is determined by term grade point average (GPA). Students with a GPA of 3.000-3.499 are placed on the "B" Honor Roll and 3.500-4.000 are placed on the "A" Honor Roll. These values are used for GPA:

A+ - 4.000	B+ - 3.333	C+ - 2.333	D+ - 1.333	
A - 4.000	B - 3.000	C - 2.000	D - 1.000	
A- -3.667	B- - 2.667	C- - 1.667	D- - 0.667	F - 0.000

Homework: There is usually enough time for students to start on work during the school day. Per board policy, the following will be used when assigning homework: *Grades 5 & 6 – 20 to 40 minutes of homework; Grades 7 & 8 – 30 to 75 minutes of homework.* To help students realize the importance of work completion, teachers may keep students after school when work is not completed. They may also deduct points or reduce a student's grade on late work. Teachers will work with students to determine the cause of incomplete or late work and help create a plan to remedy any emerging pattern. Student assignments/progress may be viewed through parental access to JMC (see Communication Tools).

Parent-Teacher Conferences: Four evenings (two in the fall and two in the spring) are set aside for Parent/Teacher conferences to discuss student progress. A parent may request a conference at any time by calling the school office or the teacher to arrange a convenient time.

Parent/Student Grievance: The middle school staff will provide honest responses to parents/guardians about a student's successes and failures in the classroom and school building. There will be open dialogues about any concerns heard or seen relating to classroom, programs, or other topics. If there is a complaint, parents are asked to go directly to that individual and express any concerns. If the problem/concern is not resolved, the chain of command is as follows: Teacher – Principal – Superintendent of Schools – Board of Education.

Release of Student Information: If needed, the following information may be released to the public in regard to any individual student of the school district: *Name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous school or institution attended by the student.* Any student, parent, or guardian not wanting this information released to the public must make an objection in writing to the building principal.

Standardized Testing: The ISASP (Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress) tests are given annually to students in 5th through 8th grade. Seventh grade students take the Algebra Aptitude Tests in March. All eighth graders take the District Technology Assessment. The IELDA is administered annually to students in our ELL (English as a Learning Language) program. Students at the middle school may participate in various reading or math standardized assessments.

Student Fees: Students whose families meet the income guidelines for free and reduced-price meals, the Family Investment Program (FIP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), transportation assistance under open enrollment, or are in foster care, are eligible to have student fees reduced or waived. The waiver form may be found on the ELC website.

This waiver does not carry over from year to year and must be completed annually. Standard middle school fees are:

Textbook Fee	\$75.00 per year	MS Yearbook (optional)	\$30.00 per issue
Activity Ticket (optional)	\$55.00 per year	Instrumental Rental (if applicable)	\$25.00 per year
Chromebook (grades 7-8)	\$50.00 /year for take-home fee to use school-issued device		

Student Transferring: If you are moving away, please stop in the office to sign a record release form and to check on any outstanding fees. The transferring student must also pick up a student checkout form from the office. This form is taken to all the student's teachers to be signed stating all books/devices/materials are returned. The student will also clean their locker/desk/PE locker, return all library books, pick up any art projects, take personal items with them, etc.

Student Appropriate Use Policy: MS Students are given access to the Internet through individual network accounts. Email accounts are issued to students at an appropriate level for curriculum use. **Expectation of Privacy:** The District retains control and supervision of all technology including computers, networks, and Internet services owned or leased by the school. The District reserves the right to monitor all use of technology. **Each person has no expectation of privacy in their use of the District technology, including email and stored files. All communications/information received via the district technology shall be considered the property of the district. Each person will respect the rights of others to the protection of the files they store on a computer and will not alter or damage such files.**

Internet Safety and Access: It is the policy of the ELC School District to (that):

- Prevent user access and transmission of any inappropriate material via the Internet and other electronic communication devices
- Prevent unauthorized access and unlawful online activity by forbidding violation of copyright laws, licensing agreements, or plagiarizing works they find on the Internet. Students shall cite all quotes, references, and sources.
- Comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)]
- Users will not make deliberate attempts to degrade, vandalize, hack, disrupt or break equipment, software, or network performance.
- Cameras or other recording devices are not to be used to take pictures or video without the consent of all persons being photographed or recorded.
- Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to information resources, another person's materials, information or work folder, files, or use another user's network account.
- Users will not use the school district system to post private information about another person or to post personal contact information about themselves or other persons including, but not limited to, addresses, telephone numbers, school addresses, identification numbers, access codes or passwords.
- Users will not use the school district system to purchase goods or services for personal use without authorization from the appropriate school district official.

- Students will not be allowed to use non-school issued email, or chat rooms, forums, post boards, post logs, blogs, or other on-line communication services or games without the authorization of a teacher.
- Students shall use all technology and communications responsibly and ethically with appropriate online behavior.
- To comply with the Children’s Internet Protection Act, we have installed security software that will filter and block offensive, obscene, pornographic, and any other inappropriate material deemed harmful to minors. Because information on the Internet changes constantly it is not possible to predict, control, or filter everything a student may locate and ELC School makes no guarantees as to the accuracy of content found on the Internet or specific websites.
- **Parents and students will sign a form acknowledging that they have read and understand the Appropriate Use Policy and that they will comply with the policy and understand the consequences that could be invoked for violation of the policy.**

Education, Supervision, and Monitoring: It shall be the responsibility of all members of the Estherville Lincoln Central Community School staff to educate, supervise, and monitor appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy and the Children’s Internet Protection Act. Estherville Lincoln Central staff will provide age-appropriate training for students who use the district’s Internet facilities. The training will be designed to promote the school’s commitment to:

- The acceptable use of the Internet services as set forth in the district’s Appropriate Use and Internet Safety Policy
- Student safety with regard to: Safety on the Internet, appropriate behavior while online, cyber bullying awareness and response, unauthorized access, including hacking and other unlawful activities by minors online, use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors
- Compliance with the E-rate requirements of the Children’s Internet Protection Act

Student Violation-Consequences and Notifications: Consequences and Notifications of violations will be handled by building administration or his/her designee. A verbal and written notice will be issued to the student violating the school district’s Appropriate Use Policy. Additionally, students may be held financially responsible for any damages caused by their actions. Based on the severity of the offense, the consequence may also include, but will not necessarily be limited to one or more of the following:

- Suspension or Revocation of Local Area Network/Internet/Email access/computer access
- School suspension or expulsion
- Legal action and prosecution by authorities
- Violation of the Good Conduct Policy
- Others as deemed appropriate by the administration

A copy of the notice will be mailed to the student’s parent/guardian and a copy placed in the student’s file.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Allegations of Abuse of Students by School Employees - Investigators: *Iowa Code 280.17*

Level One Investigator: Christine Dunlavy, 712-362-8402 Level Two Investigator: Mike Martin, 712-362-3515

Allegations of Abuse of Students by AEA Employees - Investigators: *Chapter 102*

Level One Investigator: Please call 515-295-7784 Level One Alternative: Please call 515-336-1331

Crisis Management Plan: The ELC School Board adopted a crisis management plan and guidelines for student crisis and has the capabilities to respond to various crisis situations. The plan outlines emergency response procedures for the following areas: child abuse, suicide, death and loss, health and safety, traffic emergencies/traffic safety, first aid and universal precautions, fire, tornado, earthquake, weapons, bomb threats and search, bus safety, disruptions, and general procedures for crisis management. We have a school-wide crisis response team who handles planning and evaluation, coordinating the building level teams, and connecting to community resources. We expect total student cooperation should a crisis situation become a reality. Emergency drills are conducted during the school year.

Open Enrollment: The deadline for open enrollment is March 1st for students in grades 1st - 12th.

Educational Equity Policy Statement: It is the policy of the ELC Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, socioeconomic status, national origin, creed, age, marital status, or disability in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title VI and VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, and Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It is also the policy of this district that the curriculum content and instructional materials utilized reflect the cultural and racial diversity present in the United States and the variety of careers, roles, and life-styles open to women as well as men in our society. One of the objectives of the total curriculum and teaching strategies is to reduce stereotyping and to eliminate bias on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, religion, and disability. The curriculum should foster respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity found in our country and an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each individual as a member of a pluralistic society. Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX, Title VI and VII, or Section 504 may be directed to the Director of the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Des Moines, Iowa, or to the Director of the Region VII Office of Civil Rights, Department of Education, Kansas City, Missouri.

Homeless Definitions: Homeless means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes: Sheltered/transitionally housed – Children who are placed by the state or have individually or with a family accessed and are living in a public or private shelter or transitional housing project on a temporary basis. Doubled-Up – A child who lives with relatives or friends due to a loss of housing due to disasters, lack of employment, parents will not allow a child to live at home, abandoned children, or other similar situations. Unsheltered – Children living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar situations of public and private places not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings. Other – Abandoned children temporarily housed by hospitals, YWCA/YMCA organizations, etc.

Tobacco Free Environment: A smoke free environment has been established in all school buildings and on all school grounds. All school district owned or operated buildings shall be off limits for smoking at all times. The ban is extended to all persons. This includes all school-sponsored events as well as non-school-sponsored events. Persons failing to abide by this shall be required to leave the school district premises immediately. School district personnel failing to abide by the request will be subject to disciplinary action.

School Bus Seat Belt Policy: It is the goal of the ELC School District Transportation Dept. to provide the safest transportation possible. Beginning in 2020-2021, the district will have a school bus equipped with lap/shoulder seat belts. The district requires that ALL students riding a school bus equipped with seat belts wear the seat belt while the bus is in motion. Students will receive instructions on proper use of seat belts. Drivers are not responsible (liable) for students wearing seat belts while riding. Drivers are responsible for instructing students to put on seat belts prior to the bus leaving for a destination. Students who may require assistance in using seat belts should ask the driver for help. So that all students are safely belted in their seat before the bus is in motion, drivers will announce that each student needs to be in their seat with the seat belt fastened prior to leaving. Students refusing to use seat belts create a safety concern for themselves and others, and are subject to school district disciplinary actions. Repeated offenders who do not wear the seat belts can result in suspension from bus-riding privileges.