



Bismarck Public Elementary Schools



STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK

Revised 10/2020

Bismarck Public Elementary Schools

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For more information about Bismarck Public Schools, visit our website at
www.bismarckschools.org.

Our Mission:

Empower every learner to thrive.

Our Vision:

Together, our strong relationships build inclusive, collaborative, and innovative environments that create agency and inspire a passion for learning, excellence, and discovery.

Our Values:

Excellence, Innovation, Inclusion and Leadership.

Second Step Curriculum

All Bismarck Public Elementary Schools implement the Second Step curriculum. The elementary years bring exciting new challenges and opportunities. It's the ideal time to nurture social-emotional competence and develop foundational learning skills. Evidence-based Second Step SEL for K–5 includes tools schools need to integrate social-emotional learning (SEL) into their classrooms and schoolwide. Using the Second Step curriculum has been shown to decrease problem behaviors, and it's designed to promote school success, self-regulation, and a sense of safety and support.

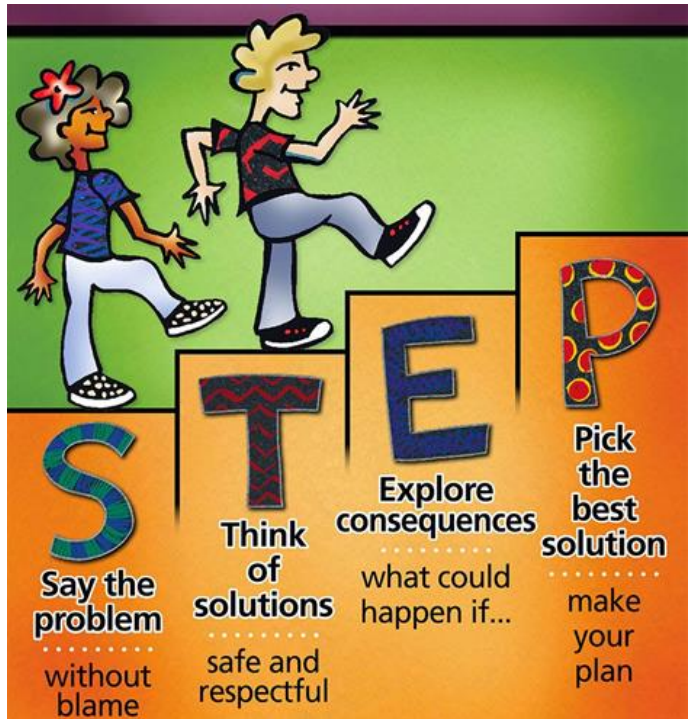
Problem-Solving Steps:

Say the problem

Think of solutions

Explore consequences

Pick the best solution



General Elementary School Guidelines*

*Please note these current elementary school guidelines may be subject to revision as a result of the need to adapt additional guidelines to deal with the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Attendance

Regular timely school attendance is not only required by law but is clearly very important to the educational process and to the development of appropriate lifelong work habits. Regular school attendance is a parent-child responsibility and the school is required by law to report apparent abuses.

Absences (even with the approval of the parent(s)/guardian(s)) which are excessive and/or interfere with the student's educational program will be interpreted as educational neglect and Child Protection Services may be notified.

It is clear, however, that times exist when not attending school is in the best interest of a child or the entire school.

- If a child is ill, he/she should not attend school and risk transmitting the disease to others.
- Parents should call the school prior to 9:00 on the morning of an absence. Upon returning, students need to bring a note to school from his/her parent and/or doctor informing the teacher why the student was absent.
- Students arriving late must check in at the school office.
- An occasional significant family trip can be a valuable learning experience. Arrangements must be made with the classroom teacher regarding make-up work in advance.

Attendance Boundaries

The school attendance boundaries for elementary schools are available in each elementary school.

- Parents can use the District website to determine the elementary, middle and high school attendance area of their address.
- Go to the District tab called “Registration”
- Click on the “Find Your School” link
- Enter the home address to receive the elementary, middle and high school assignments for your child in the Bismarck Public School System.

Procedures for attending a school other than the assigned neighborhood school are found later in this Handbook under Transfers. For additional questions regarding attendance boundaries, please contact the Registrar at 701-323-4110.

Admission Requirements

A child’s birth certificate and immunization form are required of all students. Students must be a minimum of 5 years old on or before July 31 in order to enter kindergarten. Students must be a minimum of 6 years old on or before July 31 in order to enter 1st grade. A Bismarck Public Schools Student Registration form is to be completed by the legal decision maker for the child. Please make an appointment to register your child(ren) by calling the Registrar at 701-323-4110. The registrar’s office is in the Hughes Education Center located at 806 N. Washington St. in Bismarck.

Athletic Tickets

Season activity tickets for all Bismarck High School, Century High School and Legacy High School home activities (excluding tournaments) are available for \$30 per student, \$85 per adult and \$50 for senior citizens (62 years of age and older). There will be well over 100 athletic events during the year for which the tickets will be honored. There is an additional \$1 surcharge for each event at the Bismarck MDU Community Bowl or the Bismarck Event Center.

Athletics (Extra-Curricular)

Sports programs are available for boys and girls in the third, fourth and fifth grades through the Bismarck Park District. Basketball, volleyball and cross-country activities are scheduled each year.

The emphasis of these programs is entry-level fundamentals, fun, teamwork, cooperation, conditioning, recreation, confidence-building, and good sportsmanship. While competition is necessarily a part of these games, efforts will be made to avoid unhealthy levels of competition in elementary sports.

Building Use

Use of school buildings for non-school functions is governed by the districtwide “Use of School Facilities” policies, which can be found on www.bismarckschools.org under Quick Links “Facility Rental.” These policies require filling out an application and signing a contract specifying terms and fees.

Bullying Policy

*For more information and the Bully Report Form, go to www.bismarckschools.org under Quick Links, “Bullying Resources.”

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

1. Bullying is defined as conduct prescribed in NDCC 15.1-19-17.
 - a. "Bullying" means:
 - 1) Conduct that occurs in a public school, on school district premises, in a district owned or leased school bus or school vehicle, or at any public school or school district sanctioned or sponsored activity or event and which:
 - a) Is so severe, pervasive, or objectively offensive that it substantially interferes with the student's educational opportunities;
 - b) Places the student in actual and reasonable fear of harm;
 - c) Places the student in actual and reasonable fear of damage to property of the student; or
 - d) Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the public school;
 - 2) Conduct that is received by a student while the student is in a public school, on school district premises, in a district owned or leased school bus or school vehicle, or at any public school or school district sanctioned or sponsored activity or event and which:
 - a) Is so severe, pervasive, or objectively offensive that it substantially interferes with the student's educational opportunities;
 - b) Places the student in actual and reasonable fear of harm;
 - c) Places the student in actual and reasonable fear of damage to property of the student; or
 - d) Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the public school.
 - b. “Conduct” includes the use of technology or other electronic media.

The Superintendent should place this definition, in its entirety, in student and staff handbooks and should develop guidelines to assist students and staff with identifying this conduct.
2. Protected classes are classifications/characteristics protected from discrimination by NDCC 14-02.4-01 and federal law. The following classes are protected: race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability (physical or mental), and status with regard to marriage or public assistance.
3. School property or the term on-campus refers to all property owned or leased by the District, school buses and other vehicles, or any school district sponsored or school-sanctioned activity.
4. School-sanctioned activity is defined as an activity that:
 - a. Is not part of the district’s curricular or extracurricular program; and
 - b. Is established by a sponsor to serve in the absence of a district program; and
 - c. Receives district support in multiple ways (i.e., not school facility use alone); and
 - d. Sponsors of the activity have agreed to comply with this policy; and
 - e. The District has officially recognized through board action as a school-sanctioned activity.
 - f. Examples would include, but are not limited to, BLAST Programs, Youthworks.

5. School-sponsored activity is an activity that the District has approved through policy or other board action for inclusion in the district's extracurricular program and is controlled and funded primarily by the District.
6. School staff includes all employees of the Bismarck Public Schools, school volunteers, and sponsors of school-sanctioned activities.
7. True threat is a statement that, in light of the circumstances, a reasonable person would perceive as a serious expression of an intent to inflict harm.

Prohibitions

While at a public school, on school district premises, in a district-owned or leased school bus or school vehicle, or at any public school or school district sanctioned or sponsored activity or event, a student may not:

1. Engage in bullying;
2. Engage in reprisal or retaliation against:
 - a. A victim of bullying;
 - b. An individual who witnesses an alleged act of bullying;
 - c. An individual who reports an alleged act of bullying; or
 - d. An individual who provides information/participates in an investigation about an alleged act of bullying.
3. Knowingly file a false bullying report with the District; Off-campus bullying that is received on school property is also prohibited.

Reporting Procedures for Alleged Policy Violations

1. Reporting requirements for school staff: Any school staff member with knowledge or suspicion of a violation of this policy or who has received an oral or written report of a violation of this policy from a student, community member, or anonymously shall contact the building principal to inform him/her as soon as possible. If the alleged violation implicates the building principal, the school staff member shall report it to the Superintendent. If the alleged violation implicates the Superintendent, the school staff member shall file it with the Board President.

Should school administration determine that a school staff member knew of or suspected a violation of this policy and failed to report it in accordance with the procedure above, the staff member may be subject to disciplinary consequences or, for sponsors of school-sanctioned activities, other corrective measures.

2. Reporting options for students and community members: Students and community members (including parents/guardians) may report known or suspected violations of this policy using any of the following methods:
 - a. Completing a written complaint form: A complainant will have the option of including his/her name on this form or filing it anonymously. The District will place the form in a variety of locations throughout the school and should inform students and staff of these locations. The form may be returned to any school staff member, filed in a school building's main office, or placed in a designated drop box located in each school.
 - b. Complete and submit an online complaint form. A complainant will have the option of including his/her name on the form or submitting it anonymously.
 - c. File an oral report with any school staff member.

A complaint filed anonymously may limit the district's ability to investigate and respond to the alleged violations.

Reporting to Law Enforcement & Others Forms of Redress

Anytime a school staff member has reasonable suspicion that a bullying incident constituted a crime, s/he shall report it to law enforcement. Also, nothing in this policy shall prevent a victim/his/her family from seeking redress under state and federal law.

Documentation & Retention

The District shall develop a form to report alleged violations of this policy. The form should be completed by school staff when they:

1. Initiate a report of an alleged violation of this policy; or
2. Receive a report of an alleged violation of this policy.

All reports of an alleged violation of this policy received by the District shall be forwarded to the appropriate school administrator for investigation and retention.

Report forms and all other documentation related to an investigation of an alleged violation of this policy shall be retained by the District for six years after a student turns 18 or graduates from high school, whichever is later. If a student does not graduate from the District, such reports and investigation material shall be retained for six years after the student turns 18.

Investigation Procedures

School administrators (i.e., a principal, an assistant superintendent, or the Superintendent) are required to investigate violations of this policy (as prescribed under “Prohibitions”), when in receipt of actual notice of an alleged violation. Actual notice of an alleged violation occurs when alleged bullying, reprisal, retaliation, or false reporting is reported using the applicable method(s) prescribed in the reporting section of this policy.

Upon receipt of a report of an alleged policy violation, the designated administrator shall first determine if the alleged policy violation is based on a protected class—whether actual or perceived. Reports involving a protected class shall be investigated in accordance with the district’s harassment/discrimination policy, including the timelines contained therein.

In all other cases, administration shall determine the level of investigation necessary based on the nature of the alleged violation of this policy after considering factors such as, but not limited to: the identity of the reporter and his/her relationship to the victim/alleged perpetrator; the ages of the parties involved; the detail, content, and context of the report; whether this report is the first of its type filed against the alleged perpetrator. Based on the level of investigation the administrator deems necessary, investigations may include any or all of the following steps or any other investigatory steps that the administrator deems necessary:

1. Identification and collection of necessary and obtainable physical evidence (NOTE: In some cases, physical evidence may be unobtainable, e.g., a private social networking profile);
2. Interviews with the complainant, the victim, and/or the alleged perpetrator. At no time during an investigation under this policy shall the victim/complainant be required to meet with the alleged perpetrator;
3. Interviews with any identified witnesses;
4. A review of any mitigating or extenuating circumstances;
5. Final analysis and issuance of findings in writing to the parents/guardians of both the victim and alleged bully and, if applicable, implementation of victim protection measures and disciplinary measures under this or other applicable policies.

Investigations shall be completed within a reasonable timeframe. When the investigation extends beyond 30 days, the administrator must document good cause for extending this deadline. Such documentation should be sent to the parents/guardians of both the victim and alleged perpetrator during the investigation.

Disciplinary & Corrective Measures

Students that the District has found to have violated this policy shall be subject to disciplinary consequences and/or corrective measures. When determining the appropriate response to violations of this policy, administration shall take into account the totality of circumstances surrounding the violation. Measures that may be imposed include, but are not limited to:

1. Require the student to attend detention;
2. Impose in- or out-of-school suspension or recommend expulsion. Due process procedures contained in the district's suspension and expulsion policy shall be followed;
3. Recommend alternative placement. This recommendation shall be submitted to the Superintendent for approval or denial. The Superintendent may approve such recommendations only if the student has been given notice of the charges against him/her and an opportunity to respond;
4. Create a behavioral adjustment plan;
5. Refer the student to a school counselor;
6. Hold a conference with the student's parent/guardian and classroom teacher(s), and other applicable school staff;
7. Modify the perpetrator's schedule and take other appropriate measures (e.g., moving locker) to minimize contact with the victim;
8. If applicable, contact the administrator of the website on which the bullying occurred to report it.
9. Referral to Law Enforcement

If the misconduct does not meet this policy's definition of bullying, it may be addressed under other district disciplinary policies.

For bullying initiated off campus and received on campus (e.g. cyberbullying), the District only has authority to impose disciplinary measures if the bullying substantially disrupted the educational environment or posed a true threat. In all other cases of off campus bullying received on campus, the District may only take corrective measures as described in items five through eight above.

If the perpetrator is a school staff member, the District shall take appropriate disciplinary action including, but not limited to: a reprimand, modification of duties (only if allowed by applicable policy, the negotiated agreement, and/or the individual's contract), suspension, or a recommendation for termination/discharge in accordance with any applicable law.

Victim Protection Strategies

When the District confirms that a violation of this policy has occurred, every reasonable effort shall be made to notify the victim's parents/guardians and the District shall implement victim protection strategies. These strategies shall be developed on a case-by-case basis after administration has reviewed the totality of the circumstances surrounding the bullying incident(s) or other violations of this policy. Strategies may include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Additional education for all students and applicable staff on implementation of this policy and/or bullying prevention.
2. Notice to the victim's teachers and other staff to monitor the victim and his/her interaction with peers and/or the assignment of a staff member to escort the student between classes.

3. Assignment of staff to monitor, more frequently, areas in the school where bullying has occurred.
4. Referral to counseling services for the victim and perpetrator.
5. Modification of schedules and other appropriate measures to minimize the perpetrator's contact with the victim.
6. Modification to schedules, alternative placement, and appropriate measures will first be applied to the perpetrator.

Prevention Programs & Professional Development Activities

In accordance with law, the District shall develop and implement bullying prevention programs for all students and staff professional development activities.

Chemical Abuse

The Bismarck Public School District recognizes that chemical abuse is a serious problem that adversely affects the educational process. The Bismarck Public School Board is committed to the development and implementation of programs and policies which contribute to the well-being of students and adults through prevention, intervention, after care and staff development.

Child Abuse

By state law, school professionals are required to report any cases of suspected child abuse, child neglect, or educational neglect to appropriate authorities. Reporting suspected incidents is not simply something that we are professionally obligated to do but also something that we are legally required to report to authorities. Failure on our part to do so is a crime subject to legal penalty. Reporting is not necessarily accusing; it is merely reporting a reasonable suspicion that abuse or neglect may have occurred that requires investigation.

Counseling Program

A comprehensive school counseling program is available to all students in Bismarck Public Elementary Schools. This program is preventive and developmental in nature. It also provides some remediation and crisis intervention. The classroom guidance curriculum emphasizes learning life skills and behaviors that will help each student become a responsible, productive member of society. Elementary school counselors assist with day-to-day problems and other situations requiring conflict resolution in the school setting. Counselors may serve as consultants to parents and teachers regarding personal, social, or academic development of a student. They may also act as referral agents and as a liaison to community agencies. With parental consent, students may be involved, on a regular basis, in small group counseling, or individual counseling to address specific concerns such as: study skills, family changes, grief, anger, and social skills.

Cumulative Records

Each student has a cumulative record of school progress. Immunization records, report cards, achievement test results, attendance records, and other pertinent student data are recorded in this file. Student records are confidential but open to parents for inspection.

Curriculum Materials

Textbooks and/or curriculum materials are adopted based on the North Dakota state standards. When it becomes necessary for new materials to be selected, it is the responsibility of the assistant superintendent, along with a selection committee, to study options, gather feedback, and make a selection of updated curricular materials. Parents may view such materials according to Bismarck Public Schools District policies.

Discipline

Because we care about the safety of all children and staff, we will see that no child is prevented from having an opportunity to learn and that no teacher is prevented from teaching. Our goal is to provide a productive learning/living environment, while at the same time promoting a positive sense of self-worth, dignity, cooperation, and self-discipline for everyone.

We strongly believe that it is in your children's best interests that we cooperate in developing appropriate school behavior. A parent/teacher/principal conference may be held to support positive student behavior.

Discriminatory Harassment

It is the policy of the school district that all students have a right to learn in an environment free from discriminatory harassment. The school district intends to extend its best efforts to accomplish this goal and expects all of its employees and students to do the same.

Discriminatory harassment of students in the Bismarck School District is prohibited. It is the Bismarck School District's policy to provide students a learning environment free from any form of discriminatory harassment in accord with the regulations of Title VI, Title IX, The Americans with Disabilities Act, or Section 504.

Speech or other expression constitutes prohibited discriminatory harassment if it:

- a. Is intended to insult or stigmatize an individual or a small number of individuals on the basis of their race, color, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, or disability;
- b. Is addressed directly to the individual or small group of individuals whom it insults or stigmatizes;
- c. Makes use of insulting words or nonverbal symbols commonly understood to convey direct hatred or contempt; and
- d. Creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment for the individual or small group of individuals.

Prohibited discriminatory harassment includes threats of violence intended to intimidate an individual or a small number of individuals on the basis of their race, color, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, or disability.

Any student, who violates this policy, by engaging in conduct defined above that directly or indirectly causes intimidation, harassment or physical harm to another student or staff member, will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension. Students who believe that they or any other student have been the subject of harassment/discriminatory behavior should report the incident immediately to the building administrator.

Dress Code

Although personal grooming and dress are primarily matters of concern between the students and their parents, it becomes a concern of the school when grooming and dress patterns create a disruptive influence upon the educational program of the school, endanger the health and safety of the student body, or result in the destruction of school property. Furthermore, good personal appearance is conducive to a positive learning environment and a strong school culture, reflective of adopted school district values.

The school board, therefore, encourages the students to use sound judgment in dress and grooming, and prohibits the wearing of clothing and/or accessories that endanger the health and safety of students and staff or that result in the destruction of school property. Because the Bismarck School Board's Drug Education Policy stresses prevention and a clear message of abstinence from any use of illegal drugs and abuse of any legal drugs or alcohol, articles of clothing or accessories that depict or promote the use of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs may not be worn at school functions or on school property. Also, because it is the Bismarck School District's policy to provide students with a learning environment free from any form of sexual harassment, prohibited articles of clothing include (but are not limited to) clothing that displays objects, pictures, writing, designs or representations that are obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, or sexually suggestive.

Clothing styles that are immodest, excessively revealing or show a student's undergarments may not be worn in school. Any clothing or accessories that detract from the educational environment will be judged on an individual basis by the building administrator. A student with inappropriate dress will be asked to modify clothing choices or have their parents bring them appropriate clothing.

Educational Concerns

Public schools serve many children coming from a rich diversity of cultural backgrounds. The families from which they come have values and concerns that can be equally diverse. We believe we have a high quality instructional staff and an educational program to meet the needs of all students. If, however, there is a problem that needs attention, there is a standard process for addressing the issue. Problems are best solved as close as possible to the source. With that in mind, we suggest the following steps:

1. It is suggested that you discuss your concern first with your child.
2. If further communication is necessary, visit with your child's teacher.
3. If satisfaction is not reached at this level, a letter, phone call or a personal visit with the principal is the next step to resolve the concern.
4. A conference with the parent, teacher, principal, and student, if appropriate, is the next step to resolve the concern.
5. Any decision at a building level may be appealed to central administration (the Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Schools or the Superintendent).

Emergency and Disaster Drills

Students will be informed as to exact procedures in all emergency and disaster drills. Specific routes and areas are assigned for bomb, fire, storm, civil defense disasters and lock down emergencies. Drills are regularly held to practice contingency plans for protecting your children against potential emergencies and disasters. If the building is evacuated, students will go to the nearest area(s) of safety. The superintendent will notify parents, appropriate staff, and the local news media. Information on picking up children will be communicated according to the district safety plan.

Excusing Students During School Hours

If parents or guardians need to take students out of school, the parents or guardian must sign their child out of school at the school office. Please call or write a note to the teacher in advance if possible.

Harassment of Students

It is the policy of the school district that all students have a right to learn in an environment free from any type of harassment, intimidation, or victimization. The school district intends to extend its best efforts to accomplish this goal and expects all of its employees and students to do the same.

Harassment of students in the Bismarck School District is prohibited. It is the Bismarck School District's policy to provide students an environment free from any form of harassment and to maintain a safe, supportive, nurturing, non-punitive school environment highly conducive to learning.

Harassment Defined: Harassment occurs when a series of intentionally cruel incidents that are deliberately hostile and aggressive are directed toward a person. A person is being harassed when he or she is exposed to negative actions on the part of one or more persons. Harassment also occurs when actions of one or more persons create an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment for an individual or a small group of individuals.

Harassment encompasses a wide range of hurtful behaviors:

- Physical: action-oriented harm to another person's body or property such as pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, unwanted physical contact, and any other forms of violence.
- Verbal: using words to hurt or humiliate another person such as name-calling, hurtful sarcasm, persistent teasing, spreading rumors, taunting, and any other verbal threats.
- Intimidation: arousing fear in an individual by emotional tormenting, threatening gestures, ridicule, putdowns, exclusion from a group, humiliation and any other frightening behaviors. Intimidation by virtue of the display of gang colors, gang paraphernalia, gang signing, gang gestures, and other gang-related actions is also prohibited.
- Bullying: deliberate hostility, intentional cruelty, or aggression toward a victim that is weaker and less powerful than the bully with an outcome that is painful, distressing, or intimidating for the victim. Bullying can take the form of physically injurious actions as well as verbal forms of harassment. With bullying there is always a power imbalance that makes the ill treatment of a victim possible.
- Racial, Cultural and Sexual

Complaints: Any student who believes he or she has been the victim of prohibited harassment should make a prompt, oral complaint to the teacher, supervisor, building administrator or designee.

The school district encourages informal, deliberate, and prompt resolution of concerns about prohibited harassment. If the complaint is not resolved informally, the facts surrounding the incident(s) should be submitted to the building principal in writing and signed by the complaining student or his/her parent or guardian.

Complaints of harassment shall be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the appropriate personnel. Corrective action for prohibited harassment will be taken as warranted after a complete review of all relevant facts.

Penalties for Harassment: The school administration will determine appropriate consequences for violating this policy. Consequences may include any or all of the following:

- Administering approved disciplinary practices and procedures at school.
- Notifying the principal, superintendent, or other designee.
- Notifying parents, guardians, or legal custodians.
- Notifying law enforcement officials.
- Prosecution under state statute 15-49-08 (Penalty for willful disturbance of school).
- Suspension from school.
- Recommendation for expulsion.

Homework

Time is usually provided for coursework to be completed during school hours. Students who make good use of their time will usually get their work done in school. However, there may be times when it becomes necessary to take work home in order to meet deadlines, do extra practice, or to prepare for tests. In these instances, it is the student's responsibility to complete the assigned work at home and on time. Students unable to attend school due to illness or family trips are asked to make up work by arrangement with the classroom teacher.

Illness, Injuries & Accidents

In the event a student becomes ill or an accident occurs at school, the school will provide emergency care, notify parent or guardian, and in serious instances, summon a doctor and/or arrange for hospitalization. All accidents that occur on school property or during school activities should be reported to the principal's office. The school district provides no medical insurance benefits for school related injuries. Damage to or loss of glasses or any other personal property is not covered under any school insurance plan.

Inclement Weather

The health and safety of your child will be the major consideration when making decisions about the appropriateness of going outside during extremely cold or wet conditions. Other considerations will be the need of children for fresh air, exercise, work breaks, and unstructured play time for social development. Students should come to school dressed appropriately to be outside during the weather expected that day. BPS Elementary Schools have jointly developed a guideline which states that outdoor recess will not normally occur when the wind chill drops below -15 degrees Fahrenheit. Keep in mind that actual time outside during recess breaks is generally limited to about ten-fifteen minutes. Based on the relative openness or protection of a particular school site, variations in this guideline will exist.

[Inclement Weather/Snow Day Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)

Invitations to Birthday Parties

If your child is having a birthday party or sleepover, we ask that you do not send invitations to school. When requested, schools are able to provide a school directory, which contains information parents have consented to, including family mailing addresses/contact information. This allows for invitations to be sent by mail or delivered personally outside of the school setting. While we know that all of these acts are done with the best of intentions, there have been numerous instances where children end up fighting and/or crying because of who is or who is not invited to a party. Invariably, some children end up with hurt feelings and the school staff spends time resolving the conflicts during learning time.

Legal Custody

In situations where one parent has custody or is considered the legal guardian of a child (also referred to as the child's legal decision maker), documentation should be brought to the school and placed in the child's cumulative file. This is particularly important in cases in which one parent is legally denied contact with the child. In such cases, the school will make every effort to cooperate with court orders. Divorce and custody information is available online at www.bismarckschools.org under the "Parents" tab.

Library

The motto of Bismarck school libraries is: "We show the way...to know what information you need, to find the information you need and to use the information you find." The Bismarck Public School Library Media Program equips users with diverse information resources and skills to access, process and apply information to problems and decisions, thereby helping them to make meaning of a rapidly changing world. School district policy states that all Bismarck elementary students will be allowed to search the collections of all libraries in the BPS library system. They may check out materials from their own library, and, with the help from the librarian, may request materials from any BPS library, unless the parent/guardian has restricted their access in writing. In order to provide the best access to materials, our elementary libraries allow materials to be checked out for a period to be determined by the librarian. That time is usually one week for lower grades and up to two weeks for upper grades. Materials may be renewed if necessary, as determined by the librarian. If a student has an overdue item, the child may not check out another item until the item is returned. If a borrowed item from any library is lost or damaged, it is up to the student and parents to pay for the replacement cost of the item(s).

Lost and Found

Parents are invited to check for lost items at the lost and found area in each school. By the end of school year, the lost and found accumulates quite a collection of unclaimed items. Items remaining at the end of the year are donated to a charitable organization.

Meals

Any child from grades K - 5 may eat school breakfast and lunch. Breakfast is served from 7:45-8:15 each school day. Students may bring a cold lunch from home or purchase a school-prepared lunch. Money for meals should be brought to the school office before classes begin in the morning. Parents may also make payments to their child's meal account online. Information on making online meal payments can be found on the District website under "Departments & Programs", "Child Nutrition". Milk may be purchased by children eating cold lunch for 40¢ per carton. Milk is included in the price of school meals. Meal prices are listed below. (**Prices are subject to change.**)

Lunch	Breakfast (where available)
Student - \$2.35	Student - \$1.45
Adult - \$3.60	Adult - \$2.20

Free or reduced-price meals are available for those students who qualify. Applications for free or reduced price meals are available at all the schools and at www.bismarckschools.org, under "Departments & Programs", "Child Nutrition" or under Quick Links "Free & Reduced Meal Application."

Music

An instruction program is offered on string instruments for students in grades 4-5. Schedules vary from year to year. Instruction is often scheduled before school but sometimes must be scheduled during the academic day.

In addition to the instrumental music programs, general music classes are provided as a part of the regular weekly instructional program for all students in grades K - 5.

Newsletter

A school newsletter is periodically electronically sent to parents regarding important events that occurred or will be occurring during the upcoming month. Please read the newsletter. You can also find it on your school website under "About Us."

Parent Organizations

Organizations of parents of students (PTOs/PACs) attending a Bismarck Public School have been formed at each school. Teachers may also be asked to participate in dialogue and decisions of the organization. This organization is advisory in nature and exercises only those functions and authority expressly delegated to it by the Bismarck Public School Board and the administration.

The purpose of parent organizations is:

- to promote and support good education for the students attending the elementary school and BPS in general.
- to advise and report educational concerns to school personnel and to act as a sounding board for good education.
- to disseminate information to parents and students of the school.
- to organize activities that might help provide resources for special school needs not funded by the district.

Parent-Visitor Code of Conduct

Bismarck Public Schools is proud and fortunate to have supportive and friendly parents/guardians and other adults who help model appropriate behavior so all children can be successful at school and in the community. It is important that students see people who can work together as this is a life skill we want them to develop to be healthy, productive citizens. Education of our children is a partnership with parents and others in our community.

We, as caring adults, believe we should:

- Respect school staff and what they are doing to help our children learn;
- Ask the school for help if we don't understand something happening at school or want more detail;
- Respect teaching time by not disrupting class or areas of the school during school hours;
- Set a good example by displaying appropriate behavior, respectful language, a moderate tone, and an even temper;
- Work to resolve school issues and conflicts in a constructive manner with open dialogue;
- Ask the school for their view of any incidents to determine if it is the same as the child's view before taking matters further (*ask before you act—see chain of command below*);
- Follow the proper "chain of command" when addressing a school issue. Reports of concerns would normally be made directly to the teacher. If the response is not satisfactory or it's not a classroom issue, the chain of command moves to the Assistant Principal or Principal, then the Assistant Superintendent of Elementary or Secondary Schools, then the Superintendent, and finally the School Board;
- Refrain from questioning decisions made by the school in front of children or other parents or school visitors as these are private matters;
- Refrain from criticizing or demeaning a child or parent about something that may have happened with another child;
- Refrain from criticizing the school, staff, students, other parents, etc. on the school premises or on school or personal social networking sites like Facebook or Twitter.

School staff, parents, visitors and students can work together to provide a safe, respectful school environment.

PLEASE NOTE:

Bodily harm or the threat of bodily harm to a staff member, student, parent or other school visitor will not be tolerated and is against the law. This includes abusive or threatening communications such as phone calls, texts, emails or social media posts. Use of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs while on school grounds or at a school event are illegal and will be prosecuted.

Parents or other school visitors who do not respect this Code of Conduct for appropriate school-related behavior may be banned from school grounds, buildings, and/or events. Authorities will be contacted if needed. Legal advice will be sought if disparaging or demeaning remarks are made or written about a school or staff member, student, etc. that could jeopardize the reputation of that person, the school or the district.

Parent Volunteers

Most Bismarck schools have been fortunate in having a core of dedicated volunteers. These parents usually work with students on computers, do classroom clerical work, assist on field trips, help with special projects, serve on the PTO/PAC, help with newsletters, or generally assist with school activities. Interested persons can call the school office to join the volunteer group. Volunteers may be subject to a background check.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Scheduled parent-teacher conferences are held two times a year for students in grades K-5. Parents and teachers are encouraged to make appointments for conferences at other times whenever they deem it necessary.

Pets

Pets and other animals are generally not allowed in schools or on the school playground due to allergies, safety concerns, etc.

Physical Education

Physical education classes, taught by a specialist, are offered to all students in grades K - 5. A Physical Education curriculum has been developed and is a part of the regular instructional day. No special uniform is required, though it is strongly suggested that gym shoes be worn on gym days.

Phone Calls/Cell Phone Usage

Telephone conversations should be brief since many important calls are received for teachers, parents and students. To help minimize disruption of the educational process, we suggest:

- Making prior arrangements about what children should do after school, especially during the winter months.
- Unless it is an emergency, students and teachers will not be interrupted for phone calls. During the school day, messages will be taken and given to the student or teacher or messages may be left on the teacher's voice mail.
- Students must receive permission from their teacher in order to make a phone call. Permission will be denied if the request is to make arrangements for social activities after school.
- Cell phone usage is not permitted during the school day. As with all other personal possessions, the student is responsible for the care of the phone. Cell phones will be confiscated if used during the school day. A parent or guardian may be required to pick up the phone.

PowerSchool

Parents and students can access PowerSchool and view current grades, assignment scores and attendance for the classes in which their child(ren) are currently enrolled. A Username and Password are required to access PowerSchool. If you do not have a Username and Password, contact your school office.

Promotions and Retention

If it is decided that a student is to repeat a grade, the records must support that decision. It is strongly suggested that if retention is being considered, the retention take place as early as possible in the child's school career, (i.e. kindergarten or Gr. 1), though not limited to those grades. Decisions regarding promotion or retention will be a cooperative effort between the parent, child, teacher, and principal. Factors such as physical and social maturity, effort, stress, health, attitude, and opportunity to improve are important factors to consider when decisions are made about promotion and retention.

According to school board policy, students with excessive absences may be considered for retention.

Recess

Students in all grades are given recess periods according to the time that best fits daily schedules. These schedules are determined by the building principal. Recess periods are supervised by adult members of the school staff and generally are 10-15 minutes long.

Responsible Use of Technology

BPS has a Responsible Use of Technology policy for students and staff. It includes appropriate and inappropriate use of technology on and off campus, internet filtering and online safety, as well as how violations are handled. Click here to become familiar with this policy:

<https://www.bismarckschools.org/cms/lib/ND02203833/Centricity/domain/199/board%20administrative%20policies/a%20-%20school%20board/ACDA%20Responsible%20Use.pdf>

School Day

The elementary school day is from 8:35 a.m. to 3:05 p.m. Playgrounds are not supervised prior to 8:05 a.m. Students not eating breakfast at school are encouraged to come to school between 8:20 and 8:35 a.m. There is no supervision after school; consequently, children are encouraged to go directly home after dismissal.

School Parties

Three classroom parties and an end of the year celebration are permitted each year. Occasionally, individual classrooms will have a smaller scale celebration for reaching a classroom goal. Students from families who have beliefs that conflict with the celebration of these events will be excused from these events.

School Property

We are proud of our schools and feel that most students, patrons, and taxpayers share that view. Part of a child's education is to learn responsibility and respect for the property of others. Cost of willful damage to the building, equipment, books, or the property of others will be the responsibility of the student and/or parent.

School Supervision

Staff members are assigned to school supervision beginning at 8:00 a.m. Children are under adult supervision during recess and noon hour. There is no supervision after school; consequently, children are encouraged to go directly home after dismissal.

School Supplies

All elementary schools use one general supply list. It can be found on each school webpage under "Resources."

Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of the school district that all students have a right to learn in an environment free from any type of discrimination, including freedom from sexual harassment. The school district intends to extend its best efforts to accomplish this goal and expects all of its employees and students to do the same.

Sexual harassment of students in the Bismarck School District is prohibited. It is the Bismarck School District's policy to provide students a learning environment free from any form of sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and offensive written, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature by employees or students.

Any student who believes that he or she has been the subject of sexual harassment should report their complaint to the building administrator. If the building administrator is the person complained about, the complaint should be made to the supervising assistant superintendent. The facts surrounding the incident(s) shall be submitted in writing and signed by the student or parent.

Complaints of sexual harassment are to be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the appropriate person receiving the complaint within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint.

After completing the investigation of the allegations, the student reporting the incident shall be notified of the decision made regarding final disposition of the complaint within ten (10) days by the building administrator, whose decision may be appealed to the Superintendent of Schools. Complaints may also be filed with the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Kansas City Office, 10220 North Executive Hills Boulevard 8th Floor, Kansas City, MO 64153-1367. Telephone: 816-880-4200
FAX: 816-891-0644; TDD: 816-891-0582 Email: OCR_KansasCity@ed.gov

Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Human Resources Manager, Bismarck Public Schools, 806 N. Washington St., Bismarck, ND 58501.

Staying After School

On occasion, it is necessary for students to stay after school. If it is necessary for a child to stay after school, it is normally for no more than 30 minutes. If staying after school involves transportation arrangements, standard practice is to have the child contact the parents in advance so that other transportation arrangements may be made.

Storm Policy

The Bismarck Public School System will work closely with the National Weather Service at the Bismarck airport. When weather conditions arise that may affect the safety of school children, the district administration will monitor information available concerning weather conditions. After receipt of the information, the superintendent or his designee will make the decision on school closings. If school is closed for the day, parents and local news media will be notified as early as possible in the morning or, in very extreme cases, the preceding evening.

If serious storm conditions develop during the day when children are already in school, the principals will follow the general policy of not allowing students to leave the building unless picked up by an adult. Schools will not normally dismiss early because many parents are not at home and are not expecting their children until the regular dismissal time.

Student Conduct

Students in the Bismarck School District are expected to adhere to certain standards regarding their conduct while attending school. The following are among the expectations of students:

1. Students are expected to be punctual and regular in attendance.
2. Students are expected to make reasonable class preparation prior to attending classes.
3. Students will not be absent from the school premises at such times as the student is scheduled for class or study hall attendance.
4. Students are expected to be courteous and respectful of peers, teachers, substitute teachers, and all others with whom the student comes in contact.
5. Students are expected to remember that having rights also entails having responsibility to exercise those rights in responsible non-disruptive ways.
6. Students are not permitted to use alcohol, tobacco or any other non-prescription drugs on the school premises.
7. The use of obscene or profane language is not permitted.
8. The use of threatening language or behavior toward staff, other students, or others present in the building or at an activity is not permitted.
9. Students are expected to use school equipment, furniture, halls, classrooms, textbooks, laboratories, and all facilities and materials in responsible non-destructive ways so that the maximum use of these materials can be realized. Destructive use may deprive other students of an equal chance for a good education.
10. All student rights are to be respected by all students and rights of all others with whom the student comes in contact. Harassing another student is a violation of that student's rights, this includes cyber bullying.
11. Students' internet and other electronic device use outside of school can have an impact on the school and on other students. If a student's personal expression disrupts the school's operation, he or she may face school discipline and/or criminal penalties.
12. Students must avail themselves of the specific rules and regulations for the school which they attend and strive to follow those rules.

These student conduct standards will be enforced through existing laws, policies, etc.

A serious violation of these standards shall be reported to the building administrator, who shall deal with the violation using one or more existing enforcement strategies. These strategies include the following:

1. Reporting the incident to law enforcement agencies for investigation and possible prosecution.
2. Prosecution under state statute, such as 15-49-08, which provide a penalty for disrupting the school environment
3. Disciplinary action under one or more school district policies that govern student conduct.
4. Disciplinary procedures at the school level using available measures such as:
 - a. Removal from class
 - b. Parental contact
 - c. Detention
 - d. Deprivation of privileges

Student Support Services

The Bismarck School District provides a comprehensive array of services to support learners, including Title I and District Reading, Title VII Indian Education, Guidance and Counseling, Talented and Gifted, Section 504, and Special Education. Each service has its own eligibility and/or evaluation process, and each school has processes in place that organize team members, review students' learning history and data, determine eligibility, and arrange for needed services. Parents are important members of these teams. For more information about these services, or to initiate a team meeting for his/her child, a parent may contact the child's teacher or principal.

Study/Field Trips

Classroom teachers may occasionally schedule study/field trips. Study/field trips can be a valuable learning experience. The teacher will arrange for district bus transportation to and from these events.

Suspension

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner suitable to their age and grade. Students disobedient or disruptive of the educational process are subject to corrective discipline. A principal or the Superintendent may suspend a student for up to ten (10) consecutive days. Conduct, including but not limited to the following, exhibited while on school grounds, during a school-sponsored activity, or during a school-related activity is subject to suspension or expulsion:

1. Causing or attempting to cause damage to school property or stealing or attempting to steal school property of value.
2. Causing or attempting to cause damage to private property or stealing or attempting to steal private property.
3. Causing or attempting to cause physical injury to another person except in self-defense.
4. Threatening to cause physical injury to another person, damage to school property, or damage to private property.
5. Possessing or transmitting any weapon or other dangerous objects as defined in Weapons in the Schools Policy.
6. Possessing, using, transmitting, or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
7. Disobedience or defiance of proper authority.
8. Behavior which is detrimental to the welfare, safety, or morals of other students.
9. Truancy.
10. Offensive and vulgar language, whether or not it is obscene, defamatory, or inciteful to violence, where it is disruptive of the educational process.
11. Any student behavior which is detrimental or disruptive to the educational process, as determined by the principal, Superintendent or School Board.

Transportation

The Bismarck School District believes that riding the school van/bus is a privilege. Therefore, every bus rider shall abide by the rules, as set by policy, or be deprived of the privilege of riding on the school buses. It is the driver's responsibility to enforce transportation regulations concerning students and to maintain discipline for the safety of all aboard. In view of the fact that a bus is an extension of the classroom, the School District requires students to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards of classroom behavior. Bus procedures and bus rider behavior expectations can be found on the District website. Students creating a safety hazard or discipline problem on the bus will be subject to loss of bussing privileges. For busing information, call 701-323-4500 or go to www.bismarckschools.org and choose the busing icon with the school bus.

Tobacco Free Policy

The Bismarck Public School District has a comprehensive Tobacco Free policy. Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death and disability in North Dakota. For the purposes of this policy, "tobacco" is defined to include any product that contains tobacco, is manufactured from tobacco, or contains nicotine.

1. Possession and/or use of tobacco products by students, staff, and visitors on district property, in district vehicles and at school-sponsored events (whether on or off district property) is prohibited at all times. This policy includes all events sponsored by the school and all events on school property that are not sponsored by, or associated with, the school.
2. The School District will not allow advertising of tobacco products in school buildings, on school property, at school functions, on district property and in all school publications. This includes clothing that advertises tobacco.
3. Individuals requesting assistance with tobacco cessation services will be referred to North Dakota Tobacco Quitline or North Dakota QuitNet. These are free cessation services provided to citizens of North Dakota.

Transfers

Parents of students wishing to attend a school other than their neighborhood school need to apply for a transfer and get approval from the assistant superintendent's office. Forms are available at all schools or at the Bismarck Public Schools website under "Registration." Once a student transfers to another building in the district, the same transfer request process must be followed to return to the child's neighborhood school.

Students who transfer to a different school within our district will have their books and permanent records sent to the new school as soon as possible. The child's original teacher will communicate with the receiving teacher regarding the student's academic needs. Whenever a new student arrives in our school district, we will request records from the previous school.

If you have additional questions regarding the transfer process, please contact the Registrar at 701-323-4110.

Visitors to School

All visitors to school must check in at the office and receive a visitor's badge. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may visit their child's classes on school days, subject to the approval of school administration and guidelines in school district administrative rule KAAA-AR. We welcome school visitors while balancing the need to protect privacy rights of students and the need to be sensitive to the disruption to learning that can be caused by visitors frequently observing classrooms and placing demands on teacher time. If you have a question, please contact your school principal.

Weapons Policy

The Bismarck School Board determines that possession and/or use of a weapon by a student is detrimental to the welfare and safety of the students and school personnel within the district.

Carrying, bringing, using or possessing any dangerous or deadly weapon in any school building, on school grounds, in any school vehicle or at any school-sponsored activity without the authorization of the school or the school district is prohibited. Such weapons include but are not limited to any gun (including pellet gun), slingshot, bludgeon, brass knuckles or artificial knuckles of any kind, any knife, razor, ice pick, explosive smoke bomb, incendiary device, or any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or dangerous instrument. Copies of weapons including guns, starter pistols, and other look-alikes are to be considered as weapons for the purpose of this policy. (Bringing a firearm to school, as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921, will require that proceedings for the expulsion of the student involved for a minimum of one year be initiated immediately by the principal.) Also, any object which has a school-related purpose that could be used to inflict harm on another person will be considered a weapon if the object is used in a threatening manner.

Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action. All weapons will be confiscated and may be turned over to the student's parents or to law enforcement officials at the discretion of the administration. Violation of this policy will also require that proceedings for the suspension and/or expulsion be initiated immediately by the principal.

A student will be suspended immediately in accord with School Board policy if the building administrator or designee determines:

1. The student knowingly violated the weapons policy, and
2. The safety of others or the educational environment was adversely affected by the student's conduct, and
3. The student had the ability to anticipate that the safety of others or the educational environment would be adversely affected by the student's conduct. In making this determination, the building administrator or designee may consider the age, intelligence, and behavioral history of the student.

Wellness Policy

Bismarck Public Schools has a Physical Activity and Nutrition Policy in 2006. The policy states “Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children’s diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and 100% juice, milk or water as the primary beverages”. High-calorie snacks eaten in the morning may cause students to eat poorly at lunch and get hungry later in the school day. Keep the children’s health in mind when bringing snacks or celebration foods to the classroom. The Healthy Snack List provides recommendations for light snacks appropriate for fueling young bodies and minds and is available on the District website under Quick Links, “Snacks & Parties.”

Health and Medication Guidelines

Allergies

The Bismarck Public School District is aware of increasing concerns for children with life threatening allergies. The most common allergens are peanuts and tree nuts. There is a District policy and a *Severe Allergy Handbook* available at the school office and under the “Parents” tab on the district website. Please review the Handbook for more information. Accommodations for students-with life-threatening allergies are made according to age and developmental level. Forms for the student’s health care provider and parent/guardian are required and are available on the school website. School staff have received education and training regarding allergies.

Communicable Diseases

When any symptom of a communicable disease appears, please keep your child at home from school. A list of school district documents and information on common contagious diseases and conditions is located at <https://www.bismarckschools.org/Page/1995>.

Illness Guidelines:

To return to school after illness your child must:

- Be without vomiting or diarrhea for 16 hours
- Be without an uncontrolled or persistent cough
- Have an oral temperature less than 100.4 degrees without the use of medications
- Feel well enough to take part in the usual school day.

Chronic Health Conditions

If your child has a chronic health condition such as asthma, diabetes, seizures, or allergies, please complete a school health plan. You may obtain a form from the school office, your school nurse and on the district’s website at <https://www.bismarckschools.org/Page/1994>. Health plans need to be completed annually.

Immunizations

Special emphasis should be placed on the need for childhood immunizations due to the increasing number of cases of vaccine-preventable diseases such as pertussis (whooping cough). In order for the school to comply with state law, children must be adequately immunized before school entry. If children are not properly immunized within the first 30 calendar days of school entry, exclusion from school will be deemed necessary by the principal under state law. The Certificate of Immunization must be completed and signed by the healthcare provider and submitted at the time a child registers to attend school or to the school office by the first day of school. This Certificate becomes part of the student's school record. The schedule of required immunizations is available at the following website: <https://www.health.nd.gov/immunize/schools-and-childcare>. Questions and concerns can be discussed with the school nurse, Bismarck Burleigh Public Health (for appointments call 701-355-1540), and your healthcare provider.

Medication

Under most circumstances, prescription and non-prescription medication should be administered to or by students before or after school, and under parent or medical supervision. If a student must take or receive prescription or non-prescription medication while on school property or during district-sponsored events, his/her parent must first submit written authorization.

All medication authorization forms and student health plans are on the district website under Quick Links, "Health Services Policies." If your child has a Health Plan and needs to take medication for that condition, the Health Plans now include the authorization to give that medication. If your child must take medication for any different reason, use the general medication authorization form, Medication Administration Authorization: Preschool/Elementary.

Students who require an inhaler at school must have the appropriate health plan completed. If the student is going to self-administer their inhaler, their healthcare provider must sign the Health Plan, according to state law. Students who require an EpiPen at school must have the appropriate health plan completed by parents as well as the Healthcare Provider Action Plan completed by their healthcare provider.

All medications brought onto school grounds must be in their original packaging, with the pharmacy label (prescription) or package instructions (non-prescription) clearly intact and readable. Medications brought to school in baggies, envelopes, or other types of containers will be kept in the office but not administered. A parent will be notified.

District staff shall monitor all situations involving student medication. Medications carried by students will be confiscated and parents will be notified if proper authorization is not on file.

Section 504 (Child Find Notice)

Pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the District has a duty to identify, refer, evaluate and if eligible, provide a free, appropriate public education to disabled students. For additional information about the rights of parents of eligible children, or for answers to any questions you might have about identification, evaluation and placement into Section 504 programs, please contact the District's Student Section 504 Coordinator Brian Beehler by phone at 701-323-4350 or by email at brian_beehler@bismarckschools.org.

Equal Employment and Educational Opportunities (Non-Discrimination Notice)

Applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, persons with disabilities, employees, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the Bismarck Public Schools are hereby notified that this school does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, age, equal pay, disability or genetic information in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities. Any person having inquiries concerning the school's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), or Section 504 is directed to contact Stacey Geiger, Human Resource Manager who has been designated by the school to coordinate efforts to comply with the regulations regarding nondiscrimination. The office address and telephone number of our coordinator are as follows: 806 N Washington Street, Bismarck, North Dakota 58501, telephone number is (701) 323-4071.

If any person believes that the school or any of the school's staff have inadequately applied the regulations of (1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, (2) Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, (3) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or (4) the Americans with Disabilities Act, he/she may bring forward a grievance to the school's Section 504/ADA coordinator. It should be understood by the individual(s) involved that a complaint can be made without going through the school's grievance procedures. The grievance procedures are to provide for a prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint, to the:

Director, Office for Civil Rights, Chicago Office
US Dept. of Education
Citigroup Center
500 W Madison Street, Suite 1475
Chicago, IL 60601