



**Elim Christian School**

***PARENT  
HANDBOOK***

*Revised August 2023*

**Additions/edits to the 2023-2024 parent handbook are highlighted in yellow.**

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## **Elim's Mission**

Our mission is to equip people with disabilities to pursue their God-given potential by offering person-centered services and partnering with their communities.

## **Elim Christian School Core Values**

We Are Christ Centered.

We All Have Value & Purpose.

We are a Learning & Sharing Community.

### ***Educational services are provided for children who:***

- Are ages 3-21 under the following eligibility categories: Intellectual Disability, Orthopedic Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, Emotional Disability, Other Health Impairment, Multiple Disabilities, Developmental Delay, Autism, and Traumatic Brain Injury.
- Need speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, social work, or assistive technology to benefit from educational placement.
- Desire to participate fully in student life through music, art, and recreational activities.
- Value friendships with peers of comparable abilities and social skills.

### ***Program Overview***

The school program focuses on providing an individualized Christian special education to prepare children to function at a level within society commensurate with their abilities. Elim serves students ages 3 through 21. A typical student profile would include any of the following disabilities: Intellectual Disability, Orthopedic Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, Emotional Disability, Other Health Impairment, Multiple Disabilities, Developmental Delay, Autism, and Traumatic Brain Injury.

Services provided include individualized educational instruction, vocational training, physical and/or occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, social work services, behavioral services, transitional services, nursing services, vocational training, adaptive physical education, vision and hearing screenings and limited transportation. The Pathways program supports our students with significant autism. In addition to the services listed above, students in our Pathways program also receive the services of a recreational therapist.

### ***Termination Procedures***

If an enrolled child appears to have educational, physical, medical, or behavioral needs that cannot be met at Elim Christian School, the following procedures will result:

1. The Director of School or designee will request that an IEP meeting be held with representatives from the child's school district, appropriate Elim staff, and the child's parents/guardian. The child's total program is reviewed at this conference, and a joint decision made regarding the appropriateness of continuing placement at Elim.

2. Appropriate Elim staff will carry out changes in the child's IEP that are recommended by the staffing team.
3. Should it be determined that the needs of the student cannot be appropriately met at Elim Christian School, enrollment would be terminated after twenty school days with written notification to the school district and parent/guardian. If the student possesses an imminent risk to himself or others, termination of placement may be immediate. The Director of School will implement this procedure.

### ***Parent/Guardian/Visitor Code of Conduct:***

At Elim Christian School, we are proud and fortunate to have a very dedicated and supportive school community. At our school the staff, administrators, parents, and district partners all recognize that the education of students is a partnership.

As a partnership, we recognize that healthy working relationships among all entities are vital to equip our students with the necessary skills to pursue their God-given potential. The purpose of this code of conduct is to provide the expectations for the conduct of all parents and visitors connected to our school. We are committed to resolving difficulties in a constructive manner through an open and positive dialogue; however, we understand that misunderstandings happen and can cause frustrations and have a negative impact on our relationships. When issues or misconceptions arise, please contact your child's teacher/therapist directly. They will be the person equipped with the direct information regarding your child. In any instance where issues remain unresolved, please contact your child's Assistant Principal. If further assistance is required, parents/guardians can contact the Assistant Director of School and lastly, the Director of School.

#### **It is expected that our parents/guardians will:**

- Show respect to all staff members no matter their race, creed nationality, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, appearance, or disability.
- When on school grounds, exhibit behavior that is conducive to the orderly operation of the school environment.
- Recognize that confidentiality may limit information that can be shared.
- Use appropriate language, tone, and volume when speaking with staff about concerns or questions.
- Engage with staff, students, visitors, and fellow parents in a manner that is verbally and physically nonthreatening.
- Arrange to pick up your child when Elim's nursing department has determined that their health and/or the health of others necessitates them leaving school.
- Wait for permission to be granted and/or to be escorted to any portion of the school.
- Adhere to all traffic laws, parking regulations, and other regulations related to the use of the parent lane.
- When reaching out to staff, please allow 24-48 business hours for a return call. As some staff members work part-time, the turnaround time may be closer to 48 business hours. If there is an emergency and you are not able to reach the staff members, please reach out to the program Assistant Principal.

Should any of the above expectations not be met, the school may determine it is necessary to schedule a problem-solving meeting, with the Director of School or her designee.

Thank you for abiding by this code of conduct. Together we will create a positive and uplifting environment for not only the students but also for all who work in and visit our school.

### ***Electric Recording Devices***

In recent times, the advancement of technology has brought numerous benefits to education. However, it has also raised some concerns related to privacy, security, and maintaining an optimal learning environment for our students. After careful consideration and consultation with our school leadership and staff, we have implemented a standard that prohibits the use of eavesdropping devices within the school premises. According to the Illinois statute, (720 Illinois Compiled Statutes 5/14-2(a)(1), an eavesdropping device is “any device capable of being used to hear or record oral conversation or intercept or transcribe electronic communications.” Eavesdropping devices may be used to record in-person conversations or electronic communications by telephone or other means. So, an eavesdropping device could be many kinds of recording device (tablet, smartphone, smartwatch, etc.). Audio recordings of conversations with another person, cell phone calls, video recordings, and wiretapping are common examples.

We believe that the presence of eavesdropping devices or any device used to perform the recording feature poses potential risks that could disrupt the educational process and compromise the safety and privacy of our students, teachers, and staff. Some of the reasons for this policy include:

**Privacy and Consent:** Recording others without their consent is a violation of their privacy rights. We aim to create a safe and respectful environment for everyone in our school community.

**Distractions:** Electronic recording devices can distract staff and students from focusing on their studies and disrupt the learning process.

**Cyberbullying and Misuse:** The misuse of recording devices can lead to cyberbullying or other harmful activities, which we are committed to preventing within our school community.

We understand that some students may rely on electronic devices for various purposes, such as communication or research. Rest assured that we will continue to provide access to technology in a controlled and supervised manner where it is necessary for educational purposes.

We kindly request your cooperation and support in adhering to this standard. Please refrain from sending any electronic recording/eavesdropping devices to school with your student. Devices sent to school will be collected from the student and placed in the student's locker or bookbag and returned home at the end of the school day.

If there are specific circumstances where your child may require the use of a recording device for educational purposes, please contact the school administration to discuss these matters on a case-by-case basis.

## ***Student Records***

During the time a student is enrolled at Elim Christian School, his/her school records are kept at Elim. When a student leaves Elim, all student records are returned to the home school district (or in the case of private placements, to the parents). If copies of student records are needed, please contact the home school district. All transcript requests must be made to the student's home school district. Privately funded students in need of transcripts or student records should contact the Student Records and Database Administrator, at [studentrecords@elimcs.org](mailto:studentrecords@elimcs.org) or 708-293-3688.

### ***Contact Information:***

Having accurate contact information for your student is critical. If any of your contact information (phone, address, e-mail, emergency contacts) changes please contact the Student Records and Database Administrator at 708-293-3688 or at [studentrecords@elimcs.org](mailto:studentrecords@elimcs.org) who will assist you with updating the contact information for your student.

### ***Parent Conferences***

Contact between parents and teachers is essential to the child's progress. It is the teacher's responsibility to evaluate the child's progress daily and to share this information with the parents at least four times a year. Thus, progress reports are mailed to parents quarterly with updated IEP goals. In addition, individual parent conferences are scheduled in the fall and **spring** of each school year. To help maintain contact between the school and home, teachers utilize phone calls, e-mail, and weekly newsletters to keep families informed of the activities taking place in their child's classroom. The IEP team convenes yearly to write a new IEP, these meetings are scheduled in conjunction with the student's home school district.

## ***Curriculum of Elim Christian School***

Elim's curriculum is intended for students with moderate to severe developmental disabilities ages 3 through 21. It is devoted to the content areas that directly prepare students to be able to function in real-world situations; independent living, self-determination, self-advocacy, self-management, vocational, recreation/leisure and community integration. Our curriculum includes skills that are embedded throughout all aspects of a student's educational program and focus on the development of functional academics, functional communication, and social skills.

Elim's curriculum is written to ensure that all students are exposed to the same standards as their general education peers. The curriculum is based upon the Dynamic Learning Maps – Essential Elements, the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science and upon the Illinois Social and Emotional Learning Standards. As students progress from one course to the next and tasks are completed, academic rigor increases. Most importantly, there is an intentional focus on the increase in student independence in the application of the content taught. Additionally, students will be provided with materials and tasks that are appropriate for both their age and their developmental level.

### ***E-Learning***

Private therapeutic day schools are allowed (not required) to utilize E-Learning days in lieu of emergency closures (i.e., snow days) if certain conditions are met.

ISBE has outlined the following conditions/requirements be in place *before* an E-Learning Day can be utilized:

- Each student participating in the e-learning will be provided with access from home to the materials (both electronic and non-electronic), resources, and technology required to receive instruction.
- The services and support, pursuant to a student's IEP, will be provided to the extent practical to ensure access to appropriate learning opportunities.
- Student attendance will be monitored and recorded as prescribed by the State Board of any e-learning days.
- Parents will be provided effective notice of the use of days for e-learning.
- Staff and students will be provided with the necessary training or instructions for participation in an e-learning day.

Should the decision be made to utilize an E-Learning Day in lieu of an emergency closure, you will be notified via Alert Media.

Elim utilizes Seesaw as it's digital learning platform. At the beginning of each school year and/or when a student's classroom placement changes, parents will be provided with a unique learning code for their child. We ask that you follow the provided instructions to allow your child to access their education remotely if this becomes necessary either due to inclement weather or individual quarantine requirements.

## General School Information

### *Arrival and Departure*

Elim's school day is 8:40 am to 2:40 pm. On Tuesdays Elim dismisses students at 1:50 for school improvement activities.

- If your child does not ride the bus, please be prompt on arrival and departure to and from school. Please drive carefully entering and leaving the parking lot and follow the directions of the transportation staff.
- Parents/guardians are required to sign their children in and out of school in the school office if they drop off or pick up their child outside of regular school hours. ***If your child is usually transported by bus, it is your responsibility to notify the bus company that your child will not be riding that day.***
- When students are being picked up by someone other than the parent or guardian, we will need a written note or email before we release the student. The person picking up the student will be required to present a photo ID. We **will not** release a student unless we are given consent by the parent or guardian. To protect our students, we will not release students with a phone call.
- Extended School Year (Summer 2024): Beginning summer 2024, there will be no school on Fridays from June 18, 2024 – July 25, 2024.
- During the summer of 2024 from June 18 – July 25, 2023, there will be no early release day. Tuesdays will be a full day of school. Please plan to pick up your students at 2:40pm.

### *Lunch Program*

Elim provides a daily catered hot lunch for students. Student lunches are \$8.00. Parents are billed monthly for the meals served. With a physician's order and special request, based on dietary restrictions, a dietician will support the creation of student meals. Based on the needs of our students, some foods may be restricted from being served. For a list of these foods, please refer to the "Restricted Foods" section of this handbook. If you questions related to the billing of lunch, please contact Lori Swartwout, [Lori.Swartwout@elimcs.org](mailto:Lori.Swartwout@elimcs.org) or 708-293-3633.

### ***Communicating with School Staff***

Your child's teacher and related services staff must be your contact for questions, concerns, and information about your child. It is important to share information directly with these staff members, and refrain from asking paraprofessionals to relay messages. Please note that school staff are required to communicate with you only via approved modes of communication. School staff will utilize Seesaw, e-mail, the school phone number and/or use of the *Remind* application for communication.

When contacting teachers and related services staff by phone, please understand they will not be able to answer the phone while working directly with students. Please feel free to leave them a message or send them an email (which is typically the fastest method of contact) and they will respond within 24-48 business hours.

*For emergencies*, please contact the school office at 708-389-0555 and ask to speak with the appropriate Assistant Principal or the Assistant Director of School.

### ***Private Therapists and Consultants:***

Elim staff appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with students' home private therapists/consultants when applicable. The most comprehensive educational programming occurs when all entities who support a student partner together and develop appropriate goals and programming for the student. Before any partnership with an outside therapist or consultant can begin, parents must complete and return the "Consent for Release of Information" form. Please note that some goals addressed in clinic and/or home-based services may not be appropriate within the school setting.

### ***Off Campus Outings***

Written permission is required for any student participating in off campus outings. The parent consent form for participation is distributed and collected through the annual Elim consent process. Students that do not have a signed off campus outing form on file will not be allowed to participate. Those students will remain at the school and engage in academic activities for the day.

As needed rescue medications for seizures (e.g., Diastat, Valproic acid) and diabetes (e.g., glucagon, insulin) may only be administered by Elim nursing staff and cannot be administered by unlicensed staff. Because Elim's nurses do not attend off-campus activities, an off-campus plan is required for students with these prescribed rescue medications and/or medical conditions. If the parent/guardian chooses, they themselves may attend or they may appoint a chaperone to attend the activity. The parent/guardian or chaperone would be responsible for any medical intervention needed for the student, including but not limited to medication administration. This chaperone cannot be an Elim staff member, must be over 21 years-old and is required to accompany the student for the entire trip, including transport to and from the activity. The off-campus plan may be obtained from Elim's website: <http://www.elimcs.org/children/school-forms>.

Epinephrine (e.g., Epi-pen, Auvi-Q) and asthma rescue medications (albuterol) are the only rescue medications that may be administered by unlicensed staff. Staff will be trained to administer these medications by a nurse. An Allergy Action Plan and/or Asthma Action Plan completed by the student's HCP must accompany the medication(s). The plans must also be renewed every school year.

## ***Annual Consent (Elim Registration)***

Every year we are required to seek consent from parents for a variety of things. This process is completed using Cognito forms. Directions and timelines for completing this process are sent to parents via e-mail. Parents unable to complete this process digitally should contact the Student Records and Database Administrator ([studentrecords@elimcs.org](mailto:studentrecords@elimcs.org) or 708-293-3688) for alternate arrangements. Please note that parents *may also be required to "register" their student with their home school district. Information/consent etc. provided to Elim **does not** replace this expectation. Parents are encouraged to contact their district's special education representative if they have any questions regarding their home school district's requirements.*

A parent who wishes to alter their annual consent should contact the student records and database administrator at [studentrecords@elimcs.org](mailto:studentrecords@elimcs.org) or 708-293-3688.who will assist with process. *Please note verbal changes are not accepted.*

## ***Lock-down, Tornado, and Fire Drills***

- A. Lock-down drills are held annually to make sure staff and students are prepared to respond quickly and correctly in the unlikely event of a dangerous intruder. The Crestwood Police department partners with Elim in planning and implementing lock-down procedures.
- B. Fire drills are held throughout the school year to train students how to leave the building in case of fire. Each teacher is responsible for orderly exit procedures. The Crestwood fire department partners with Elim in planning and implementing fire drills.
- C. **Tornado watch** or **tornado warning**. The school has a radio and ten-ten civil defense receiver whereby we receive instant notification of tornado weather conditions.
  - 1) **Tornado watch** means that weather conditions are such that a tornado or severe thunderstorm may develop. All students will remain in the building under the direct supervision of their teacher. The regular school schedule will be followed, and classes will be dismissed at the regular times.
  - 2) **Tornado warning** means that a tornado or severe thunderstorm has been sighted and may be near you. No student will be released during a warning and students will be assigned to the safest possible area within the school building until the tornado warning has been lifted. No bus will leave school until the principal is certain an "all clear" has been received from local government officials. ***Do not telephone the school except for extreme emergencies during this period.*** You are urged to stay tuned to the local radio stations during times of questionable weather.

## ***Snow Policy/School Closing***

If school is canceled due to inclement weather, you will be notified via the automated calling system. You can also check television and radio stations or the Elim website – [www.elimcs.org](http://www.elimcs.org) for updates.

## ***Labeling Clothing & Special Equipment***

Many of our students have similar articles of clothing, equipment, technology etc.; therefore, we ask that students' names are written on all items so that staff can properly identify ownership.

## ***Student Attendance***

If your student will be absent, the parent/guardian is required to call the student attendance line at 708-293-3626 and leave a message or e-mail [studentattendance@elimcs.org](mailto:studentattendance@elimcs.org). Please include the following information in your communication:

- Student Name
- Date of Absence
- Reason for the absence

Absences reported via the teachers/therapists are not accepted. By contractual obligation, we are required to notify home school districts of student attendance monthly. Additionally, we are required to notify them each time a student has five and/or ten consecutive days of absence.

## ***Elim Bus Transportation***

Students whose transportation is provided by their home school district should notify the identified transportation company in the event of an absence.

Students whose transportation is provided by Elim only need to report the absence to the student attendance line at 708-293-3626 or e-mail [attendance@elimcs.org](mailto:attendance@elimcs.org).

## ***Dress Code***

Students are expected to be dressed and groomed acceptably for their age and in a manner conducive to fostering a good school atmosphere. All shoes should have a closed toe and strap around the back of the foot. Flip flops, slides or sandals that expose the foot are not acceptable footwear.

## ***Classroom Observation Procedures***

Elim Christian School welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with parents and qualified private providers to meet the needs of our students. To facilitate the many requests for observations in a timely manner, the following specific process should be used.

Before scheduling any observation, Elim must have a current [Release of Information to an Outside Agency form](#) on file for any provider that wishes to observe or consult. In addition, all observers will be required to sign the [Classroom Observation Confidentiality Acknowledgement form](#).

[Classroom Observation Request form](#), which includes the following components:

- Name of person making request
- Name and title of observer
- Purpose of observation
- Contact information

Classroom observation request forms must be submitted to the appropriate assistant principal, who will facilitate the scheduling of the observation.

Each classroom observation request will be considered individually, based on its purpose, duration, and frequency. We will make every effort to accommodate observation requests, but our priority is maintaining the learning environment for our students. To minimize classroom disruptions, the duration of observations may be limited based on purpose as well as staff availability. A qualified staff member will usually accompany visitors. Visits will be scheduled with consideration for the classroom schedule, school personnel schedules,

and requests of parent or private provider. If there is a need for follow-up discussion with the teacher or therapist, this must be scheduled *in addition* to the actual observation.

Once a visit has been scheduled, parents will need to make childcare arrangements for their other children, as it would be too disruptive to the classroom setting to bring them to an observation session.

Please consider the privacy of our students. Parents should only address the needs of their child. Any information shared about other students is in violation of the *student confidentiality rights (FERPA)*. Our students have very specific and unique educational and behavioral plans according to their IEPs. Sharing this information would jeopardize the privacy of our students and their families.

Concerns regarding parent visits and observations should be directed to the appropriate assistant principal.

ISBE and placing district personnel may visit/observe without notice.

### ***Classroom Pets***

Pets and animals, including but not limited to, dogs, cats, and birds, are not permitted on Elim's grounds and buildings. Elim does have an approved Comfort Dog "Abbi" as part of our Crossroad's program.

Parents/guardians whose student has any allergies/sensitivities should contact the nursing department.

## **Medical Services and Policies**

Elim's nursing department can be reached at: 708-389-0555 ext. 305 or at [nurse@elimcs.org](mailto:nurse@elimcs.org)

### ***Illness***

A student may be sent home from school at the discretion of the nurse due to symptoms of illness. A student cannot remain in school or board transportation when exhibiting fever (100.4 degrees or higher), vomiting or diarrhea as these symptoms may be indicative of infectious illness. Additionally, the student may be sent home if they exhibit significant nasal drainage or other symptoms of illness that adversely affect the student's behavior and/or ability to participate in school activities. The parent/guardian will be expected to pick up the student as soon as possible. The student should remain home until symptoms of illness have significantly improved or resolved. Any student who has been ill or sent home from school should not return until fever, diarrhea, and vomiting have ceased for a full 24 hours without the use of medication.

### ***Medications***

Elim Christian School adheres to the applicable state laws and regulations, specifically Section 10-22.21b of the *Illinois School Code* (105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b), 105 ILCS 5/22-30, and 23 Illinois Administrative Code 1.540, pertaining to the administration of medication to students during regular school hours and during school-related activities.

We encourage families to administer medications at home as doing so at school is discouraged unless *necessary* for the critical health and well-being of the student. Should your student's health care provider deem that medication is required, the parent/guardian must submit a written health care provider's (HCP's) order to Elim's Nursing Department. The prescribed medication form is available for families to download from the Elim website: <http://www.elimcs.org/children/school-forms>. We ask that the parent/guardian provide at least a 2-week supply of their student's medication to the nurse. Prescription medication must be provided in the original container with an accurate pharmacy label along with an additional labeled bottle to

transport refills. The pharmacy label must include the student's name, prescriber number, medication name and dose, route, date of medication and refill/expiration, prescriber's name, pharmacy name and contact information. Over-the-counter medication (OTC), including but not limited to, pain medication (e.g., Tylenol, ibuprofen) vitamins, supplements and creams must include the student's name and must be in the original, unopened container with the label intact. **Any medication sent to the nurse in any other manner or without a written HCP's order will be returned to the parent/guardian.**

Medication administration records, storage of medications and medication administration is the responsibility of the nurse. However, in order to allow students to fully participate in educational programming and school activities at all times, trained staff members *may* also be delegated medication administration authority in compliance with the requirements of Section 50-75 of the *Nurse Practice Act*, the applicable regulations at 68 Illinois Administrative Code 1300.20, and pursuant to the requirements of a comprehensive nursing assessment by the licensed School Nurse/Registered Nurse under 225 ILCS 65/50-75(b). Elim Christian School will keep record of medication administration training provided to a staff member who is delegated medication administration authority by the licensed School Nurse/Registered Nurse.

### ***Medication orders***

Medication orders must include student's name, medication name, dose, route of administration, and time to be given. For the order to be complete, it must be signed by the prescriber *and* the parent/guardian. These orders must be renewed each school year. Any changes made to a medication order, such as the dose, directives, or time of administration, will require a new order that indicates those changes. If your student's medication is discontinued, you must submit confirmation, in writing, to the nurse.

### ***As-needed rescue medications***

As-needed rescue medications for seizures (e.g., Diastat, Valtoco) and diabetes (e.g., glucagon, insulin) may only be administered by Elim nursing staff and cannot be given by unlicensed staff. Because Elim's nurses do not attend off-campus activities, an off-campus plan is required for students with these prescribed rescue medications. The off-campus plan may be obtained from Elim's website: <https://www.elimcs.org/school-and-medical-forms/>.

Epinephrine (e.g., Epi-pen, Auvi-Q) and asthma rescue medications (albuterol) are the only rescue medications that may be administered by unlicensed staff. They will be trained to administer these medications by a nurse. An Allergy Action Plan and/or Asthma Action Plan completed by the student's HCP must accompany the medication(s). The plans must also be renewed every school year. These forms are available on Elim's website.

### ***Essential Oils:***

The guidelines set forth by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) require medications to be prescribed by a physician, advanced practice nurse, or physician's assistant with exact dosing instructions. They must also be regulated by the Food and Drug Administration specifically as a drug/medication. Homeopathic treatments do not currently meet these requirements. Examples of these treatments include, but are not limited to, essential oils and some supplements. Elim does not allow non-FDA regulated homeopathic treatments at school.

### ***Other treatments and medications***

Other treatments and medications, such as insulin, oxygen, suctioning, and nebulizer treatments will require HCP's order. Nursing staff will assist parents to ensure that the necessary documentation is completed for their student.

### ***Self-Administration of Medication:***

Section 10-22-21b and 22-30 of the *Illinois School Code* (105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b; 105 ILCS 5/22-30) allows students with a provider's order and parent permission to carry and self-administer asthma medication or epinephrine injector. However, Elim's special needs environment requires that all medications be stored and administered by the nurse or trained Elim staff.

Elim Christian School and its employees and agents shall incur no liability, except for willful and wanton misconduct, because of any injury arising from the administration or self-administration of medication by a student during school hours or school-related activity pursuant to this policy and a medication administration authorization form.

### ***Physical Examinations***

Physical exams will be required for students entering the school system for the first time, preschool, kindergarten (turning six years old), second grade (turning eight years old), sixth grade (turning 12 years old), and entering ninth grade (turning 15 years old). Vaccination against several diseases at specified intervals is also required. State law requires that students without those exams and/or vaccinations are excluded from school attendance unless certain exceptions are met. Students, parents, or legal guardians who object to state mandated health examinations and/or immunizations on religious grounds must submit the "Illinois Certificate of Religious Exemption to Required Immunizations and/or Examinations" form. If a student cannot receive mandated immunizations for medical reasons, the student's health care provider must submit written documentation explaining the need for the medical exemption.

### ***Dental Examinations***

Dental examinations will be required for students entering kindergarten, second grade, sixth grade and ninth grade.

### ***Vision and Audiology Examinations***

Vision examinations will be required for students entering kindergarten (turning six years old). In addition, students prescribed glasses/contacts must have a vision examination every two years. Students prescribed hearing aid(s) must have an audiology examination every two years.

### ***Hearing and Vision Screening***

Parents will be notified of the hearing and vision screening dates. Any student that is not prescribed glasses/contacts or hearing aid(s) and enrolled in special education must be screened annually, unless a parent/guardian objects to the screening in writing.

### ***Physician Referral for Therapies***

An annual doctor's prescription is required by the start of the fall semester for students to receive the **physical therapy** services designated on their IEP, per Illinois state law. Requests for the annual doctor's orders are mailed as follows: first request is mailed to the parent/guardian at the end of May; second request is sent

home with students and/or mailed by the end of July. If the completed doctor's order form is not returned by the first week of September, the funding school district will be notified. On October 1, PT services for students without a current doctor's order on file will be placed on hold until the doctor's order is received.

A doctor's order for **occupational therapy** is required to be on file if the funding district requires Elim OTs to fill out paperwork necessary for the district to bill Medicaid for OT services rendered during the school day.

### ***Emergency Medical Care***

The school nurse or other certified Elim staff will provide emergency first aid procedures.

- A. At the discretion of the school nurse, emergency medical services (EMS) will be phoned, and the student will be transported by ambulance to the nearest hospital's emergency department.
- B. Immediate and continual attempts will be made to contact the parent/guardian to inform him or her of the situation.
- C. An Elim staff member will accompany the student to the hospital.
- D. Pertinent medical information will be forwarded to the EMS, including, but not limited to, allergies, medications, and diagnoses.
- E. In the event the parent/guardian cannot be reached by telephone, emergency interventions will be provided per the policies and procedures of the EMS and/or hospital staff.

### ***Health-Related Absences***

Documentation is required for a student to return to school after a health-related absence, including but not limited to hospitalization, surgery, casting, splinting, extended absence, or any procedure requiring sedation. Additionally, documentation may also be requested if a student was treated for an illness or injury. This documentation must include [Elim's Activity & Return to School form](#), or by contacting the nursing department directly, 708-389-0555 ext. 305 or via e-mail at [nurse@elimcs.org](mailto:nurse@elimcs.org).

The Activity and Return to School Form gives Elim staff the necessary information to ensure the student's health and safety upon return to school. It also gives an update regarding the student's medical status. It will instruct staff regarding any activity restrictions or limitations. This information is also required for physical therapy and/or occupational therapy services to resume, and for the student to participate in physical education, swimming, and recess.

The Activity and Return to School Form must be completed in its entirety by the student's treating health care provider and should be received by Elim's nursing department 24 hours prior to the student's return to school. The prompt receipt of the Activity and Return to School Form is particularly important if restrictions are to be implemented or if there is a change to the student's medical status. If the Activity and Return to School Form cannot be sent to nursing prior to the student's return, a parent or guardian must bring the student to school and meet with a member of the nursing staff.

If the necessary information is not contained within the Activity and Return to School Form, the student may be excluded from school, therapies, physical education, swimming, and/or recess. If the student is transported by bus or van and the Activity and Return to School Form does not contain the required information, the parent may need to arrange for transportation for the student to return home.

Please note that the Activity and Return to School Form is required even if there are no changes to the student's medical status following any health-related intervention.

## ***Clean Intermittent Catheterization***

Any student that requires clean intermittent catheterization during the school day must have an order from a physician. This order is required yearly, and must detail time(s) of catheterization, necessary equipment, and precautions. Any changes to any portion of the order will require a new signed physician order. The school nurse will perform the procedure per the physician's order.

## ***Communicable Diseases***

Elim Christian School follows the recommendations of the Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Department of Public Health, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in controlling communicable diseases. The following procedure will be utilized concerning a child whose physical condition has deteriorated significantly or who exhibits symptoms of a chronic infectious disease:

1. The parent/guardian will be contacted by the program director or school nurse for an immediate discussion of the child's status.
2. A written letter of specific medical concerns regarding the child will be sent by the school nurse to the parents/guardians to present to the child's physician. The nurse may contact the physician directly with parent/guardian permission.
3. Children whose presence at school poses a significant danger to themselves, the other students, or the staff may be suspended immediately at the discretion of the principal.
4. Suspension would remain in effect until the following requirements are met:
  - a. The school nurse receives a written letter from the physician specifically addressing the medical concerns listed by the school nurse and recommendations for treatment.
  - b. The school nurse receives written notification from the physician that the child has received all necessary treatment for the condition and attending school no longer poses a significant risk to self or others.

## **Nutritional Intake**

### ***Safe Oral Feeding***

Elim is not a therapeutic feeding center, nor does Elim initiate advancement from one level of feeding to the next level of feeding.

In general, staff will cut food into small bite-sized pieces prior to serving it to a student. This preparation is the safest and is our preferred method for most students.

At Elim, our goal is to ensure that meals are consumed in a manner that reduces the risk of choking or aspiration. We address this goal by assigning a feeding team, utilizing adaptive equipment, and employing safe feeding techniques. The feeding team includes representatives of speech and language pathology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, classroom teacher and nursing. The purpose of the team is to problem-solve and to maintain a safe eating environment, on an individual student basis. The feeding team will review a parent's diet request or a physician's diet order. The feeding team will then collaborate to determine if Elim's staff can safely implement the request or order.

Our number one priority is safety. If staff members have concerns regarding oral feeding for a student, the parent/guardian will be notified, and additional medical evaluation may be requested, or adaptive equipment may be recommended. Observations and suggestions from the feeding team, along with input from the parent and the physician, will ensure that the student will have a safe and enjoyable eating experience at school.

### ***Restricted Foods***

Some foods are considered high risk for choking. Elim's staff or kitchen personnel will not prepare the following foods:

- sausage links with casing (hot dogs, bratwurst)
- chicken with bones or skin
- fruits with the rind

The restricted foods listed above should not be sent from home. If parents choose to send any of these restricted foods, Elim staff will prepare the foods to ensure that they may be safely consumed. Sausage links will be cut into small pieces, bones and skin will be removed from chicken, rinds will be removed from fruit and the fruit will be cut into bite-sized pieces.

If your student self-restricts by only consuming the restricted foods listed above, a release of liability will be required. A release of liability may also be required if the size, shape, or texture tolerated by the student poses a risk for choking or aspiration. The parent/guardian must submit a letter to Elim's nursing department indicating the food allowed and the way it should be prepared. Elim retains the right to alter the food if the feeding team deems it unsafe to eat.

### ***Special Diet – Needs a Physician Order***

Any student that is not on a regular diet is on a "special diet." This may be because of restrictions due to an allergy, sensitivity, or medical treatment. These special diets will require a physician's order. Additionally, variations to texture, size, and consistency of food are considered a special diet and require a physician's order.

As a school, Elim is not able to meet the requirements for every type of diet. To ensure accuracy and consistency, only Elim's kitchen staff can prepare the following diets:

- chopped
- pureed
- gluten-free
- casein-free
- dairy-free
- pork-free

If the student requires a diet not listed above, the parent/guardian must supply the student's lunch each day.

[Special diet order forms](https://www.elimcs.org/school-and-medical-forms/) may be downloaded from Elim's website <https://www.elimcs.org/school-and-medical-forms/>. The completed form should be returned to Elim's nursing department. Special diet orders must be renewed each school year. Any changes to the diet will require the completion of a new order by a physician.

### ***G-Tube Feeding – Needs a Physician Order***

G-tube feeding is another form of special diet. G-tube feeding requires a physician's order that must be renewed yearly. Any changes to the g-tube feeding order during the school year will require a new written physician's order. The special diet order form, available on Elim's website <https://www.elimcs.org/school-and-medical-forms/>, is used for this order.

A school nurse will train classroom staff how to properly and safely carry out the physician's directives. Nursing staff will compose a detailed, individualized g-tube feeding care plan as a reference for classroom staff. Nursing staff will be available for assistance when needed.

## ***Weather Recess Policy***

*Please note: If your child has special requirements/restrictions related to outdoor conditions, a doctor's note must be on file with Elim's nursing department.*

## **Wheelchairs**

### ***Wheelchair Clinic***

Wheelchair clinics are provided for Elim students for the purpose of AT evaluation and initial fittings in coordination with parents and wheelchair vendors. Clinics are provided as a courtesy; therefore, frequency, date, and time of wheelchair clinics are based on therapist availability and are scheduled in advance.

### ***Wheelchair Maintenance***

A student's family is responsible for the maintenance of their student's wheelchairs, walkers, etc. Wheelchair repairs should be done at the vendor facility or student's home. If an emergency arises, parents should contact the PT department (ext. 331) before scheduling a repair with the vendor to request a time for the vendor to come to Elim to make the repair. All general repairs should be handled by the family with the vendor.

### ***Wheelchair Transportation***

The American Academy of Pediatrics, along with the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), has provided guidelines for the transportation of children in wheelchairs. Elim will follow the following guidelines for safe transportation of all students in wheelchairs and strollers.

- Head support in place
- Pelvic, chest, and/or shoulder harness secured.
- Child's feet safely secured in footrests.
- Brakes in good working condition
- Tires properly inflated.
- Anti-tip bars in place
- Wheelchair tray & AAC device removed from wheelchair and secured separately on the bus.

If a student's wheelchair is determined to be unsafe for transportation, the parent will be notified and will need to transport their student.

### ***Letters of Need***

Elim therapists will assist parents with equipment acquisition when the equipment is necessary for a student's education. If assistive technology or any other *special equipment* is recommended by an outside agency or therapist or is needed for home use, Elim staff will not take responsibility for the letter of medical necessity.

### ***Lifting Policy***

#### **Elim's Safe Lifting Policy**

If a student requires a maximum/total lift (not able to bear weight or assist in the transfer):

- Student weighing <35 lbs. = 1 person lift/roll with a second person standing by ready to assist. \*Note: to ensure student and staff safety and to follow proper safety and lifting guidelines and procedures, it may be determined that a student weighing <35 lbs. require a two-person lift.

- Student weighing 36-70 lbs. = 2-person lift/roll. \*Note: to ensure student and staff safety and to follow proper safety and lifting guidelines and procedures, it may be determined that a student weighing 36-70 lbs. requires the use of a mechanical lift (ex. Hoyer Lift).
- Student weighing >70 lbs. should be using a mechanical lift to follow proper safety and lifting guidelines and procedures.

\*\*All lifting/transfer for positioning will be performed within the safe lifting zone (shoulder to knee), which eliminates lifting of students in situations where the staff person/s is lifting above the shoulder level or below the knee level.

## Abuse & Neglect

(See Illinois School Code 325:5/1 to 5/11.8)

(See Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, 325 ILCS 5/4 et seq.)

All Elim employees are mandated reporters. **Any** staff member who in his/her professional capacity has reasonable cause to believe a student at Elim is the subject of abuse or neglect, is required to contact the appropriate agency.

If a parent/guardian suspects that abuse and/or neglect has taken place by a staff member, the allegation should be reported to the Director of School. The alleged abuse and/or neglect will be investigated by the administration and appropriate action taken. The parent/guardian should also report the allegation to the appropriate agency.

THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES (DCFS) AND THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGING HAVE STRICT RULES GOVERNING PHOTOGRAPHY. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL STAFF TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS RELATED TO ANY SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT.

## School Policies for Bullying Prevention

### Purpose:

The Illinois General Assembly has found that a safe and civil school environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve. Bullying behaviors are directly contrary to this and can cause physical, psychological, and emotional harm to students and interferes with their ability to learn and participate in school activities. It is the goal of Elim Christian Services to create a learning environment where all students feel safe and supported, are protected from bullying, and can succeed academically as well as develop socially and emotionally into responsible, caring individuals. Elm's bullying policy can be found [here](#).

### Complaint Managers:

#### Primary Contact

Name: Amanda Griffin

Title: Assistant Principal

Mailing Address: 13020 S. Central Ave. Crestwood, IL 60418

Email: [bullying@elimcs.org](mailto:bullying@elimcs.org)

Phone: 708-389-0555

## **Secondary Contact**

Name: Dorothy Bowman

Title: Director of School

Mailing Address: 13020 S. Central Ave. Crestwood, IL 60418

Email: [bullying@elimcs.org](mailto:bullying@elimcs.org)

Phone: 708-389-0555

## **Employee's Code of Professional Conduct (Faith's Law) Policy**

[This policy applies to school and support services employees. Adult Services employees are exempt]

Illinois School Code (105 ILSC 5/22-85.5) requires all schools, including approved nonpublic programs under Section 14-7.02, to create an "Employee Code of Professional Conduct" policy which must be posted on your school's website and be included in any staff, student, or parent handbook.

## **ILLINOIS EDUCATOR CODE OF ETHICS**

### **Preamble**

Educators fundamentally believe that meeting the educational needs of each student is critical to the profession. The Illinois Educators' Code of Ethics is a set of core principles, values, and responsibilities that sets expectations to guide practice and inspire professional excellence in relation to federal, state, and local policies, rules, regulations, and collective bargaining agreements. Illinois educators encourage the application of these core principles throughout the education community.

### **Definition of Educator**

An educator is a person who holds or is applying for a certificate or approval or is enrolled in an Illinois pre-service education preparation program.

### **Principles**

The Illinois Educator Code of Ethics contains five core principles which provide a foundation for the responsibilities and commitments of Illinois Educators.

1. Responsibility to Students
2. Responsibility to Self
3. Responsibility to Colleagues and the Profession
4. Responsibility to Parents, Families and Communities
5. Responsibility to the Illinois State Board of Education

## **PRINCIPLE 1: RESPONSIBILITY TO STUDENTS**

The Illinois educator is committed to creating, promoting, and implementing a learning environment that is accessible to each student, enables students to achieve the highest academic potential, and maximizes their ability to succeed in academic and employment settings as a responsible member of society. Illinois educators:

- Embody the Standards for the School Service Personnel Certificate (23 Ill. Adm. Code 23), the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (23 Ill. Adm. Code 24), and Standards for Administrative Certification (23 Ill. Adm. Code 29), as applicable to the educator, in the learning environment.

- Respect the inherent dignity and worth of each student by assuring that the learning environment is characterized by respect and equal opportunity for each student, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, religion, language, or socioeconomic status.
- Always maintain a professional relationship with students.
- Provide a curriculum based on high expectations for each student that addresses individual differences through the design, implementation, and adaptation of effective instruction; and
- Foster, in each student, the development of attributes that will enhance skills and knowledge necessary to be a contributing member of society.

## **PRINCIPLE 2: RESPONSIBILITY TO SELF**

The Illinois Educator is committed to establishing high professional standards for their practice and striving to meet these standards through their performance. Illinois Educators:

- Assume responsibility and accountability for their performance and continually strive to demonstrate proficiency and currency in both content knowledge and professional practice.
- Develop and implement personal and professional goals with attention to professional standards through a process of self-assessment and professional development.
- Represent their professional credentials and qualifications accurately; and
- Demonstrate a high level of professional judgment.

## **PRINCIPLE 3: RESPONSIBILITY TO COLLEAGUES AND THE PROFESSION**

The Illinois Educator is committed to collaborating with school and district colleagues and other professionals in the interest of student learning. Illinois Educators: Illinois Educator Code of Ethics

- Collaborate with colleagues in the local school and district to meet local and state educational standards.
- Work together to create a respectful, professional, and supportive school climate that allows all educators to maintain their individual professional integrity.
- Seek out and engage in activities that contribute to the ongoing development of the profession.
- Promote participation in the educational decision-making processes.
- Encourage promising candidates to enter the education profession; and
- Support the preparation, induction, mentoring and professional development of educators.

## **PRINCIPLE 4: RESPONSIBILITY TO PARENTS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES**

The Illinois Educator will collaborate, build trust, and respect confidentiality with parents, families, and communities to create effective instruction and learning environments for each student. Illinois Educators:

- Aspire to understand and respect the values and traditions of the diversity represented in the community and in their learning environments.
- Encourage and advocate for fair and equal educational opportunities for each student.
- Develop and maintain professional relationships with parents, families, and communities.
- Promote collaboration and support student learning through regular and meaningful communication with parents, families, and communities; and
- Cooperate with community agencies that provide resources and services to enhance the learning environment.

## **PRINCIPLE 5: RESPONSIBILITY TO THE ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

The Illinois Educator is committed to supporting the Administrative and School Codes, state and federal laws and regulations, and the Illinois State Board of Education's standards for highly qualified educators. Illinois Educators:

1. Provide accurate communication to the Illinois State Board of Education all certification matters.
2. Maintain appropriate certification for employment; and
3. Comply with state and federal codes, laws, and regulations.

#### Section C of Illinois School Code 105 ILCS 5/22-85.5:

In this Section, "sexual misconduct" means any act, including, but not limited to, any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity, by an employee or agent of the school district, charter school, or nonpublic school with direct contact with a student that is directed toward or with a student to establish a romantic or sexual relationship with the student. Such an act includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- A sexual or romantic invitation
- Dating or soliciting a date
- Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog
- Making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a student
- Self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature
- A sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with the student

### Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Relationships between Staff and Students

#### SECTION 1: Purpose

Elim Christian Services employs dedicated and professional staff members who provide students with a safe and supportive learning environment. Elim Christian Services encourages healthy relationships between students and school staff and administrators to promote student achievement and success. These standards define appropriate and reasonable boundaries for staff members and students to (1) protect students from sexual misconduct and abuse, and (2) to protect staff members from misunderstandings and false accusations.

#### SECTION 2: Applicability

The Standards apply to all employees (including and without limitation to teachers, teacher assistants, paraprofessionals, coaches, counselors, clinicians, administrators), volunteers, vendors, consultants, and their employees, and other third parties who interact with students (hereinafter "staff" or "staff members"). For staff members whose children are students of Elim Christian Services or who have family members who attend Elim Christian Services, these Standards do not apply to the usual parent/child or familial relationship.

#### SECTION 3: General Standards

The following general standards apply to all staff/student interactions.

- Personal contact between students and staff members must always be appropriate to the circumstances, non-sexual and unambiguous in meaning.
- Staff members shall maintain a strictly professional relationship with students, whether on or off school property and during or outside of school hours
- Staff members are responsible for always maintaining professional and appropriate physical and emotional boundaries with students.
- Interactions between staff members and students should be based on mutual respect and trust.
- Staff members are responsible for treating all students consistently and in line with the educational mission of Elim.

#### **SECTION 4: Unacceptable Behavior**

The following behaviors are unacceptable and therefore strictly prohibited. Each behavior is an example of the inappropriate and prohibited crossing of a boundary and violation of the professional role of a staff member. This list is not exhaustive.

- Staff members shall not target a particular student or students for personal attention or friendship. Gossiping with or about other students or staff and confiding in students beyond the normal staff member-student relationship is prohibited.
- Staff members shall not ask a student to keep a secret, promise to keep a student's secret or coerce a student to confide their personal or family problems. This example does not apply when counseling staff are meeting with students. If a student initiates a discussion of their personal or family problems, staff members are expected to be supportive and to refer the student to the counseling staff member, if appropriate
- Staff members shall not engage in sexual, racial, or religious banter, jokes, or innuendoes with students. Discriminatory and/or banter that marginalizes a student or groups of students is strictly prohibited. This applies to one's actual or perceived membership in one or more of the Protected Categories (such as actual or perceived gender identity or sexual orientation)
- Staff members shall not show inappropriate images, including pornography, violence, or explicit language to students.
- Staff members should not be in possession of or use their personal devices to take or store pictures and/or videos of students.
- Staff members shall not engage in, discuss, or plan future romantic or sexual relationships with students.
- Staff members shall not make sexual advances towards students or flirt with students.
- Staff members shall not engage in a student's flirting or sexual overtures. Any incidents of a student flirting with a staff member or making sexual overtures towards a staff member must be reported pursuant to the section "Reporting Possible or Actual Violations of These Professional Standards."
- Staff members shall not provide or offer to provide alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or paraphernalia to students.
- Staff members shall not single out any one student and provide the student with gift(s) or accept expensive or numerous gifts from students. Nominal gifts to multiple students/classrooms are permissible. Nominal gifts to teachers as a form of appreciation are acceptable.
- Staff members shall not address students with unique pet names or personalized terms of endearment that suggest a unique and overly familiar relationship. Staff members shall not allow students to address them by their first name alone, nickname, pet names or personalized terms of endearment that suggest an overly familiar relationship.
- Staff members shall not comment on a student's physical appearance.
- Staff members shall not engage in any type of inappropriate physical contact with students or any other conduct that might be considered harassment, discrimination, or retaliation.
- Staff members shall not use corporal punishment or engage in any disciplinary action with the intention of producing physical or emotional pain (such as humiliation, embarrassment, threats, or

other punitive or demoralizing actions toward a student), this includes conduct towards the children of staff members enrolled in Elim.

### **SECTION 5: Acceptable Supportive/Encouraging Behavior**

It is acceptable to show your students that you care. You should promote affirming, inclusive, and positive environments for students with your words and body language, such as actively listening, appropriately responding and relaying that you are concerned for students. It is acceptable to high five, fist bump, handshake, or say “give yourself a pat on the back.” To console a student, it is permissible to offer tissues, link arms and offer them time to take a walk or give the student a quick side hug.

### **SECTION 6: Appearances of Impropriety**

Most contact between students and staff is appropriate and professional. However, there are instances or activities that could be considered invasions of appropriate boundaries and can create an actual impropriety or the appearance of impropriety.

To protect students and staff, staff should avoid activities with students that present opportunities for inappropriate relationships or that create the appearance that the staff and student are in an inappropriate relationship. Examples of such activities are described below and must be avoided by staff members. This list is not exhaustive and there may be situations where these activities are within professional staff/student boundaries. Such situations where these activities may be within professional boundaries are when the staff member’s child is friends with another student. In this circumstance the activity may be acceptable if the staff member is not alone with the student (the staff member’s child or another person should be present) and the staff member’s supervisor is aware of the staff member’s activities.

- Being alone with an individual student out of the view of others, unless required in connection with providing educational services in accordance with your employment (e.g., health screening, counseling, therapy, nursing, personal care, and other services required by individualized education plans, or other medical condition action plans)
- Inviting or allowing individual students to visit the staff member’s home.
- Visiting a student’s home or meeting the student at another location outside of school for non-educational purposes
- Transporting a student in a staff member’s private vehicle without permission of the principal and the parent.

Before any of the above activities occur, staff members should communicate with the appropriate administrator and obtain approval. If any of the above activities occur and are not approved, the staff member must report the occurrence to the appropriate administrator as soon as possible. Failure to report any activities could lead to the employee being subjected to Elim’s progressive discipline policy.

### **SECTION 7: Electronic Communication**

Communicating via electronic means can be a valuable way to convey information. However, caution should be exercised when staff members are communicating with students via electronic means. At all times, staff members shall abide by Elim’s Acceptable Use Policy. Staff members communicating with students via electronic means must do so using Elim’s network and for educational purposes only.

- Staff members shall not engage in any unacceptable behavior with students via electronic means. Staff members should also avoid any appearances of impropriety with students via electronic means.
- Staff members shall not communicate with students via a student's mobile device, whether phone, text, or instant message
- Staff members shall not communicate with students via a student's personal email account. If the student doesn't have a school address, and there is a need please work with your program administrator to secure a school-based email.
- Staff members shall not accept or initiate connections with current students on social networking sites.
- If a staff member has a social networking site for educational purposes, the staff member shall obtain permission from the principal and parents to engage with students via this site.

### **SECTION 8: Travel/Transportation**

Consistent with Elim's Student Travel Policy, staff members are strongly discouraged from transporting a student in the staff members' private vehicle(s) under any circumstances. However, staff members may transport a student with the written consent of both the Director of School and parent/guardian of the student. Written consent from the parent/guardian must be given in advance of the trip on the attached Appendix A, containing the Elim Written Consent Form for the Private Transportation of a Student. If the Director of School gives consent to a staff member to transport a student in a private vehicle, the Director of School must maintain a copy of the staff member's driver's license and insurance documentation. Staff members are strongly discouraged from transporting a student in the staff members' private vehicle(s) under any circumstances. However, staff members may transport a student with the written consent of both the Director of Children's Services and parent/guardian of the student. Written consent from the parent/guardian must be given in advance of the trip on the attached Appendix A, containing the Elim Written Consent Form for the Private Transportation of a Student. If the Director of School gives consent to a staff member to transport a student in a private vehicle, the principal must maintain a copy of the staff member's driver's license and insurance documentation.

If a staff member transports a student with permission from the parent/guardian and the Director of School, efforts should be made for an additional adult to be in the car such that the staff member is not alone with a student outside the view of others.

### **SECTION 9: Remote Instruction/E-Learning**

During remote instruction/E-learning, Elim Christian Services remains committed to ensuring students are learning in a safe and supportive environment. Elim also understands that to serve students during remote instruction/E-learning, there may be times when one-on-one meetings between staff and students need to take place to facilitate learning. As our staff and students adjust to teaching and learning remotely, the standards of conduct outlined below for remote instruction/E-learning should guide staff and student interactions.

#### **SECTION 9.1: Mandated Reporting**

It is important to remind all staff that they are mandated reporters. Staff may not be able to rely on in-person signs of abuse or neglect, such as unexplained bites, burns or bruises. However, a student's physical appearance, their environment, their behavior, their emotional state and/or their lack of access to a supportive adult can indicate that they need help. Remind students that they have the right to be safe, that

staff are here to support them, and that they are available to speak about concerns or connect them to support.

Essential services that help ensure student safety remain open and available, including:

- The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services 24-Hour Child Abuse Hotline that can be reached at 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873) or via their new [online reporting system](#).

## **SECTION 9.2: One-on-One Staff/Student Contact and Meetings**

The following standards apply to scheduling one-on-one staff/student contact and meetings:

- All staff/student one-on-one remote interactions must occur on the staff member's Elim purchased **Zoom account**.
- Invite the assistant principal, and the student's parents/guardians, to the meeting by adding them as optional meeting attendees.
- The purpose of any one-on-one remote meeting must be clear and unambiguous and must be clearly communicated by the staff to the student, parent/guardian, and school principal or assistant principal before the interaction begins. To clearly communicate the purpose of any one-on-one remote meeting and for proper record-keeping, it should be listed in the staff member's Elim Outlook calendar invite description.
- One-on-one meetings should be recorded to avoid any appearance of secrecy for the benefit of both the staff and the student. To record the session, you will need to obtain parent/guardian authorization for the recording by having them sign the Elim Video Informed Consent Form. Parent/guardian consent to record is needed during a one-on-one meeting between a staff member and student because the nature of the interaction is inherently private.
- If a parent/guardian does not give their consent to record the virtual meeting, the meeting cannot occur as a one-on-one session between a staff member and student. Instead, the school principal, assistant principal or parent/guardian must attend so that the session is no longer a meeting between one staff member and one student.
- When staff are meeting one-on-one with students using staff member's Elim purchased **Zoom account**, these standards must be followed:
  - Video cameras are permitted to be turned off by students to protect privacy (staff are required to always have their camera on and must maintain an appropriate environment)
  - If video cameras are on, the students and staff should be in an environment free from distraction.
  - Everyone must be fully clothed during video meetings.
  - The chat function can be used by either party to protect privacy if others are nearby.
  - Images or content from remote learning must not be screen-captured or posted elsewhere without the consent of all parties (if parties are minors consent must be obtained from a parent/guardian)
  - Any disclosure or allegations made must follow proper reporting procedures.
  - If a staff member finds themselves in an unplanned one-on-one meeting with a student, they must end the interaction as soon as it is safe to do so and report the occurrence to the appropriate administrator as soon as possible.

### SECTION 9.3: Group Staff/Student Contact and Meetings

When adults are with students in group remote sessions or teaching synchronously in remote classrooms, the following standards apply:

- Talk about remote learning boundaries and everyone's right to safety, allowing students to provide feedback and ask questions.
- Provide feedback to students who are not following boundary guidance to model for other students, so that they are empowered to ask for boundaries to be followed. Some examples may include interrupting others who are speaking, misusing a person's preferred pronouns, or making offensive comments during the session.
- Video cameras are permitted to be turned off by students to protect privacy (staff are required to always have their camera on and must maintain an appropriate environment)
- If video cameras are on, the students and staff should be in an environment free from distraction.
- Everyone should be fully clothed during video meetings.
- Give reminders that images or content from remote learning should not be screen-captured or posted elsewhere without the consent of all parties (if parties are minors consent must be obtained from a parent/guardian)
- The chat function can be used to chat to the entire group but should not be used privately between students.

### SECTION 10: Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

All school personnel are mandated reporters. A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to believe that a child known to them in their official capacity may have been abused or neglected shall immediately contact DCFS.

The [Online Reporting System](#) is to be used for non-life threatening and non-emergency incidents of abuse or neglect of a child. **If you believe the abuse or neglect you are reporting requires immediate action, you MUST call the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at [800-25-ABUSE \(800-252-2873\)](tel:800-25-ABUSE) to make your report.**

Call the DCFS Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline instead of using the Online Reporting System for situations including but not limited to:

- Current injuries to the child
- Immediate need for medical treatment (including a child who is suicidal)
- Sexual abuse where the involved adult has or will have access to a child within the next 24 hours.
- A child is currently afraid to go home.
- A child is currently in the protective custody of police or medical personnel.
- A child death

For additional information on this requirement, please see Elim's Reporting of Child Abuse and Child Neglect Policy.

### SECTION 11: Reporting Possible or Actual Violations of These Standards

Students, parents/guardians, and staff members shall notify their program administrator, the Director of School, and/or Director of Human Resources, if they believe a staff member may be engaging in conduct that violates these Standards. Prompt reporting protects all personnel.

Staff shall immediately notify their appropriate administrator, Director of School, and Human Resources if they believe that they are receiving inappropriate attention from a student, or if they have been subject to sexual advances, comments, or communications by a student. Any complaints/notifications shall be appropriately documented by the program administrator, Director of School, or Director of Human Resources immediately.

The failure of a staff member to timely report conduct that violates these Standards can result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment.

Staff members are mandatory reporters and shall abide by the Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect and Inappropriate Relations between Adults and Students and also have an independent obligation to notify the [Illinois Department of Children and Family Services](#) (DCFS) at 800-252-2873 (1-800-25-ABUSE) if they suspect that child abuse or neglect has occurred. If the alleged victim is over the age of 18, contact the Department of Aging.

## **Behavior Intervention Policy & Procedure**

### ***Behavior/Discipline Procedure for All Staff***

Title 23: Education and Cultural Resources

Subtitle A: Education

Chapter I: State Board of Education

Subchapter a: Public School Recognition

Part 1 Public School Evaluation, Recognition and Supervision

Section 1.285 Requirement for the use of Isolated Time Out, Time Out and Physical Restraint

### ***Purpose and Philosophy Statement***

The purpose of the Behavior Intervention Policy & Procedure at Elim Christian School is to provide students with the tools and resources needed to enhance their ability to use self-management skills and apply those skills to exhibit appropriate behaviors. In addition, this policy and procedure is written to ensure that all staff who are responsible for carrying out these behavior management procedures and techniques promote the privacy and dignity of our students while communicating with respect.

### ***Reliance on Best Practices***

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is defined as the science in which the principles of the analysis of behavior are applied systematically to improve socially significant behavior and in which experimentation is used to identify the variables responsible for change in behavior. (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2020)

A Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) uses the principles of ABA to conduct assessments, define and measure academic and social behavior, graph and analyze data, create individualized behavioral programs, and plan for and facilitate student-centered meetings and/ or trainings. BCBAs adhere to the BACB's Professional and Ethical Compliance Code, collaborate with other school personnel, and participate in professional learning and teaching communities.

## ***Behavior Programming***

At Elim, behavior programming is initially created after thorough assessment and observation, and continuously monitored to ensure up to date and meaningful interventions are being implemented. It is the responsibility of the behavior therapist to create and oversee the direct implementation of individual behavior strategies and behavior intervention plans (BIPs). Individualized behavior programming prioritizes the use of positive behavioral supports (PBIS) to help students achieve the highest level of independence possible. These approaches may include, but are not limited to, making data driven decisions, using least-to-most restrictive procedures, creating supportive environments, and modeling and reinforcing appropriate behavior. Ultimately, all Elim staff (which includes Behavior Therapists, Registered Behavior Technicians [RBTs], teachers, related service providers, paraprofessionals, and administrators) are responsible for managing student behavior and implementing proactive and reactive strategies as outlined in a student's individual behavior strategies and/or BIPs.

Individual behavior strategies written if:

- If an individual student has significant behavior needs related to his/her disability that impedes his/her learning or the learning of others.

A formal BIP will be written and included within a student's IEP if:

- If the student is restrained in a supine physical restraint in at least 2 separate instances within a 30-school day period, the school personnel who initiated, monitored, and supervised the incidents shall initiate a review of the effectiveness of the procedures used.
- When a student experiences three instances of non-therapeutic isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint, the school personnel who initiated, monitored, and supervised the incidents shall initiate a review of the effectiveness of the procedures used and prepare an individual behavior plan for the student that provides either for continued use of these interventions or the use of other, specified interventions.
- It has been determined that a student's behavior has a significant impact on his/her education and requires the consistent use of restrictive measures.

Behavior Therapists analyze student behavior data and determine appropriate changes to the plan if needed. No changes should be made to any part of the plan or the direct implementation of the plan without Behavior Therapist approval. When deemed appropriate, the student will participate in the development of the behavior intervention plan. Consent will be obtained from the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) of the student prior to completing either a formal FBA or BIP and updated on a yearly basis.

### **Procedures & Training**

Upon hire, all school staff members responsible for direct care of students receive Safety-Care© behavioral safety training. Recertification occurs every year. All staff members receive ongoing informal and formal training on behavior policy, the utilization of positive behavior supports, and proactive behavior management strategies, by the team of behavior professionals employed at Elim. Staff members that support individuals who may require highly restrictive interventions are trained in alternative interventions designed to maintain the safety of the student and others in accordance with regulations outlined by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). Staff members who have not received annual systematic training on less restrictive and intrusive strategies and techniques to reduce the use of isolated time out, time out and physical restraint based on best practices and how to safely use time out and physical restraint when those alternative

strategies and techniques have been tried and proven ineffective, shall not participate in isolated time out, time out or physical restraint.

### General Discipline

- A. It is the intention of Elim Christian School to comply with The Illinois School Code, DCFS, IDEA, APA, and ISBE rules and regulations. Interventions used with students with disabilities will incorporate procedures and methods consistent with positive behavior supports designed to develop and strengthen desirable student behaviors and should be used to the maximum extent possible.
- B. The school will develop its own set of rules and consequences. The enrollee who violates general rules will be informed of the appropriate behavior consequence before it is carried out.
- C. Parents/guardians will be given a Parent Handbook during the admission process. Parents/guardians will sign a consent form indicating they have read, understood, and agree to the contents.
- D. Positive Interventions – The use of positive interventions is consistent with the educational goals of enhancing students’ academic, social, and personal growth.
- E. Non-Restrictive Interventions – This is the preferred type of intervention because of the low risk of negative side effects and the high priority placed on behavior change. These interventions may be used without the development of a written BIP as part of the student’s IEP.

Restrictive Interventions – Restrictive interventions may be used when less restrictive interventions have been attempted and failed or in emergency situations. A Behavior Therapist is notified immediately whenever highly restrictive interventions may be necessary. In the event that a Behavior Therapist is not available, an administrator is contacted immediately. These interventions should be used for the minimal amount of time necessary to manage the student’s behavior and should be used in conjunction with positive interventions. Restrictive interventions are never used as a form of punishment.

- F. Alternative Learning Areas (ALAs) – Elim is equipped to accommodate individualized student programming by offering a safe and quiet environment for the student to participate in modified school programming. ALAs may be utilized voluntarily per a student’s request or as a calming or sensory room to help the student de-escalate. If an ALA is utilized as a time-out space, all criteria must be met, and appropriate documentation filed.

### Physical Restraint

Physical restraint means holding a student or otherwise restricting the student's movements.

- A. A physical restraint shall not impair a student's ability to breathe or communicate normally, obstruct a student’s airway, or interfere with a student’s ability to speak. If physical restraint is imposed upon a student whose primary mode of communication is sign language or an augmentative mode, the student shall be permitted to have hands free of restraint for brief periods unless the supervising adult determines that this freedom appears likely to result in harm to the student or others.

- B. Physical restraint will only be used if and when the student poses a physical risk to himself, herself, or others, there is no medical contraindication to its use, and the staff applying the restraint have been certified in its use through the Safety Care © physical management curriculum.
- C. Staff involved in physically restraining a student must periodically halt the restraint to evaluate if the imminent danger of serious physical harm continues to exist. If the imminent danger of serious physical harm continues to exist, staff may continue to use the physical restraint and the continued use may not be considered a separate instance of physical restraint.
- D. A student shall be released from physical restraint immediately upon a determination by the staff member administering the restraint that the student is no longer in imminent danger of causing physical harm to himself, herself, or others.
- E. A student shall be released from physical restraint immediately if the student indicates the inability to breathe or staff supervising the student recognizes that the student may be in respiratory distress.
- F. Students shall not be subjected to physical restraint for using profanity or other verbal displays of disrespect for themselves or others. A verbal threat shall not be considered as constituting a physical danger unless a student also demonstrates a means of or intent to immediately carry out the threat.

### **Supine Physical Restraint**

Elim staff is trained to implement highly restrictive restraint procedures such as supine restraint. Supine physical restraint means a physical restraint in which a student is held face up on the floor or other surface and physical pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in the supine position. Supine physical restraint is prohibited unless all of the following criteria are met:

- A. Before using a supine physical restraint, the school district or other entity serving the student shall review and determine if there are any known medical or psychological limitations that contraindicate the use of a supine physical restraint.
- B. The school district or other entity serving the student deems the situation an emergency, defined as a situation in which immediate intervention is needed to protect a student or other individual from imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others and less restrictive and intrusive interventions have been tried and proven ineffective in stopping the imminent danger.
- C. Supine physical restraint is used in a manner that does not restrict or impair a student's ability to breathe or communicate normally, apply pressure to a student's neck, obstruct a student's airway, or interfere with a student's primary mode of communication.
- D. Supine physical restraint is used only by personnel who have completed required training under subsection (i) as outlined in the Illinois Administrative Code Section 1.285.
- E. Supine physical restraint is used only if those interventions are the least restrictive and intrusive interventions to address the emergency and stop the imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others. During each incident, one school staff person trained in identifying the signs of distress must be assigned to observe and monitor the student during the entire incident. That staff person may not be involved in the physical holding of the student. The number of staff involved in physically restraining the student may not exceed the number necessary to safely hold the student.

Staff involved in the restraint must use the least amount of force and the fewest points of contact necessary and must afford the student maximum freedom of movement while maintaining safety.

- F. The supine physical restraint ends immediately when the threat of imminent danger of serious physical harm ends, but in no event shall supine physical restraint last longer than 30 minutes. If after 30 minutes the emergency has not resolved, or if an additional emergency arises the same school day that meets the standards of this subsection (d), a school administrator, in consultation with a psychologist, social worker, nurse, or behavior specialist, may authorize the continuation of the restraint or an additional supine physical restraint. No restraint may be continued, nor may additional restraints be applied, unless continuation is authorized by a school administrator.
- G. If the student is restrained in a supine physical restraint in at least 2 separate instances within a 30-school day period, the school personnel who initiated, monitored, and supervised the incidents shall initiate a Restraint Review, which is a review of the effectiveness of the procedures used. If the personnel involved in the restraints do not include a psychologist, social worker, nurse, or behavior specialist, at least one of those staff members shall be included in the Restraint Review. The State Superintendent may request that the school district or entity provide documentation from the Restraint Review. The Restraint Review must include, but is not limited to:
  - i. conducting or reviewing a functional behavioral analysis, reviewing data, considering the development of additional or revised positive behavioral interventions and supports, considering actions to reduce the use of restrictive procedures, or, if applicable, modifying the student's individualized educational program, federal Section 504 plan, behavior intervention plan, or other plan of care, as appropriate; and
  - ii. reviewing any known medical or psychological limitations that contraindicate the use of a restrictive procedure, considering whether to prohibit that restrictive procedure, and, if applicable, documenting any prohibitions in the student's individualized education program, federal Section 504 plan, behavior intervention plan, or other plan of care.

### **Time Out and Isolated Time Out**

- A. Time out means a behavior management technique for the purpose of calming or de-escalation that involves the involuntary monitored separation of a student from classmates with an adult trained for part of the school day, only for a brief time, in a non-locked setting.
- B. Isolated Time Out means the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a time out room or other enclosure outside the classroom without a supervising adult in the time out room or enclosure. Isolated time out is allowed only under limited circumstances and must be approved by the Behavior Therapist. If all other requirements under this section are met, isolated time out may be used only when the adult in the time out room or enclosure is in imminent danger of serious physical harm because the student is unable to cease actively engaging in extreme physical aggression.
- C. Time out or isolated time out does not include a student-initiated or student-requested break, a student-initiated or teacher initiated sensory break, including a sensory room containing sensory tools to assist a student to calm and de-escalate, an in-school suspension or detention, or any other

appropriate disciplinary measure, including a student's brief removal to the hallway or similar environment.

- D. Any enclosure used for time out or isolated time out shall:
- i. meet all of the health/life safety requirements of 23 Ill. Adm. Code 180;
  - ii. have the same ceiling height as the surrounding room or rooms and be large enough to accommodate not only the student being placed in isolated time out or time out but also, if applicable, any other individual who is required to accompany that student under this Section;
  - iii. be constructed of materials that cannot be used by students to harm themselves or others, be free of electrical outlets, exposed wiring, and other objects that could be used by students to harm themselves or others, and be designed so that students cannot climb up the walls;
  - iv. be designed to permit continuous visual monitoring of and communication with the student; and
  - v. if fitted with a door, be fitted with either a steel door or a wooden door of solid-core construction. If the door includes a viewing panel, the panel shall be unbreakable. The door shall not be fitted with a locking mechanism or be physically blocked by furniture or any other inanimate object at any time during the isolated time out or time out.
- E. For an isolated time out, an adult who is responsible for supervising the student must remain within two feet of the enclosure. The supervising staff member must always be able to see, hear, and communicate with the student. The door shall not be locked or held to block egress. A student in isolated time out shall not be supervised using cameras, audio recording, or any other electronic monitoring device.
- F. For time out, an adult trained under subsection (i) who is responsible for supervising the student must remain in the same room as the student at all times during the time out.
- G. The deprivation of necessities needed to sustain the health of a person is prohibited. A student placed in isolated time out or time out must have reasonable access to food, water, medication, and toileting facilities. Except in circumstances in which there is a risk of self-injury or injury to staff or others, a student in isolated time out or time out shall not have clothing removed, including, but not limited to, shoes, shoelaces, boots, or belts.

## **Time Limits**

- A. A student shall be released from isolated time out or time out immediately upon determination by the staff member that the student no longer poses an imminent danger of causing serious physical harm to the student or others. No less than once every 15 minutes, an adult trained must assess whether the student has ceased presenting the specific behavior for which the time out was imposed.

- B. A student shall be released from physical restraint immediately upon a determination by the staff member administering the restraint that the student is no longer in imminent danger of causing serious physical harm to the student or others.

### **Documentation and Evaluation**

A written record of each episode of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint shall be maintained in the student's temporary record. The report will outline the following information:

- the student's name.
  - the date of the incident.
  - the beginning and ending times of the incident.
  - a description of any relevant events leading up to the incident.
  - a description of any less restrictive or intrusive alternative measures that were used prior to the implementation of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint and why those measures were ineffective or deemed inappropriate.
  - a description of the incident or student behavior that resulted in isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint, including the specific imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others.
    - for isolated time out, a description of the rationale of why the needs of the student cannot be met by a lesser restrictive intervention and why an adult could not be present in the time out room.
  - a log of the student's behavior in isolated time out, time out, or during physical restraint, including a description of the restraint techniques used and any other interaction between the student and staff.
  - a description of any injuries (whether to students, staff, or others) or property damage.
  - a description of any planned approach to dealing with the student's behavior in the future, including any de-escalation methods or procedures that may be used to avoid the use of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint.
  - a list of the school personnel who participated in the implementation, monitoring, and supervision of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint; and
    - the date on which parental or guardian notification took place.
- A. If an episode of isolated time out or time out exceeds 30 minutes, an episode of physical restraint exceeds 15 minutes, or repeated episodes have occurred during any three-hour period:
- i. A licensed educator or licensed clinical practitioner knowledgeable about the use of isolated time out or time out or trained in the use of physical restraint, as applicable, shall evaluate the situation.
  - ii. The evaluation shall consider the appropriateness of continuing the procedure in use, including the student's potential need for medication, nourishment, or use of a restroom, and the need for alternate strategies (e.g., assessment by a mental health crisis team, assistance from police, or transportation by ambulance).
  - iii. The results of the evaluation shall be committed to writing and copies of this documentation shall be placed into the student's temporary student record and provided to the official designated under this Section.
- B. When a student experiences instances of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint on any 3 days within a 30-day period, the school personnel who initiated, monitored, and supervised the incidents shall initiate a review of the effectiveness of the procedures used and prepare an individual

behavior plan for the student that provides either for continued use of these interventions or for the use of other, specified interventions. The plan shall be placed into the student's temporary student record. The review shall also consider the student's potential need for an alternative program or for special education eligibility, or, for a student already eligible for special education, change in program.

- i. The district or other entity serving the student shall invite the student's parents or guardians to participate in this review and shall provide ten days' notice of its date, time, and location.
- ii. The notification shall inform the parents or guardians that the student's potential need for special education, an alternative program, or, for students already eligible for special education, the student's potential need for a change in program, will be considered and that the results of the review will be entered into the temporary student record.

### **Notification to Parents or Guardians**

- A. If a student is subject to isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint, the school must make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parent or guardian on the same day the isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint is imposed.
- B. Within one business day after any use of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint, the school district or other entity serving the student shall send the form required to the student's parents or guardians. Within 48 hours of the restrictive measure utilized, a copy of the report will be sent to the State Superintendent.
- C. No later than 2 school days after each incident of isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint, the principal or another designated administrator shall notify the student's parent or guardian that he or she may request a meeting with appropriate school personnel to discuss the incident. If a parent or guardian requests a meeting, the meeting must be convened within 2 school days after the request, unless extended per the parent or guardian's request. A summary of the meeting shall be documented in writing and shall become part of the student's school record. A copy of the documents shall be provided to the student's parent or guardian. If the parent or guardian does not request a meeting within 10 school days after the school has provided the documents or if the parent or guardian fails to attend a requested meeting, it will be documented and filed in the student's school file.
- D. If the team has attempted all approved interventions and deems that the student continues to pose a significant safety risk to themselves or others beyond the means of the current placement, one or all the following may occur:
  - i. Student conference with designated members of the team to explore beneficial modifications to the plan.
  - ii. Suspension (one to five days)
  - iii. Parent conference
  - iv. Emergency IEP
  - v. Transfer of placement within Elim Christian School
  - vi. Termination of placement
  - vii. *(All final placement decisions are made by the Director of School)*

### ***Special Celebrations***

Classroom celebrations must be approved in advance by the program administrator. All food and drink items must be store bought and prepackaged. To ensure that we can remain complaint with student food allergy needs we are unable to accept food that is home made. Please note that Parents should not order food to be delivered to classrooms/students.

As a Christian School, the School Leadership Team recognizes the concerns and varying opinions regarding the appropriateness of celebrating Halloween. “Fall Festivals” or “Harvest Celebrations” will be allowed as long as the positive character/costume focus is adhered to (e.g., no blood, gore, devils, etc.).

Throughout the year, Elim may host special events, including, but not limited to talent shows, game day, prom and graduation ceremonies. As special events are scheduled, parents will be provided information related to expectations, dates, times, locations, etc.