

WISDOM • PASSION • SERVICE

# WOODLAND SCHOOL

7224 Supply Road  
Traverse City, MI 49696

## Family Handbook 2011-2012

Phone (231) 947-7474

Fax (231) 947-7667

[www.woodlandschool.ws](http://www.woodlandschool.ws)

### SCHOOL HOURS

Monday through Thursday 8:25 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Friday 8:25 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Half Days 8:25 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

# WOODLAND SCHOOL CALENDAR 2011-2012

August 29-September 1—Work Days

Sept. 2-5 Labor Day Weekend  
September 6—First Day of School; half-day for students

October 14—Hike-a-Thon  
October 11-27 MEAP testing  
October 19-20 6/8 Student-Led Conferences  
October 24-28—Intensive Week #1  
October 28—History Fair; 1/2 day  
October 31—No School/Professional Development Day

November 9-10—Primary & 3-5 Conferences  
Nov. 23, 24, 25—Thanksgiving Break  
December 6—Primary Concert followed by Production  
December 9—Trimester 1 ends  
Dec. 13—Band/Choir Concert 7:00 p.m.  
December 19-January 2—Holiday Break

January 2—No School/Professional Development day  
January 16—No School/Professional Development day  
January 20—Primary Semester 1 ends (report cards sent home January 27)

January 25-26 6/8 Conferences  
February 8-9 3-5 Conferences  
March 1—Band/Choir Concert 7:00 p.m.  
March 3—Winterfest  
March 8—Trimester 2 ends  
March 9—No School—teacher work day  
March 12-16—Intensive Week #2  
March 14-15—Primary conferences  
March 15-16 Evening Musical—7:00 p.m.  
March 26-30—No School/Spring Break

April 6—No School/holiday  
April 23—No School/Professional Development day  
April 24-26—Iowa Testing for Grades 1-2  
May 11—No School—teacher work day  
May 11—Kindergarten Visit Day  
May 22—Primary Music Concert & Production  
May 24—Band/Choir Concert 7:00 p.m.  
May 28—Memorial Day

June 4-8—Intensive Week #3  
June 4—8th Grade Graduation  
June 8—LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

- Holiday/Vacation Day
- / Half Day for Students
- ◇ Professional Development
- △ Teacher Work Day

## September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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## November

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## January

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## April

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## May

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## June

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## STAFF LISTING & CONTACT INFORMATION

<u>Name</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Voice Mail Ext.</u>
Bowen, Sandy <a href="mailto:sbowen@woodlandschool.ws">sbowen@woodlandschool.ws</a>	Receptionist	3002
DeBruyn, Mae <a href="mailto:maedebruynteacher@yahoo.com">maedebruynteacher@yahoo.com</a>	6-8 Teacher	3035
Germaine-Easterle, Moe <a href="mailto:measterle@woodlandschool.ws">measterle@woodlandschool.ws</a>	K-2 Teacher	3009
Giem, Kristine <a href="mailto:kgiem@woodlandschool.ws">kgiem@woodlandschool.ws</a>	Special Services Teacher	3003
Goodrick-Scanlon, Lesley <a href="mailto:lgoodrick@woodlandschool.ws">lgoodrick@woodlandschool.ws</a>	4-5 Teacher	3014
Gorney, Mary <a href="mailto:mgorney@woodlandschool.ws">mgorney@woodlandschool.ws</a>	K-2 Teacher	3008
Hadd, Sarah <a href="mailto:shadd@woodlandschool.ws">shadd@woodlandschool.ws</a>	3-5 Teacher	3018
Hoepfner, Melissa <a href="mailto:mhoepfner@woodlandschool.ws">mhoepfner@woodlandschool.ws</a>	K-1 Teacher	3011
Kreykes, Kathy <a href="mailto:KathyKreykes@hotmail.com">KathyKreykes@hotmail.com</a>	Primary Art	3010
Louis, Shann <a href="mailto:slouis@woodlandschool.ws">slouis@woodlandschool.ws</a>	3-5 Teacher	3017
Milne, Jessica <a href="mailto:milne63@hotmail.com">milne63@hotmail.com</a>	2-3 Teacher	3010
Milne, Ned <a href="mailto:nedmilneteacher@yahoo.com">nedmilneteacher@yahoo.com</a>	6-8 Teacher	3030
Opsasnick, Julie <a href="mailto:jopsasnick@woodlandschool.ws">jopsasnick@woodlandschool.ws</a>	Librarian	3045
Pataky, Jean <a href="mailto:jpataky@woodlandschool.ws">jpataky@woodlandschool.ws</a>	Secretary	3001
Post, Chris <a href="mailto:chrispostteacher@yahoo.com">chrispostteacher@yahoo.com</a>	6-8 Teacher	3033

Rancour, Stephanie <a href="mailto:srancour@woodlandschool.ws">srancour@woodlandschool.ws</a>	PE and Health Teacher	3034
Ruopp, Amy <a href="mailto:sagenamy@sbcglobal.net">sagenamy@sbcglobal.net</a>	Art Teacher	3032
Tarsa, Nathan <a href="mailto:ntarsa@woodlandschool.ws">ntarsa@woodlandschool.ws</a>	Director	3006
Terhune, Julie <a href="mailto:Stahlje18@yahoo.com">Stahlje18@yahoo.com</a>	Band/Primary Music, Vocal Music	3041
Tilley, Marilyn <a href="mailto:tilleyjm@gmail.com">tilleyjm@gmail.com</a>	Vocal Music & Production	3007

During the school day, calls are transferred through the office. After hours, to leave a voice mail message for a staff member dial 947-7474, dial "\*" (the star key) and the extension of the desired person as soon as the automated answering system engages. You will be transferred directly to that voice mailbox.

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Diane Huff	John Tilley	Kurt Kellett	Jennifer Ulbrich	Mary Wodzien
President	Vice-President	Treasurer	Secretary	

The Board of Directors meets the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.  
in the Woodland School Library.

# BASIC INFORMATION

## ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is a critical part of the learning process. If your child is absent for any reason, call the office prior to 9:00 a.m. If we have not heard from you, a phone call will be made to your home. Parents will be notified if absences and/or tardies exceed 10 in a semester.

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

School begins promptly at 8:25 a.m. It is important for students to arrive at school on time. Because adult supervision is not available earlier than 8:15 a.m., it is expected that students will not arrive at school any earlier. Once students are in the building, they are to go directly to their classroom.

Students who arrive at school after 8:25 a.m. must be accompanied to the office by their parent/driver and signed in. Students will be required to obtain a tardy slip in the office and present it to their teacher before they are allowed in class late.

During school hours, a student will not be released to any person not listed on the emergency card without the written or verbal permission of the parent. **The person to whom the child is being released is required to sign the log in the office.** Identification will be required if the person is not known to staff. Teachers may only release a child to an adult after receiving notification from the director or secretary.

School dismisses at 3:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, unless there is a scheduled half-day. It is very important that your child be picked up promptly at the end of the school day, as teachers and other staff have end of the day assignments and meetings. Please be considerate of staff schedules.

**For your child's protection and safety, students will be picked up in front of the school's main building. Do not encourage your child to meet you in another location, as you may compromise their safety. If students are not in front of the building at dismissal time, parents are asked to park their car and walk down to escort their child to the vehicle. Students may not walk up to cars without being accompanied by an adult.**

If you give permission for someone else to pick up your child at dismissal (other than arranged carpool), please send a note indicating the date and with whom they will be riding. All Kalkaska bus arrangements must be made directly through KPTA at 258-6808. If BATA bus transportation becomes available this school year, we will provide that information to Woodland families. You should call the school office if your child will be riding the bus and they are not a regular rider.

## **BRINGING THINGS TO SCHOOL**

Personal property that is not needed for educational purposes should not be brought to school (e.g. any electronic devices including cell phones, ipods, games, recorders; toys, cards or valuable items). Woodland School will not be responsible for personal property that is lost or stolen. Snowboards, skateboards, in-line skates, shoes with wheels, and other modes of transportation on wheels are not allowed unless part of an organized school activity. Materials that burn or cause damage, such as matches and lighters, are not allowed. Guns, knives and blades, or other weapons are not allowed. Michigan law prohibits students from having guns or from having blades longer than three inches in their possession. Possession results in automatic expulsion.

## **BUS TRANSPORTATION**

Kalkaska Public Transit Authority offers bus transportation for a fee from Kalkaska, South Boardman, and Fife Lake. Call 258-6808 for information. If BATA bus transportation becomes available, we will make that information available to Woodland families.

## **CHANGES IN STUDENT INFORMATION**

If there is a change in student information (address, phone, emergency contacts, etc.) please notify the office immediately.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Woodland students and staff are expected to show respect, use good manners, provide help, be kind, and clean up after themselves. Respect yourself, respect others, and respect property.

## **COLD WEATHER RECESS**

Normally all students go outside for recess. Students are expected to come to school dressed appropriately for the outside weather conditions. Students will not be sent outside in case of rain or when temperatures are 0° or lower.

On rare occasions, students recovering from illness may stay in from recess for one day with a note from home. More than one day requires a doctor's recommendation.

## **DISMISSAL**

Students are required to stay in the designated paved area in front of the building during the dismissal process. A staff member will announce each car as it drives up, and those students will proceed to their car. Students who do not stay in the designated paved area will be sent to the Director's office, and must be picked up by their driver. Please have a card with your child's last name posted on the dashboard when you pull in the school driveway to expedite the dismissal process.

## **EDUCATIONAL VACATIONS WHILE SCHOOL IS IN SESSION**

Woodland School expects students to attend classes daily. **Please make it a priority to plan vacations during non-school days.** Any travel plans that require a student to be absent for more than 10 days may jeopardize their enrollment at Woodland School. Such plans must be discussed with and approved by the school Director. In the event that a family decides to vacation at a time when school is in session, the following procedure is in place:

1. Send written notification to teacher(s) stating dates of absence.
2. Send written notification to the office stating dates of absence.
3. If a child is being taken out of school, Woodland School expects that the trip is, at least in part, educational. Parents and students should work together to outline the types of projects that would be interesting and relevant to work on over the vacation.
4. Upon returning, check with the teacher to make up missed assignments.

Due to time constraints, teachers will not assume the responsibility to create work for children while they are on vacation.

## **FAMILY COUNCIL**

The Family Council is a group of parents, administrators, and teachers that provides service to the school community in a variety of ways. Every Woodland parent is encouraged to participate. Watch the Woodland School monthly newsletter for details on upcoming meetings and ways for parents to be involved.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Permission slips will be sent home indicating the date, time, and location of all school field trips. Students who have not returned their permission slip, signed by a parent or guardian, by the day of the trip will not be allowed to participate. If there is a fee for the trip, include the correct amount of cash or a check payable to **Woodland School**.

Telephone or send a note to your child's teacher if you are giving permission for someone else to pick up your child from the field trip (beyond normally arranged carpools), or if you will be picking up your child at the field trip. Notes should contain the date, child's first and last name, reason for the note, and parent's signature.

Please make sure students are dressed appropriately for the weather conditions when preparing for a field trip, as they may be outdoors. Students are encouraged to wear Woodland School logo clothing on field trips. Logo clothing is sold periodically as a fundraising activity.

We often need parent drivers for field trips. In order to drive, a parent must complete a volunteer form, a driver form (available in the office) and have on file a copy of their driver's license and proof of insurance. These forms are updated annually. Background checks will be done on all drivers and adults chaperoning school activities. We encourage you to complete this paperwork early in the year, in the event you decide to drive later for a field trip. Throughout the trip, parents are expected to follow all school rules and all directions from the lead teacher(s).

### **EMERGENCY CARDS**

An emergency card must be on file for every Woodland student. Make sure the card is filled out completely, with complete phone numbers (including home, work, cellular phones, and pager numbers), your email address, **and numbers of at least two other people** to contact in the event that you cannot be reached.

### **INTERNET USE POLICY**

Woodland School has the Internet available for educational purposes only. All computers are protected with web filtering software. Students may use the Internet only when there is an adult present. They may not use the internet before or after school or without supervision. Students may only access sites that contain appropriate material for school use. Any attempt to access inappropriate material will subject student to discipline under the school's discipline policies.

Students may only download off the Internet with the direct written permission of Mr. Post. The written permission must include the program to be downloaded, student's name, the date, and Mr. Post's signature.

## LUNCHES

As we do not offer a hot lunch or milk program, children must bring a lunch and beverage to school each day. Parents are asked to donate a box of crackers or other non-perishable food item to their child's classroom. In the event that a child forgets to bring a lunch, teachers will use these items.

## LOST AND FOUND

Items will be held for one month, and then donated to charity if not claimed. Encourage your child to check the Lost and Found (rack in the hallway outside the lunchroom) for items they cannot locate. Lost items can be easily returned if the student's name is on the item. **Please label everything.**

## MEDICATION

All prescription medication must be submitted to the office, and administered by school personnel. **A medical authorization form signed by the doctor must be on file in the office before prescription medication can be administered at school.** School personnel cannot administer medication except in accordance with the physician's written instructions indicated on the form. Forms are available in the office. Medicines must be delivered by the parent, be clearly labeled with the student's name and dosage instructions and be in the container provided by the pharmacy. Included in prescription medications are inhalers, cough medicines, and bee sting kits. Over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol can be sent to the office labeled for a student, but a form with dosage instructions must be signed by the parent and on file before it can be dispensed.

Your child cannot transport prescription medication to and from school. Parents are responsible for bringing the required medication, in a properly labeled container from the pharmacy, to the office.

## NEWSLETTERS

In addition to individual classroom or village newsletters, the office issues a monthly all-school newsletter. This newsletter is sent electronically via email on or shortly before the third Monday of each month (we will provide a paper copy of the newsletter to families who notify the office that they prefer this method). A current copy is posted on the hallway bulletin board, and extra copies are also available on the counter in the Main Office. The newsletter is also available online at our website, [www.woodlandschool.ws](http://www.woodlandschool.ws).

## OUTDOOR BEHAVIOR

Students are not allowed to throw, kick, or propel items such as snow, acorns, sticks, etc. on school grounds. Furthermore, students are not allowed to be outside the school

building without permission or supervision. Outdoors, students are expected to:

1. Follow directions the first time they are given.
2. Use equipment properly.
3. Not fight or play fight.
4. Not name-call, tease, swear, or be vulgar.
5. Stop playing and go inside when signaled by outdoor supervisor.
6. Respect all people and property.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

Parental involvement in a child's education is one of the most important factors in their success. The most important kind of involvement is associated with the things you do regularly with your children at home, e.g. reading to them, asking them about what they are working on, etc. We encourage you to get involved in your child's education in these sorts of ways.

Woodland School also welcomes and encourages parent involvement as volunteers. We need the enthusiastic and dedicated efforts of parents and others in the community and are fortunate to have many wonderful volunteers. Some of the areas you may want to consider include volunteering in a classroom, assisting with pizza lunch, leading primary electives, driving for field trips and assisting with costumes, props, and ticket sales at theater productions.

Prior to volunteer activity, all volunteers will be required to complete a Volunteer Agreement, giving the school authority to conduct a criminal background check.

Whenever possible, please schedule your volunteer time with your child's teacher or other Woodland staff member. When reporting to the school to volunteer, please do the following:

1. Sign the volunteer log in the office, including date and time of arrival, and pick up a volunteer badge.
2. Attend to your duties and activities.
3. Sign out with the date and time of departure, and return volunteer badge.

Parents who are not volunteering but just wish to visit their child's classroom are welcome. If you need to bring a preschooler with you please understand that if your child becomes loud or disruptive you will need to leave the classroom so the learning process is not disrupted for our students.

Except for brief interchanges, teachers are not available to talk with parents during school hours. If you require a conference with your child's teacher, they will be happy to schedule a time to meet with you that does not conflict with instructional time.

## PARENT/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

All Woodland staff has voice mail and messages are checked daily. Parents are encouraged to use the voice mail system when possible to contact staff members. Please note that office staff is limited and the campus is vast—teachers and students are often in areas without telephone access. The time periods when school is starting and dismissing are particularly busy. Please limit messages that must be delivered to students and staff to those of an urgent nature.

## PARKING

Employee and visitor cars should be parked in the designated parking area. For safety reasons, parking is not allowed in front of the school building or on the grass in the turnaround during school hours.

## SCHOOL CANCELLATION/DELAY

Woodland School will follow the lead of the Traverse City Public Schools in making the decision to cancel or delay classes due to weather conditions. Woodland may or may not be listed individually on local TV and radio stations when there are closings or delays...but please note that **if Traverse City Schools are closed or delayed due to weather, then Woodland School will follow their lead. The Woodland School voice mail greeting will also announce any cancellation or delay (947-7474).**

\*Please note that we do not follow the Traverse City Public Schools' calendar for such things as teacher work days, conferences, etc. Check the handbook calendar for our scheduled days off during the school year.

## STUDENT APPEARANCE

Although Woodland School does not have a formal dress code, students are expected to dress in a manner that does not disrupt the educational process. Any clothing or attire that creates disorder, disrupts the learning environment, and/or promotes or encourages drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or exhibits vulgarity, profane comments, or sexual innuendoes is strictly forbidden. Questionable apparel will be brought to the attention of the administration. The Director or teacher may request a change in attire, if necessary, and parents will be contacted.

Bare midriffs, muscle shirts, or extreme mini-skirts and shorts are not appropriate for the school setting. Shoes are required by state law. Winter headwear and gear are to be taken off when inside the building. The wearing of any other hats may or may not be allowed inside the building, depending on individual teacher preference or situation.

## TELEPHONES

Students may not use a school telephone except in the case of an emergency or the student has permission from a teacher. Students should make arrangements for transportation, homework, instruments, lunch, etc. before coming to school. *Please help our students be responsible.*

## VISITORS

All visitors to the school, including parent volunteers, must sign in and out on the sheet in the Main Office and wear the provided visitor or volunteer badge.

Students may not bring a visitor to school without prior written approval of their teacher or the Director. Permission must be given at least **one day prior to the visit**. The parent or legal guardian of a visiting student must fill out an emergency card in the office before their child will be allowed to visit the school. We encourage visits to be scheduled for no more than a half-day.



**GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**  
*Woodland School*

**Authorizing Agency.** The authorizing agency approves the school charter, appoints Woodland School Board members, grants final approval to any recommended changes to the Woodland School by-laws or charter documents, and provides general support and oversight of the school’s academic and administrative activities.

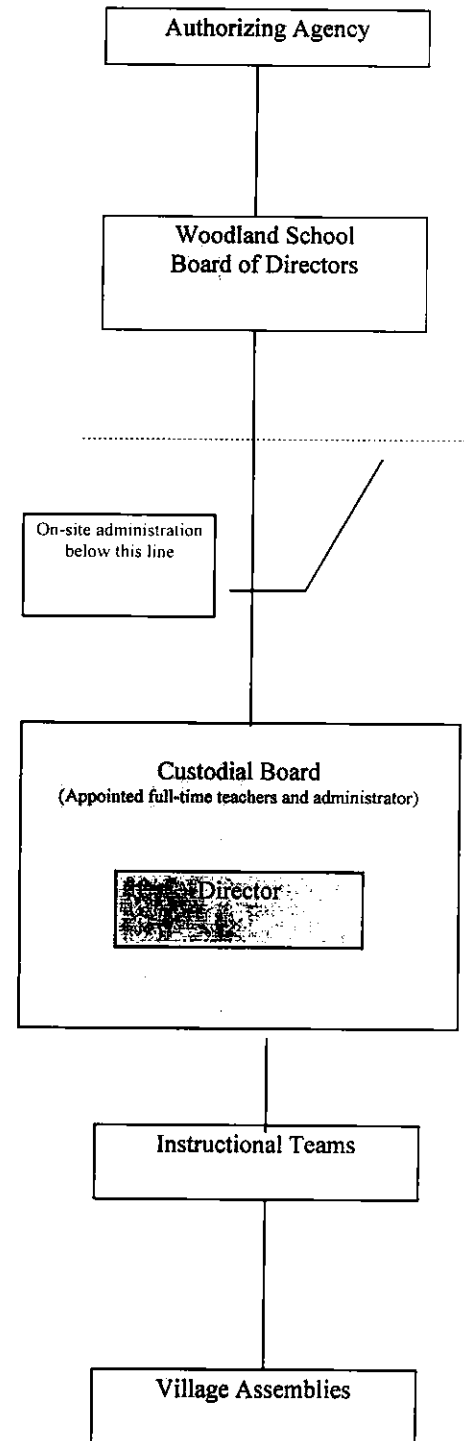
**Woodland School Board of Directors.** The Woodland School Board provides oversight of school affairs. Some specific duties include the following: nominating new members to the Woodland School Board; approving the school budget; authorizing expenditures; developing and approving general school policies; appointing School Custodians; reviewing, appointing, and recommending salary for administrator; and hearing parent concerns (as per communication policy).

**Custodial Board.** We use the term “custodial” to refer to the duties of watching over and taking care of the school. The Custodial Board is made up of full-time staff members who have demonstrated a strong commitment to the school. Duties include: approving significant changes in school programs; advising on budget issues; developing and implementing policies and procedures; determining staffing needs; overseeing the facilities and grounds; fulfilling charter obligations and other legal requirements; hearing parent concerns (as per communication policy); and nominating administrator by election (with final approval given by the Woodland School Board).

The Custodial Board delegates the day to day duties of administering the school to the **Director**. In other words, the Director is the on-site administrator for the school.

**Instructional Teams.** The instructional teams are composed of the full-time teachers who teach within a given village (K-3, 3-5, 6-8 each form a “village”) are responsible for designing, developing, and evaluating their respective programs consistent with the overall vision of the school. They administer their own budgets and make recommendations for hiring new teachers and other staff who work within their programs.

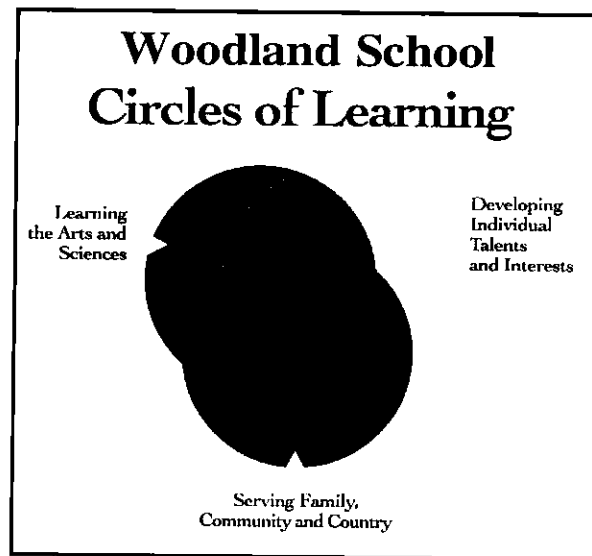
**Village Assemblies.** Village assemblies are made up of all students and staff within a given K-2, 3-5, or 6-8 village. The students and staff within a given village form a body which is given authority to make certain decisions in specified areas by majority vote. The organization—officers, meetings, and powers and duties—is determined by each village assembly through negotiation with the Instructional Team (the teachers) and majority vote of the respective village assembly.



## Basic Program Outline and Vision

**Our mission** is to help students to progressively improve their ability to understand and respond well to others and the world around them. We encourage this by developing, refining, and maintaining a learning environment where students *and* teachers:

- develop their talents and interests,
- mature in their understanding of, and participation in, democratic processes and service to community, and
- acquire the skills and wisdom of the past and present (math, science, history, English, music, art, etc.) to improve their talents, strengthen their potential to serve, and enrich their general ability to respond well to life's opportunities and challenges.



There are three general, interactive areas that should characterize learning and teaching at Woodland School. We call them Circles of Learning. These “circles” are not separate, but are instead overlapping and supportive of one another.

### ***Free and Responsible Development of Personal Talents & Interests***

Our commitment to respecting student freedom and responsibility in the learning process is one of the distinguishing features of Woodland School. All children have unique talents and interests which, if nurtured and allowed to develop, enrich their own lives as well as the lives of those whom they are able to serve.

**Choice and Responsibility.** We do, and must, and should make many decisions for our children. It is important that they develop the habit of doing things that they may not want to do, but which are necessary. However, if they are to learn true responsibility, we must also allow them liberty in choosing for themselves. Students need to have a large measure of freedom in choosing, initiating, and carrying out their learning. This must entail learning from both the positive and negative consequences of their choices. Our

challenge is to find non-coercive ways of helping students become *personally* responsible for their learning.

**We Learn Best What We Care About.** Besides learning responsibility, there are other bonuses which accompany the freedom to choose one's studies. Children who pursue learning which interests them are more likely to work hard, remain highly motivated, follow through when the road is tough, and retain what they learn along the way. Our challenge is to create learning spaces and learning opportunities where students are able to find and engage in learning about which they really care.

### ***Citizenship & Community Membership***

Developing democratic citizenship and worthy community membership have long been goals of public schooling. We embrace these goals, but we believe that they are best reached through direct participation in democratic processes at school, rather than by simply studying *about* such practices.

**Reasonable Boundaries.** Establishing reasonable boundaries is vital both to the school community and to individual learning efforts. Establishing these boundaries within a democratic, constitutional governance structure is a key goal of our school.

**Learning Good Habits and Basic Duties.** We must all learn the basic habits and duties necessary for living together peaceably. Being a citizen, family member, community member, cooperative worker, etc., require careful attention to developing good habits and cultivating a willingness to fulfill basic duties which contribute to peaceful and positive relations among people. Cleaning up after yourself, showing respect, using good manners, providing service, being kind, and so on, are examples.

**Creating and Maintaining a Good School Community.** Along with community acknowledged boundaries, service is the foundation of a good community. And service is most effective when it is entered into voluntarily. It is an important goal for us to develop options for service that are useful to our school community (and the broader community) and fun and educational for the students.

### ***Authentic Participation in Arts and Sciences***

It is our belief that nearly any interest that a student has, if pursued vigorously, will begin to make connections with many of the practices found in art, history, science, engineering, philosophy, politics, etc. This is because most of the knowledge and practices of the arts and sciences were developed by people and communities who were themselves vigorously pursuing better ways of understanding and responding to life on earth. The wisdom and ways of these disciplines aid children in developing their own unique talents and interests, and in refining their service to family, community, nation, and the world.

**We Learn What We Do: The Importance of Direct Participation.** We can learn some important things by observing, for instance, a skilled athlete. But to become skilled ourselves, we must do more than watch, we must also participate in the sporting activity.

Likewise, if children are to become skilled in arts and sciences they need to do more than learn “about” these from textbooks, films, CD ROM, and so forth; rather, they need to have first hand, authentic experience. It is an important goal for us to create more and better opportunities for students to get directly involved in scientific and artistic practices.

**Repetition, Routine, and “General Preparedness.”** General preparedness—that is, preparing for what we really can’t predict, but what we can anticipate generally—is an important aspect of education. Certain skills, techniques, and competencies need to be developed, extended, and maintained regularly so that learning opportunities are not missed and typical challenges do not overwhelm us. The nature of these is such that if they are not practiced regularly, they are lost. Routine practice and review (even when they are not what we *feel* like doing) are important when they are done with a purpose. This is the main rationale behind our math/language arts block in the morning and other daily routines.

We believe that if people are having significant experiences in these “circles of learning” described above, they will be more likely to feel confident, happy, and successful.

To facilitate these experiences at school requires the following:

- an environment that is **safe and hospitable** enough for students to get beyond concerns that cause them to be overly self-conscious or defensive. Getting beyond these concerns allows them to turn outward and engage in a healthy exploration of the world around them.
- **a sense of being free to explore and make choices.**
- an **inviting array of activities, options, teachers, and resources** which draw the interest and attention of the students,
- regular routines that **develop good habits**, appropriate discipline, and generally useful skills.

We incorporate the following general practices into our overall educational program believing they are especially well suited to nurturing our learning goals.

- multi-age groupings
- continuity with teachers from year to year
- small class sizes
- thematic interdisciplinary studies (e.g., special school-wide historical cycle)
- independent studies
- ecology/outdoor learning
- service opportunities
- strong art, music, and drama opportunities
- elective learning experiences
- required daily math and language arts
- alignment of learning activities and classes with Michigan Curriculum Framework standards

# Communication Policy

## Woodland School

At Woodland School we recognize the central role communication plays in the success of our school. We want to encourage honest, open, responsible, and respectful communication. Consistent and appropriate communication in an organization, especially when one has concerns, is best accomplished when an agreed on order is followed. We ask that, as you seek to communicate your concerns to us, please follow the procedures outlined below.

### PROCEDURES

1. If you have a question or concern about your child's school experience, please discuss this first with your child's teacher.

or

If you have a question or concern about administrative or other school issues, we ask that you briefly describe the issue to one of our administrative assistants (school secretaries) and they will either resolve the issue or direct you to someone who can.

We expect that most issues will be resolved at this first step with either the teacher or the secretary. However, if your issue is not resolved, please request a meeting with the Director.

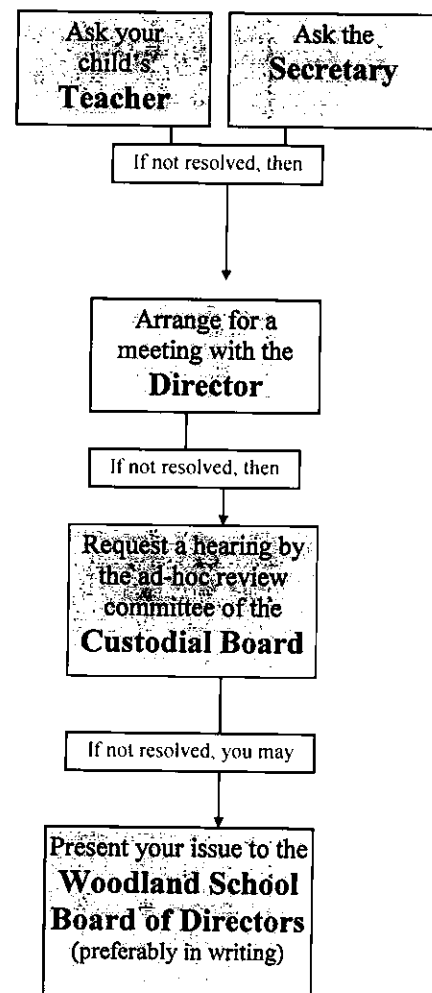
2. The Director will review the issue and will take whatever action is deemed necessary. (The Director may involve teachers or other staff members where appropriate.)

If your issue is not resolved at this step, you may make a request, in writing, for a hearing with the ad-hoc review committee of the Custodial Board. A brief form is available at the Woodland School office.

3. The ad-hoc review committee of the Custodial Board will meet with you, along with the Director, and any other appropriate participants. This committee works to resolve the issue and determines whether or not it is reviewed by the Custodial Board.

If your issue is not resolved at this step, you are free to either submit your concern in writing to the Woodland School Board of Directors, or express your concern verbally during the public comment portion of a board meeting.

4. The Woodland School Board of Directors will hear and respond to your concern.



## DISCIPLINE

The underlying rule guiding the School's discipline policy is that every student has a right to feel safe and secure and to learn in a safe, respectful and productive environment. Discipline is an integral part of the learning process. Each Student is highly regarded as an important, unique individual and contributing member of the School community. Discipline procedures will generally follow a positive mode in which self-control is encouraged and self-esteem is enhanced.

The School reserves the right to judge the severity of any single infraction or the persistence of patterns of behavior that are disruptive to one's own or another's right to learn in a safe, respectful and productive environment.

Student misconduct can be divided into two general types: major and minor. **Minor misconduct** is a situation where physical, emotional, or social safety of students or staff is not seriously threatened but where there is a problem to be resolved, such as disputes between students, leaving messes, name calling, yelling, and class disruptions. **Major misconduct** is defined as the willful and wanton acts of disrespect toward School staff members, students, or property. Examples of major misconduct include fighting, acts of defiance, insubordination or disrespect, harassment/intimidation, use of profane language, willful destruction of School property, and possession or use of alcohol, drugs, or weapons.

**Behavior consequences** will bear a reasonable relationship to the behavior. Behavior consequences may include one or more of the following:

- A warning
- A problem-solving conference with the student and/or parent(s)
- Removal from class/an assigned "time-out" in an appropriate environment
- A responsibility report filled out by the student and, if appropriate, taken home and returned with a parent signature
- An individual contract that identifies goals and includes timely monitoring, rewards for successes and possible consequences for unconstructive behavior
- In-school service
- Suspension
- Expulsion

An instructional staff member may **remove a student from class** when the actions of the student disrupt the educational process of the classroom. A student may also be removed for persistent misbehavior or disrespectful conduct.

On occasion, staff members may assign students to **detention** as a penalty for misconduct such as tardiness, running in School, classroom/work area disruptions, and missing classes. Students who refuse to serve detention or who do not show up for detention may be suspended.

The Board of Directors recognizes that exclusion from the educational programs of the School, whether by **suspension** or **expulsion**, is the most severe sanction that can be imposed on a student in this School, and one that cannot be imposed without due process, since exclusion deprives a child of the right to an education.

Students who are unable to meet the behavioral expectations of the School may, nonetheless, be suspended or expelled. "Suspension" shall be exclusion from the regular School program for a definite period of time. A long-term suspension is suspension for more than ten (10) days. "Expulsion" shall be the permanent exclusion of a student from this School. **Students suspended more than three times during an academic year will be subject to expulsion.**

The decision to suspend a student for any number of days less than ten (10) is made by the Director in consultation with the teacher involved in the incident or making the necessary investigation and the student's primary teacher or middle school advisor. The decision to suspend a student for any number of days more than ten (10) or to expel a student must be approved by the Board. Students will be expelled for behavior that is unlawful and/or that threatens the health, safety and welfare of the student and/or others. In addition, students will be expelled in those situations where the same is required by law. Offenses that may result in suspension include, but are **not** limited to assault, false report of fire/explosion, racial or sexual harassment, threatening/intimidating acts, use of alcohol or drugs, possession of a weapon, etc.

In all cases, the student and parent(s) will be afforded all applicable **due process** rights. The parent/guardian must be given written notice of his/her child's suspension and the reasons therefore. In the event that written notice cannot be served directly to the parent, it will be mailed first class within one business day. In all cases, the student and his/her parent/guardian will be given the opportunity to respond to the charges against the child prior to the suspension.

A parent/guardian whose child is subject to long-term suspension (more than 10 days) or expulsion must be given written notice of the intention to suspend long-term or expel and the reasons therefore. In the event that written notice cannot be served directly to the parent, it will be mailed first class within one business day. The student and his/her parent/guardian will be provided an opportunity to appear with a representative before the Board to answer the charges. The student and/or his/her guardian must also be provided a brief description of the student's rights and of the hearing procedure, a list of the witnesses who will provide testimony to the Board, and a summary of the facts to which the witnesses will testify. The hearing may be private, but the Board must act publicly.

A disabled student under IDEA or Section 504 shall be expelled only in accordance with Federal and State laws regarding suspension and expulsion and Federal due process rights appropriate to these students.

The Director, in conjunction with the Custodial Board, shall establish procedures to carry out the Board's discipline philosophy and policy, and shall hold all School community

members responsible for the conduct of students in School, on School vehicles, and at School-related events.

### **ILLEGAL DRUGS AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES**

No member of the Woodland School community may possess or use alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal drug or controlled substance at school or while participating in school functions. No one may encourage or advocate these activities or bring these substances into the School community. This policy includes adults not smoking on the School premises and while driving students in a car during a School function.

### **WEAPONS**

Woodland School will not tolerate possession of a weapon by any individual, other than law enforcement personnel, while on the School's premises or at a School function. Any individual found in possession of a firearm or any other dangerous weapon will face discipline and legal action of the highest level. Students violating this policy will be expelled. Others will be dealt with as allowed by law and, in the case of an employee, up to and including discharge.

A weapon is defined as, but not limited to, a firearm, explosives or explosive device, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, brass knuckles, or any other device designed to inflict bodily harm. This policy shall also encompass such actions as lookalike items, false fire alarms, bomb threats, or intentional calls to falsely report a dangerous condition.

### **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

While recognizing that students may require disciplinary action in various forms, the Board cannot condone the use of unreasonable force and fear as an appropriate procedure in student discipline.

Professional staff should not find it necessary to resort to physical force or violence to compel obedience. If all other means fail, the staff members may always resort to removal of the student from the classroom or school through the suspension or expulsion procedures.

Professional staff, as well as support staff, within the scope of their employment, may use and apply reasonable force and restraint to quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to others, to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects upon or within the control of the student, in self-defense, or for the protection of persons or property.

In accordance with state law, corporal punishment shall not be permitted. If any employee inflicts unnecessary, unreasonable, irrational, or inappropriate force upon a student, he/she may be subject to discipline by the Board and possibly criminal assault

charges. This prohibition applies as well to volunteers and those with whom the School contracts for services.

### **REQUIRED REPORTING**

Woodland School is required by state law to report any suspected child abuse to the Family Independence Agency. Some behaviors must also be reported to civil authorities as violations of civil law. Other behaviors, such as acts of violence, theft, vandalism, arson, possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, weapons, assaults, extortion, and criminal sexual conduct will be reported to the proper authorities for possible prosecution.

The school's policy on **Searches and Seizures** is available for review in the Administrative Office.

## DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE

Certain standards of conduct are essential to creating and maintaining a good learning environment. The procedures to be followed where there is misconduct are outlined in summary form below (a copy of the full discipline policy is available in the office).

Student **misconduct** can be divided into two general types: major and minor. **Minor misconduct** is a situation where physical, emotional, or social safety of students or staff is not seriously threatened but where there is a problem to be resolved such as disputes between students, leaving messes, name calling, yelling, class disruptions. **Major misconduct** is defined as willful and wanton acts of disrespect toward school personnel, students, or school property. Examples include fighting; acts of defiance; persistent disobedience; blatant disrespect; profane language; willful destruction of school property; and use or possession of alcohol, drugs, or weapons.

In situations where minor misconduct involves a **teacher** and a **misbehaving student**, the teacher will use positive methods such as explanation, clarification of expectations, problem solving conferences, goal setting, etc. If the problem persists and is judged to be sufficiently problematic, the teacher will contact parents. Should a student's behavior continue without improvement, the cumulative effect may result in disciplinary action under the category of "major misconduct."

In other minor misconduct situations, the parties involved are expected to work things out with one another by discussing the problem and seeking a solution. Options may include asking a teacher to serve as a mediator. If this doesn't work, students are encouraged to involve their parents and have them contact the teacher. *Major* misconduct is immediately reported to the School Administrator.

If student misconduct falls under the category of **major misconduct**, the teacher involved will **first** investigate the situation and consult with the student's advisor or primary teacher. Together they have the authority to administer limited consequences such as a one-day detention or suspension. If they feel that more serious consequences are in order (e.g., longer than one-day suspension or detention), they will consult with the School Administrator. Students and their parents will be notified in writing (and in most cases verbally) of all decisions made. In all cases, the student in question will be given an opportunity to respond to the charges.

If a student is recommended for expulsion, both the Custodial Board and the Woodland School Board must approve the recommendation. Under such circumstances the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian will be given written notice of the intention to expel and the reasons therefore, and will be given an opportunity to appear before the Woodland School Board to answer the charges. The hearing may be private, but Board action will be available to the public.

