



# Elementary Student Handbook

## 2025-2026

REV June 2025

**\*IMPORTANT NOTICE-**Please sign and return the Student Handbook Acknowledgment Form showing that you and your child have discussed and reviewed the contents of this handbook.

Return by September 5, 2025

## Welcome to the Belding Area Elementary Schools

The staffs of Ellis and Woodview Elementary schools welcome you. Many educational opportunities await you, and we look forward to helping your child grow and learn. Each staff member will make every effort to assist you in any way possible. We are proud of our staff, buildings, and especially our students.

It is important that the student and parents/guardians become familiar with this Student Handbook. Remember, the Student Handbook contents do not cover every existing situation but only basic, general areas.

As always, we expect all students to be safe, be respectful, and be responsible.

We are looking forward to another great year!

Brian Babbitt  
Ellis Principal

Kristen Larson  
Woodview Principal

### **Belding Area Schools Mission Statement**

Belding Area Schools will commit minds to inquiry, hearts to compassion and lives to the service of humanity.  
An engaged staff + a supportive community = successful students

### **Student Handbook Belding Elementary Schools**

Belding Elementary School students are expected to always demonstrate good conduct and citizenship in the building, on the grounds, at school-related activities, and toward all school personnel as well as to visitors to the building. These schools strive to create an atmosphere conducive to learning and utilizing the principles of safety, pride, dignity, courtesy, and respect in order to meet the educational and development needs of all students. Belding Elementary Schools' discipline plans provide rewards for positive behavior as well as sanctions for unacceptable behavior.

### *Important Notice*

*It should be remembered that this administration has the authority to question behavior of any form within the building, on school grounds, and at school-related activities and deal with behavior accordingly even if that behavior is not specifically mentioned in this handbook. The behavior consequences listed in this handbook are some - but by no means all - of the consequences of violating Belding Elementary Schools rules.*

### **ALCOHOL**

Students are not to possess or consume alcohol on school property or at school-sponsored events. Students are prohibited from possessing or consuming non-alcoholic malt beverages (such as Sharp's, O'Doul's, Kingsbury, etc.).

### **ANIMALS/PETS**

Persons bringing animals into the school must receive prior permission from the building administrator. Live animals, including all vertebrates, invertebrates, and toxic plants such as poison ivy or sumac may be brought into the classroom for education purposes. However, neither animals nor toxic plants should be kept overnight at school.



### **ASBESTOS**

Our school district has conducted an extensive asbestos survey of all our buildings. Based on the findings of this inspection, a comprehensive management plan was drafted. Asbestos surveys and management plan details are available in school offices.

## **ASSAULTIVE BEHAVIOR**

Physical or verbal confrontations will not be tolerated under any circumstances in Belding Area Elementary Schools. Serious attacks causing injury or verbal attacks threatening bodily harm may result in immediate recommendation for expulsion and a police report will be filed. The following will help define assaults:

### **Fighting - Minor**

Minor fights are those characterized by pushing, shoving, or name-calling.

### **Fighting – Major**

Major fights are violent confrontations with hair pulling, punching, kicking, and/or biting.

The decision whether a fight is a major or minor offense rests solely with the building administrator.

Further sanctions may come as a result of students not cooperating with adult intervention.

### **Physical Assaults**

Michigan Public Act 104 of 1999 defines “physical assaults” as “intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.”

**Physical assault against a school employee, volunteer, or contractor will result in the student being permanently expelled from all Michigan public schools.**

By Michigan State Legislature Public Act 102 of 1999 every **student-on-student physical assault** on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, or in any school-related vehicle will result in the offending student being expelled up to 180 days.

### **Verbal Assaults**

Public Act 104 of 1999 also calls for mandatory expulsion up to 180 days for verbal assaults against a school employee, volunteer, or contractor. The definition of verbal assault is the following:

“Any intentional threat or offer to do bodily injury to another by force, under circumstances which create a well-founded fear of actual harm, coupled with the apparent ability to carry out the act if not prevented.”

## **ASSEMBLIES**

School assemblies may be held during the year. A variety of programs are planned for student enjoyment and education. Parents are always welcome to attend.

## **ASSESSMENTS (District and State)**

It is the district’s expectation that all children will be in attendance during district and statewide assessments. These assessments help guide instruction throughout each classroom.

## **ASSISTANCE POLICY**

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to provide all students with an environment conducive to the development of their maximum learning potential. We accept the concept of chemical dependency and emotional health problems as treatable conditions and realize that simply excluding those students who are involved cannot solve the problems in our schools. We recognize that there are many contributing factors in problems of this nature.

The district shall initiate intervention strategies via the Student Assistance Program under three circumstances:

- 1) student seeking help; 2) student exhibiting inappropriate unusual, or atypical behavior; or 3) as disciplinary action where the student has been found breaking rules adopted by the Board of Education. It is the policy of the district to refer students to licensed programs or individuals pursuant to the State of Michigan Public Act 368.

## **ATTENDANCE**

The law in Michigan governing compulsory attendance requires a parent, legal guardian, or other person having control or charge of a child age six to sixteen to send the child to school during the entire school year, except under the limited circumstances specified in subsection (3) of MCL 380.1561.

Although the compulsory school attendance law does not apply to children under the age of six, a child who is at least five years of age by September 1 of the school year and is a resident of a school district which provides kindergarten work is entitled to enroll in kindergarten [MCL380.1147].

- 10 or more will warrant a conference with school officials and possible involvement with Juvenile Court (Youth Service Bureau)

### **Absences**

- Please confirm every absence with a call to the school absence line within 24 hours. The office will notify the teacher. If you do not have a phone or are unable to call, your child must bring a note confirming the absence when s/he returns to school.
- Excessive absences and tardiness are a cause for concern and interfere with student progress. Please try to schedule doctor or dental appointments after school hours. In case of frequent absence, the parent will be notified so the situation can be corrected. The county truancy officer will also be informed.

### **Tardiness**

\*15 or more will warrant a conference with school officials and possible involvement with Juvenile Court (Youth Service Bureau)

- Students are expected to be in the classroom by the last bell. It is the responsibility of the parent and the student to see that the student arrives on time. A student coming in late disrupts the class and interferes with the learning of other students.
- Frequent tardiness will result in a letter to parents as well as a report to the county truancy officer.
- Students arriving late due to bus route problems are not considered tardy.

### **Makeup Work**

Students with excused absences will be allowed two days for each day of excused absences to complete work missed. If a parent wants their absent child's work, requests must be made by 11:00 AM to their teacher to provide ample time to gather the work.

\*Further information can be found under Board Policy 5200.

### **BICYCLES**

- Bicycles are to be walked when entering and leaving school property, including sidewalks and crossing the street. They are not to be ridden on the playground while school is in session.
- Bicycles are to be parked in the bike racks or designated places.
- Riding a bike to school is a privilege. Anyone misusing this privilege will not be permitted to ride his or her bike to school.
- The school is not responsible for damages to, or theft of, bikes brought to school.

### **BIRTH CERTIFICATES**

Michigan law requires a person enrolling a student in school provide the local or intermediate school district with a certified copy of the student's birth certificate [MCL 380.1135]. b) If a person enrolling a student fails to comply with subsection (1), the local or intermediate school district shall notify the person enrolling the student in writing that, unless he or she complies within 30 days after the notification, the case shall be referred to the local law enforcement agency for investigation. If the person enrolling the student fails to comply within that 30-day period, the local or intermediate school district shall notify the local law enforcement agency.

### **BOMB THREATS/ARSON/FALSE ALARMS**

The making of bomb threats by students as well as the willful or negligent starting of fires at school or on school property will result in immediate suspension of the student from school for up to ten (10) days pending a formal expulsion hearing with the Board of Education. Further, students are prohibited from causing a false alarm or a false 911 call to be made. All violations will result in a report being filed with appropriate law enforcement officials.

### **CHEATING/PLAGERISM**

Cheating is unethical behavior and will not be tolerated. Cheating is defined as – but not limited to – the following: copying another student's work; looking at another student's paper/test; taking the teacher's answer key; talking during testing; using a "crib" sheet; and writing answers so they can be seen during testing.

Plagiarism is taking someone's written (or oral) words and using them as your own without acknowledging the source for the words. Plagiarism is unethical and against the law.

### **CHILD ABUSE REPORTING**

Suspected child abuse or neglect will be reported to County Protective Services or a local law enforcement agency as required by Michigan law.

### **CIGARETTES/TOBACCO/VAPE PRODUCTS, LIGHTERS**

Students – and adults – are not to possess or use cigarettes, tobacco products, Vapes, lighters, matches, etc., at school, on school property, at school-sponsored events, or within the Drug Free School Zone (an area within 500 feet of school property).

\*Further information can be found in Board Policy 5512

### **CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS**

Teachers will distribute and practice classroom expectations. All students must abide by the rules set forth in the classroom as well as the consequences attached to the rules. Students may need to adjust from teacher to teacher on specific rules and requirements.

### **CLASSROOM VISITATIONS**

- Although many parents would love to observe their children in the classroom without the children knowing, it is disruptive to the class to have parents peeking through the door window: children usually discover the parent and are distracted from their school activities.
- Parents are urged to make plans with the classroom teacher for a more straightforward visit of at least half an hour. It's a great way to really see how the child functions among his/her peers. Please sign in at the office before proceeding to the classroom for your scheduled visit.

\* Further information can be found in Board Policy 9150

### **CLOSINGS**

- The decision to close or cancel school rests with the superintendent of schools. School closings or cancellations also will be broadcast on the appropriate media.
- If you think school might be dismissed before normal dismissal time because of a severe storm or weather warning, it will be more expedient to tune to local stations rather than call the school. Closings after the start of school are rare, but pre-arrangements should be made for your child with a neighbor or friend in the event that you may not be home.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Students in the Belding Area Public School System are guaranteed the right to a public education. The purposes of the code of conduct are to provide regulations governing the behavior of students, to prevent actions that interfere with the school program and/or are prohibited by law, and to provide for student rights and responsibilities.

When students engage in unacceptable conduct, they will be subject to disciplinary action.

#### **Students Rights**

- Fair administration of discipline
- Make-up work
- Freedom of expression

#### **Student Responsibilities**

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Safe

#### **Illegal Behavior**

- Threats of violence
- Possession of weapons
- Aggressive behavior

- Possession of dangerous objects
- Drugs, tobacco, and alcohol
- Stealing
- Extortion
- Vandalism
- Violence
- Disruptive behavior
- False alarms
- Interference with the student movement of students inside or outside of school
- Sexual harassment
- Racial and ethnic harassment
- Other unlawful conduct

### **Prohibited Behavior**

- Insubordination
- Verbal abuse
- Loitering or trespassing
- Gambling
- Disruptive group behavior
  - Truancy
  - Other misconduct






\*Further information can be found in Board Policy 5500

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

Please telephone the school immediately if your child is diagnosed as having a contagious disease. District personnel will issue the appropriate letters to the parties that have been exposed.

\*Further information can be found in Board Policy 8450 and 8453

### **PROCEDURES FOR CONCERNS**

<b>Students</b> – do you have a concern with a teacher?  	<b>Parents</b> – Do you have a concern about one of your child's classes?  
Discuss the concern with that person respectfully and privately. If the issue is not resolved  	A classroom concern is to be discussed with the teacher. If it is not resolved involve one of the building administrators in the discussion.  
Involve your parents in the discussion with your teacher. If the issue is still not resolved.  	If a parent still has a concern after speaking first with the teacher and then the building administrator the parent may direct their concerns to the superintendent of schools.

Involve a building administrator in the discussion	
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### **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

- Prohibition of the use or threat of inflicting physical pain in the Belding Area Schools does not give license to students to defy authority or disobey rules and regulations.
- Use of physical contact is still appropriate to guide a student to a desired destination (principal's office, etc.) or to handle an act of insubordination.

\*Further information can be found in Board Policy 5630

### **CURRICULUM**

Belding Area Elementary Schools have a standard curriculum that is taught and assessed in kinderstart/kindergarten through fifth grade. This curriculum covers the following areas:

- Music, PE/Health, STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math)
- Science
- Social Studies
- Math
- Language Arts

A copy of the curriculum and assessments is available for parents in the school and district office.

Further information: Parents and public have the right to Inspect Educational Material and Review, request amendments to Student Educational Records. See Board Policy 2416, 5780, 9130, 8330.

### **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS/PROCEDURES**

Belding Elementary School teachers are expected to create a positive classroom atmosphere conducive to learning and maintaining order. Positive Behavior Support System will be used to address expectations. Individual teachers will distribute and post the expectations they have established, and teachers will handle many discipline situations in their rooms. Every effort will be made to communicate with parents about disciplinary action.

Disciplinary actions include – but are not limited to – the following: detentions (AM or PM), written assignments, confinement to the office or PBIS room, learning and/or behavior contracts, time out, suspension, and expulsions from school. See Board Policy 5610

### **DRESS CODE**

It is recognized that student attire does assist in establishing and maintaining the educational tone of the building as well as helping students create a positive, upbeat feeling about themselves and others. Students are expected to dress in neat, clean, safe attire.

The following is provided as a guideline for parents and students:

- Children will be going outside for recess even in cold weather. Coats, hats, mittens or gloves, and boots should be worn when outside. Snow boots should not be worn throughout the school day.
- Shoes are to be worn during school hours in the building. Stocking feet will not be permitted for health and safety reasons.
- Gym shoes are required to participate in gym class; black-soled shoes should not be worn in gym as the shoes leave black marks on the floor.
- In warmer weather, shorts may be worn. Shorts, dresses, skirts, etc. must be mid-thigh in length. Short shorts are prohibited.
- Sleeveless shirts are permitted; however, shirts armholes should be high enough under the arm area that underwear is not visible and/or bare skin cannot be seen.
- Shirts that show a bare mid-riff or any tops that promote a less-than-modest image are prohibited (examples: halter tops, tube tops, spaghetti straps).
- See-through or revealing clothing is prohibited.

- Saggy, baggy, oversized clothing, specifically clothing that permits or promotes the exposure of underwear is prohibited.
- All attire, including clothing, patches, buttons, and jewelry, may not advertise or promote the use of beer, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or drug paraphernalia. They may also not display any offensive, lewd, or vulgar language, ideas, or graphs. It will be the judgment of the administration whether attire is vulgar.
- Clothing that is derogatory to any group of people or is a “put down” to others (including the person wearing the clothing) is prohibited.
- Clothing that has been intentionally mutilated or torn is prohibited as well as tear-away athletic attire.
- Shoes that convert to roller skates/roller blades are allowed only if the roller skates/blades are not used on school property.
- Hats and/or hoods are not to be worn inside the school building during school hours.

Students who violate the dress code will be immediately required to change into appropriate clothing or call parents to obtain suitable attire. Should the student be unable to secure suitable attire, the office will lend acceptable clothing for the day if available.

### **DRUG POLICY**

- Students shall not carry or dispense any type of medication including over-the-counter medication to themselves or to others. All medications, including over-the-counter medications, are kept in the clinic and must have appropriate physician and parent permission for administration on file.
- Students are prohibited from possessing, using and selling any mood-altering chemicals or other controlled substances, without prescriptions, in school or any school-related activity.
- Students are also prohibited from delivering, attempting to deliver, or causing to be delivered, a non-controlled substance which the student:
  1. Represents to be a controlled substance
  2. Represents to be of a nature, appearance, or effect, which will allow the recipient to display, sell, distribute or use the substance as a controlled substance.

The Board of Education recognizes that the misuse of drugs is a serious problem with legal, physical and social implications for the entire school community.

\*Further information can be found in Board Policies 2431D, 5530, 5532, 5771, and 5330.

### **DUE PROCESS**

The constitutional rights of individuals assure the protection of due process of law; therefore, this system of constitutionally and legally sound procedure is developed with regard to the administration of discipline in the schools of Michigan.

1. The hallmark of this exercise of disciplinary authority shall be reasonableness and fairness.
2. Efforts shall be made by administrators and faculty members to resolve problems through effective utilization of school district resources in cooperation with the student and his/her parent/guardian.
3. A student must be given an opportunity for hearing with the appropriate school administrator if he/she or his/her parent/guardian indicated the desire for one. A hearing shall be held to allow the student and his parent/guardian to contest the facts which may lead to disciplinary action, or to contest the appropriateness of the sanction imposed by a disciplinary authority, or if the student and his/her parent/guardian allege prejudice or unfairness.

\*Further information can be found in Board Policy 5611

### **EDUCATIONAL TRIPS**

Educational trips may be planned for students which relate to classroom learning and activities. Parents will be notified in advance of trip plans and will be requested to give written permission for their child to participate. Field trips within Be lding are covered by the general field trip permission slip which is collected at the beginning of the year.

### **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

The elementary schools have a no see/no hear policy. Cellular telephones are not to be used by students during regular school hours. Any cellular phones causing a disturbance will be confiscated. All ringers/auditory alarms must be turned off during school hours. In no case will any student utilize a personal communication device in a manner that would allow for an unfiltered connection to the Internet. Video/camera devices are not to be used in an inappropriate manner or venue.



Students may not video or photograph other people at school or bus. Any violation will result in confiscation and/or disciplinary action. Due to the age of our students, it is highly suggested these devices be kept at home.

### **EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

- Equal educational opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual origination or transgender identity), disability, age (excepts as authorized by law), religion, military status, ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, “Protected Classes”).
- Any question concerning Title VI or Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 (which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin and on the basis of sex, respectively) or questions related to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap) should be directed to the district's Coordinator (see below).
- If any person believes that the Belding Area School District or any part of the school organization has inadequately applied the principles and/or regulation of (1) Title VI of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972, (2) Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972, and (3) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, he/she may bring forward a complaint which shall be referred as a grievance to the local civil rights coordinator at the following address:

Civil Rights Coordinator – High School Principal  
Belding Area Schools  
850 Hall Street  
Belding, Michigan 48809  
(616) 794-4700

Civil Rights Coordinator – Ellis Elementary Principal  
Belding Area Schools  
850 Hall Street  
Belding, Michigan 48809  
(616) 794-4700

\*Further information can be found in Board Policy 5723

### **EXPLOSIVES**

Students shall not possess any type of explosive on school property or at school-sponsored activities. All violations will result in a report being filed with appropriate law enforcement officials. The possession or use of smoke bombs, fireworks, firecrackers, or ammunition, etc., will result in suspension from school. The possession or placement of a bomb -type device will result in immediate suspension from school pending a formal expulsion hearing with the Board of Education.

### **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS, PRIVACY ACT, and RELEASE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

Each year the district will provide public notice to students and their parents of its intent to make available, upon request, certain information known as “directory information.” The Board designates as student “directory information” the following: a student’s name; address; telephone number; photograph; major field of study; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; height and weight (if a member of an athletic team); dates of attendance; date of graduation; awards received; or any other information which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy, if disclosed.

The District commonly uses student directory information for the following purposes: school yearbook, programs for athletic events, musical/drama presentations, graduation and/or award ceremonies, academic honor roll recognition, school and/or district newsletters, school and/or district web site/social media, Project Graduation.

Parents may elect not to have his/her child’s directory information disclosed for one or more of the listed uses by completing the opt-out form below and returning it to the child’s school within the first 30 days of the school year. This form is also available at the school office.

#### **Directory Information Opt-Out Form**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School Year: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

I request that my child’s directory information not be included in publications listed below:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Further information can be found in Board Policy 8330

## **FIRE/TORNADO/LOCKDOWNS**

Drills are of vital importance and will be successful only if every student regards them as practice in saving his/her life. Directions for exits are posted in each room of the building. Periodic drills will be scheduled.

NOTE: in the event of an actual tornado watch or warning, parents wishing to pick up their children MUST report to the school office so that child may be paged.

1. If a tornado watch or warning occurs **BEFORE** school starts, school will not open, and busses will not run.
2. If a watch occurs **DURING** school, classes will remain in session. Busses will run when the danger has passed.
3. If a warning is sounded during school, students will be sent to assigned shelter areas. Busses will not run until the danger has passed.
4. During either a watch or a warning, students will be released to adults other than their parents with permission only.

NOTE: In the event of a lockdown, no person will be allowed to enter or to leave the building until emergency personnel gives the all clear.

## **GANG RELATED ACTIVITY**

Any activity related to gangs – including but not limited to – demonstration or use of hand signs, display of colors, pins, graffiti, or recruitment of other students is strictly prohibited. Violence related to gang activity will be grounds for referral for an expulsion hearing.

## **GUM**

Belding Elementary Schools are GUM FREE schools.

## **HANDBOOK RECEIPT**

Each student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) must sign a receipt for the Student Handbook, indicating they have received, read, and understand, the Belding Elementary Schools Student Handbook. This form is in the packet given to each child at the beginning of the year.

## **HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION**

### **Ethnic Intimidation**

The legislature passed P.A. 371 1988 which establishes ethnic intimidation as a felony under the Michigan Penal Code. Ethnic intimidation means that a “person maliciously and with specific intent attempts to intimidate or harass another person because of that person’s race, color, religion, gender, or national origin.”

### **General Harassment or “Bullying”**

Harassment is not a one-time situation involving two students or a group of students. Harassment takes place over a period of time. Bullying or harassment can include – but is not limited to – the following: Name-calling, pushing/shoving, negative comments about clothing or body parts, and malicious gossip to ruin a person’s reputation. Behavior of this nature that causes a student to feel intimidated will be considered as harassment or bullying. Students who feel they are being harassed must report the behavior to the office immediately.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Parents of students, or students themselves, who believe they have been the victim of sexual harassment are to report it to the building Principal or Superintendent of Schools. \*Further information can be found in Board Policy 5517

## **HOMEWORK**

A reasonable amount of individual study at home is beneficial for elementary students. Homework assignments may include reinforcement activities for basic skills, enrichment activities or opportunities for independent research.

## **ILLNESS / INJURY/CONCUSSION**

Students who become ill or injured during the day are sent to the clinic or office so that care may be given and a record maintained. Calls home for illness may not be made from classrooms. School personnel will assist the student and evaluate his/her condition. If school personnel feel the student’s condition warrants, the parent or other person listed on the emergency card will be contacted to take the child home. Students may be picked up in the office and must be signed out. Current and updated emergency numbers ensure the expedient care and comfort of your child.

\*Further information see Board Policy 5340A.



### **IMMUNIZATION REGULATIONS**

To enter school Michigan state law requires that all new students show record of having received at least one dose of each of the following immunizations: measles, mumps, rubella, polio, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, varicella and hepatitis B. To stay in school, you must provide the school with a record showing that your child has received all the required immunizations. To get a complete list please contact your physician, the county health department, or the district medical services director. ***Children who have not received the required immunizations will be excluded from school until parents provide proof that all required immunizations have been given, or a waiver is on file.***

### **INHALER POLICY**

1. A student may possess, and use a meter dose or dry powder asthma inhaler if all of the following conditions are met:
2. The inhaler must come to school in its original box with the doctor's dosage instructions on it.
3. The student has written approval from a licensed health care provider authorized by law to prescribe an inhaler, and an approved asthma management plan.
4. A parent or legal guardian has signed the form available in the school office.
5. The form has been submitted to the school office.

Upon receipt of a properly completed form, the building principal will approve use of the inhaler. Inhalers will be kept in the office and will be administered by school personnel only.

### **LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER**

The Library/Media Center is available to Belding Elementary students. Students who violate Library/Media Center rules face the loss of Library/Media Center privileges. Students who lose or destroy material or equipment are responsible for the cost of replacement or will be fined the cost of damaged materials. All fines, fees, and overdue obligations must be met during the school year.

### **LICE**

To avoid a major outbreak, students will be checked in classrooms where live lice are discovered. Students found to have nits and/or head lice will report to the office. In an effort to be thorough and consistent, the office staff and/or social worker will reexamine students. Students with live head lice will be sent home and must be lice-free prior to returning to school. Students with nits must have them removed prior to returning to class.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

A lost and found box is provided near the office area for found clothing, equipment, etc. Lost watches, money, wallets and valuable jewelry are turned in directly to the office secretary. Please mark all clothing and other personal items with your child's name. Items left at the end of the school year are given to the local clothing center or another charitable agency.

### **LUNCH AND BREAKFAST PROGRAMS**

- The breakfast and lunch programs are open to all students. The children will be supervised by paraprofessionals. Students are encouraged to pay lunch meals for the week on Monday or on the first school day of each week, but they are available for purchase each day. Lunch charges are not allowed.

#### **Prices**

Breakfast	Free
Lunch	Free
Milk	.75*

*\*Prices are subject to change*

- Menus are sent home monthly. Please check the menus so that you may properly plan which lunches to buy.
- Children bringing their own lunches should avoid the use of glass containers. The use of a thermos for milk, soup, etc. is permissible, but children should be advised to take caution, as it is breakable. Spoons and napkins (when needed) are to be provided by parents. Please do not send soda pop as no refrigeration is provided.
- Applications for the Free and Reduced Lunch and Breakfast Program are available in the school offices and are sent home with all students at the beginning of the year.

Parents are always welcome to visit the lunchroom and eat with their child. An adult may purchase a school lunch for the day. Please notify the office ahead of time; lunch orders are called in at 9:20 a.m.

### **Lunchroom Rules:**

- Follow directions of adults in charge
- Speak softly
- Walk and move in the lunchroom line without distracting others
- Eat food; do not throw it
- Clean eating area before leaving
- Students leave in a quiet and orderly manner

### **MEDICATION**

1. Students should not carry or dispense any type of medication including over-the-counter medication to themselves or to others. All medications, including over-the-counter medications, are kept in the clinic and must have appropriate physician and parent permission for administration on file.
2. The child's physician must provide written orders detailing diagnosis, dosage of medicine, times when medicine should be administered, and a telephone number where the physician can be contacted.
3. The parent must bring the medicine to school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician.
4. All medication shall be clearly identified on the outside of the vial or package. The medication will be stored in a secured area.
5. School personnel shall administer the medication in the presence of another adult whenever possible and in compliance with the instruction of the physician.
6. School personnel will communicate with parents and physician about any problems or effects of administering medication to students when a concern develops during school hours.
7. In an emergency, a designated staff member will notify the parent/guardian as quickly as possible.
8. School personnel shall not administer any medication where the administration of the medication requires specialized knowledge or training such as injection of medication, unless that person has the required knowledge or training.
9. If the seal is broken on any medication vial or package, the parent or guardian shall affirmatively state that the vial/package contains the medication that is identified on the outside of the vial/package.
10. School personnel shall exercise the utmost care in administering medication to students.

Further information can be found in Board Policy 5330

### **NEWSLETTERS**

Building newsletters will be emailed/sent home twice a month with each child. You will also be receiving regular newsletters from your child's classroom teacher.

### **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

- Conferences will be scheduled in the fall and spring. All parents or guardians are invited to meet with their child's teacher at this time.
- Telephone or on-site conferences are encouraged throughout the year. They may be held whenever the parent or teacher feels it is necessary and are usually scheduled before or after school hours.
- To help maintain the focus and productivity of the conference, other children should not attend.



### **PARTIES AND GIFTS**

Each room may have three parties during the year (Halloween, Christmas and Valentine's Day). Most classrooms do charity, food, or mitten collections at Christmas rather than a gift exchange between students or gifts to teachers.

### **PESTICIDE APPLICATION NOTIFICATION**

Our school district has trained and licensed persons applying the needed pesticides to our school buildings and grounds. All applications are made in compliance with Michigan Pesticide Control Act.

Prior notice of application is given to the principal of the building and posted so that every student will be protected from contact with the products used. The premises and areas treated are also clearly marked for everyone's protection. The material safety data sheets for every product used are on file in the Maintenance Department, 321 Wilson, and copies are available for review.

### **PICTURES**

Students are photographed once, possibly twice, a year, with the option to purchase pictures. Prices and the date(s) are announced in the newsletter.

### **PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION**

In order to maintain a business-like atmosphere, public displays of affection – including but not limited to – hand holding, kissing, and long hugs will not be allowed.

### **QUESTIONING BY LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL OR PROTECTIVE SERVICES AUTHORITIES**

The administration will make every reasonable effort to notify parents or legal guardians before permitting the interrogation or detainment of a student by law enforcement personnel. Law enforcement authorities may not question students at school without parent permission. If a law enforcement official finds it necessary to interview a student during school hours and the parent requests, the building principal may represent the parent to ensure the student's rights are represented. ***By state law, Protective Services personnel have the authority to interview students without parental permission.***

### **RECESS**

- Recess is an important part of our school day. It is a period of change from mental activity to physical activity and provides students with an opportunity to release extra energy.
- Each recess period is supervised, and students are expected to follow school rules. These rules protect the rights, safety and welfare of each student. Students who abuse the rules and privileges of recess will not participate in future recesses.
- Students are provided with recess time of approximately 15 minutes after their lunch time and an additional 20-minute recess during the day. We also provide an optional 15-20 minute recess before school starts.
- All children are expected to go outside at recess time. Fresh air, exercise, and a change of pace help students return to their classroom refreshed.
- **If your child is well enough to come to school, we assume s/he is well enough to go outside for recess. Students recovering from a serious illness, surgery, or on crutches may stay in with a doctor's note explaining the special circumstances.**
- Children are kept indoors if the temperature or wind chill is 0 degrees (or below), or if it is raining.

### **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued on a regular basis twice a year. In addition to these formal reports, teachers and the principal call parents as needed. These communications are encouraged and considered basic to the school's effectiveness.

### **ROOM PARENTS and VOLUNTEERS**

Some classroom may request room parents to help with classroom parties, carnival games, and field day if possible. One or two of the room parents will act as the chairpersons of the group. Often room parents chaperone classroom field trip(s), but it is not automatically assumed that they will do so. An ICHAT background check will be completed yearly.

\*Further information can be found in board policy 2112.

### **SAFETY**

**Surveillance – Our buildings are under video surveillance for the safety of staff and students.**

#### **Traffic Safety**

Parents who drive their children to school are expected to observe the established traffic pattern in the parking lot. Please adhere to all traffic signs. The entrance and exit signs are clearly marked. Please be patient and careful when entering and exiting the parking lot. Remember, children don't always look out for you; therefore, you need to look out for them. **Children who are being picked up may not cross the parking lot. A special pick-up area has been designated at each school. If necessary, a crossing guard will be on duty each day to assist students crossing Bridge and Ellis.**

#### **Walkers**

Students walking home will be released from their classrooms at the dismissal bell and exit through the designated doors of the school. Students are advised by the school not to accept rides from strangers and to go directly home from school. Please emphasize this with your child. We are not able to supervise your son/daughter once they leave the school premises.

#### **Bus Riders**

Students will be supervised at the school after dismissal until they board their buses.



### **Changes in Transportation Arrangements**

Unless we have received a note or been contacted by a parent/guardian, a child must follow the normally designated transportation arrangements. Signed notes must be sent in the morning to inform teachers of any change in plans for a child's transportation home or to another destination. This is a security issue and should not be left to a telephone call during the last hour of the school day. Emergency changes should be made by calling the school office and speaking directly with the school secretary or principal **before 2:30** in the afternoon.

### **SCHOOL DAY**

#### **Times**

- Ellis: 8:45 a.m. - 3:40 p.m.
- Woodview: 8:35 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

#### **Arrival**

- Students are not to arrive at school any earlier than 20 minutes before school begins. No supervision is provided before that time.
- Students report to their assigned playground unless it is raining. On rainy days, students report to the assigned indoors area.

#### **Dismissal**

##### **Early Dismissal**

If you desire to have your child released from school before the dismissal bell, you must report to the office to sign out your child. Please call the school ahead or send a note so the child can be prepared for your arrival. Please do not pick your child up directly from the classroom. This precaution is for the safety of the student. Students may leave school only with a parent, guardian, or designated parent substitute. We will ask for identification or phone for parent/guardian consent if we do not recognize an adult asking for the release of a child. If the office has not been notified and the person is not on the emergency card, the child will not be released until clearance is made with the parent/guardian.

**Early pickups should be reserved for doctor's appointments, emergencies and other unavoidable events. Remember, each minute your child misses instructional time he/she loses education. Therefore, avoid early pickup as much as possible. They count against our truancy policy.**

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

All school property is held in public trust by the Board of Education. Use of such property, including – but not limited to – school lockers and student desks are provided for student convenience. The Board makes notice of its intent to retain joint control over such property provided for student use. Further, the Board expressly maintains its right of access to that property.

\*Further information can be found in Board Policy 5771

### **SNACK BREAKS**

Classroom teachers may plan nutritional snack breaks asking for donations from parents. Please consult your teacher's newsletter for information.

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities have the same right to a public education as all other students. Specialized programs and services are provided based on medical documentation, applicable legislation, professional evaluations, assessments, placement decisions, and individualized planning.

Students may be eligible to receive Special Education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), unless otherwise outlined in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

If a student has a medical condition or disability that may affect their ability to meet attendance requirements, the student or their family should contact the building principal at the beginning of the school year or as soon as the condition becomes known. The principal can arrange appropriate accommodations based on the student's individual needs. Medical documentation will be required.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects the rights of individuals with disabilities. Public schools are required to provide accommodations and support services to ensure that students with disabilities can fully access and participate in educational programs and activities. School districts must make reasonable accommodations to support student success, but Section 504 does not require the creation of fundamentally different programs from those that already exist.

### **SUBSTITUTE TEACHER/BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS**

Belding Elementary Schools value their dedicated substitute teachers who have a very difficult task. In order to support our substitutes, after investigation, any student who is sent out of a classroom by a substitute teacher will receive disciplinary action.

### **SUPPLIES AND BOOKS**

- Required supplies such as books, paper, pencils, etc. are provided to students. Parents may furnish additional supplies and are encouraged to check with the teacher to see if the items are appropriate to classroom needs.
- Some textbooks are issued directly to students. The teacher will record the number of the textbook and its condition. Students are responsible for taking care of textbook and library books. Costs will be assessed for damage to books and materials beyond reasonable use. Cost of replacement will be charged if the book is lost or deemed unusable.

### **SUSPENSION/EXPULSION**

- Suspension means the temporary removal of a student from his regular class routine and/or school activity because of a gross misdemeanor or persistent disobedience.
- Expulsion means the permanent removal of a student from school because of gross violation or persistent disobedience.

### **TECHNOLOGY USAGE POLICY**

Technology is an increasingly important part of a student's education. Belding's Technology Usage Agreement specifies the rights and responsibilities associated with the proper use and care of the school's technology hardware and software. Besides being a tremendous asset, the use of technology also lends itself to special degrees of misuse. Misuse may take the form of questionable ethical practices, criminal activity, or vandalism. Students will be disciplined for violation of the policy based on both the intent and end result of their actions.

### **TELEPHONE USE**

- Students may use the school phone only in cases of emergency. Please help your children remember their supplies, money, lunch, agendas, etc. when they leave for school. This will save you valuable time and help make your child's day at school go more smoothly.
- Arrangements should be made at home for after school activities; those arrangements cannot be made at school.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

#### **Mission Statement**

The Belding Area Schools Transportation Department is dedicated to providing safe and efficient transportation to eligible Belding students to the School they attend from the vicinity of their home.

#### **A. Operation of System**

1. In organizing and operating the transportation system, all applicable statutes, rules and regulations of the State of Michigan and its agencies, shall be strictly adhered to and all recommendations and suggestions shall be carefully considered.
2. In all cases, first consideration shall be to provide eligible pupils safe transportation to regularly scheduled classes. Careful consideration shall be given also to efficiency and economy of operation.
3. Transportation shall be considered a privilege to be enjoyed by a student only as long as he/she accepts responsibility for his/her own conduct, carefully follows all rules and regulations and promptly responds to the directions and requests of the bus driver.
4. Students will be eligible for transportation if they live one-half (1/2) mile or further from the school they attend.
5. Wherever possible, stops for students, who qualify for transportation, will be located within one-quarter (1/4) mile of their homes. Stops will be kept to a practical minimum. Parents will be responsible for transportation from the home to the bus stop. Belding Area Schools will be responsible for transportation from the assigned bus stop of the child to and the return from school. This shall apply to all students K-12.

6. The measurement of the mileage to determine student eligibility for transportation shall be the responsibility of the Transportation Supervisor. His/her measurement shall be accepted as conclusive evidence of eligibility for transportation – except, that any person who feels himself/herself aggrieved by this measurement may, at his/her own personal expense, employ a qualified engineer to make a more precise measurement and may present this measurement to the Superintendent of Schools along with an application for approval of transportation service for children living in his/her home who are legal residents of the school system.
7. Students identified by an individual educational planning committee (IEPC) as a “Handicapped Person” in accordance with RE40.1702, who would otherwise be unable to participate in an appropriate special education program or service operated or contracted for by the Ionia Intermediate Schools, shall be eligible for only that additional transportation, determined by the committee, to be necessary for the person to participate in the program or service. Only students identified by an IEPC shall be eligible for transport services that exceed those described above.
8. A Belding resident pupil enrolled in a nonpublic school shall be eligible for transportation to his/her nonpublic school (if that school is located within the boundaries of the Belding Area Schools system) according to the same eligibility provisions and schedules in effect for public school pupils.
9. School transportation equipment shall be used only for the transportation of pupils to and from school and be used to furnish transportation to groups identified by and in accordance with the school code.
10. The Board recognizes the needs of the District to own or lease vehicles to carry out the instructional program and the business of operating the schools. The Superintendent is authorized to determine the extent to which District-owned vehicles might be used for official school business. Such vehicles shall not be used for personal travel unless expressly approved by the Board. Drivers of school-owned vehicles shall be properly licensed. Privately-owned vehicles may be used to conduct school business when approved by the Superintendent.
11. There shall be no charge for pupil transportation to non-mandatory, non-credit events unless it is determined by the Board of Education that adequate funds to support these activities are not available; in which case, such charges shall be determined, as permitted by State regulations, according to procedures recommended by the administration and approved by the Board.
12. Routes are to be planned to keep individual riding distance and time to a practical minimum.
13. Each eligible pupil will be assigned to use a specific bus and bus stop and shall not be permitted to use any other bus or bus stop without permission from the Transportation Supervisor, or his/her designee.
14. The Transportation Supervisor may grant permission for a pupil to ride a different bus or use a different stop. Such permission may be granted only upon request of a parent, guardian or other responsible adult. The request shall be for a specified period of time subject to the following conditions and limitations:
  - The request change must not result in the overcrowding of any bus; alteration of any regular bus route, bus stop or time schedule or in any other way interfere with the regular operation of the transportation system.
  - The purpose for which special permission is requested shall be:
    - To relieve a temporary situation which would otherwise cause a severe hardship on a pupil getting to and from school.
    - For such other emergency or unusual reason as shall be approved by the Transportation Supervisor, or his/her designee.
  - Drivers are to transport only their regularly assigned passengers unless other authorization is received from the Transportation Supervisor.
  - In an emergency, written requests may be waived. Emergency requests should be made to the child’s Principal, who will be responsible to coordinate necessary actions with the Transportation Supervisor.
  - In case of an emergency with the bus transportation system whereby the buses are unable to run, it is the responsibility of the parents to get the children to and from school.
15. Parents may request transportation to or from baby sitters or an alternate location instead of their home address. The request may be granted, if the following conditions are met:
  - An established stop will be used.
  - There is room on the bus to accommodate the student.
  - The stop will be the same every night.
16. A permanent change in a student’s bus stop (pick-up or drop-off) may be made over the phone by calling the Transportation Department year round at 616-794-4970. Please allow up to 24 hours for a change in bus stop location.
17. Temporary changes to daily transportation will not be accepted after 2:00 pm.
18. All temporary changes should be kept to a minimum to ensure safe transportation procedures.
19. Groups of students will not be transported for overnight slumber parties, scouting, etc.
20. For the safety of the students, no one other than a school employee may enter a school bus that is in route to/from school, without the permission of the Transportation Supervisor or the Superintendent.



21. The safety and conduct of a pupil while going to and from a bus stop and while waiting at a bus stop, is the responsibility of the parent. The school recognizes a secondary responsibility to assist and cooperate with the parents.

## **B. Expectations for Student Behavior and Discipline Response for Misbehavior**

1. Belding Area Schools consider the school bus to be “an extension of the classroom.” All school handbook policies apply on the school bus.
2. Pupils transported in a school bus shall be under the authority of and are responsible to the driver of the bus. This includes advising students concerning rules and regulations, assigning seats, encouraging good behavior, and other generally accepted means of maintaining and developing constructive pupil-school relationships. Continued disorderly conduct or persistent refusal to submit to the authority of the driver shall be sufficient reason for a pupil to be denied transportation in accordance with regulations as set by the Belding Board of Education. No driver shall require any pupil to leave the bus before he or she has reached his/her destination. Under no circumstance, shall a parent stop a school bus for personal reasons. The parent shall contact the Supervisor of Transportation and the problems will be handled through his/her office.
3. For minor infraction or first-time offenses, the driver will issue a warning by means of a “Bus Conduct Report.” Copies will be given to the student, Transportation Supervisor, Building Principal and will become part of the student’s disciplinary record. To assure the parent has seen the Bus Conduct Report, it must be signed by a parent returned to the driver by the next school day.
4. For repeated offenses or a major infraction (i.e. fighting or in some other way jeopardizing the safety of the bus) the driver may issue a Conduct Report suspending the student from riding the bus. Copies of the Conduct Report will be given to the student, Transportation Supervisor, Building Principal and will become part of the student’s disciplinary record. This Conduct must be signed by the parent and returned to the driver. Typically, suspensions will be given as follows:
  - First Bus Conduct Report: Warning
  - Second Bus Conduct Report: One-Day Suspension-
  - Third Bus Conduct Report: Two-Day Suspension etc.
5. If either because repeated suspensions have failed to improve behavior or, because of gross misconduct on the bus, the student may be denied the privilege of riding the bus for extended periods by the Supervisor of Transportation and the Building Principal.

In case of extended suspension, the Principal will notify the parents and explain to them the action of the student and the length of the suspension. The bus driver cannot permit the suspended student to ride on the bus until the suspension period has been completed by the student. In case of a student over 18 years of age, it is required that only the student be notified of the suspension.

In case of suspension, the parent or the student has the right to appeal to the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education. The Superintendent shall establish the procedure and time limits for appeal. The parent shall be notified, in writing, of this procedure. The parent shall be responsible for the transportation of the pupil to and from school during the effective time of any suspension of the pupil’s riding privilege.

6. In emergency cases or serious misbehavior which demands immediate action, the driver may request that the Supervisor remove a student from a bus until regular disciplinary procedures are instituted.
7. Basis Rules for Bus Stop Conduct
  - Stay off the traveled roadway at all times while waiting for a bus.
  - Wait until the bus has come to a stop before attempting to get on or off.
  - Leave the bus only with the consent of the driver.
  - Enter or leave the bus only at the front door after the bus has come to a stop, except in case of emergency.
  - Stay out of the “danger zone” and never crawl under the bus.
  - Cross the traveled highway, if necessary after leaving the bus, in the following manner:
    - Make certain the bus is not moving.
    - Upon leaving the bus, go to the front of the bus within sight of the driver and wait for the proper signal for crossing.
    - Upon signal from the driver, or from a personal escort, look both to the right and left and proceed across the highway in front of the bus.
    - Walk (do not run) in front of the bus when crossing the highway.

- Student conduct rules described in Building Use Student Handbook (fighting, substance abuse, etc.) shall be enforced while the student is riding district transportation equipment.
- It should be remembered that administrators have the authority to question misbehavior of any form within the building, on school grounds, on district transportation equipment, at school-related activities or when directed toward any staff member. Any behavior which adversely affects the learning process or atmosphere of the school, as interpreted by the administration, will be handled by disciplinary action.

### **C. Basic Rules for Bus Riding Safety**

1. Follow directions given by the driver.
2. Wait until bus has come to a complete stop before attempting to enter or leave the bus. Remain seated while bus is in motion. Enter or leave the bus only at the front door, except in case of emergency.
3. Do not leave the bus without the driver's consent, except at home or school. No unauthorized stops will be made.
4. Occupy only the seat assigned by the driver. Keep feet out of aisles, off of seats and off the back of seats. Standing will not be permitted unless all seats are filled to capacity.
5. Musical instruments will be held by the owner. Do not leave them in the aisles, or at front or rear emergency door.
6. Remain seated, sit erect with your feet on the floor, and back against the seat at all times.
7. Please keep head, arms and hands inside bus at all times.
8. Avoid unnecessary disturbing noises. The driver should not be distracted while bus is in motion. Do not shout at passing persons or vehicles.
9. Be courteous! Use no profane or vulgar language.
10. Please use "inside voices."
11. Help keep the bus clean.
12. No littering
13. Keep hands to yourself.
14. Be considerate of small children.
15. Inform driver when absence is expected from school.
16. Fighting, pushing, shoving or other rowdy behavior will not be tolerated.
17. Report any damage you observe to the driver. Student-caused damage to the interior or exterior of the bus will result in payment for damages and in suspended bus riding privileges.
18. No pets or animals may be transported on the bus.
19. A student will leave or board the bus only at his or her assigned stop. Any deviation must have prior approval of the Transportation Supervisor, upon written request of the parent and approval of the Building Principal.
20. The bus driver has the authority to issue a report of misconduct for violation of the rules by a student.

### **D. Field Trips (including Athletics and Band)**

1. All rules which apply to students on regular bus routes, also apply to students on field trips.
2. Failure to follow the rules may result in the loss of future riding privileges. This may apply to entire groups or teams as the situation warrants.
3. Students on a field trip must be supervised on the bus by a staff member other than the driver.

### **E. Responsibility of the Parents: It is the responsibility of parents whose children are transported by the Belding Area Schools.**

1. To ascertain and insure that their children arrive at the bus stop ten (10) minutes before the scheduled stop time.
2. To provide necessary protection of their children when going to and from the bus stops and while waiting for the bus to arrive for pick-up.
3. To accept joint responsibility with the school authorities for proper conduct of their children while the children are in school custody.
4. To make reasonable effort to understand and cooperate with school employees responsible for pupil transportation.
5. To ensure all address and phone number information is always up-to-date with the Transportation Department.

### **F. Guidelines for Special Education**

1. All Rules and Regulations which apply to general education transportation will also apply to students assigned to special programs.
2. Parents or Guardians must be available to help load or unload those students who need assistance. It is the parents' responsibility to get the student from the house to the bus.
3. Drivers will not drop a student off when it is obvious there is no one home. If this situation arises, the driver will radio the transportation office for guidance. If convenient, the driver will stop back at the home at a later time. The Parents/Guardians may be requested to pick up the child at the transportation office at the completion of the

route. The student may be dropped at an alternate drop-site if such a site has been listed on the student's Emergency Information form and someone is known to be at that alternate site. If Parent/Guardian cannot be contacted within a reasonable time after completion of the route, the student will be taken to the Police Station.

4. Parents will be asked to fill out an Emergency Information Form giving medical information, emergency instructions and other pertinent information.
5. Any special equipment to be used in transporting a student identified for special education (i.e. harnesses, restraints or medical equipment) will be identified by the IEPC or its use coordinated with the parent, Transportation Supervisor and Building Administrator.

#### **G. Operation of School Buses During Times of Inclement Weather**

1. Morning Run: Upon consideration of the road and weather information available, the Superintendent of Schools, or designee, will decide whether buses can safely travel their routes. The completeness with which any route is covered will be in accordance with the judgment of the Transportation Supervisor and the driver of the bus on that particular route. Roads which are not traveled in the morning will not necessarily be traveled in the afternoon. Parents who bring their children into school should plan on picking them up at the end of the school day.
2. Early Dismissal: Buses will be sent out early whenever, in the opinion of the Superintendent of Schools or designee, it is felt that deteriorating weather and road conditions advise early release of students.
3. Belding Area Schools Two-Hour Delay Policy: When the weather requires the District Administration to delay the start of school by two hours because of fog, snow, ice or other conditions, it is important that parents, students and staff understand what a "two-hour delay" means.
  - In the event of a two-hour delay, there will no morning Pre-K programs (ECSE, GSRP, Preschool, Headstart). Afternoon sessions of these programs will start on schedule.
  - Buses will pick students up at their regular bus stop two hours after their normal, scheduled time. For example: if a child normally catches the bus at 6:30 a.m., the pick-up will be at 8:30 a.m. on days when a two-hour delay is called.
  - Likewise, school will start two hours after the normal start-time, so high school students will begin classes at 9:25 a.m. (students should report to their second block class) and morning Heartlands will be cancelled; middle school students will begin classes at 9:30 a.m.; Ellis Elementary students will begin classes at 10:45 a.m. and Woodview Elementary students will begin classes at 10:35 a.m.
  - If the start of school is delayed, breakfast will not be served but lunch will be available as usual. Dismissal time will remain the same.
  - Safety remains the primary focus when the determination is made to close school or delay the start of school by two hours. From time to time, it may be predicted that a two-hour delay will allow morning fog to lift or roads to be cleared. If the weather has not cleared after the two-hour delay, school will be cancelled for the day and broadcast via local media. Please remember that parents always have the right to make the final decision if they feel it is not safe to send their child(ren) during inclement weather.
4. Parental Prerogative: If parents feel that it is unsafe for their children to ride the bus because of poor weather or road conditions, they should keep their children home. Also, parents are encouraged to pick their children up at school and take them home if the parents feel that weather or road conditions will be unsafe at the regularly scheduled school dismissal time.
5. Closing Information: Local radio, TV and Internet Sites will broadcast information furnished by our school district regarding all actions necessary in the event of "severe or hazardous weather" situations.
6. Severe and Hazardous Weather Bulletin Policy Tornado Policy – to clarify terms used, definitions are stated to guide intent and interpretation of this Bulletin.
  - Tornado Watch: means weather conditions are such that tornadoes could occur.
  - Tornado Warning: means a tornado has been sighted in the area.
  - Hazardous Weather: means that weather and/or resulting road conditions are such that the safe operation of vehicles involves unnecessary risk.

#### **H. Operation Procedures**

1. When the school receives official information of a tornado watch during school hours, action by school authorities will depend on the extent of the forecast and time element involved.

- The situation may require action as follows:
    - Dismissal of students that walk to school with instructions to proceed immediately for their homes or other parentally-designated places.
    - Transportation of others as time permits: an attempt to transport the middle and high school students to their regular bus stops first, followed with the transportation of elementary students approximately one hour later.
    - Generally, no children will be picked up and brought to school by buses when a Tornado Watch is in effect.
  - Parents or designated representatives may pick up children at school if they so desire, but are requested to avoid school bus loading areas and bus traffic routes.
2. When the school is officially notified of a tornado warning during school hours, it is expected that the time available will be insufficient to disperse students. If so, procedures will be placed in operation to provide the students with maximum protection offered at each school building.
  3. If hazardous weather conditions develop when schools are in operation, the Superintendent of Schools, or his/her designee, will decide on the matter of early dismissal of students. Such decision will be based on reports and information received by the Transportation Supervisor. Procedures for early dismissal in this situation are as follows:
    - The middle and high school students will be dismissed first and appropriate bus route schedules will be placed in operation.
    - Elementary students in session will similarly be dismissed approximately one hour later depending on prevailing weather and road conditions.
  4. Hazardous weather conditions may develop requiring a decision by the Superintendent of Schools, or his/her designee, not to commence operation of schools on a particular day. Action will be based on reports and information received by the Transportation Supervisor and on consultation with the Superintendent.

## **VALUABLES/PERSONAL PROPERTY**

### **Electronic Devices, IPODS, Handheld Games**

It is strongly suggested that these items are left at home. Belding Area Schools will accept no responsibility for lost and/or damaged items of this nature. Any personal property items that potentially interfere with the educational process will be confiscated.

### **Cellular Telephones**

Cellular telephones may only be used by students outside of regular school hours. Any cellular telephones causing a disturbance will be confiscated. All ringers/auditory alarms must be turned off during school hours.

In no case will any student utilize a personal communication device in a manner that would allow for an unfiltered connection to the Internet.

Video/camera devices are not to be used in an inappropriate manner or venue. Any violation will result in confiscation and/or possible disciplinary action.

## **VISITORS**

- For the safety of our students and staff, ALL visitors (even parents and former students) must stop and register at the office and receive a visitor badge.
- This badge must be worn at all times while in the building.
- The administration also reserves the right to deny a visitor access to the building if it will be disruptive to staff or students.
- Students are NOT allowed to bring child visitors to school because of the liabilities involved.

\*Further information can be found in Board Policy 7440.01

## **WEAPONS**

Students are prohibited from possessing weapons of any description at school or school related activities or on the way to or from school under the provisions of Michigan Law, as referred to in school board policy. Students also are prohibited

from possessing items that may replicate any of the above, that when displayed could cause a reasonable person to believe it was real and therefore feel threatened. Students with knowledge of weapons that are present at school or school related activities must immediately report such information to the nearest school personnel. Failure to do so will constitute a violation of this policy, and the student will be subject to disciplinary action. Students responsible for bringing weapons to school or school related activities or found in control or possession of weapons may be subject to suspension and/or expulsion. A report of all weapons confiscation will be made to the Belding City Police.

\*Further information can be found in Board Policy 5772.

### **Anti-Bullying Policy**

\*Further information can be found in Board Policy 5516, 5517.01

It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of our students.

This policy protects all students from bullying/aggressive behavior regardless of the subject matter or motivation for such impermissible behavior.

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety or personal degradation.

Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.

This policy applies to all "at school" activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, and those occurring off school property, if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it interferes with the school environment.

### **Notification**

Notice of this policy will be **annually** circulated to and posted in conspicuous locations in all school buildings and departments within the District and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student, and parent/guardian handbooks. State and Federal rights posters on discrimination and harassment shall also be posted at each building. All new hires will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related complaint procedure.

Parents or legal guardians of the alleged victim(s), as well as of the alleged aggressor(s), shall be promptly notified of any complaint or investigation as well as the results of the investigation to the extent consistent with student confidentiality requirements. A record of the time and form of notice or attempts at notice shall be kept in the investigation file.

To the extent appropriate and/or legally permitted, **confidentiality** will be maintained during the investigation process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure of names and allegations. Further, the appropriate authorities may be notified, depending on the nature of the complaint and/or the results of the investigation.

### **Implementation**

The Superintendent is responsible to implement this policy, and may develop further guidelines, not inconsistent with this policy.

This policy is not intended to and should not be interpreted to interfere with legitimate free speech rights of any individual. However, the District reserves the right and responsibility to maintain a safe environment for students, conducive to learning and other legitimate objectives of the school program.

### **Procedure**

Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of bullying, hazing, or other aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the Principal or assistant principal. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building

principal should be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent should be filed with the Board President.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports shall be made to those identified above. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The Principal (or other administrator as designated) shall promptly investigate and document all complaints about bullying, aggressive or other behavior that may violate this policy. The investigation must be completed as promptly as the circumstances permit after a report or complaint is made.

If the investigation finds an instance of bullying or aggressive behavior has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any official position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement or other appropriate officials.

If, during an investigation of a reported act of harassment, intimidation and/or bullying/cyberbullying, the Principal or appropriate administrator believes that the reported misconduct may have created a hostile learning environment and may have constituted unlawful discriminatory harassment based on a Protected Class, the Principal will report the act of bullying and/or harassment to one of the Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers so that it may be investigated in accordance with the procedures set forth in Policy [5517](#) - Anti-Harassment.

The individual responsible for conducting the investigation shall document all reported incidents and report all verified incidents of bullying, aggressive or other prohibited behavior, as well as any remedial action taken, including disciplinary actions and referrals, to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall submit a compiled report to the Board on an annual basis.

### **Non-Retaliation/False Reports**

Retaliation or false allegations against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of bullying or aggressive behavior (as a witness or otherwise), or is the target of the bullying or aggressive behavior being investigated, is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy, independent of whether a complaint of bullying is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as bullying/aggressive behavior.

Making intentionally false reports about bullying/aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

### **Definitions**

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been bullying, hazing, harassment or other aggressive behavior, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it immediately and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

**"Aggressive behavior"** is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well-being. Such behavior includes, for example, bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidation, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hitting/pushing/shoving.

**"At School"** is defined as in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises. It also includes conduct using a telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider that occurs off school premises if either owned by or under the control of the District.

**"Bullying"** is defined as any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e. internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand held device) that, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus, is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- A. substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students;
- B. adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress;
- C. having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health; and/or
- D. causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are:

- A. Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling; taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student movement, unwelcome physical contact.
- B. Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name calling, making threats.
- C. Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in a number of different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti.

**"Harassment"** includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written or physical nature, often on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability, but may also include sexual orientation, physical characteristics (e.g., height, weight, complexion), cultural background, socioeconomic status, or geographic location (e.g., from rival school, different state, rural area, city, etc.).

**"Intimidation/Menacing"** includes, but is not limited to, any threat or act intended to: place a person in fear of physical injury or offensive physical contact; to substantially damage or interfere with person's property; or to intentionally interfere with or block a person's movement without good reason.

**"Staff"** includes all school employees and Board members.

**"Third parties"** include, but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors, vendors, or others engaged in District business, and others not directly subject to school control at inter-district or intra-district athletic competitions or other school events.

For further definition and instances that could possibly be construed as:

Harassment, see Policy [5517](#);

Hazing, see Policy [5516](#).

M.C.L. 380.1310B (Matt's Safe School Law, PA 241 of 2011 )  
Policies on Bullying, Michigan State Board of Education  
Model Anti-Bullying Policy, Michigan State Board of Education

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