

# **Woodland Elementary School**



## **Student-Parent Handbook 2025-2026**

# **East Syracuse-Minoa Central Schools**

## **District Office**

407 Fremont Road  
East Syracuse, NY 13057

General Information.....315-434-3000  
Superintendent of Schools.....Dr. Donna DeSiato  
Deputy Superintendent.....Grenardo L. Avellino  
Exec Director of Curriculum, Learning & Assessment.....N. Shane Hacker  
Exec Dir.r of Employee Engagement & Accountability.....Pam Buddendeck  
Exec Director of Planning, Development & Technology.....Kieran O'Connor  
Exec Director of School Business Administration.....Katherine Skahen  
Director of Facilities.....John Young  
School Information Officer.....Marcia Kelley  
Director of Special Education.....Heidi Allen  
Associate Director for Special Education.....Nicole Cummings  
Director of Counseling, Youth Development, & Leadership..Meghan Thomas  
Director of Athletics, PE and Health.....Michael Clonan  
Coor. of Community Engagement, Data, and Fine Arts.....Thomas Decker  
Director of Teaching and Learning.....Michelle Gipe  
Director of Dining Services (Chartwells Food Service).....Rose Montanaro  
Director of Transportation.....Jennifer Homeyer

### **Board of Education Members**

BOE President - D. Paul Waltz  
BOE Vice President - Tracy Callahan  
Diana Abdella  
Jolie Bonaparte  
John Albanese

Kay Gallery  
Susan Cain  
Deborah Kolod  
Leah Cushing

**Dear Woodland Families,**

Welcome to a new school year! Enclosed in this handbook is important information designed to support your child(ren)'s experience at Woodland. Your time and attention in reviewing it are greatly appreciated. Our goal is to promote academic success, social-emotional development, and a strong understanding of school expectations, all while reinforcing our commitment to PBIS and maintaining a safe, positive, and welcoming environment for all.

At Woodland, we are proud to be a PBIS school. Our core expectations — “Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Here, Be Ready” — are woven into daily routines and conversations. Don't be surprised if your child brings these phrases home, as we strive to use consistent, encouraging language to reinforce them throughout the building.

Strong school-to-home communication is key to student success. We use Parent Square to keep families informed about classroom learning, school happenings, and ways to get involved. Additional details can be found on our school's webpage through the district site: <http://www.esmschools.org>.

As we begin this new school year, I'm excited to continue my role as Principal of Woodland Elementary. We look forward to a rewarding year ahead and hope you'll take part in our vibrant school community—whether through our Parent-Teacher Organization or attending school events. Thank you for your ongoing partnership and support. Let's make it another wonderful year at Woodland!

Warm regards,  
*Vanessa McClowry*  
Vanessa McClowry  
Principal, Woodland Elementary

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# WOODLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

[www.esmschools.org](http://www.esmschools.org)

**MAIN OFFICE: 315-434-3440**

**FAX: 315-434-3450**

**NURSE: 315-434-3441**

Principal: Vanessa McClowry

Secretary: Erin Pease

School Nurse: Atifa Ajsic

Head Custodian: MaryEllen Dineen

## **K—5th Instructional Staff**

### **Kindergarten**

Lori Beeman

Jenna Berry

Leslie Brower

### **First Grade**

Jen Frasier

Olivia Grabowski

Allison Whitlock

### **Second Grade**

Sara Bourdon

Jennifer Pirro

Tennille Page

### **Third Grade**

Shonagh Kelley

Liz Mossovitz

Emily Zirilli

### **Fourth Grade**

Loren Clifford

Tammy Hogan

Leah Turner

### **Fifth Grade**

Lori Greabell

Sarah Guidone

Darren Kupinsky

### **Math/Science Inquiry Teacher**

Christy Fahey

### **Instructional Support**

Karen Dooling

Shelby Russo

### **Reading Teacher**

Shannon Manfredo

### **Library**

Sarah Casey (Librarian)

### **Physical Education**

Carrie Stoddard

DJ Charles

### **Special Education Teachers**

Maria Bomasuto

Jill Valente

Liz Mabbett

Tessa Mosher

### **ENL Teachers**

Lisa Law

Danielle Spencer

### **Music**

Lorien Beaulieu (Instrumental)

Annmarie Gregory (Vocal)

### **Art**

Kelly Sgroi

## **Support/Non-Instructional Staff**

**Psychologist:** Cecily Albach

**School Counselor:** Shelly Chizzonite

**Cafeteria:** Margaret Williamson

**Speech:** Kim Lowe & Taylor Casciano

**Occupational Therapy:** Kelly Dutton

**Physical Therapy:** Cathy Emery

**Promisezone Family Engagement Coordinator:** Maia Dotson

**Liberty Resources:** Amanda Sabins

**Special Education Teaching Assistants:** Tammy Breclaw, Cathy Lillo, Donna Peck, Cindy McGuire, Sharon Schildkamp, Heather Allen, Lori Bosket, Rachel Foster, Nicole Shantel, Alexa Reichel, Bryan Straub

**Clerical/ Aides:** Michelle Corbett, Azra Saric, Anna Wurster, MST Rahman, Ashley Day, Leslie Penman

# EAST SYRACUSE MINOA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 2025-2026 SCHOOL CALENDAR

**BOE Approval on 3/10/2025**

<b>LEGEND</b>				
Supt. Conf. Day - Staff Only				
Holiday				
School Recess				
Prof. Learning / Parent				
Conf. / Shortened Day				
Regents Exams R				
Regents Rating Day r				
*****				
August 28 Supt. Conf. Day				
September 1 Labor Day Holiday				
September 2 First Day of School				
October 13 Columbus Day/				
Indigenous Peoples' Day Holiday				
November 4 Supt. Conf. Day				
November 11 Veterans Day Holiday				
Nov. 26 & 28 Thanksgiving Recess				
November 27 Thanksgiving Holiday				
December 22- 24 Holiday Recess				
December 25 Christmas Holiday				
Dec 26, 29, 30 & 31 Holiday Recess				
January 1 New Year's Holiday				
January 2 Holiday Recess				
January 19 Martin Luther King Jr Holiday				
January 20-23 Regents Exams				
February 16 President's Day Holiday				
February 16-20 Winter Recess				
February 17 Asian Lunar New Year				
March 20 Supt. Conf. Day EID al-Fitr				
March 9-June 5 NYS Testing				
March 30-April 3 Spring Break Recess				
April 6-May 15 Grades 3-8 Testing				
May 22 Memorial Day Recess				
May 25 Memorial Day Holiday				
May 27 Supt. Conf. Day EID al-Adah				
June 9 & 10 Regents Exams				
June 17-26 (Except 6/19) Regents Exams				
June 19 Juneteenth Day Holiday				
June 26 Rating Day				
June 26 Last Day of School				
June 26 Graduation				

  

M	T	W	TH	F
<b>September (22) [21]</b>				
		Aug 28		29
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			
<b>October (22) [22]</b>				
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31
<b>November (16) [15]</b>				
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
<b>December (15) [15]</b>				
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		
<b>January (19) [19]</b>				
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20R	21R	22R	23R
26	27	28	29	30

  

M	T	W	TH	F
<b>February (15) [15]</b>				
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
<b>March (20) [19]</b>				
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			
<b>April (19) [19]</b>				
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	
<b>May (19) [18]</b>				
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29
<b>June (19) [19]</b>				
1	2	3	4	5
8	9R	10R	11	12
15	16	17R	18R	19
22R	23R	24R	25R	26r
29	30			

**(186) Staff Days [182] Student Days**

## **Conference Dates, Progress Reports & Report Cards**

### **Marking Periods for 2025-2026 will end on the following dates:**

November 7, 2025	April 10, 2026
January 23, 2026	June 26, 2026

### **Progress Reports for 2025-2026 will be available on the following dates:**

1 <sup>st</sup> Marking Period:	Discussed at Parent Conferences
2 <sup>nd</sup> Marking Period:	December 19, 2025
3 <sup>rd</sup> Marking Period:	March 13, 2026
4 <sup>th</sup> Marking Period:	May 21, 2026

### **Report Cards for 2025-2026 will be available on the following dates:**

1 <sup>st</sup> Marking Period:	November 14, 2025
2 <sup>nd</sup> Marking Period:	January 30, 2026
3 <sup>rd</sup> Marking Period:	April 17, 2026
4 <sup>th</sup> Marking Period:	June 26, 2026

### **Parent-Teacher Conference Dates for 2025-2026:**

November 4, 2025  
November 18, 2025

- Parent-Teacher Conferences can be scheduled with your child's teacher during Parent Information Night.
- On shortened days, students in grades K-5 dismissal will be at 11:00 a.m.
- Bagged lunches will be available on shortened days

## **Daily Schedule**

Office Opens	7:15 a.m.
Buses Arrive & Unload/Parent Drop Off	7:30/7:35 a.m. - 7:45 a.m.
Breakfast Available for Students	7:35 a.m. - 7:45 a.m.
Announcements Begin	7:45 a.m.
School Starts/Students tardy after	7:45 a.m.
Student Dismissal/Pick-up	2:00 p.m.
Office Closes	3:15 p.m.
Instructional Day	7:45 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

## Emergency School Closings

When it is necessary to delay or close schools because of bad weather, power failure or some other emergency, the information will normally be announced by 6:30 a.m. via phone, text, and/or email on ESM's alert system, Parent Square, as well as radio, TV, and websites of local media.

A one or two-hour delay announcement means that all morning school bus stops will be one or two hours later than usual time and there will be no morning Pre-K. The remainder of the school day will follow a regular schedule including lunch, dismissals, and extracurricular activities. When a delay is announced, conditions might deteriorate and require the school to close. In that event, a closing announcement will be made by 7:30 a.m. and also relayed via Parent Square.

Occasionally, bad weather or other emergencies develop after school begins and force an earlier-than-normal closing. In that case, Parent Square as well as local media announcements will be made indicating the time of dismissal. The following TV and radio stations will announce school closings and delays caused by adverse weather or other emergencies. Please listen to the radio on bad weather days since phone lines are likely to be tied up at school.

<u>TV Stations</u>	<u>FM Radio</u>
WSYR TV-9 WSTM TV-3 WTVH-5 NEWS 10 Now	93Q 95X B 104.7 HOT 107.9 KROCK 100.9 LITE 105.9 POWER 106.9 SUNNY 102.2
<u>AM Radio</u>	TK 99 Y94 JAZZ 88 OLDIES 92.1 Z89
WFBL 1050 WSYR 570 WHEN 620 WNSS 1260	

## Family Emergency Information

Parents are requested to update the annual student verification form with pertinent student and family information as well as at least two names, addresses and telephone numbers of individuals who may be contacted if the school personnel can not reach either parent. This information is kept in School Tool, the district's online data system. It is extremely important to keep this information current and up to date. ***Please notify the main office at 315-434-3440 when any of this information changes.***

## Attendance

Students' class attendance correlates highly with success in school. Similarly, those students who miss many school days often have difficulties with the curriculum. The ESM School District strongly encourages regular attendance and will actively pursue students whose attendance is less than satisfactory.



**Parents are asked to call the attendance office at 315-434-3440 or email [weattendance@esmschools.org](mailto:weattendance@esmschools.org) when their child is absent. Parents must follow up with a note or an email if the absence was phoned in.** NYS Education Law requires a written or emailed communication for every absence from school. If one is not submitted within 10 school days, the absence remains unexcused and could result in further actions with the Department of Social Services.

Parents who allow their children to be excessively absent without adequate explanation can be charged with educational neglect in family court. If a student is absent for fifteen percent or more of a marking period, parents will be contacted and may be asked to meet with school officials.

Parents are reminded that students should only miss school for reasons that are legal and approved by the Commissioner of Education. Some of these reasons include personal illness, visits to a clinic, illness or death in the family, impassable roads, religious observance, or required court appearances. Be aware that excuses such as babysitting, needed at home, job interview, hunting, appointment (non-medical), or running an errand are not legal. **Students who are late to school also need written excuses.** Reasons for being legally late are similar to the reasons for being legally absent. Consequences for illegal late days can include school detentions, disciplinary referrals, loss of privileges, etc.

**If children need to be excused early, please send a note explaining the reason for the excuse.** Whenever possible, please schedule appointments for early in the day or after school hours. We verify excuses by calling you, so please keep the school aware of your work numbers. We require verification of excuses from doctors, clinics, etc., and we may disallow excuses for illegal reasons. The Commissioner of Education has ruled that parental consent for student absences does not disallow the school district from taking disciplinary action against those violating attendance procedures.

Our attendance procedures are not meant to punish students. Rather, they are meant to encourage good habits, which will lead to success in school now and later in the workplace. If you need to discuss any attendance problems, call Meghan Thomas (Director of Counseling, Youth Development, and Leadership) at 315-434-3306.

## **Extended Absences**

Children who miss school to take or extend family vacations are considered to be illegally absent. Because learning in elementary school is designed to meet the individual needs of students, teacher lesson plans reflect this. Teachers, therefore, often cannot predict specifically what their expectations for students will be. Additionally, we hope that parents understand that at the elementary level, most of the learning occurs as a result of discussion, hands-on activities, and teacher reinforcement, which cannot be packaged to take on a trip. Missed school work cannot be prepared ahead of time for those students who miss school to take or extend a vacation.

In the elementary school, it will be the responsibility of the parents to supervise the makeup work at home, after the student returns to school. Failure to complete and return the makeup work will be reflected in the student's quarterly grade.

## **Making Up Work When a Child is Absent**

If your child is too ill to be in school, he/she is probably too ill to do schoolwork at home. If your child is out of school for a long period and is well enough for school work, but will not be out long enough to require homebound instruction, you may request work from your child's teacher and arrange to pick it up the day following your request. We cannot accommodate same-day requests for make-up work.

## **Visitors to Woodland**

School safety is of utmost importance to our building and district. Visitors will be given limited access to the building during school hours. ***At this time, we do not have visitors during a student's lunch or outdoor learning. Visitors will be invited to school assemblies where applicable.*** This is to ensure a high level of safety for all students and staff in the building. Since the school is a place of learning and work, we do ask that you abide by our visitation rules:

1. Every building in our district has a single point of entry for visitors during the school day.
2. All visitors will need to use the buzzer located at the main entrance of the building for admission. You will pass through a weapons detection system prior to entering through a second set of doors.
3. Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the school will be considered a visitor.
4. **All visitors need to report directly to the office. You will be required to show a valid driver's license or federal ID which will be scanned. Once scanned, you will be given a visitor's badge. This badge should be worn at all times while on the premises. Any staff member may approach you and ask you to report to the office if you are found in**

***the building without a visitor's badge. You must sign into the building prior to entering.***

5. Teachers are not permitted to take class time to discuss individual matters with visitors.
6. All visitors are expected to use the same door to exit the building, and to sign out in the main office upon departure. You will be asked to turn in your visitor's badge prior to leaving the building.
7. All visitors are expected to follow the rules for public conduct on school property contained in this handbook.

We also do not permit children or visitors to bring friends or relatives from other schools into the building. School insurance does not cover visitation by those who are not enrolled.

### **General Bus Guidelines**

It must be clearly understood that students must fulfill certain responsibilities when riding the bus to and from school. These responsibilities include the following:

1. Be ready to board the bus quickly and safely, when it arrives.
2. Students must stay in their seats until the bus comes to a full stop at school or their bus stop.
3. Upon exiting the bus, students must cross the road at least ten feet in front of the school bus. Students must also wait when crossing in front of the school bus for the driver's signal to cross. Crossing at the rear of the bus is dangerous and not permitted.
4. Obey the bus driver and ESM's Code of Conduct. Drivers will address any behavioral concerns. Ongoing concerns with discipline will be reported to the principal.
5. Assist with keeping the bus neat, clean, and safe.
6. Students need to enter the bus one at a time and should use the handrail.
7. While on a bus, students shall not:
  - a. fight or quarrel
  - b. change seats
  - c. use profane language
  - d. mark or deface the bus
  - e. put arms, legs, elbows, and/or hands out of the bus windows
  - f. carry glass containers on the bus

### **Special Transportation Requests**

Requests for short-term transportation to and from an address other than the home address must be approved by the Director of Transportation, Jennifer Homeyer based on a verified hardship, ex. hospitalization of a parent. Approval of such a request is typically dependent upon meeting these conditions:

- (a) No bus route change is required,
- (b) No added bus stop is required and
- (c) No change of attendance boundaries is required.

All transportation requests should be consistent for a.m. and p.m. pickups.

## **Bus Passes**

When it is necessary for your child to ride another bus home in the afternoon, a specific, written request must be sent to school with your child. This written request must state the reason for your child to take another bus, where she/he is going, and the bus number she/he is to ride. (See example below) **Incidents of students riding other buses should be kept to a minimum** (i.e. child care).

## **Drop-Off/Pickup Policy**

If you drive your child to school you must enter the parking lot from Nature Trail Drive and drop your child off on the sidewalk so your child can safely enter through the door closest to the delivery entry. Once your child exits your vehicle you may move forward in line. **DO NOT PULL AROUND** the vehicles in front of you. Use patience as some special needs families may require staff assistance. If you arrive after 7:45, please park your car in the staff lot and walk your child to the Main Office doors. **Please do not park in the bus loop.**

**Please do not drop children off any earlier than 7:35 a.m. as staff is not available until this time.** The building opens at 7:35 a.m. for students.

If you need to pick up your child during the school day or at dismissal time a written note should be sent with your child. If an emergency arises throughout the day please **make every effort to contact the office prior to 1:30 p.m.** In lieu of a note, dismissal requests can be communicated via email to [weattendance@esmschools.org](mailto:weattendance@esmschools.org) or by calling the office (315-434-3440). The office is very busy during dismissal time and this will alleviate confusion. To pick up your child early (prior to 2:00 p.m.), you must enter the building and sign him or her out at the main office. Proper ID (valid driver's license or federal ID) is required to pick up students as well.

## **Food Services**

When a student requires special foods because of allergies to food, dairy products, or has a special diet requirement, a request signed only by a doctor must be on file in the school cafeteria that the student attends, and also a copy must be sent to the high school food service office. Please send this to the nurse, Atifa Ajsic, and she will attend to the situation. Feel free to call food services with any questions or concerns at 315-434-3441.

## **School Breakfast and Lunch Program**

Students may bring their lunch from home or they may purchase a school-prepared lunch. Those who bring lunch may purchase milk, ice cream or other ala carte snacks to supplement their meal. Monthly menus are available on the District website.

### **Food Service Prices for 2025-2026**

Breakfast FREE  
Elementary Lunches FREE

#### **Ala Carte Item Prices:**

<b>Ala Carte Items -- 2025-2026</b>	<b>PRICE</b>
Cheez-it Crackers	\$1.00
Chips and Doritos	\$1.00
Cookie	\$1.25
Double - Elementary	\$2.00
Fruit Snack	\$1.00
Ice Cream, Large	\$1.35
Ice Cream, SCOOTERS	\$1.00
Ice Cream, Small	\$0.95
Milk	\$0.75
Muffin	\$1.00
Pop Tarts	\$1.00
Rice Krispie Treat	\$1.40

ESM's system allows meal prepayment for up to a year in advance using cash, checks or debit/credit cards. ESM partners with **[myschoolbucks.com](https://myschoolbucks.com)** for debit/credit cards. There is also a mobile app available. You can download this free app from your app store by searching "MySchoolBucks". You may also access menus through another free app by searching "Nutrislice" in the app store. For further information, the district's food service website is [www.esmschools.org/food](http://www.esmschools.org/food). Direct contact is available by email at [esmfood-service@esmschools.org](mailto:esmfood-service@esmschools.org) or by phone at 315-434-3304.

Please refrain from sending your students in with fast food options for lunch. Also, if you need to drop an item off to your child, including lunch, you may leave it in the office for them to pick-up. We cannot call children out of class to pick up items in the Main Office.

## **Classroom Parties and Snacks**

Both students and staff look forward to celebrations and we also enjoy acknowledging your child's birthday. Each classroom teacher will set forth his/her own policy on birthday celebrations. Please contact your child's teacher in advance if you plan to send in a birthday snack. Once you make contact with the teacher, you may either send treats in with your child or drop them off to the Main Office.

Our district-wide Wellness Policy dictates the kinds of snacks permissible for students:

- Snacks need to be store bought, prepackaged, and individually wrapped. No homemade items can be accepted.
- Snacks must be **peanut-free** (*check with classroom teacher for any other allergy-needs that may need to be accommodated*)

We ask that you do not send in gifts, balloons, flowers, or stuffed animals to be presented to your child at school. *Unless everyone in the class is invited, invitations for personal parties should not be distributed at school.*

## **Health Services**

### **Dispensing Medication**

Whenever possible, medication should be given at home. Every effort should be made to avoid dispensing medication during school hours. In the event a medication must be given at school, New York State law mandates the following information is given to the school before any medications can be administered:

1. Written permission from the doctor, including dosage and times of administration. This includes over-the-counter medications such as aspirin, Tylenol, or ibuprofen.
2. Written permission from the parent or guardian.
3. Parents or guardians must bring the medication to school along with both written requests. **Children are NOT allowed to bring medication to school.**
4. Medications must be in a pharmacy-labeled container with only enough medication needed for dispensing in school. Medication sent to school in unlabeled containers cannot be given.

If these requirements are met, the nurse will safely administer medicine during school hours. To protect your children, all medications will be kept under lock and key. An *Authorization for Dispensing Medication* form may be obtained from the Fremont health office webpage. Your child's unused medication must be picked up by the last day of the school year or it will be disposed of.

### **Medications on Field Trips**

If your child is going on a field trip and requires an injection medication, a treatment such as a nebulizer, or is unable to take his/her own medication, you must accompany your child on the field trip. **If a parent is unable to attend, you may (1) designate someone else to accompany and dispense medication to your child. In this case, a note identifying your designee and a statement that he/she is properly trained to dispense the medication is required. OR (2) present a “change in medication order” from your child’s physician for the days of the field trip.** If no one is able to accompany your child, the school nurse will make arrangements to insure that your child receives his/her medications from a nurse while on the field trip.

### **Student Health Alerts**

Under FERPA (Family Educational Right to Know Privacy Act), the school nurse may disclose health alerts involving individual students to individuals who have a “legitimate educational interest” or “need to know” the student’s health situation. If you do not want your child’s medication information shared with the appropriate staff, please do not hesitate to contact the school nurse, Atifa Ajsic, at 315-434-3441.

### **Permanent Withdrawal Procedure**

Please call the Woodland Office (315-434-3440) if you are moving within or outside of the district. We are required to obtain a formal request from your child’s new school in order to transfer records. If you have any questions please contact the Woodland Office.

### **Student Agendas (Grades 4—5)**

Each student in grades 4—5 is provided an agenda. This agenda is an IMPORTANT TOOL that each child is required to use every day. The agenda will contain the homework assignments, as well as the dates for studying for tests and quizzes. Long-term projects may also be listed in the agenda. The agenda may also be used as a communicator between school and home. It is the student’s responsibility to bring the agenda to and from home each day. It is also the responsibility of the student to write the assignments in his/her agenda. If used correctly, the agenda is a tool that will greatly add to a child’s confidence and success in school.

### **Student Folders**

Each student in grades K—5 will have a take home school folder. This folder will be sent between home and school each day with your child. This folder is a GREAT organizational tool for your child and will become an integral part of the child’s daily school routine. The folder will also provide the parent a secure path to the teacher for notes, excuses, permission slips, etc. Please do your best to check your child’s folder each day.

### **After-School Activities**

Periodically, teachers will offer after-school activities or clubs that may run for half an hour to an hour after dismissal. Clubs may run for the entire year or run quarterly. If your child expresses an interest in an after-school activity, a permission slip will be sent home for your signed permission.

***Parents must provide after-school transportation.***

### **Enhanced Visual and Performing Arts Program (K–5)**

Throughout the year, the art and music teachers team up with students and teachers at each grade level to enhance student learning of the classroom curriculum through experiences in visual and performing arts. Each collaboration may have a culminating event where students may be acting, reciting, singing or preparing scenery or displays.

### **Art, Physical Education, Music (K–5)**

All students receive instruction in art, physical education and music on a four-day rotation schedule. Students meet for physical education twice during the four-day rotation and once each for art and music. If school closes due to snow days or holidays, the rotation resumes on the day when the students return to school. All students in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade participate in chorus and will have concerts in the winter and spring of each school year.

### **Library**

All Woodland students will have library scheduled in once a cycle. There is also a research block to allow cross curricular and/or research opportunities. If you have any questions please reach out to Sarah Casey, School Librarian ([scasey@esmschools.org](mailto:scasey@esmschools.org)).

### **Games, Toys & Electronic Devices**

**Please do not send your child in with any games, toys, or other electronic games/devices. Students are not permitted to use personal cell phones, pagers, iPods or MP3 players, handheld video games, lasers or other personal electronic devices at school.** If your child needs to call home, they may be allowed to use a classroom phone or the phone in the main office.

Before you or your child allows such an item on school grounds, please consider the financial loss if the item is lost or stolen. Neither the school or district is financially responsible for any lost or stolen items. If your child is seen using a prohibited electronic device, they will be warned to put it away. Any subsequent incidences of using a prohibited electronic device will result in discipline, and the device will be brought to the Principal's Office. Parents will be responsible for picking up the device from school.



### **Photo Opt-Outs**

If you would not like your child to be pictured in any photographs please be sure to update the annual student information verification form. These forms are sent out annually in the fall for updating.

Initial opt-out forms are provided at kindergarten registration and are automatically renewed every year.

Also, please refrain from posting pictures of other children, including whole class pictures on social media. Many parents do not want their child's picture posted online.

### **Field Trips**

Over the school year, your child will have the opportunity to partake in a field trip. In order for them to attend, parents/guardians must sign and date the field trip form. Parents of students requiring medication, please see page 12 for important information.

### **Lost & Found**

Please mark your child's property with his/her name or initials. Raincoats, jackets, lunch boxes, footwear, backpacks, etc. should be marked. Unmarked items will be placed in the lost and found.

Announcements will be made in school as well as communication made home via Parent Square on occasion, reminding students to check the lost & found for their belongings. If you see something that belongs to your child, please let us know.

### **Telephone**

Students are permitted to use the school phone for emergency purposes only. Students are not allowed to use personal devices during the school day. See bell-to-bell ban for more information.

## Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports is a proactive approach to help establish a positive culture needed for all students in a school to achieve social, emotional, and academic success. As a Response to Intervention (RTI) model, PBIS applies a three-tiered system of support, and a problem-solving process to enhance the ability of the staff to effectively educate all students.

The PBIS team specifically works to maintain students at the Universal Level (Tier 1). The primary goal is to create a climate where most students are able to meet or exceed behavior and academic expectations. The Woodland Behavior Matrix, school rules, parent handbook, and special assemblies are all aspects of PBIS.

### Woodland's Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

	Be Safe	Be Respectful	Be Responsible	Be Here	Be Ready
<b>Bus</b>	*Safely wait for your bus *Sit facing forward *Hands and feet to yourself	*Use kind words and actions *Listen to the bus driver	*Wait for your turn to exit *Sit in your assigned seat *Keep the bus clean	*Arrive at bus stop on time	*Gather up your possessions *Exit safely
<b>Arrival</b>	*Follow the direction of traffic *Hands and feet to yourself	*Greet others with a smile, wave, or hello *Listen to announcements	*Arrive on time	*Move safely and directly to your destination	*Complete morning routines
<b>Hallway</b>	*Move safely on the right side of the hall	*Use voice level 0 *Stay in your space *Hands at your sides *Look at artwork and signs with your eyes, not your hands.	*Respect personal spaces	*Go to your destination	*Bring your belongings
<b>Cafeteria</b>	*Keep all food to yourself	*Follow adult directions *Hands and feet to yourself	*Raise hand if you need help *Clean up after yourself	*Sit at your assigned table	*Listen for directions *Quietly wait to leave
<b>Bathroom</b>	*Wash with soap and water *Keep water in the sink *Put towels in garbage can	*Give others privacy *Respect personal space *Use quiet voices	*Flush toilet when finished	*Use only when necessary	*Return to class right away
<b>Playground</b>	*Use equipment safely *Keep hands to yourself	*Take turns *Include everyone	*Pick up materials	*Line up when your called	*Listen for directions
<b>Dismissal</b>	*Go directly to your destination	*Listen for buses to be called	*Move safely and directly to your bus	*Have all of your belongings ready	*Clean up work area

At Woodland, our students receive stars as a regular reward for following our four school expectations: **Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Here, Be Ready**. Students can receive stars from any adult in the building at any time!

Here are some examples of positive behaviors you can look for:

- **Be Safe:** keeping your shoes tied, sitting properly in your chair
- **Be Respectful:** silent when teachers are talking, being kind to friends
- **Be Responsible:** picking up after yourself, helping others
- **Be Here:** being in your class ready to learn
- **Be Ready:** sitting with a sharpened pencil, notebook or tools you need to be ready for the subject you are studying

## **PBIS Focus Area: 7 Habits for Happy Kids**

All grade levels at Woodland practice the work of Sean Covey's 7 Habits for Happy Kids. Covey believes that if people (children and adults) can embrace these habits, they will have the ability to take control of their lives and therefore be able to make any change happen. In other words, don't wait for people to create change for you; you can make things happen yourself!

The following habits will be taught and demonstrated throughout the year:

**Habit 1: Be Proactive** – *I'm in charge of me.*

**Habit 2: Begin With the End in Mind** – *Have a plan.*

**Habit 3: Put First Things First** – *Work first, then play.*

**Habit 4: Think Win-Win** – *I win. You win. We win.*

**Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, then to be Understood** – *Listen, then respond.*

**Habit 6: Synergize** – *Together is better.*

**Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw** – *Balance feels best.*

These habits will help students learn how to work with others by finding positive qualities to situations, learning how to truly listen to others and how to effectively work together as a team to make things happen. At each school-wide assembly, Fremont will focus on a specific habit. This is a school-wide initiative that will be promoted and encouraged throughout all areas of school. Please look for more information throughout the year for further details regarding each habit and how you can incorporate this language and these skills at home! We are encouraging all parents to use the blue shields that are handed out during parent information night to help reinforce these important life skills as well.

## **Dress/Appearance**

All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. Students and their parents have the primary responsibility for acceptable student dress, grooming, and appearance.

A student's personal appearance should not disrupt the educational process, call singular attention to him/her, violate federal, state, or local health and/or obscenity laws, or affect the welfare or safety of others.

A student's dress, grooming and appearance shall:

1. Be safe, appropriate, and not disruptive or interfere with the educational process.
2. Include appropriate footwear at all times. (i.e. athletic shoes for P.E., closed toe shoes for outdoor activities, etc.).
3. Include removal of all hats and other forms of headgear before entering the building. "Only students who have legitimate medical or religious reasons may wear a hat, head covering, or other headgear." In the case of a question regarding whether a student is in violation of the dress code, the principal will be responsible for making a final determination.

## **Sexual Harassment Policy**

It is the policy of the East Syracuse Minoa School District that all students and employees have the right to be free from all forms of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment. Any allegations that a student has been sexually harassed will be fully investigated. If the allegations are determined to be valid, appropriate discipline will be imposed.

Sexual harassment may occur in a number of ways including (1) verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature; (2) situations where a student's submission to or rejection of such conduct becomes a basis for academic decisions affecting the student and/or impacts on the learning environment; or (3) when such conduct creates a hostile, intimidating or offensive learning environment. Any student who believes he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment should immediately report the incident(s) to the building principal so that the matter may be investigated and the student's welfare protected. All information gathered during an investigation will be kept confidential to the fullest extent permitted by law.

## **ESM Code of Conduct**

The East Syracuse Minoa Central School District Board of Education, administration, teaching, faculty, and support staff are dedicated to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive and district personnel may deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, support staff, parents and visitors is essential to achievement of this goal. To support this concept, the Board of Education, working with administrators, teachers, parents, and students, has created a new Code of Conduct and written this summary of the district's long-standing principles contained in the Code. "Students' grooming, dress and appearance shall comply with the Dress Code in the District's Code of Conduct."

These expectations, based on a philosophy of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty, and integrity, are established by the district and explained in detail in the unabridged Code of Conduct found on the [esmschools.org](http://esmschools.org) website.

## **Behavior-Related Offenses and Consequences**

The rules of conduct are intended to focus on safety and respect for the rights of others. Students or others who do not accept this responsibility are subject to disciplinary consequences. Disciplinary actions will be firm, fair, and consistently applied to affect a positive change in behavior. The consequences for an offense will vary according to the nature of the offense and the circumstances that led to the offense. Disciplinary action will be guided first by the extent to which the offense poses a threat to the health and safety of others. As a general rule, discipline will be progressive or increase in severity as the behavior problem increases in seriousness. The range of consequences for offenses may include a verbal reprimand or a

warning up to an out-of-school suspension and/or a superintendent's hearing. In cases of school suspensions for frequent or more severe behavioral offenses, administrators will make all mandatory State and Federal notifications. For each category of offense, the range of appropriate options for consequences is outlined in the district code of conduct. In addition, all categories are clearly defined (i.e., possession of disruptive items is defined as unauthorized possession of a sound box, laser pointer, squirt gun, water balloon, personal audio device, stink bomb, or any other disruptive item).

### **Student Behavior Expectations**

Specific rules will be established in each classroom, and school-wide behavioral expectations can be found in the matrix mailed home in our back-to-school communication information. They reflect the building guidelines of treating everyone with courtesy and respect, acting in a way to promote a positive and safe environment, coming to school ready to learn, acting responsibly, and accepting the consequences for any chosen behaviors.

Parents will be notified and encouraged to assist with any behavior issues that persist. All students have a right to learn and all teachers have a right to teach. We want to provide the best learning environment for every student.

### **Parent Communication**

If you have any questions or concerns, please first reach out to your child's teacher and/or school counselor. Many questions, concerns, and other issues can typically be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties by starting with these staff members. If a parent/guardian is in need of further assistance, the building administrator will work to resolve the issue.

Please note that conflict between students is typical, particularly at an early age. We work to foster productive conversations, problem-solving, and emotional regulation skills. This allows students to learn essential pro-social skills to set them up for success later in life.

### **Woodland Playground Safety Rules and Recommendations**

- *Please do not send in balls or other play items for Outdoor Learning without prior approval from your child's teacher.* Play equipment provided by the PTO will be made available to students during their classroom outdoor play at their teacher's discretion.
- Respectful hands and feet at all times is expected and reinforced
- Students are not permitted to climb trees or pull/hang on limbs, or sit or climb on fences, swings, and basketball equipment.
- Students must not play near classroom windows or by doorways and should remain playing in clear view of supervising teachers.
- Students shall play safely and with good sportsmanship.

### **Stationary Equipment Safety: (specifically)**

- Swings – students should wait in an open area while waiting for a swing. This is to avoid children being hit by a moving swing.
- Slides – Go up the ladder, by foot, and slide down, facing forward, sitting on bottom. Students should not stand at the top of the slide or climb up the slide.
- Monkey Bars – No climbing/sitting on top of bars, one student at a time

### **Ball Play (Basketball, Soccer, Kickball, Football)**

- Under direct teacher supervision during classroom outdoor learning.
- All play items should be kept away from the parking lot.
- All play items should allow for space away from general playground equipment.
- Balls are not to be bounced against the building or in the halls.
- Students will not throw balls at each other, except in organized games.
- If students are unsafe with items, they may be taken away at the discretion of the teacher or other supervising adult.

### **Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)**

The Woodland PTO works tirelessly and cooperatively to bring special events and performances to the building. Given all of the work that they do across the year, it is essential that we have a large number of volunteers to assist with events. We welcome you to join the PTO as a way to become involved with your child's schooling, become acquainted with the building and be a part of a larger community.

## **2025-2026 Woodland Elementary PTO**

[esmwoodlandpto@gmail.com](mailto:esmwoodlandpto@gmail.com)

**President:** Bridget Nash

**Vice President:** Melissa Miner

**Treasurer:** James Miner

**Secretary:** Ryane Martino

**Please join us for PTO meetings that take place throughout the year at 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm.**

## **Bell-To-Bell Requirements**

Starting September 2, 2025, a new New York State law takes effect that restricts student cell phone use during the school day. This means ESM will implement a “bell-to-bell” ban on all personal cell phones and internet-enabled devices during school hours.

### **What Does “Bell-to-Bell” Mean?**

From the moment students arrive at school until they are dismissed, cell phones and other personal internet devices must be turned off and put away. This includes time in class, lunch, study halls, and passing time between periods. The ban also applies during field trips and other off campus, school-related activities held during the school day.

Once students are dismissed, the ban no longer applies. After-school sports, clubs and evening events are not affected.

### **Why Is This Happening?**

This new state law is meant to help students stay focused and support their mental health. Research shows that phones can be a big distraction during learning time and may contribute to issues like cyberbullying and reduced face-to-face interaction.

At ESM, we also heard from students, staff and families through our Community Café conversations this spring. Their input helped shape how we’ll put this new law into practice.

### **Keeping Devices Out of Sight—Pouches**

To support this policy, each student will receive a school-issued pouch that fastens shut with Velcro. Students will place their phone or device in the pouch at the start of the day and keep it with them until dismissal.

- If a student forgets their pouch, they may need to check their phone in with the main office.
- Students are responsible for their pouches. Lost or damaged pouches may carry a replacement fee.

## **Staying Connected During the School Day**

We know many families are used to texting or calling their child during the day.

Here's how students and families will still be able to reach each other:

- Students can use a designated phone in the school if they need to contact home.
- Families can call the school's main office to reach their child during the school day.
- Students can check their school email using their District-issued Chromebook.

## **What Devices Are NOT Allowed?**

Any personal device that connects to the internet is NOT allowed during the school day, including:

- Cell phones and smartphones
- Smartwatches
- Tablets, including iPads
- Fitness trackers with messaging or calling features

## **Are There Any Exceptions?**

Yes. The following are exceptions to the policy:

- District-provided devices used for learning are still allowed.
- Medically necessary devices (like a glucose monitor) may be permitted with proper documentation from a healthcare provider. (Please contact your school nurse for help.)
- In case of an emergency, students can access their device by simply removing it from its pouch.

## **What Happens If a Student Uses Their Device Anyway?**

The state doesn't allow suspension just for using a phone, but there are steps ESM will take if students don't follow the rules:

- 1st & 2nd violation: The device is kept in the office until the end of the day. Parents/guardians are notified.
- 3rd and future violations: A parent will need to pick up the device from the office. In some cases, the student may need to turn in their device daily for a period of time.

## **Policy Information & Future Reporting**

- The [full policy](#) will be available on the ESM website and translated into the top 12 non-English languages in New York State upon request.
- Starting in September 2026, ESM will post a yearly public report about how this policy is being enforced, including anonymous demographic data and actions taken if enforcement appears unequal.