



EKALAKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

EKALAKA ELEMENTARY DISTRICT #15 • CARTER COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

Certified Employees Handbook

2021-2022

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WELCOME TO EKALAKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS!

The material covered within this staff handbook is intended as a method of communicating to employees regarding general district information, rules, and regulations and is not intended to either enlarge or diminish any Board policy, administrative regulation, or negotiated agreement. Material contained herein may, therefore, be superseded by such Board policy, administrative regulation, negotiated agreement, or changes in state or federal law.

Any information contained in this staff handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination, from time to time, without notice. No information in this document shall be viewed as an offer, expressed or implied, or as a guarantee of any employment of any duration.

Equal employment opportunity and treatment shall be practiced by Ekalaka Public Schools regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, and disability, if the employee, with or without reasonable accommodation, is able to perform the essential functions of the position.

The following have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements, including Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, and other civil rights or discrimination issues, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and may be contacted at the high school business office for additional information and/or compliance issues:

Stephen Ely, Superintendent


MISSION STATEMENT

The Board of Trustees, the school staff and the Ekalaka community are committed to establishing a learning environment that ensures all learners an equal opportunity for an educational program that will produce learners who are responsible and accountable, who value lifelong learning, and who are capable of succeeding in a changing world.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

The Trustees are guided by the conviction that every student has the right to the best education this community can provide. Responsibility for this rests with all citizens, parents, school staff, and students, with the ultimate responsibility for direction and decision making assumed by the Board.

The Board will exert leadership in creating, maintaining, and improving the school for the children's educational needs. The focal point of concern in our school system is the student. Organization, staffing, programming, teaching, and funding should all be developed primarily and basically to enhance appropriate opportunities for students to learn and develop – personally, academically and socially.

ORGANIZATION

The Ekalaka Public School (EPS) System is composed of two schools: Ekalaka Elementary School District #15 and Carter County High School, Carter County, State of Montana.

In order to achieve their primary goal of providing each child with the necessary skills and attitudes to become effective citizens, the Board shall exercise the full authority granted to it by the laws of the state. Their legal powers, duties and responsibilities are derived from the Montana Constitution and the State statutes and regulations. School Laws of Montana and the administrative rules of the Board of Public Education and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction delineate the legal powers, duties and responsibilities of the Board.

EKALAKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Legislature of the State of Montana delegates to the Board responsibility for the conduct and governance of district schools. The District is operated by a Unified Board of Trustees consisting of 7 members. Board members, as elected by residents of this district, are as follows:

Helen King, Chair, High School District #1
Lynn Williams, Vice-Chair High School District #3 & Elementary District #15
Tye Williams, School District #3 & Elementary District #15
Lisa Borchgrevink, High School District #3 & Elementary District #15
Stefan Livingston, High School District #3 & Elementary District #15
Thebea Thomas, High School District #2
Mike Ashbrook, High School District #2 & Elementary District #15

TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

To contact the school please dial: (406) 630-1523
To contact the Business office dial 630-1521
To contact the Superintendent, dial 630-15217
To contact the Technology/Transportation office, dial 630-1511

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Stephen Ely, Superintendent
Lora Tauck, Business Manager/Clerk & Title XI Coordinator

ABSENCES

ABSENCE FORMS

Leave forms are available in the building office and should be completed as early as possible prior to taking leave to insure a substitute can be secured. Deductions from sick, personal, professional, bereavement or vacation will be made in the business office. When completing your leave form, please make recommendations for your choice of substitute to be hired.

If you do not take leave for the time requested, please submit a note or a photocopy of the leave slip with the corrections, to the Superintendent or business office.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

Eligibility: FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees. Employees must request leave and be determined to be eligible to receive FMLA leave. Please contact the Superintendent for additional information and proper forms.

EMPLOYMENT

APPROPRIATE DRESS

All Staff are encouraged to pay particular attention to their dress and appearance. Please dress in a manner that is appropriate for your position and the work that you do. Professional dress is required for regular classroom instruction.

CELL PHONES

Employees are strongly discouraged from using their personal cell phone during the school day. When necessary, employees may use their personal cell phones and similar communication devices only during non-instructional time. In no event shall an employee's use of a cell phone interfere with the employee's job obligations and responsibilities.

COMPLAINTS

If a teacher/parent/community member has a complaint, the following channels should be followed:

1. Employee
2. Superintendent
3. Board of Trustees

CONTRACTS

All certified employees must have a signed contract with the Board of Trustees. The contract/master agreement covers many details that are not contained in this handbook. You should become familiar with this document. After issuing of contracts, teachers must return the contract either signed or unsigned to the superintendent within 20 calendar days of issuance. A contract not returned by this date will indicate that the teacher does not wish to return the following year.

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

The use of illicit drugs and unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful. It is the policy of Ekalaka Public Schools (5226) that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance by an employee in the workplace is prohibited. Compliance with the standards of conduct set forth in this policy is mandatory for all staff.

Ekalaka Public Schools have a responsibility to students, employees and the general public to ensure a safe and efficient work environment conducive to providing a quality education for all students. To satisfy this responsibility, the school shall make a good faith effort to ensure a work environment which is free from the effects of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs. Accordingly, it is the policy of the District as follows:

Adopted by Ekalaka Public Schools Board of Trustees July 2021

1. The following definitions shall apply for purposes of this policy:
 - a. **Alcohol** shall mean and include ethanol and any beverage that may be legally sold and consumed in the State of Montana having an alcohol content in excess of 3% by volume.
 - b. **Drug** shall mean any substance, other than alcohol, capable of altering an individual's mood, perception, pain level, or judgment.
 - c. **Illegal Drug** shall mean any drug or controlled substance the sale or consumption of which is restricted or controlled by the State of Montana or the federal government but shall not include a prescription drug for which the possessor has a valid prescription.
 - d. **Under the influence** of alcohol or illegal drugs shall mean that the person's faculties or abilities are impaired by consumption of alcohol or drugs. A person with an alcohol concentration in excess of .04% shall be presumed to be under the influence of alcohol.
 - e. **Odor of alcohol** shall mean the commonly perceived odor of ethanol in sufficient concentration upon the person's body, breath or clothing to be readily detectable by smell to an ordinary person in close proximity to such an individual.

Prohibited Conduct:

No employee during the duty day or at the time of other school assigned responsibilities shall:

1. Have in his/her personal possession, nor consume any alcohol or illegal drug.
2. Have an identifiable odor of alcohol upon their person or clothing;
3. Be under the influence of alcohol or an illegal drug;
4. Use, sell, distribute or give away any alcohol or dangerous drug; or
5. Knowingly allow any student or students under his/her supervision to possess or consume alcohol or an illegal drug.

The above prohibitions also apply to those occasions during which an employee is supervising or chaperoning students or groups of students.

Administration and Enforcement:

1. The primary responsibility for administering this policy shall be with the Superintendent, Principal or designee of the facility at which the employee is employed or performing duties.
2. The District shall conduct an awareness of its drug-free workplace policy for all employees.
3. If the District has reasonable cause to suspect that an employee is under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs in violation of this policy or has an identifiable odor of alcohol upon their person, breath, or clothing, the District may require the employee to do any of the following (except that submission to urine or blood testing shall be limited to those incidences where the District has reason to believe the employee's faculties are impaired on the job as a result of alcoholic consumption or illegal drug use.);
 - a. Immediately submit to a breath analysis upon a certified Breathalyzer operated by certified Breathalyzer operators.
 - b. An employee registering an alcohol concentration greater than .04% on a certified breathalyzer may:
 - i. Immediately submit to a repeat of the test on the same breathalyzer;
 - ii. Immediately obtain, at the expense of the district, an independent test of his/her blood or urine at a local hospital or medical clinic. Such test must occur within four (4) hours of the original test and must state its results in terms of alcohol concentration at the time of day that the Breathalyzer test was initially conducted.
 - c. Immediately submit to a blood or urine test in conformance with the provisions of 49 CFR; part 40, as now existing, or hereafter amended, which are hereby adopted by the District as

its testing blood and urine testing procedure. Any employee subjected to testing of blood or urine shall have a copy of 49 CFR, part 40 made available to them. In addition:

- i. A copy of all blood or urine test results shall be provided to the employee;
 - ii. Any employee submitted to a blood or urine test at the request of the District will be provided the opportunity, at the expense of the District, to obtain a confirmatory test of the blood or urine by an independent laboratory selected by the employee;
 - iii. The employee will be given the opportunity to rebut or explain results of any blood or urine test;
 - iv. Adverse action will not be taken against a person whose blood or urine is tested pursuant to this policy if the person tested presents a reasonable explanation or medical opinion indicating the results of the test were not caused by alcohol consumption or illegal drug use.
4. Reasonable cause under this section may be established by, but is not limited to:
 - a. Direct observation;
 - b. Reliable reports of observations from others;
 - c. Evidence obtained from an arrest or criminal conviction;
 - d. Verified positive test results; or
 - e. An employee's voluntary admission.
 5. An employee in violation of the District's drug and alcohol policy shall be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Disciplinary action may include required participation in an approved drug abuse assistance and rehabilitation program.
 6. Any employee refusing to submit to testing in accordance with the procedures specified herein, when reasonable cause exists for requesting such testing, shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Reports of Convictions:

All employees must notify the District's administration of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in a workplace no later than five (5) days after such conviction. Any employee so convicted will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The employee may be required to participate successfully in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

Assistance and Rehabilitation:

- A. The District places importance on assisting employees who have drug and alcohol abuse problems through its Employee Assistance Program. Private counseling, Mental Health Counseling, Treatment Centers and various support groups are available for rehabilitative services for the employee. The district's health insurance may cover some of the cost for these services.
- B. The district recognizes that chemical dependency is a highly complex illness that often can be treated successfully. The purpose of this policy is to assure that any employee suffering from chemical dependency will receive the same careful consideration as employees with other illnesses.
- C. Chemical dependency problems are defined as illnesses in which the employee's consumption of alcoholic beverages and/or use of drugs interferes with his or her job performance and/or health.
- D. Although chemical dependency is recognized as an illness, such dependency shall not constitute an excuse for violation of the District's drug and alcohol policy.
- E. Nothing contained herein shall be construed to create any right of disability for chemical dependency in excess of that, if any, provided in the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Administrative Procedures and Policy Review:

Widespread communication of this drug-free workplace policy is essential to its successful implementation. All employees shall receive a copy of this policy annually.

In order to remain responsive to the current needs for drug use education and prevention, this policy shall undergo periodic reviews to assess the consistency and fairness of the disciplinary sanctions imposed and assistance offered to staff. Each year the school administration shall compile information from the incident reports and records of the referrals made and disciplinary sanctions imposed to present at the June meeting of the school board.

This drug-free workplace policy shall be reviewed at least every three years by a committee of staff, parents, law enforcement officers and board members.

EVALUATION

Certified staff evaluations will be conducted as outlined in the master agreement.

HARASSMENT

Harassment of staff members is strictly prohibited on district property, including non-district property while a staff member is at any district-sponsored, district-approved, or district-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events, in which students are under the control of the district or where the staff member is engaged in district business.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, marital status, disability, and sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. The staff member's submission to the conduct or communication is made a term or condition of employment;
2. The staff member's submission to, or rejection of, the conduct or communication is the basis for decisions affecting employment and assignment;
3. The conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance;
4. The conduct or communication has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Other types of harassment may include, but not be limited to, jokes, stories, pictures, or objects that are offensive, tend to alarm, annoy, abuse, or demean certain protected individuals and groups.

A staff member whose behavior is found to be in violation of Board policy may be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal.

Any staff member who is subject to, or knows of, such harassment is directed to notify the Superintendent immediately. If the complaint is not satisfactorily settled, the staff member may file a complaint directly with the Montana Human Rights Commission or with the U.S. Department of Labor, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Such complaints may also be filed with the appropriate enforcement agency, in lieu of the district's complaint process, at any time, as provided by law.

There will be no retaliation by the district against any person who, in good faith, reports harassment.

Idle gossip is detrimental to the work environment and could lead to harassment charges.

IN-SERVICES (*PIR Days*)

Attendance is mandatory at the October Teacher In-services offered throughout the state unless an alternative plan has been filed by you and approved by the administration. If you should decide to substitute a workshop or class for the October In-service, you should contact the ETA president before June 30 (the preceding spring). Other PIR days are noted on the adopted school calendar. Classes taken during the summer will be documented and turned in to the administration on the 1st PIR day of the school year that will take the place of MFPE days in October.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Job descriptions for all employees have been formulated. As an accredited public school system, we adhere to state and federal laws, administrative rules and state accreditation standards governing school personnel.

MASTER AGREEMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT

Working conditions, benefits, compensation and employee rights of certified staff are negotiated and codified in the master agreement between the Unified School Board and the Ekalaka Teachers Association.

PAYDAY

All staff will be paid on the 15th of each month during the school year. Arrangements for certified staff for payments of 10, 11 or 12 month increments and extra-curricular payments should be made with the district clerk.

PERSONNEL FILES

The system maintains a personnel file for each employee. You have the right to inspect your file at any reasonable time. By law, certified employees must provide the district with an official transcript of coursework. We also require that you provide us with a copy of your valid teaching certificate. The responsibility for keeping certificates current and in force rests with the individual teacher.

POLICY MANUAL

The Ekalaka Public Schools Policy Manual is available at the office and teacher workrooms. Section 5000 applies directly to staff.

REPORTING TIME FOR STAFF

Normal working days are 8:00am to 4:00pm, exceptions are listed in the CBA.

SALARY LANE CHANGE REQUEST

Written notification of any request for different placement on the salary schedule based on coursework must be submitted to the superintendent by May 1.

STAFF AND TEACHER MEETINGS

All staff and teachers must attend meetings unless excused by the Superintendent.

STAFF DIRECTORY

A staff directory listing each employee's position and telephone number will be made available to all staff members. Please be respectful of staff member's privacy and do not share outside our staff (unless given permission by that individual.)

TEACHERS ORGANIZATION

The Ekalaka Teachers Association, affiliated with the MFPE, is the recognized bargaining unit in our school system. Membership is voluntary. For more information, visit with an ETA officer.

TENURE

Montana State Laws govern the rules of tenure. Essentially, if a teacher received their fourth consecutive contract he/she has tenure.

TOBACCO-FREE ENVIRONMENT

In order to protect the health of students, staff, and the general public, provide a healthy working environment, and promote good health for students, tobacco use is prohibited on all district property, in district-owned vehicles and in all public school buildings.

Tobacco use is defined as the carrying or smoking of any kind of lighted pipe, cigar, cigarette, or any other smoking equipment or material or the chewing or sniffing of a tobacco product. Tobacco products may not be visible.

YEAR END CHECK OUT PROCEDURES

An end-of-the-year form will be provided by the Superintendent in preparations for year end procedures.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR

ADVISING, COACHING, SPONSORING

Both schools offer a number of extra-curricular activities for students. As a small system, we urge all certified staff to become involved in the extra-curricular program as an advisor, coach and/or sponsor. A list of these positions and a salary schedule for certified staff is in the master agreement. It is necessary for an advisor, coach, or sponsor to supervise students at all times.

Contacting Coaches/Advisors

If a parent is concerned about an issue, they must make arrangements to meet with the coach or advisor during school hours at the school. Coaches and advisors will not be available directly after games for discussion, they will not be available until the next scheduled school day.

STUDENT ACTIVITY ELIGIBILITY

MHSA standards are observed, but in addition, we determine student eligibility on a weekly basis. The students must be passing in all subjects at semester; be in school the entire day of the activity or have prior permission from an administrator to be absent; not maintain a failing average in the same subject for 2 consecutive weeks; and abide by all rules and regulations of the school. The teacher will notify the guidance counselor and superintendent on Monday mornings of ineligible students. The counselor or superintendent will then inform parents of this status. See the Student Handbook for a full explanation of this policy.

GRADE AND ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Grade School attendance (Grades K-6) must be taken twice daily, once in the morning and once after lunch. Children returning to school from being absent are asked to present a note to their teacher signed by the parent/guardian.

High School and Junior High attendance is taken each period. Please check the Infinite Campus message center daily for students who are absent and report any student who does not arrive in your class to the office so that personnel can determine their location.

8 DAY POLICY: (Junior High & High School Only)

Each student enrolled in EPS will be allowed to be absent (8) days per semester but not more than four (4) days per quarter. If the student has missed four (4) days from a class during the quarter, the parents will be contacted. If the student has missed eight (8) days during the semester, a meeting will be held with the parent(s), the student, and the Superintendent. At this time an attendance plan will be written. Seniors will be allowed two (2) days for military enlistment or college visitation.

GRADE BOOKS

Electronic grade books are used. Grades are to be kept current and confidential. A minimum of 2 grades will be entered each week and an appropriate number of grades should be recorded each quarter. Your grade books will be updated weekly by 8:00 am Monday morning in order to run the most current eligibility for students.

GRADING PERIODS

Report cards are issued quarterly. Starting and ending dates for each quarter are on the calendar. Dates for sending home report cards will be determined near the end of each quarter.

GRADING SYSTEM AND HONOR ROLL

Kindergarten through grade 2 will use (S) for satisfactory, and (U) for unsatisfactory.

Grades 3-12 will use the letter grades A, B, C, D, F, and I for incompletes. If a student receives a D or F, comments will be included in the Report Card.

GRADING SCALE:

A	96-100%	A-	93-95%
B+	90-92%	B	87-89%
B-	84-86%	C+	81-83%
C	77-80%	C-	74-76%
D+	71-73%	D	68-70%
D-	65-67%	F	64% and lower

LESSON PLANS

Lesson plans and requirements concerning plans will be turned into the Superintendent on a weekly basis. All staff are to maintain an active sub folder containing emergency lesson plans in case of unexpected absence and keep in their designated school office.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent conferences are held at the end of the 1st and 3rd quarters, generally about a week after the quarter ends.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports will be made available at the end of each midterm, quarter and semester with a copy being sent home for semester only. Please provide feedback in the notes section, that they will access through their parent portals, to keep an open line of communication with parents and maintain a positive learning environment.

REPORT CARDS

The official electronic grading system of the district will be used to record grades K-12 and for printing report cards.

RETENTION

If you plan to retain a student in grades K-8, you must notify the superintendent and counselor of your intent no later than the end of the 3rd quarter. Upon notification, the administrator will apprise you of additional steps necessary before a final decision to retain can be made.

(FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HONOR ROLL, INCOMPLETES, ETC. PLEASE REFER TO THE APPROPRIATE STUDENT HANDBOOK SECTION.)

LUNCH

CAFETERIA SCHEDULE

The high school and junior high lunch period runs from 11:59 until 12:24 with seniors having first-in-line privileges.

The grade school will eat with the K-6 eating in the cafeteria from 12:20-12:50.

LUNCH COUNT

A preliminary morning lunch count is to be taken by both grade school and high school teachers and reported in Infinite Campus. An actual lunch count will be recorded as everyone passes through the lunch line.

LUNCH TICKETS

Adult meal tickets are presently \$4.00 per meal. They may be purchased from the office. ALL MEALS MUST BE PAID FOR IN ADVANCE.

MISCELLANEOUS

ASSEMBLIES

Situations may arise during the school year (i.e. assemblies, etc.) where the class schedule may have to be altered. In these instances, the administration will contact the teachers as to their preferences on how to proceed (i.e. shorten periods, drop a period, etc.). Also, all effort will be made to make the adjustments in a timely fashion.

BUS ROUTES

The Mill Iron and Hwy. 7 route (running generally north and east of town); the Ridgeway route (running generally south and east); The Chalk Butte route (running generally southwest of town)

VISITORS

We encourage parents, trustees, and interested community members to visit our school. We do ask them to observe the following guidelines:

1. Check in at the office.
2. Do not expect to confer with a teacher during instructional time.
3. Avoid visiting during the first and last two weeks of school and during testing periods.
4. Do not allow students to bring friends or visiting relatives to school unless they have permission from the classroom teacher and administration.

VOLUNTEERS

The District recognizes the valuable contributions made to the school program by members of the community who act as volunteers. District employees who work with volunteers shall follow school Policy #5430.

Volunteers with access to students are subject to a criminal background check (Policy #5122). This means they must be fingerprinted. If the volunteer does not have "regular unsupervised access" to students, a

criminal background check may not be required. The Superintendent will make this determination. Volunteers must sign a volunteer log that can be obtained in the office.

PURCHASING

PURCHASING PROCEDURES

Under law, the Board has sole authority and responsibility for all purchasing within the district; however, the mechanical functions of procurement will be delegated to the Superintendent.

Any obligation of district funds without utilization of a purchase order shall become the financial responsibility of the person having obligated the monies.

Employees are to fill out requisitions and receive approval in the form of a copy of the purchase order in advance of purchase.

RULES & CONSEQUENCES

CLASSROOM RULES AND CONSEQUENCES

Teachers are expected to formulate and post in your classroom a set of classroom rules and consequences. This should be done prior to the first day of school. If you are in doubt about appropriate rules or consequences, please check with the Superintendent before implementation.

DISCIPLINE FOR GRADES K-12 (please see attached discipline chart)

Discipline will be the responsibility of the classroom teacher. Most discipline will be handled by the classroom teacher or person on duty. Persistent problems will involve parents and the administration. If referring a student to the superintendent's office, please fill out a behavior referral form and send with the student. In-school suspension will be used for disruptive behavior. If the behavior persists, the administration will invoke the disciplinary procedure. We ask the cooperation and support of parents in our effort to provide an educational atmosphere where all students can learn and faculty can teach.

Every action produces a consequence. If the student chooses to violate a school rule, he/she is choosing to accept the consequences attached to violating that rule. In general, there are two (2) categories of consequences for violating school rules:

1. Rules and consequences shall be posted in each classroom. These rules will be enforced by each classroom teacher.
2. General rules and administrative consequences. If a student is referred to the office (because classroom consequences have been exhausted or the student has violated rules outside the classroom or because of the seriousness of the offense)-the Superintendent will enforce attached discipline chart.

SAFETY/EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

ACCIDENTS

All accidents or injuries involving students or staff, no matter how minor, are to be reported to the building office. Accidents involving students require an 'accident report' be filled out. Forms are available in the office and should be filled out in a timely fashion. Accidents involving staff members will be reported to Workers' Compensation.

FIRE SAFETY

Please acquaint yourself with the fire exits and fire alarm system. Be sure you have a drawing posted in your room that indicates the primary and secondary evacuation routes from your classroom. There will be a drill the first week of school, as per state law, and 8 other drills during the course of the year. See your red emergency binder for references on procedures and exits.

TEACHERS:

- Designate a place where all students know where to go and wait outside for school for the teacher (at least 100 feet from the building).
- In case of emergency, you and your students may seek shelter in the high school or elementary school gym. Certain circumstances will dictate the most appropriate choice.
- Should be the last one out of the classroom.
- Shut-off lights on the way out and close classroom door.
- Go over routes until ALL students know what to do and when.
- See that students move in a single file to the assigned exit. In the event that the route and/or designated exit is blocked, the teacher will give directions for the next nearest exit.
- Once outside and in your designated area check your roll to see that all students are present and accounted for. Immediately report any discrepancies to the roll to person in charge.

INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

Every effort is made to keep school systems open. Inclement weather may force us to run buses late or cancel a route, but usually we can continue to operate. Decisions about route cancellations are to be made by the driver after consultation with the Superintendent, when possible. Decisions to close the school for emergency or inclement weather reasons will be made by the Transportation Director, administration or the person designated "in charge" in his/her absence. The administration will try to contact all staff members when a cancellation occurs. In addition, the cancellation will be broadcast on KFLN 960 AM, 100.5 FM, KKRY 92.3 FM, via Facebook, the school website, and with the use of the school phone tree.

There will be months the weather will not be conducive for taking students to the playground for the normal recess periods at the elementary. The following criteria will be used in evaluating these days:

1. When the temperature drops below the zero degree mark or the wind chill is below zero, either an indoor or an abbreviated outdoor recess period will be observed.
2. During rain or hard snows the indoor recess period will be observed.
3. The teacher will also take the responsibility of keeping a student in if he or she is not feeling well, even if a note has not been sent from home on that day.
4. Notes sent by parents to allow a teacher to keep a student in at recess time should have a statement of reasons why the student is remaining indoors and the parent's signature. This should also be done on a daily basis. There may be some exceptions to this policy, and if so will be handled on an individual basis through the office.
5. If any situations that are not covered in this policy should arise, they will be discussed and handled through the Superintendent.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES / CONDITIONS

To protect children and staff from contagious illnesses, students and staff infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. Parents of a student with a communicable or contagious disease should phone the superintendent so that other students who may have been exposed to the disease can be alerted. These diseases include, but are not limited to:

Amebiasis	Hepatitis	Rubella (German Measles)
Campylobacteriosis	Influenza	Chickenpox
Lyme disease	Salmonellosis	Chlamydia

Malaria	Syphilis	Colorado Tick Fever
Measles (Rubeola)	Scabies	Diphtheria
Meningitis	Shigellosis	Gastroenteritis
Mumps	Giardiasis	Pinkeye
Tuberculosis	Hansen's disease	Ringworm of the scalp
Covid 19		

Whooping Cough (Pertussis) Streptococcal disease, invasive
For further information, see policy 3417

SCHOOL FACILITY & EQUIPMENT USAGE

BUILDING/DISTRICT OFFICE HOURS

Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. when school is in session. Staff members needing access to rooms other than their own may contact the Superintendent for key checkout procedures.

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES AND PROPERTY

School facilities are available to the community for education, civic, cultural, and other uses consistent with the public interest, when such use does not interfere with a school program or school-sponsored activities. Use of school facilities for school purposes has precedence over all other uses. Persons on school premises must abide by the district's conduct rules at all times.

Student and school-related organizations shall be granted the use of school facilities at no cost. Other organizations granted the use of the facility must complete the "Facility Use" form and shall pay appropriate fees and costs. All requests must be pre-approved by the Superintendent.

COPIER USAGE

STUDENTS SHOULD NOT BE MAKING COPIES unless they are an aide. DO NOT SEND STUDENTS TO THE OFFICE TO MAKE COPIES!

INTERNET USAGE

Do not give your password to anyone. When the teacher leaves his/her computers or classrooms, they are responsible for logging off of their computers. You are responsible for logging a student in and monitoring their access to sites. **Do not take this responsibility if you are not going to monitor them closely.**

Teachers have no expectation of privacy in any materials that are stored, transmitted, or received via the EPS electronic network or EPS computers. EPS reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store, at any time and without prior notice, any and all usage of computers, systems, networks and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage.

LIABILITY/DISCLAIMER:

Ekalaka Public Schools makes no warranties of any kind, expressed or implied, for internet service. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at each user's risk. EPS specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the Internet. *For further information, see policy 3612.*

KEY PROCEDURE

Keys are issued to staff by the Superintendent. In order to protect property, students, and staff and to ensure the building is adequately secured when no authorized personnel are present, all staff are expected to follow the following key-control procedures:

1. The duplication of keys is prohibited;
2. Keys are not to be left unattended. Avoid having keys on desks, tables, in mailboxes, unattended coat pockets, etc.

3. Keys may not be loaned to students or to individuals not employed by the district. Under no circumstance should staff provide keys to students to “run errands”, “unlock/lock” doors, etc.
4. Lost or stolen keys must be reported to the Superintendent within 24 hours of discovery of the loss or theft so that measures may be taken to protect district property. Three days will be allowed for the finding or recovery of keys before any charges are assessed;
5. Upon completion of a lost-or-stolen-key report form, presentation of the broken or damaged key(s), and submission of assessed fees, replacement keys will be issued within 72 hours;
6. Charges for lost or stolen keys will be made to the staff member to whom the key(s) have been issued.
7. All keys are to be checked in at the end of the school year. Staff may make arrangements with the Superintendent to keep their keys if a need is established.

TELEPHONE USE

Please keep in mind that the telephones are business phones and should not be tied up for personal calls (local or long distance). The school district will pay for long distance calls which are made for school purposes. Personal calls must be reversed and charged to your home phone or credit card.

VEHICLE USE

Any staff member or volunteer must have a copy of a valid driver’s license on file with the district office and must consent to a background check of their driving record before they may operate a school vehicle.

STUDENT PROCEDURES

CHILD ABUSE

A district employee who has reasonable cause to suspect that a student may be an abused or neglected child shall report such a case to the Montana Department of Family Services Centralized Intake Reporting System. All reporters will call the statewide phone number, 1-866-820-5437. The employee shall notify the Superintendent that the report has been made.

Any of the District’s employees who fail to report to the Department of Family Services Centralized Intake Reporting System known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect, or who prevent another person from reasonably doing so may be civilly liable for the damages proximately caused by such failure or prevention, and are guilty of a misdemeanor. This person will also be subject to disciplinary action, including discharge, by the Board. Ekalaka Public School Policy #5232.

CONFIDENTIALITY

As a professional educator, you are under a legal and ethical obligation to guard the confidentiality of your students. Personal information which you possess concerning a student – such as grades, test scores, etc. – may be shared with the student, his/her parent/guardian(s) and select professional staff. Acquaint yourself with state and federal law regarding the individual’s’ right to privacy.

LEGAL STUDENT NAMES

All school documents should contain the legal names of the students. It is absolutely essential that the permanent records contain the legal names of the students. To help prevent confusion, birth certificates for entering students should be presented. Immunizations records must be presented by new students who are enrolling in Ekalaka Public Schools

MEDICATION

Teachers are not to administer medication to students without prior administrative approval. Teachers are not to permit students to take medication unless a written authorization from home is provided.

All medications, except inhalers or anaphylactic reaction medication, insulin or other medication deemed necessary shall be kept in a designated locked container in the office. Under normal circumstances, absolutely NO medication (over the counter or prescription) can be kept in a student's possession during school hours. Please refer to Policy #3416.

RELEASING STUDENT INFORMATION

The Districts may release certain directory information regarding students, except that parent(s)/guardian(s) may prohibit such release. Directory information shall be limited to:

- Name
- Address
- Date & Place of Birth
- Gender
- Grade level
- Parents'/Guardians' names and addresses
- Dates of Attendance
- Academic awards, degrees and honors
- Information in relation to school-sponsored activities, organizations, and athletics
- Period of attendance in school

Before releasing any student information, including their names, be sure that the parents have approved the release by submitting the student directory release form.

STUDENT HANDBOOKS

Please acquaint yourself with the content of the student handbooks.

STUDENT RECORD ADDITIONS

When making any additions to the student permanent files, please place the new item in the front of the folder or give it to the guidance counselor for filing. The records for grades K-12 are housed in the guidance office. See the counselor for access.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

By law, you are not to leave students unsupervised. Doing so makes you and the district liable in the event that a student is harmed or property destroyed. You may also jeopardize your continued employment.

WAIVER OF FEES

If a staff member becomes aware that certain required student fees may be a financial burden and would prohibit a student from participating, they are encouraged to discuss these hardship cases with the Superintendent, who will evaluate a possible waiver on a one-on-one basis.

STUDENT SCHEDULE

STUDENT HOURS - Monday – Friday - 8:10 am to 3:45 pm

CARTER COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL BELL SCHEDULE

Regular

Period 1	8:10-9:05
Period 2	9:08-10:03
Period 3	10:06-11:01
Period 4	11:04-11:59
LUNCH	11:59-12:24

Period 5	12:27-1:22
Period 6	1:25-2:20
Period 7	2:23-3:18
Homeroom/Assembly	3:21-3:45

TRAVEL PROCEDURES

1. TRAVEL REQUEST

- a. A request for travel must be submitted to the Superintendent on a "Travel Request" form.
- b. Once the request has been approved & signed by the Superintendent, it will be forwarded to the Business office.
- c. A "Financial Report" must be completed within 5 working days of return date.

2. TRAVEL ADVANCE

- a. Travel advances can only be issued after a "Travel Request" form has been approved.
- b. Request must be received at least five (5) working days before the travel is to occur. Requests not received within this time frame will need to be claimed as a reimbursement to the employee.
- c. Travel advances are issued to individual employees. For example, if three employees are traveling together, one employee may not request an advance for 3 lunches each day of travel.

3. PER DIEM

The district has adopted per diems as the method of reimbursing staff for travel. Per diem is the allowance for lodging (excludes taxes), meals and incidental expenses (M&IE). Per diem will be computed based on time the event begins/ends, plus a reasonable travel time. Time spent for personal errands will not extend travel time to allow for additional meals and/or lodging.

***MEALS & INCIDENTAL EXPENSES**

- (a) The maximum daily allowance for meals is \$30.00 which is calculated as follows: Breakfast = \$7.00; Lunch=\$10.00 and \$13.00 for supper.
- (b) Employees are eligible for breakfast, lunch and supper per diem if departure time is by 6:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., respectively.
- (c) Only one of the three meal allowances will be provided if the travel is performed with the employee's normal working hours.
- (d) Meals included in the registration fee will be deducted from per diem.

***LODGING**

The standard rate for lodging in Montana is currently \$94.00. The school will try to secure the state rate for lodging whenever possible. Non-standard areas are established for locations whose lodging rates are higher than standard CONUS (Continental United States) rates.

- (a) Under normal circumstances, the business office will arrange for lodging to be either direct billed to the district or charged to a district issued procurement card (P-card). If the office is not given sufficient time to set up this billing, the employee will be reimbursed at CONUS rates.
- (b) All claims for lodging expense reimbursement allowed under this section must be documented by an appropriate receipt. Lodging must be reimbursed at actual cost, not to

exceed the prescribed maximum rate per day for the location involved plus taxes on the allowable cost. If lodging is not available at the CONUS rates, the Superintendent must pre-authorize the additional cost, otherwise CONUS rates will be reimbursed, regardless of actual cost.

(c) If the event gets over at 5:00 p.m. or later and there is 250 miles or greater travel distance, the district will provide for the night the meeting concludes.

(d) Employees are expected to share rooms, with a 2 person/room maximum. The Superintendent may allow for deviation from this rule, under special circumstances.

***MILEAGE**

Employees are expected to take advantage of a district owned vehicle, if possible. When the district owned vehicle is used, if sufficient time is given either the cost of fuel can be charged to a p-card or employees may estimate the cost of fuel and 80% will be advanced to them. Receipts must be attached to the financial report.

When an employee chooses to use a privately owned vehicle even though a district vehicle is available, the employee may be reimbursed only at the rate of 48.15% of the mileage rate allowed by the United States Internal Revenue Service for the current year.

When a privately owned motor vehicle is used because a district-owned vehicle is not available or because the use is in the best interest of the district, then a rate equal to the mileage allotment allowed by the United States Internal Revenue Service for the current year must be paid for the first 1,000 miles and 3 cents less per mile for all additional miles traveled within a given calendar month.

Wherever mileage is allowed to any employee, the same shall be computed according to the shortest traveled route, when such shortest route is passable.

***REGISTRATION**

Under normal circumstances, registration fees will be prepaid. If the business office has not been given sufficient time to prepare a warrant for the registration, the employee will be reimbursed the actual expense.

4. CLAIM FOR EXPENSES.

All claims for reimbursement must be turned in to the business office no more than 5 working days after the travel has occurred.

All conflict or questions (such as method of travel, per diem & mileage calculations, room sharing, driver, etc.) will be handled by the Superintendent, who will have the final determination.

TRAVEL WITH STUDENTS

The following guidelines will apply for approved school sponsored activities with students:

MEALS:

- Students are provided one meal per day. The meal allowance will be \$14.00. Any overages will be paid by the student.
- Meal stops must be made to receive meal money. This does not include convenience store or snack stops.
- Any extra meals eaten will be at the traveler's' expense. Students will be responsible for all costs over the stated meal allowance. Any costs over the allowance should be paid directly to the restaurant and not charged to the District.

- Every attempt will be made by the advisors/coaches to select eating establishments where meal money will provide an adequate menu selection.
- Individuals are responsible for gratuity. Gratuity should never be charged to the school.
- Every attempt will be made to have lunch meals prepared through the hot lunch program so that they may be taken on the bus at departure (sack lunches). Students will be charged the regular school lunch price.
- Where possible, coordination will be made with other schools for parents/booster clubs or other organizations to provide meals on a reciprocating basis.

MOTELS:

When student travel requires overnight accommodations, the office will make arrangements in advance of the group/team departing Ekalaka. In severe weather situations, poor road conditions or mechanical difficulties, arrangements may need to be made without prior knowledge.

- Motel/hotel reservations will be made on the basis of availability, appropriateness and cost.
- Rooms will be reserved to allow not more than five (5) students to a room, but in all cases, each student will be provided a bed for sleeping purposes. Not more than two (2) students per double bed will be allowed. (Ex. 5 students would have 2 double beds plus on rollaway).
- Separate accommodations for male and female students will be provided.
- If any emergency should arise on a trip (e.g., adverse road conditions, injuries or major infraction of rules), the athletic/activities director and/or Superintendent will be contacted by phone as soon as possible. Parents will then be notified by the most efficient method.

OVERNIGHT STAYS FOR ATHLETIC EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

If a tournament is held more than 100 miles away, the team may stay overnight in the host city with approval of the Superintendent.

OUT OF STATE TRAVEL:

CONUS (Continental United States) rates apply for travel beyond the 4 state regions (ND, SD, WY & MT) or with pre-authorization of the Superintendent.

Reopening Safe and Healthy Schools Best Practices

EPS Procedures in the Event of Schoolwide Closure

K-3 Learning Packets Along with Chromebooks or iPads for Online Learning

- *Folders created for each student.
- *Chromebooks or Ipads will also be sent home with students to allow for online learning
- *Two week lesson plans provided to students with all handouts, printouts, notes for parents, directions, and assignments.
- *Folders will be delivered with any materials needed such as books, workbooks, Chromebooks, Ipads etc.

4-6 Online Learning Model Using Google Classroom

- *Chromebooks and chargers sent home to students
- *A technology waiver/agreement will need to be signed by each student grades 4-6- a picture can be taken of the signed document and sent to 406-772-2010 (do not return paper copy to the school)
- *One week lessons will be provided on the Google Classroom sites for students
- *All assignments will have due dates and need to be returned on the due date unless otherwise noted

7-12 Online Learning Model Using Google Classroom

- *Chromebooks and chargers sent home to students- do not pick up at the school
- *Use of Google Classroom and Google Meets allows teachers to correspond electronically with students daily
- *Teachers will be available Mon- Thurs. 8-4 on email, phone, or video conferencing to answer questions or assist with work
- *Assignments will be posted for students on each teacher's Google Classroom site. *Assignments will have due dates and expectations are to have assignments in by the due dates assigned unless otherwise noted.

Special Education Services

- *Provided by special education teacher using "Google Meets" - video conferencing tool used through our Google account
- *Scheduled conference calls would need to be developed and completed weekly in areas services are mandated by the students IEP
- *The district will need to ensure these families have the accessibility necessary to provide these services.
- *IEP meetings will continue to be held using video conferencing/ phone conferences

Other Issues Related to Covid 19

- If a student tests positive for COVID-19, the student must stay home, parents of all individuals in the same class as the positive student will be contacted by Public Health officials, contact tracing of the individual will be performed by Public Health.

- Anyone who is considered a close contact to a person who is positive for COVID-19, will be contacted by Public Health.
- Students who were close contacts will have virtual class at the same time as the regularly-scheduled class during their 14-day quarantine period.
- Teachers who are required to quarantine, but are not sick/symptomatic, will teach from home using Google Classroom.
- Virtual classroom same time as regular schedule is an option for students who were in close contact during quarantine (14 days) for grades 7-12, grade school will have materials sent home.
- If your child is sick, please keep them home.