

**Byron Center Public Schools
Elementary School
Family/Student Handbook
2024-2025**



Brown Elementary
Countryside Elementary
Heritage Elementary
Marshall Elementary

“Helping students build success stories”

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Forward

This student handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you may have during the school year and to provide specific information about certain Board policies and procedures. This handbook contains important information that you should know. Become familiar with the following information and keep the handbook available for frequent reference. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, you are encouraged to talk to your child's teacher or the building principal.

Mission of the School

The staff of Byron Center Public School District believes that all students can learn. We commit to assuring that all our students will master and demonstrate the thinking, social, physical, emotional and creative skills needed for life-long independent learning. Our commitment to students will assure a positive learning environment with high expectations for all.

Administration Building

(616)-878-6100

Kevin Macina - Superintendent

Jeff Wierzbicki - Assistant Superintendent of Schools

Erin Tacoma Special Education Director

Scott Joseph - Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Stephanie Thelen - Curriculum Director

Vince Sturgis - Food Service Director

Toni Jones - Transportation Director

Brown Elementary Mrs. Tina Mysliwiec 8064 Byron Center Ave, SW Byron Center, MI 49315 (616) 878-6200	Countryside Elementary Ms. Cindy Viveen 8200 Eastern Ave SE Byron Center, MI 49315 (616) 878-6900	Heritage Elementary Mr. Nathan Clophus 8638 Byron Center Ave Byron Center, MI 49315 (616) 878 - 6800	Marshall Elementary Mr. Kris Vydareny 1756 64th Street SW Byron Center, MI 49315 (616) 878-6300
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SCHOOL HOURS 8:30 AM - 3:40 PM (HALF DAY 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM)

Individual schedules for breakfast and entry will be communicated by each elementary school. There is no student supervision prior to communicated times.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance Philosophy

Because school attendance is a major factor related to academic success, the students of Byron Center's Elementary Schools are expected to attend school on a regular and consistent basis. Students must be present if they intend to take full advantage of the opportunities offered to them in the classroom. Regular attendance at school teaches self-discipline and responsibility. It is the responsibility of the students, parents, staff, and administration to recognize the importance of school attendance and its impact on academic achievement.

Absences

If a student will be absent from school the parent or guardian must call the attendance line verifying their student's absence. They should include the child's name, grade, teacher's name and reason for absence.

Tardiness

School begins promptly at 8:30 AM. All students should be in their classrooms, ready to start the day at this time. Students arriving after 8:35 AM will be marked tardy. At any time, if your child is late, parents MUST sign their student into school in the main office.

Leaves or Vacations

During the course of the year, vacations are scheduled into our school calendar. As a staff, we believe it is essential for students to be in school in order to learn. It is our hope that family vacations will coincide with our pre-planned school vacations. If a family vacation (lasting over 3 school days) is unavoidably scheduled during school time, please notify the office and teacher in advance to obtain and complete a Vacation Request Form. If a student will be out of school, the teacher may assign missed work to be completed.

Other Student Absences

If possible, please plan your child's out of school activities and appointments at a time which will not conflict with school hours. Doctor and dentist appointments are recognized as excused absences. We do not encourage students to miss school for such activities as scouting, sporting events, special music lessons, etc. Work missed during all absences may be required to be made up.

BRINGING PETS TO SCHOOL

Pets are not permitted on school property. There are many children with allergies and exposure to pets could have severe consequences.

BULLYING

The school will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety, or personal degradation. This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or

athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business.

We are working with children to help them understand the definition of bullying and the differences between tattling and reporting. Bullying is any mean look, gesture, or action that hurts a person's body, feeling, friendships, reputation or property. The following gives a detailed explanation of tattling and reporting.

Tattling

- Telling an adult a problem that you could solve yourself.
- Telling an adult about a problem when you really just want your own way.
- Telling an adult about a problem when you just want to make yourself look good.
- Telling an adult about a problem because you want to get someone in trouble that you don't like.

Reporting

- Telling an adult a problem when someone is getting hurt: their body, or their feelings, or their friendships, or their reputation, or their property are being hurt.
- Telling an adult about a problem that is dangerous or destructive.

The "No" Bully Pledge

Students sign a "No" Bully Pledge at the beginning of the school year promising to be kind, caring and respectful. They will promise the following:

- I want my school to be a place where all students feel safe and treat each other with respect.
- I will not bully, tease, or put anyone down. If I hear bullying or teasing, I will tell the person to stop and tell an adult.
- I will not call anyone names, use bad language or use any act of aggression to hurt someone else.
- I will tell an adult right away if I hear anyone threaten another person.
- I will immediately tell an adult if a student brings something to school that could hurt someone.

CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION FOR THE PARENT

<p>A classroom issue/problem is to be discussed with the teacher first.</p>	<p>A student and/or parent brings a problem to the principal. The principal will confirm if this was discussed with the teacher.</p>	<p>If discussed with the teacher, the principal will meet with the teacher, student and/or parent and identify the problem, setting measurable outcomes.</p>	<p>Action will be taken by either; the teacher, student, parent, and/or principal.</p>
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CHILD ABUSE INFORMATION

Michigan State Law mandates reporting of child abuse or neglect. The law states that professional persons or delegates who are engaged in the practice of the healing arts, social services, hospital administration, psychology or psychiatry, teaching, law enforcement or regulated child care are obligated under the law to report to local welfare, police, or the county sheriff if they have reason to suspect that a child is being neglected or physically or sexually abused.

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS

Before any student may take advantage of the school's computer network and the internet, students and parents must sign an agreement which defines the conditions under which the student may participate. Failure to abide by all the terms of the agreement may lead to termination of the student's computer account and possible disciplinary action or referral to law enforcement authorities. A copy of the Byron Center Public Schools Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy can be found on our website or [click here](#) to access the page directly.

CLASS PARTIES

Elementary students have three classroom parties a year; Halloween, Holiday and Valentine's Day. Parties are planned with the assistance of the room parents.

Halloween costumes that depict violent characters or include weapons or fake blood are not acceptable.

Individual birthday parties during school hours are not permitted, but children may bring a simple treat (preferably store bought) or trinket to share with their classmates. Parents must check with their child's teacher to verify any classroom allergies.

DEVELOPMENTAL KINDERGARTEN

Byron Center Public Schools offers a Developmental Kindergarten (DK) classroom for those children who meet state entry requirements but are developmentally young for Kindergarten. The DK year will be followed by a year in Kindergarten, giving the child two years of growth before entering first grade.

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS

Our discipline procedures are based on two general goals: to provide a safe, caring and effective learning environment for all students, and to have students show respect for school, student property, and other people. Byron Center supports the utilization of Restorative Practices for community building and conflict resolution. Restorative Practices will be utilized as part of the disciplinary procedures when appropriate.

Discipline procedures include student/teacher discussion, and parent/guardian contact. In-school and/or out-of-school suspension may be assigned. Discipline and consequences are designed to motivate students to make better choices and decisions. If it becomes apparent one mode of discipline is not effective, others will be tried. The first step is, of

course, teacher contact with the parent(s)/guardian(s) involving misbehavior of a minor nature. Major discipline problems will be dealt with immediately and contact with parent/guardian made after the fact.

Certain types of behavior are never appropriate and are considered to be serious violations. The following are the most common examples of disciplinary violations. The listed penalties are “suggested guidelines.” It is understood that a lesser/greater penalty may be imposed if, in the judgment of the administration, the situation warrants. The severity of the punishment will depend upon the circumstances, intent, and the severity of the offense. The administration has the right to invoke any disciplinary measure necessary to insure the safe and positive operation of the school.

It is important to remember that the school's rules apply going to and from school, at school, on school property, at school-sponsored events, on school transportation, and at the bus stop. The school also may discipline a student for misconduct that occurs away from school, school transportation or school events if the student’s actions cause a substantial disruption to the school environment. In some cases, a student can be suspended from school transportation for infractions of school bus rules. In all cases, the school shall attempt to make discipline prompt and equitable and to have the punishment match the severity of the incident.

The following matrix will be used when determining appropriate consequences for student actions/behaviors. Student age and frequency of behavior will be factors into utilization of the levels consequence.

Elementary Consequence/Behavior Intervention Matrix

Consequence	Staff	Administration
Conference with student	X	X
Parent/Caregiver/Guardian contact	X	X
Restorative Practice (Completion of an activity to repair harm to personal relationships such as apology, classroom meeting, restorative conference/conversation etc.)	X	X
Individualized instruction (Instruction (skill building, reteach/practice of matrix/routines) specifically related to their behaviors)	X	X
Alternative Placement/Sensory Regulation (Placing the student in a different setting such as BI, Counselor, SSW, Buddy Classroom)	X	X
Loss of privilege (Removal of a benefit such as recess (supervised by assigning staff), classroom choices, technology, etc.)	X	X

Classroom Exclusion/Time Out (Exclusion from scheduled activities or instruction.)		X
Detention (Time in a specified area away from non-instructional activities/classes such as lunch and/or recess detention.)		X
In-School Suspension (ISS) (*will be determined by administration based with on the intensity and/or frequency of behavior*)		X
Out of School Suspension (OSS) (*will be determined by administration based with on the intensity and/or frequency of behavior*)		X

DRESS CODE

Byron Center Elementary Schools recognize that each student’s mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference. We will not interfere with the right of students and their parents to make decisions regarding their appearance, except when their choices interfere with the education program of our school. Please be aware that we may ask a student to change if his/her dress interferes with school work, creates disorder, or disrupts the educational program. Clothing that has suggestive words, slogans, quotations, or pictures are not considered appropriate school attire. Items that promote the use of chemicals or substances illegal for use by elementary students also should not be worn at school. Children should also be dressed appropriately for existing weather conditions. All clothing, boots, gym shoes, hats and gloves should be clearly marked with students’ first initial and last name. Thank you for being conscientious of this and feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

DRUG FREE SCHOOLS

The Byron Center School District attempts to provide a safe and healthy environment for all of the students and patrons. To that end and because the use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possessions and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful, the district complies with all provisions of the Federal Drug Free School Act.

In accordance with this federal law and Board of Education policy, the use, and possession, concealment or distribution of drugs or alcohol by students on school grounds, in school or school approved vehicles or at any school-related event is prohibited. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with due process, up to and including expulsion from school and prosecution. Compliance to these standards by students is mandatory.

The district is concerned about any student who is a victim of alcohol or drug abuse and will facilitate the process by which he/she receives help through programs and services available in the community. Non-students who violate these provisions are subject to severe penalties under this law.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell phones, tablets, or gaming devices that distract from learning must remain in backpacks during the school day and brought at the owners risk as lockers/cubbies are not locked. Smart Watches may be worn in school as long as they do not disrupt the learning environment. Personal communication devices are not permitted to be used for communication through text, email or calls during the school day. In the event students need to communicate with home, school staff will assist and calls/emails will be sent from school.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

If the school must be closed, or the opening delayed, because of inclement weather or other conditions, the District will notify local radio and television stations. Notifications will also go out from the District's School Messenger system about closing and delays.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

All enrollments begin at the BCPS Administration Building. Please contact (616) 878-6100 for initial questions and appointments.

At the time of registration, the following information must be provided to school officials:

1. **Two (2) proofs of residency in the Byron Center School District as follows:**

One of the following:

- current lease agreement (including the page with the landlord and tenant signatures)
- mortgage statement (within the last month)
- city assessor's tax statement (current year)

AND, one:

- current utility bill (within last month)

2. **Copy of your child's vaccination record.**

3. **Parent/Guardian's driver's license.**

4. **The child's state-certified birth certificate.**

5. **Court documents if applicable (guardianship, foster care, etc.)**

If you reside with a Byron Center resident in a home/apartment/mobile home, you will need to provide the following:

- Notarized affidavit of residence, form available at the Administration Office.
- Owner's driver's license and two (2) proofs of their residence as listed above.
- If parent/student names are not listed on the lease, a statement of landlord form is required.

Homeless students who meet the Federal definition of homeless may enroll and will be under the direction of the District Liaison for Homeless Children with regard to enrollment procedures.

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of this district to provide an equal education opportunity for all students. Any person who believes that she/he has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin, while at school or a school activity should immediately contact the School District's Compliance Officer at (616) 878-6121.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

School Records: FERPA requires schools, as a condition of federal funding, to honor a parent's or eligible students (18 years or older) request to review and inspect the student's educational records. This provision applies to non-custodial parents as well. Parent/guardian must contact building principal for an appointment.

Directory Information: Directory information includes: student's name, address, phone, e-mail address, and class list by teacher. This information is usually given to newspapers when they print stories on student accomplishments, used in district publications and provided to parent-teacher committees. Parents/Guardians may refuse to allow the district to disclose any or all of such "directory information" by contacting the principal or indicating their wishes on the Student Demographic Information Sheet provided at the start of school.

Parents/guardians will be asked annually to give permission for their child's photograph to be used for any school and/or newspaper publication. This opt out would include the school yearbook unless otherwise specified by the parent/guardian.

FIELD TRIPS

Occasionally, your child's teacher will extend classroom instruction and activities through field trips. Before going on a field trip, teachers will send notification to parents informing them of the trip. All students must have a signed Field Trip Permission Form in the teacher's possession before they will be allowed to participate in any field trips. If sack lunches are required, please do not send beverages in glass containers. All chaperones are REQUIRED to fill out a background check at least two weeks before the scheduled field trip day.

Request for permission to attend field trips within the district is also located on the Student Demographic Information Sheet completed in the fall. You will be made aware of any district field trips by school newsletters.

Siblings are not allowed to ride school buses on field trips due to guidelines set up by the district insurance company.

HARASSMENT

Public Act 241 of 2011 "Matt's Safe School Law"

Byron Center Public Schools is in complete compliance with the above public act. Harassment of students is prohibited and will not be tolerated. It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school sponsored activities whether on or off school property.

Harassment is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical or emotional well being. This would include harassment based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race,

color, national origin, religion, height, weight, sexual orientation, marital status or disability. The policy, however, is not limited to these legal categories and includes any harassment that would negatively impact students. Every student should, and every staff member **MUST** report any situation that they believe to be improper harassment of a student. If the investigation finds harassment occurred it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. Retaliation against any person for complaining about harassment, or participating in a harassment investigation, is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment. Intentionally false harassment reports, made to get someone in trouble, are also prohibited. Retaliation and intentionally failing to report a witnessed harassment may result in disciplinary action.

It is a violation of law and of school rules for any student or staff member to take any of the following actions toward another student or staff member, or any person associated with the school district while on district property or at any school related events, on or off district property:

Student Harassment Policy

Harassment of a student(s) by other students or any member of the staff is contrary to the Board of Education's commitment to provide a physically and psychologically safe environment in which to learn. and may be in violation of federal or state law. Anyone found to have violated this policy and or the Code of Conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion from school.

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been harassment, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, it should be reported and the administration will determine the appropriate course of action.

Here are the definitions:

- submission to such unwelcomed conduct or communication is made either an explicit or implicit condition of utilizing or benefiting from the services, activities, or programs of the School District;
- submission to, or rejection of, the unwelcomed conduct or communication is used as the basis for a decision to exclude, expel or limit the harassed student in the terms, conditions or privileges of the School district;
- the unwelcomed conduct or communication interferes with the student's education, creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities. This may include racial slurs, mocking behavior, or other demeaning comments.

Sexual Harassment

A. Verbal: Written or verbal sexual innuendos, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, or threats.

B. Nonverbal: Placing sexually suggestive objects, pictures, electronic communications or graphic commentaries in the school environment or making sexually suggestive or insulting gestures, sounds, leering, whistling, etc.

C. Physical: Threatened, attempted; or actually unwanted bodily contact, including but

not limited to the following: patting, pinching, pushing the body, or coerced sexual intercourse.

Gender/Ethnic/Religious/Disability/Height/Weight/ Harassment

A. Verbal: Written or spoken innuendoes, comments, jokes, insults, threats, or disparaging remarks concerning another person's gender, national origin, religious beliefs, etc. or conducting a "campaign of silence" toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person, associated with the District by refusing to have any form of social interaction with the person.

B. Nonverbal: Placing objects, pictures, or graphic commentaries in the school environment or making insulting or threatening gestures.

C. Physical: Any intimidating or disparaging action such as hitting or spitting on another person. Any student who believes that he/she is the victim of any of the above actions or have observed such actions taken by another student, staff member, or teacher, administrator, or counselor should contact our district office; @ 616-878-6100, and then take the following steps:

- If the alleged harasser is a student, staff member, or other person associated with the district other than the student's principal, the affected student should, as soon as possible after the incident, contact the principal or assistant principal.
- If the alleged harasser is the student's principal, the affected student should, as soon as possible after the incident, contact the assistant superintendent.
- The student must submit a report in writing and sign it. If the report is made in person or by telephone, the student must follow up with a signed report within two school days. The reporting student should provide the name of the person(s) he/she believes to be responsible for the harassment and the nature of the harassing incident(s).
- The report shall be investigated in a timely and confidential manner. While a charge is under investigation, no information will be released to anyone who is not involved with the investigation, except as may be required by law or in the context of a legal or administrative proceeding. No one involved will discuss the subject outside of the investigation.
- If the investigation reveals that the complaint is valid, prompt, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken immediately to prevent the continuance of the harassment or its recurrence. Discipline may include expulsion, suspension, and verbal or written warning, restriction of privileges (extra and/or co-curricular).

All students are expected to act responsibly, honestly, and with the utmost candor whenever they present harassment allegations or charges against fellow students, a staff member, or others associated with the district. Some forms of sexual harassment of a student by another student may be considered a form of child abuse, which will require that the student abuser be reported to the proper authorities. Any criminal acts taken at or related to the school will be reported to law enforcement officials as well as disciplined by the school. It is not considered double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime) when school rules and the law are violated.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Parent involvement is vital to the total growth of your child and provides a valuable link between home and school learning. Homework assignments vary from grade to grade and from teacher to teacher. However, the purpose of these assignments is to reinforce and extend your child's academic experience beyond the classroom.

Further, regularly assigned and monitored homework tasks serve to help build students' study skills and habits, as well as creating a sense of personal responsibility for the learner's own education.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Each student should have the immunizations required by law or have an authorized waiver. If a student does not have the necessary shots or waivers, the principal may remove the student or require compliance with a set deadline. This is for the safety of all students and in accordance with state law. Any questions about immunizations or waivers should be directed to the school Administrative Assistant.

INJURIES, ILLNESSES, AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Our schools will do our best to keep you informed if your child is injured or becomes ill during the school day. We may call and ask that you pick up your child if we see any of the following:

- Elevated temperature
- Unknown skin rash or open sores
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Earache or sore throat
- Redness, irritation or discharge from the eyes
- Head lice suspected
- Persistent cough or runny nose

Please plan to keep your child out of school if signs of severe illness are shown. **We ask that your child be free from fever and/or vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school.**

LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

Students are encouraged to take library books home to read from the school's Media Center. Lost or damaged books are charged to the parents of the involved students. Any student with an outstanding book fine at the end of the school year may not be allowed to check out library books the following year.

LOST AND FOUND

Students who have lost items should check in the lost and found and may retrieve their items. Students are encouraged to mark all personal items with their name. Unclaimed items will be given to charity with advance notice.

If items are left on a bus, check with the Transportation Department at 878-6496.

Students are encouraged not to bring valuables to school. The school is not responsible for lost or broken items that students bring to school.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Limited proficiency in the English language should not be a barrier to equal participation in the instructional or extra-curricular programs of the district. It is, therefore, the policy of this District that those students identified as having limited English proficiency will be provided additional support and instruction to assist them in gaining English proficiency and in accessing the educational and extra-curricular program offered by the District. Parents should contact their principal to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs offered by the District.

MEAL SERVICE

The School participates in the The Michigan School Meals program which is state funded and allows school districts and local education agencies participating in the U.S. Department of Agriculture School Nutrition Programs to provide students with one free breakfast and one free lunch daily. Students may also bring their own lunch to school to be eaten in the School's cafeteria.

If your child has an allergy to milk or other foods, a note from their doctor is required to make the necessary adjustments to their meal. There is a BCPS Board approved form which parents can have their doctor fill out and sign. This form must be turned in to the school office at the beginning of the school year. It is not necessary to have a new form filled out every year if the allergy does not change. It is the responsibility of the parents to inform the school if their child is no longer allergic.

MEDICATION POLICY

Byron Center School Board Policy states that other than bandaging of minor cuts and bruises, no medication, including aspirin, ointments, cold tablets, etc. shall be administered to students without written instructions on a form provided by the school, signed by the parent or guardian and a physician. The medication must be provided and delivered to the office by the parent. Students that require prescription medications administered during the school day need to have a medication form on file signed by a physician before medications can be administered. Prescription medications need to be in a prescription bottle, with the prescription dose clearly stated. Please call or stop by the main office for more information and the required medical form.

NON CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES and HEAD-LICE

Please report all communicable diseases to the office. Head Lice is considered a communicable disease. If your child has head lice, they should be treated with a special shampoo. Please inform the school if head lice are discovered so further problems may be eliminated.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Fall conferences are scheduled early in the school year to provide the opportunity for parents and teachers to work together as a team in coordinating an appropriate learning plan for each student. If your child has exhibited a learning or behavior problem, early conferencing may provide the opportunity to remediate before major problems occur. Conferences are scheduled again in the spring so you can be kept informed of your child's progress. Staff members will coordinate conference times and you will be notified of specific day(s) and time(s) in advance. It is imperative that conferences be limited to 15 minutes to accommodate all parents. The district tries to limit one conference per family in the fall and the spring.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All children are scheduled for weekly Physical Education classes. Unless excused by a physician, all students are expected to participate. For maximum safety and protection of the gym floor, gym shoes ARE REQUIRED for each student. An extra pair should remain at school and be used for Physical Education classes only.

PROHIBITED ITEMS AT SCHOOL

The following are NOT permitted at school or on the school grounds:

- **Weapons:** Firearms, knives, or any object that could be used as a weapon or any sharp tools that could cause harm.
- **Drugs and Alcohol:** Including tobacco products and vaping devices.
- **Inappropriate Media:** Magazines, books, or digital content in violation of the school's/district's policy.
- **Toys and Trading Cards:** Items that may cause disputes or distractions among students.
- **Certain Foods:** Due to allergies or school policies, some foods may be restricted..
- **Dangerous Materials:** Chemicals, matches, lighters, or any hazardous substances.

RECESS

Supervision is provided during recess. Students will remain in the building during severe weather and if the wind-chill is below 0 degrees Fahrenheit. Discretion will be used by the office personnel for unique weather conditions. All students will participate in outdoor recess except in cases of medical conditions which prohibit them from doing so. A physician's note must be on file in the office regarding the medical condition.

DK-2 Students are required to wear coats/jackets if the temperature is below 50 degrees (3rd and 4th grade students will be encouraged to do the same). During winter months, students are required to stay on the blacktop surfaces if they do not have boots and snow pants.

RELEASE OF EDUCATIONAL RECORDS

The school is required to maintain records (CA60) on all students. Information included in these records may not be released to a third party without the permission of the parents.

Parents have the right to review these records according to the Byron Center policy and state law. If a student transfers to another school district, records will be sent at the new district's request

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be distributed to Elementary students after the end of each trimester. The last report card will be mailed out on the last day of school.

REVIEW OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Parents have the right to review any instructional materials being used in the school. Any parent who wishes to review materials or observe instruction must contact the principal prior to coming to the school.

SAFETY DRILLS

The school complies with all safety laws and will conduct drills in accordance with State law. Specific instructions on safety procedures will be provided to students by their teachers who will be responsible for safe, prompt, and orderly protocols.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

The classroom teacher will handle distribution and control of textbooks and school materials. There will be reasonable limits set on the quantity of materials that will be distributed to each student. Parents will be responsible for replacement of lost or damaged school-owned property.

SPECIAL EDUCATION and AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT - SECTION 504

Byron Center Public Schools provides a variety of special education programs for students identified as having a disability defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A student may access special education services through the proper evaluation and placement procedure.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) requires the school to ensure that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals.

Students with disabilities may be served within the regular education program with an accommodation plan developed by school staff. Parents who believe their child may have a disability that substantially limits the child's ability to function properly in school should contact their school's administrator.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM SCHOOL

School Bus Policy

Responsibility Of Parents

- To make sure that their child(ren) arrive at the bus stop in the morning 5 minutes before the scheduled time.
- To provide necessary protection for their child(ren) when going to and from the

bus stop. To accept joint responsibility with school authorities for proper conduct of their child(ren) on the bus and at the bus stop.

- To be home and visible when lower elementary students return home from school. Any student in 4th grade or younger should not be home without supervision. Kindergarten students will not be dropped off without a visible sign of an adult at the bus drop off location.

Responsibility Of Riders

- To occupy the seat assigned by the driver and to refrain at all times from moving around while the bus is in motion.
- To stay seated in the bus seat facing forward.
- To observe classroom conduct (except for ordinary conversation), while getting on or off and while riding the bus.
- To cooperate and obey the driver cheerfully and to report promptly to the school official when instructed to do so by the driver.
- To be ready to board the bus on schedule. The bus driver is responsible for the maintenance of his/her schedule and cannot wait for tardy pupils. Students must arrive at the bus stop at least 5 minutes but no more than 10 minutes early.
- Students are prohibited from taking photos or videos on school buses

Safety For Riders

- At all times, stay off the traveled roadway while waiting for a bus.
- Stand at least 10-15 feet from the road.
- Do not push or shove.
- Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before attempting to get on or off.
- Leave the bus only at the consent of the driver.
- Enter or leave the bus only at the front door, after the bus has come to a stop, except in an emergency.
- Keep hands and head inside the bus and stay seated at all times.
- Inform driver when absence is expected from school.
- Report to the driver at once any damage to the bus that is observed.
- Help keep the bus clean/sanitary and orderly. No eating on the bus.
- Cross the traveled highway, if necessary, after leaving the bus in the following manner:
 - Make certain the bus is stationary.
 - On alighting, go about ten feet in front of the bus so you can see the driver in the window and wait for the proper signal for crossing. (yellow paddle)
 - Upon signal from the driver, look to both right and left and proceed across the highway in front of the bus.
 - Walk, do not run, in front of the bus when crossing the highway.
- Normally, all students are required to ride on a certain bus as assigned by the Transportation Department. Students are not allowed to ride a different bus home with a friend. Exceptions to this will be handled as follows:

- Students eligible for transportation will be picked up and returned home or at a permanent babysitter's residence (within their home school area) only.
- Any student riding a transfer bus during elementary bus runs are required to remain on the bus to their designated drop off location.
- Bus drivers have attended classes conducted by the State, and they know the regulations and procedures to be followed.
- Bus routes and bus stops are such that they guarantee the safest and most economical operation. Students may ride bicycles or scooters to school. These must be parked in the racks provided by the school and should be locked when not in use.

Discipline Expected When Misbehavior Occurs

No student may conduct himself or herself in a manner that jeopardizes the safe operation of the bus. Any distraction or disturbance, which draws the driver's attention from the road, could result in an accident causing injury and possible death to other students.

Thoughtless action by students can cause accidents. The driver's authority on the bus is absolute. Thus, disturbances on buses will be handled according to the severity of the act and the age of the student and may result in suspension of the privilege of riding the bus.

The process of bus discipline may be as follows:

1. Verbal warning by bus driver.
2. Assigned seat.
3. Discipline slip given to student, which must be signed by parent and returned to driver. Driver will call the parents.
4. Second discipline slip given to student. Principal will make contact with student and parent.
5. Third discipline slip - automatic three (3) day suspension from bus. Driver/transportation director will notify the parent before suspension takes place and notify the principal. Principal will facilitate a conference between the driver, student, parent and principal if necessary.
6. Additional discipline slips beyond third - transportation director will decide long-term suspension.

NOTE: Severe cases of discipline--malicious destruction of property, fighting, smoking, disrespect of the bus driver, etc., --may result in immediate suspension from the bus.

Video Surveillance On School Busses

The Board of Education has approved the installation of video capability on school buses to monitor student behavior. If a student misbehaves on a bus and his/her actions are recorded, the video may be submitted to the principal and may be used as evidence of the misbehavior. Since these videos are considered part of a student's record, they can be viewed only in accordance with Federal law.

If you have any questions, please contact Toni Jones, Transportation Director, at

(616) 878-6496.

Bicycles (Or Scooters)

Students may ride bicycles or scooters to school. These must be parked in the racks provided by the school and should be locked when not in use.

STANDARDIZED TESTS

Every year, Byron Center Elementary 3rd and 4th grade students take state tests in the Spring. The test results help teachers and parents see how individual students are progressing in academic areas. Results also help school staff and review committees evaluate what is being taught and how effective that instruction has been.

Parents will be advised in advance as to exact testing dates.

STUDENT PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF

Schedules for children who are being dropped off in the morning before school will be communicated by each school and students should be dropped off in the school's designated drop-off area. There is no supervision before this time.

If your child needs to be dismissed early from school, a parent or authorized person should report to the office to pick up the child. Students will only be released to those named as an emergency contact by the parent. Students will only be released to those 18 years or older. This procedure is strictly enforced for the safety and protection of the student.

The office staff will ask for identification from anyone that is not recognized by the office personnel. The person picking up the student must sign them out on the appropriate form. Any student coming in late must be brought into the office and signed in before going to the classroom. Please remember to park in the designated area.

Parents should send a note or an email to the child's teacher and office if their child will be picked up at any time during the day or at the end of the school day. A call must be made to the school office no later than 2:30 PM if there is a change in your student's dismissal plan.

STUDENT PLACEMENT ASSIGNMENTS

Classes and teachers are determined by the principal with input from grade level teachers. Every possible effort will be made to place your child in their home school. Any questions or concerns about the assignment should be discussed with the principal.

STUDENT SALES

No student is permitted to sell any item or service in school without the approval of the principal. Violation of this may lead to disciplinary action. The Board will permit student fund raising by students in the school, on school property, or at any school-sponsored event only when the profit is to be used for school purposes or for an activity connected with the schools.

THREAT ASSESSMENTS

Student safety is a top priority for all students in Byron Center Public Schools. To ensure this, we have implemented a threat assessment process that will be utilized when students demonstrate behavior that threatens the safety of themselves and/or others. The threat assessment process may include interviews with the student who expressed the threat, school staff, and classmates as well as a public source social media review to determine if the student in question is a threat to themselves or others. When threats occur, portions of the threat assessment process are entrusted to Kent ISD staff. Byron Center Public Schools identifies Kent ISD as school officials for purposes of conducting or collaborating in student threat assessments. Byron Center Public Schools also works in conjunction with the Kent County Sheriff's Office, when necessary, in the threat assessment process.

TOBACCO USE POLICY

The Byron Center School Board approved a Tobacco Use Policy for the district. The policy prohibits the use of tobacco on district premises, in district vehicles, and in all school buildings owned and/or operated by the district, 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Possession or use of tobacco in any form on school grounds or school-sponsored events will result in a suspension from school. This includes tobacco, vapes, and "look-alikes."

TRUANCY POLICY

Your child's attendance is very important to us. The Kent County Truancy Office has established guidelines for schools to work with families of students who are considered Chronically Absent/Tardy. The County considers students who miss (or are tardy) more than 10% of school days Chronically Absent. Schools will make contact with families of students who meet this threshold and will problem solve on an individual basis. This may include a referral to the Kent County Truancy Office if attendance issues persist.

VISITORS

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit our schools. For the safety of everyone, it is required that all visitors sign in and sign out at the office. Any visitor found in the building without a pass shall be asked to report to the main office. If you wish to meet with a member of the staff please call or email for an appointment prior to coming to the school in order to schedule a mutually convenient time.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

There are many opportunities available to assist the school in better serving the needs and interests of our students. While the teacher is responsible for the actual technical instruction, parent volunteers can contribute much to children's learning and welfare. Contact the classroom teacher or the school office if you are interested. All volunteers are required to complete a background check before working with students. A background check form can be picked up in the school office or accessed electronically by contacting the main office.

WEAPON FREE SCHOOL ZONE

Byron Center Public Schools is concerned and interested in protecting the safety and welfare of students, employees and visitors. School property is best utilized, in the educational process, in the absence of threats to the physical well-being and safety by individuals possessing weapons and/or dangerous weapons.