

# Murray Lake Elementary Parent/Student Handbook

2015-2016



Working Together to:  
Achieve Academic Excellence,  
Build Self Esteem, and  
Care for Others.

**Brent Noskey, Principal**

3275 Alden Nash Ave NE  
Lowell, MI 49331  
[www.lowellschools.com](http://www.lowellschools.com)

Phone: 616-987-2750  
Attendance: 616-987-2775  
Fax: 616-987-2761

Non-Discrimination Policy  
The Lowell Area School District does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin,  
sex, age or disability in its programs and activities.

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**Murray Lake Elementary School Staff**

**Principal**

Brent Noskey

**Administrative Assistant**

Julie Simmons

**Office Assistants**

Alice Bush  
Cathy Noffke

**Teachers**

Kindergarten Karla Byrne, Maria McGovern, Amy Pike  
First Grade Nancy Breuker, Karen Eldridge, Denise Washburn  
Second Grade Lori Cyrocki, Kristin Manske, Nancy Russell  
Third Grade Susan Day, Diane Titcher, Sue Wilterink  
Fourth Grade Julie Fuss, Stuart Kohl, Robin Picarazzi  
Fifth Grade Paul Jacobus, Ausma Pupel, Daniel Wright

**Educational Support Services**

Megan Pulvermacher - School Psychologist Pat Sinen - Occupational Therapist  
Cortney Duffner - Social Worker Jacqui Farrington - Speech Therapist  
Sue Gordon - Interventions Coordinator Brooke Culver - Resource Room

**Specials Teachers**

Nicole Bosco - Art Jacquelyn Fliehm - Music  
Lori Coffman - Art Brent Steele - Physical Education

**Support Staff**

Ruby Baker - Food Service Sara Ponchaud - Food Service  
Paula Briggs - Intervention Asst. Kim Miles - Paraprofessional  
Dianna Boston-Meijer - Intervention Asst. Heidi Organek - Paraprofessional  
Nancy Dood Tammy Petersen, Paraprofessional  
Janet Fabis - Paraprofessional Kris Rickert - Paraprofessional  
Teresa Farley - Individual Needs Para Misty VanTimmeren - Paraprofessional  
Patti Harreld - Media Center Larry Wenger - Custodian

**Central Office Administration**

**(616) 987-2500**

Gregory Pratt - Superintendent  
John Zielinski - Chief Financial Officer  
Mari Price - Director of Special Education

**Board Of Education Members**

Jim Turner - President Brian Krajewski - Vice-President Pat Nugent - Secretary  
Maureen Fleet - Treasurer Gary Blough - Trustee Laurie Kuna - Trustee  
Tom Kaywood - Trustee

### Accident Insurance

LAS District does not pay for any type of health or accident insurance for injuries incurred by your child at school. As a service to our students and families, LAS makes a student accident insurance policy available for purchase for your child at a very nominal cost. Information and an application form are available at the beginning of the school year.

### Attendance/Tardy

Call 24 hours a day at (616) 987-2775

Please call the attendance line whenever your child is absent (even if the teacher is aware of the absence). Call this 24-hour attendance line **by 9:00 am** each day your child is absent.

All students are required to be in school regularly and on time unless prevented by illness. Please make every effort to arrange appointments during non-school hours. It is important that children learn the value of prompt and regular attendance and establish positive patterns at an early age.

**When students arrive after 8:40 am, they must sign in at the office.**

We will be working with the Kent Intermediate School District to monitor attendance and tardiness. If either becomes excessive, a truancy referral will be placed with the Kent Intermediate School District. Warning letters will precede a truancy report.

### Birthdays/Holidays/Special Events

We realize the importance of birthdays, holidays and special events recognition to your children. Celebrations with friends are special and need to take place after school hours. Elaborate recognitions may become disruptive and result in students feeling left out. Children are always welcome to bring in a small treat for their special day, being mindful of student allergies. Flowers, balloons or other delivery items cause an educational disruption and are not allowed to be transported on school buses.

### Bullying

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

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

- D. causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

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

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

**Bus Transportation**  
**(616) 987-2540 Fax 987-2544**

To ensure our commitment to excellence on the roadways with your students, we encourage parents to become educated on our Transportation Policies & Rules. Please take time to review this information and share it with your student.

**Bus Rider Rules**

- Respect your driver, others and self
- Be on time
- No eating - No smoking - No pop - No gum on the bus
- Remain seated while bus is in motion
- Keep head, arms, and hands inside windows
- Be courteous! Profanity is prohibited
- Obey drivers' orders respectfully
- Drivers are authorized to *assign seats*
- Individual drivers may make additional rules as needed for their bus.
- Students must go directly into school or to their assigned areas after leaving the bus.
- Students must be quiet at railroad crossings

**Bus Stop Safety Rules**

- Never talk to strangers - especially strangers in vehicles.
- Students should report to their parents, bus driver or school officials any suspicious vehicle or people.
- Always have a second house or place to go if there is a problem at a bus stop.
- Children should walk in pairs if at all possible.
- Students should be at their stop a reasonable time prior to their buses scheduled arrival times, but not earlier than 5 minutes before scheduled bus arrival.
- Parents should know their students' bus number and bus times.
- No horse play while in line at the bus stop - no running, shoving, etc.
- Stay off private property.
- Adults, please be alert to inappropriate student behavior or suspicious activities near your bus stop and report them to the police or school officials.

### **School Bus Regulations**

- Use a tote bag with your student's name to carry papers, lunches, shoes, etc.
- Names should be on all items to help return these items to students when left on the bus.
- If we are making a stop where your student is the only rider, please call the Transportation Office and let us know if they will NOT BE RIDING in the morning, or if you will be picking them up from school.

### **No "EXTRA RIDER" Policy**

It is the policy of Lowell Area Schools to allow only those students assigned to a bus route to ride that bus. This helps to assure that each rider gets to the proper school in the morning and to the correct location in the afternoon. Exceptions will be permitted only for a necessary change in Day-Care provider or for a **family emergency**. A parent or legal guardian **must first** contact the Transportation Office at 616-987-2540, notifying us of the emergency, before any transportation change will be permitted. It is a good idea for parents or guardians to follow up with a note to the driver as well.

### **Calendar**

September 2	First Day of School for Students
November 21	Half Day School AM only for Students (PM Staff Records)
November 26-28	Thanksgiving Break (No School for Students and Staff)
December 22 - January 2	Christmas Break (No School for Students and Staff)
January 6	Classes Resume
January 19	Martin Luther King Day (No School for Students and Staff)
February 16	Mid-Winter Break (No School for Students and Staff)
March 6	Half Day School AM only for Students (PM Staff Records)
April 3 - April 10	Spring Break (No School for Staff and Students)
April 13	Staff Professional Development (No School for Students)
May 25	Memorial Day (No School for Staff and Students)
June 5	Half Day AM only (Last Day) of School for Students (PM Staff)

### **Cell Phones**

Students may carry a cell phone for emergencies. Phones may not be used during the school day without permission of the classroom teacher. If used without permission or in a non-emergency situation, the phone will be taken away by a staff member and an adult family member must pick it up in the school office.

### **Child Care Program/YMCA**

**(616) 855-9571**

Hours: 6:30 a.m. to 8:40 a.m. and 3:33 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. We are fortunate to have the Lowell YMCA providing children with a safe, well-supervised and developmentally-appropriate program for those hours before and after school. The childcare program is located in Room C100 (main hallway, right of lobby).

## Code of Conduct

This section of the handbook describes the following:

1. School Climate
2. Character Education
3. Student Discipline Plan

These three areas work together to create a safe, happy and productive school environment for all.

1. School Climate is a priority of our school. A positive school climate focuses on self-concept and encourages the staff and students to act in positive ways. It is believed that as students learn concepts and behaviors that make them happier, healthier and more responsible, the school will then take on those same characteristics.

2. Our Character Education program is called Character Counts! It emphasizes six "Pillars of Character" that are practiced throughout the year. Character is a combination of traits that defines each person as an individual. The development of character traits directs actions, choices and the path one takes in life.

### Character Counts! Calendar of Character Traits:

September -Character  
October - Responsibility  
November - Respect  
December - Caring  
January - Trustworthiness  
February - Fairness  
March - Citizenship  
April - Making Good Decisions  
May - Sharing our Learning

3. Our Student Discipline Plan includes the following general school expectations:

- Follow directions the first time they are given.
- No gum chewing, except when approved by classroom teacher for testing or other purposes.
- Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
- Use appropriate language, volume and tone.
- Treat all school property and the property of others with respect.
- Leave all dangerous items at home (toys that represent weapons).
- Respect others: No teasing, name-calling or bullying.
- Students' cell and/or camera phones can be brought to school, but can only be used in emergency situations. Phones should be left off during the school day. If phones become a disruption to the educational process they will be confiscated. Parents must then come to school to collect the phone.
- It is highly recommended that video games/MP3 players be left at home. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items.



## Playground Expectations:

Follow all general school expectations.

1. Remain within the designated area.
2. Share equipment and take turns.
3. Be courteous and avoid interferences with others' activities.
4. Safety first at all times.
  - a. Leave rocks and other dangerous objects alone.
  - b. Play tag on the ground only, not on equipment.
  - c. Refrain from playing rough on the playground.
5. Line up quietly and cooperatively when the whistle blows and the flag is waved.
6. Show pride by picking up litter from our playground.
7. Do not eat on the playground.
8. Settle differences peacefully and respectfully

## Cafeteria Expectations:

1. Follow all general school expectations.
2. Be courteous and use a conversational tone at all times.
3. You must stay in the cafeteria for a minimum of ten minutes (refers to lunch only).
4. Raise your hand to be dismissed by a student supervisor.
5. Leave a clean table and eating area.
6. Go to your locker and then directly to recess (refers to lunch only).
7. No loitering in hallways.
8. No returning to classrooms without a pass from the teacher.

## Steps to Handle Misbehavior

The classroom teacher is directly responsible for student discipline. Ideal discipline is self-controlled and self-directed by the student. If problems do arise, the following procedures are general guidelines toward solving them. (Refer to the incident report below).

1. The first step in correcting misbehavior is discussion between the child and the supervisor/teacher. Depending on the severity, the adult may decide to contact the parents and discuss the concern with them as well as the child. The teacher will always be notified of student misbehavior incidences occurring outside the classroom.
2. If the misbehavior continues after the informal conference, the adult issues an incident report. The adult will explain the report to the student outlining what corrective action needs to be taken. The student is responsible for returning the form the next school day with an adult family member's signature. Failure to return slip may result in lunch-recess detention.
3. A conference with parent(s) will be arranged if the problem continues.
4. After three incident reports, or when the offense is severe, the student will be referred to the office. Parents will be contacted and the student will be assigned an appropriate consequence related to the offense.

5. If a problem continues after exhausting the above options, a LAST resort may be to suspend a student from school per Lowell Area Schools Board of Education policy.

Administrative discretion will be used when dealing with severe behavioral issues.

Incident Report - Below is an example of an incident report. This report may be used to communicate to parents regarding ongoing or severe behaviors. If you get an incident report, it must be discussed with your child, signed and returned to school the following school day.

Incident Report  
Lowell Elementary School

\*Trustworthiness \*Respect \*Responsibility \*Fairness \*Caring \*Citizenship

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Location of offense \_\_\_\_\_ Reported/Observed by: \_\_\_\_\_

REASON FOR REFERRAL (Give explanation and circle all that apply)

Disruptive behavior	Hitting/tripping/pushing/kicking	Weapons
Bullying/teasing/name calling	Defying authority	Sexual Harassment
Profanity/obscene gestures	Violation of safety procedures	Destructive
Rude/discourteous	Stealing	Forgery
Lying	Disruption of the educational process	Other _____

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Steps taken (check all that apply)

Met with student   
  Met with other involved students   
  Conflict Wheel   
  Recovery  
 Phoned parents   
  Teacher/parent meeting   
  Principal/parent meeting   
  Other (explain)

Comments/Student accountability: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Signature and title of adult dealing with incident report \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Communication & Teacher Contact Procedure**

We believe that cooperation and collaboration between parents and school staff is vital if the school is to function in the best interest of your child. You are the expert regarding your child. Part of this cooperation must include 'open and two-way' lines of communication. You have an obligation to let us know of concerns, questions and ideas you have regarding your child, or the school as a whole. You may call the office and leave a voicemail message for the teacher or e-mail them at: Teacher first initial last name @ lowellschools.com (for example: [keldridge@lowellschools.com](mailto:keldridge@lowellschools.com)). You can also access teacher email at the Lowell Schools web site [www.lowellschools.com](http://www.lowellschools.com). (Select Schools, Murray Lake Elementary, Staff Directory)

If you wish to contact your child's teacher, please call school before or after class time (8:20 a.m. - 8:35 a.m. or after 3:35 p.m.).

**If you have questions or concerns about a situation, please follow this course of action. By following this procedure, your questions and concerns about school-related matters can and will be resolved.**

1. First, discuss your question or concern with your child's teacher.

2. If you then feel you have not received a satisfactory answer or solution, contact the school principal.
3. If the principal does not resolve the matter to your satisfaction, the next step is a meeting with the superintendent.
4. The final step, if necessary, is to request an appearance before the Lowell Board of Education. You must notify the superintendent if you wish to address the Board of Education.

### Dismissal

If there will be a change to your child's end-of-day routine, please send a note to your child's teacher. We realize that situations occur throughout the day that may require a change to your child's routine. In this instance please call the office before 3:00 pm so we can get the message to your child's teacher. Please communicate bus changes to the Transportation Department (987-2540) as well.

Classes dismiss at 3:33 pm for all students. When picking up your child, we ask that you wait in the main lobby and the teacher will escort your child to you. This prevents congestion and having students being distracted unnecessarily while teachers may be offering last-minute instructions and reminders. Classroom teachers will also escort students to their busses.

Parents meeting their child outside may pull up along the curb to wait for students to be dismissed. Parents who are entering the building to meet their child must park in the parking lot area before entering the building.

### Dress Code

We encourage a high standard of dress, grooming and cleanliness. Fire Safety Regulations require that shoes be worn at all times. During the times of the year when boots should be worn, each child must have a pair of shoes to wear in the building. Your child will also need gym shoes to participate in gym class. Slippery dress shoes pose a hazard, especially on the playground and on gym floors.

Students are required to adhere to the following dress requirements:

- Students shall not wear clothing with profanity, satanic symbols or offensive designs that may infringe upon the rights and freedoms of other students.
- Students shall not wear clothing that contain slogans or statements using improper language.
- Students shall not wear clothing with cigarette, alcohol or drug advertising.
- Clothing must properly cover undergarments. Shorts and skirts should be mid-thigh.
- Clothing must cover the stomach. No spaghetti straps permitted; all sleeveless shirts must have straps at least two inches wide and cover both shoulders.
- Long pierced earrings are not permitted as they can tear the earlobe if caught on something.

- Distracting jewelry, long chains, non-traditional hairstyles or colors and inappropriate oversized clothing are not permitted if they are disruptive or distracting to the educational process.
- Shoes with roller wheels (Heely's) may be worn, but the **wheels cannot be used** at school.

If a student's clothing or dress is deemed disruptive or distracting and interferes with the educational process then a child will be asked to call home and make arrangements for necessary changes. The discretion in determining what is deemed appropriate will be left up to the school principal.

### Drills: Armed Intruder/Fire/Tornado

**Armed Intruder Drills:** House Bill 4460 requires that all Michigan public schools conduct lockdown drills three times per school year. Students and staff practice the importance of moving quickly to a designated "safe wall" in the nearest classroom, following the safety practices and staying quiet until given the all clear signal.

**Fire Drill:** The State of Michigan also requires that fire drills be conducted five times throughout the school year. Students practice the quickest and safest way to leave the building in case of fire. Fire instruction includes the actual practice of filing out, moving to a safe distance, and remaining there until given the 'all clear' signal.

**Tornado Drills:** The students practice two mandated tornado drills during the school year. The practice includes going to the designated "safe place" in the building and assuming a safe position until given the 'all clear' signal. If students are in school when a tornado watch or thunderstorm warning is issued, they will remain in session until regular dismissal time. If a tornado warning is issued for our vicinity, students will be escorted to predefined areas of safety within each building and remain there until the warning is lifted. It is the policy of Lowell Area Schools not to dismiss students to parents during a tornado warning, even if it means holding students beyond the normal dismissal time. If students are held thirty minutes or longer beyond their normal dismissal time due to a tornado warning, school buses will not run and parents or guardians will be required to pick up their students. The school district will not begin school during a tornado watch or warning, including afternoon and evening functions. All after-school activities will be canceled during a tornado watch or warning. Generally, after-school activities will be resumed if such activities begin two hours after a tornado watch or warning has been lifted. Activities underway when a warning is issued will cease and participants/spectators will be instructed to take cover in a designated safe place.

### Drop-Off/Pick-Up/Parking

Classes begin at 8:40 am. Students should not arrive before 8:20 am because there is no outside supervision before that time. Breakfast is served from 8:20 am to 8:40 am. Breakfast students can enter the building as soon as they arrive and all other students will be directed to their specific

grade-level area outside. Students will enter the building at 8:35 am in order to go to their lockers and get to class by 8:40 am.

**Procedures for parents coming into the building to drop off and/or pick up students:**

1. Use the east drive of the parking lot
2. Park in the visitor (east) parking lot
3. Walk to the designated crosswalk area to meet your child so children are not walking across the parking lot unsupervised.

**Procedure for remaining in the vehicle to drop off and/or pick up students:**

1. Use the east drive of the parking lot
2. Follow the drive around the semi-circle to the furthest empty spot.
3. Allow student to exit only on the passenger side of the car
4. Cautiously pull out, being mindful of traffic behind you, and exit round the semi-circle

Be mindful of children and adults using the crosswalk.

Any students not picked up by 3:40 pm are brought to the office for parent pick-up.

### **Emergency Contact Information**

Emergency contact information is provided during the enrollment process and at the beginning of each school year. Copies of all legal documents regarding guardianship and custody issues must be given to the office. If we are ever in a situation where we are unable to reach you during an emergency, we will release your child only to adults whose names have been provided by the parent. We must have at least one working phone number to use in case of emergency, and it is very important that all information be kept current in the school office. Let the office know immediately of changes in your family situation and of any special arrangements concerning guardianship.

### **Family Resource Center**

Parents and guardians are encouraged to become involved in their child's education. Many volunteers donate time in the school on a weekly basis. We also welcome and appreciate volunteers with a varying schedule or those who can work only from their homes. The Family Resource Center (FRC) is a parent and toddler-friendly room, which is conveniently located across from the main office. It is a place for you to come and complete work for your child's teacher, help with Family Links projects, set up volunteers or a number of various activities. The FRC is stocked with an abundant supply of parent resources, from homework help to social issues. Please take time to visit the FRC whenever you are in the building.

### **Food Service**

**Mindy Grant, Director of Dining Services**

**Phone 616-987-2964 Fax 616-987-2952 Email [mgrant@lowellschools.com](mailto:mgrant@lowellschools.com)**

Applications for free and reduced meals are available online at [www.lunchapp.com](http://www.lunchapp.com) or in the school office and sent to all students at the beginning of the school year. Every family has the

opportunity to apply and will be advised if they qualify based on USDA guidelines for income. We have a daily breakfast and hot lunch program. The lunch includes a balanced meal and milk. Monthly menus will be sent home in Friday parent emails and posted weekly in the Lowell Ledger, Buyers Guide and Cable T.V.

- **Elementary Breakfast:** Full Pay \$1.10 Reduced Breakfast .30
- **Elementary Lunch:** Full Pay 2.20 Reduced Lunch: .40
- **Milk sold separately for:** .50

Students may pay for their meals on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. To guarantee proper accounting, money should be put in an envelope marked with the student's name, grade, teacher and amount. The money goes into individual accounts and reminders will be sent home when the account is low. LAS serve breakfast and lunch at all buildings. The food service department works on a debit system. Please send a check for your children's meal purchases; one check for your family may be written. In an effort to operate a fiscally responsible department, we ask you to monitor your child's account. Web access to view your children's account may be set up by contacting Mindy Grant at 987-2964 or mgrant@lowellschools.com.

### **Food Service Charge Policy**

Elementary, Middle School and High School: Students will be allowed to charge up to two (2) meals (includes "Type A" breakfast and/or lunch.) A "Type A" breakfast consists of four components: (two breads or one bread and one protein, fruit/vegetable or juice, and milk). A "Type A" lunch consists of five components: (protein, bread, fruit, vegetable, and milk). To be eligible for a free, reduced, or paid "Type A" breakfast or lunch, students must take a minimum of three components at breakfast and three components at lunch.

At the Middle and High School, food items are available for ala carte purchase. To purchase these items, students must have cash or money on account for the entire purchase. "Type A" breakfast and lunch are the only meals which may be charged. Milk is always an ala carte purchase. Students approved free meals, if purchasing milk only, must have cash for the milk.

Adult: No charging

After the maximum charges are accrued, food service will provide the student an "alternate choice" and white milk.

**Please note:** April 30 of each school year will be the final date any student may charge a Type A meal. After this date, students must have cash or cash in their account to cover their meal purchases through the end of the year.

**Grievance Procedure**  
**Statement of Non-Discrimination and Equal Education Opportunity**  
FOR TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964  
TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENT ACT OF 1972  
TITLE II OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITY ACT OF 1990  
SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973  
AGE DISCRIMINATION ACT OF 1975

Section I

Any person believing that the Lowell Area Schools or any part of the school organization has inadequately applied the principles and/or regulations of (1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, (2) Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, (3) section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, (4) the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and (5) Title II of the Americans with Disability Act Rights of 1990 may bring forward a complaint, which shall be referred to as a grievance, to the local Civil Rights Coordinator at the following address:

Administration Building  
300 High Street  
Lowell, MI 49331

Section II

The person who believes a valid basis for grievance exists shall discuss the grievance informally and on a verbal basis with the local Civil Rights Coordinator, who shall in turn investigate the complaint and reply with an answer to the complaint within five (5) business days. The complainant may initiate formal procedures according to the following steps.

Step 1

A written statement of the grievance signed by the complainant shall be submitted to the Local Civil Rights Coordinator within five (5) business days of receipt of answers to the informal complaint. The coordinator shall further investigate the matters of grievance and reply in writing to the complainant within five (5) days.

Step 2

A complainant wishing to appeal the decision of the Local Civil Rights Coordinator may submit a signed statement of appeal to the Superintendent of Schools within five (5) business days after a receipt of the conclusion, and respond in writing to the complainant within ten (10) business days.

Step 3

If unsatisfied, the complainant may appeal through a signed, written statement to the Board of Education within five (5) business days of receiving the superintendent's response in step two. In an attempt to resolve the grievance, the Board of Education shall meet with the concerned parties and their representative within forty days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within ten (10) days of this meeting.

Step 4

If at this point the grievance has not been satisfactorily settled, further appeal may be made to the Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202.

Inquiries concerning the nondiscriminatory policy may be directed to:

Director, Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202.

The local Coordinator, on request, will provide a copy of the district's grievance procedure and investigate all complaints in accordance with this procedure.

A copy of each of the Acts and the regulations on which this notice is based may be found in the Civil Rights Coordinator's office, which is located at our Administrative Building at the above address.

### **Statement of Non-Discrimination and Equal Education Opportunity**

LAS does not discriminate against any individual, with regard to receiving the full utilization of or benefit from the District, or the services, activities, or programs provided by the District, on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, ethnicity, sex, age, disability or any other legally protected category as required by state and federal law. In the case of admission to the District, in addition to the above-identified categories, the District does not discriminate based on marital status.

In addition, The District is an Equal Opportunity Employer for all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, religion, color, gender, age, national origin, ethnicity, height, weight, marital status, veteran status, disability, or any other legally protected category as required by state and federal law.

The following individual has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the Non-Discrimination and Equal Education Opportunity Policies:

Roger Bearup, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction, Lowell Area Schools, 300 High St, Lowell, MI 49331, [rbearup@lowellschools.com](mailto:rbearup@lowellschools.com), 616-987-2500.

### **Health and Medication**

**Health:** Parents will be asked to pick up their child from school in the event of illness, contagious disease, or serious injury. Criteria for sending a child home will be complaints of general illness, lice, pink eye, vomiting, diarrhea, severe coughing or suspicion of a communicable disease or condition. Students should not return until they are symptom-free for 24 hours.

LAS Lice Policy (June 2004) - We operate under a "No Nit Policy" regarding head lice. In the event of a lice infestation, the individual's family will be contacted to sign their student out of school for treatment. Once a child is nit-free, he or she may return to school. In addition, notes will be sent home with all children in the classroom. As a courtesy, for children with chronic cases of head lice (three or more), a referral may be made, for you, to Kent County Health Department's Head Lice program for additional support. (This is a free service available through Child Protective Services.) For information regarding proper treatment, please contact your child's physician or your local health department.

**Medication:** Medication will be given during school hours if necessary. A school medication permission and instruction form must be filled out for all medication (prescription or over the counter) which is to be given during the school day. This includes aspirin, Tylenol, cough drops, topical creams, etc. All non-prescription medications must be supplied by the parent in the original container. Most medication will be kept in the office; however, there are instances where students may need to self-possess their medication. Students are permitted to self-possess rescue medications, such as asthma inhalers and epi-pens with written permission from their parent AND physician. Medication permission forms are available in the school office and on the Lowell Schools web site ([www.lowellschools.com](http://www.lowellschools.com)). Medications MUST be in the original, correctly-labeled



prescription bottle with the student's name and dosage of medication, with specific directions. The parent or guardian is responsible for transporting the medication to and from school.

**Students may not bring in or carry home medication on the bus.** The parent or guardian must assume responsibility for informing the school of any change in the child's medication. A new prescription and physician's note to change the original prescription must be provided. Unused medication should be picked up by the parent or guardian by one week following the last day of school in June. Any remaining medications will be destroyed.

### Homework Procedures/Homework Pick Up

Homework is an activity which is assigned for completion at home to reinforce or extend learning. Homework may also be work that was assigned in class but not completed during the allotted school time. This work is to be completed at home and returned the following day.

Work sent home is also reinforcement work specifically assigned for completion at home.

Special projects and reports are also considered homework since these are assigned for completion at home. Studying required for tests and/or class work can also be considered homework.

Independent reading silently or aloud to the parent also goes under the heading of homework.

Teachers may use recess time to allow students time to finish previous night's homework.

**Timeframe guidelines for nightly homework, which includes assigned reading, should not exceed\*:**

Kindergarten	15 minutes	1st Grade	20 minutes	2nd Grade	30 minutes
3rd Grade	40 minutes	4th Grade	50 minutes	5th Grade	60 minutes

\*As always, exceptions may include projects, test preparation etc. If these guidelines are routinely exceeded, please contact the classroom teacher.

When scheduling family vacations, parents are encouraged to follow the school calendar, as missed instruction tends to have a negative affect on student achievement.

#### **Homework Pick Up:**

Requests for homework can be made if your child has been out of school two or more days. You may call the school office or e-mail the teacher, by 11:00am and pick the work up after 4:00 p.m. in the front lobby.

### Lockers

Each child will be given a locker. Be advised that these lockers do not have locks on them and students are not allowed to put locks on their lockers. We strongly recommend that students do not bring money or possessions that are of value. We advise that all electronic equipment (Gameboys, I-Pods, MP-3 players) be left at home to avoid any heartache if lost or stolen. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

### Lost and Found

To avoid ending up in lost and found, all student items from home should be clearly labeled with the student's name. This simple measure will help us to return lost items quickly. When items are missing, students and parents can check the lost and found. When found, items of value, such as money, jewelry and glasses can be claimed in the front office. We will make every effort to help locate missing items; however, for obvious reasons, the school cannot be responsible for lost items. All items left on a bus can be claimed at the bus garage. Please note that at the end of each trimester (November, March and June) unclaimed lost and found items will be donated to the Flat River Outreach in Lowell.

### Media Center

One of the most pleasant spots found in our elementary building is the Media Center. Here children can find information on various subjects. Every class has a scheduled period each week. The Media Center assistant is there to service students and teachers. Most of the materials within our Media Center are available to be checked out and taken home. Books may be checked out for two weeks and subsequently renewed if desired. Magazines may be checked out for one week. Families are requested to help their children return these items by their due date. No fines are charged for overdue books, but if books are not returned, the student may not check out new books until the book is returned. If a book is lost or destroyed while checked out to a student, that student is responsible for paying the replacement cost of the book. A letter will be sent home with information regarding any lost materials.

### Movies

Teachers will occasionally show movies which are related to the curriculum. Our current policy is that movies rated "G" may be shown without parent consent. Parents will be asked to give consent when a teacher plans to show a movie rated "PG." Parents who have a concern with their child viewing a "G" rated movie should contact their child's teacher.

### Newsletter

The Murray Lake newsletter is sent home weekly via email. The newsletter includes dates of interest, detailed information of coming events, reports of the Family Links organization, notes from the principal, parenting tips and much, much more. It is very important to read and keep these "information-packed" newsletters. **Please contact the office if you are not able to access the newsletter through email to request a paper copy be sent home with your child.**

### Parent Involvement/Family Links

Our parent organization is known as the Family Links. It is an organization of parents that "links" your family to other families in the community, as well as to teachers and school staff. Family Links

is responsible for the fundraisers, such as the fall fundraiser, the box tops and labels program, and the book fairs. Family Links also sponsors family events during the school year. Watch the weekly newsletter for more specific information on parent meetings and volunteer opportunities.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

You will be invited to attend two formal parent/teacher conferences during the school year to discuss your child's progress. The parent or teacher may request other conferences, as needed. We ask that you do not show up at a teacher's door right before or after school regarding your child's progress. A teacher needs time to gather their thoughts in order to supply you with the correct information. When approached at an unexpected time, he or she may not be able to give you the information you need. It is by working cooperatively that we can provide the best educational experiences for your child.

Fall conference dates:	November 13 and 18	4:30-8:45 pm
Spring conference dates:	February 19 and 24	4:30-8:45 pm

### **Pets and Wildlife**

Pets and wildlife should only be brought into the classroom if prior arrangements are made with the teacher. We must closely monitor animal visits due to student allergies. Animals are not allowed on school busses.

### **Principal Appointments**

If you have a specific concern that needs to be addressed, please make an appointment with the principal's assistant by calling the school office. As with any professional office, appointments scheduled in advance are given priority.

### **Promotion, Retention, Transfer and Acceleration**

In promoting, retaining, transferring or accelerating students, consideration will be given to the student's ability to be successful at the next level. Decisions on retention, transfer or acceleration shall be the responsibility of the Principal and shall be guided by the recommendation of a Child Study team composed of the teacher(s), parents, guardians, itinerants and the student, if applicable.

### **Recess**

All children will go outside, unless the weather is not suitable. During inclement weather, the children will be supervised indoors. This will occur on days when it is raining or the temperature or wind chill factor is at or below zero degrees, as determined by the computer weather program for

our area. If your child is well enough to come to school, we can generally assume the child is well enough to go outside for recess. A written request from the parent asking that a child remain inside for recess will be honored for one day. Requests for extended periods inside will require a statement from your doctor.

### **Report Cards and Progress Reports**

Report cards are issued three times per year at the end of each trimester.

Progress reports will be given half way through each trimester to keep you updated on your child's progress. Many teachers do weekly or biweekly updates on student progress.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's academic progress, please feel free to contact the teacher at any time.

### **Student Classroom Placement**

Determination of student placement is primarily the responsibility of the principal with a great deal of input from the child's teacher. In order to make a wise decision, the following criteria are utilized.

- Academic abilities
- Teacher and parent input
- Special student interests and needs
- Separation of certain student combinations
- Boy/girl ratio
- Ability levels
- Behavioral factors

A combination of all these factors is considered for each child. It is a very important process and is carefully monitored. The educational, social, and emotional well-being of our students is vital to a good learning experience. If parents have educational concerns regarding a preferred teaching-style (not specific teacher) they may obtain a form from the office the second week of April to be returned by May 1. Due to student mobility and the need to keep classes balanced, classroom assignments will not be posted until a week before school begins in the fall.

### **Student Permission Form**

Parents will be asked to complete an Elementary Student Permission Slip at the beginning of each school year. This three-part permission slip includes the Technology Use Agreement (see pages 23-24 of this handbook), Field Trip Permission and Picture Permission. A summary of the field trip and picture permission sections are listed below.

### **FIELD TRIP PERMISSION**

My child has my permission to accompany his/her class on field trips of all types during the 2014-2015 school year (if deemed necessary by the principal, an adequate number of chaperones will accompany the group).

I grant permission for my child to attend field trips

I do not grant permission for my child to attend field trips

### **PICTURE PERMISSION**

Periodically, we like to share what is happening in our schools by videotaping for our local cable TV, taking pictures for the paper and/or Directions and our web page.

I grant permission for my child to be videotaped or photographed for general marketing purposes.

I do not grant permission for my child to be videotaped or photographed for general marketing purposes.

### **Student Registration/Review of Student Records**

Students new to the school system are asked to register at the elementary office. If registered by 12:00pm., your child may start school the next instructional day. If registered after 12:00pm., he/she may be asked to delay an additional day to allow time for the teacher to prepare a work area and gather supplies for the child's warm welcome. If your child has additional special needs, classroom placement may be delayed a couple of days to make certain that his/her programming is appropriately matched to prior placement. At the time of registration, the following information must be supplied to school officials:

- Child's birth certificate
- Record of immunizations
- Latest Report Card
- Proof of Residency (utility bill, purchase agreement, etc)
- Any special education information - latest IEP, Sec. 504, Behavioral plans or student instructional plans
- Current Custody Papers (if applicable)

If a student transfers to another school district, records will be sent at the new district's request. The only exception to this rule is when the district is required by a court order to release records.

A parent/guardian may view their child's permanent school record, also known as the CA60. Prior arrangements with the school office must be made in order to have someone available to supervise the review of your child's records.

### **Student Release Procedure**

Students will only be released to parents/guardians or those listed on the emergency contact information. The office will always make every attempt to contact parents before calling other emergency contacts. We will not release your child to anyone whose name has not been provided by the parent unless we receive a note or phone call from parents/guardians giving specific

instructions for pick up. Please do not be offended if we ask for identification; it is for your child's safety. The student must be picked-up and signed-out at the office during regular school hours.

Please remind your child that they are never to leave school grounds without an adult. When a child leaves the property, we will make every attempt to locate them, which may include contacting the local police department.

### **Student Technology Use Agreement and Parent Permission Form**

Technology is an increasingly important facet of education. Teachers use technology (for example, the internet) to enhance the resources available to our students. Parents and students will be asked to complete the following technology use agreement and permission form at the beginning of each school year.

#### **Lowell Area Schools, Lowell, Michigan**

#### **TECHNOLOGY USE AGREEMENT FORM FOR STUDENTS**

**The term “Technology” refers to the use of the network, internet, e-mail, software and hardware.**

We are pleased to offer the students of Lowell Area Schools the use of technology. All students must have parental permission with a signed form on file at the school they attend before they are allowed to use technology. Students 18 and over may sign their own form.

Access to technology will enable students to explore online information sources. Although the school district utilizes internet blocking of inappropriate sites, families should be aware that some material accessible via technology may contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or potentially offensive. While our intent is to make technology available to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other materials as well. We believe the benefits provided to students with access to technology, in the form of information, resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed any disadvantages. Parents and guardians of minors are ultimately responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media information sources. To that end, Lowell Area Schools supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for access.

Users have no expectation of privacy when using technology. The District retains the right to monitor all use, including but not limited to personal e-mail, computer files, databases, web logs, or any other electronic transmissions.

#### **Acceptable Use Guidelines**

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior while using technology just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. It is presumed that users will comply with district standards and will honor the agreement they have signed. *Access is a privilege – not a right.* Access entails responsibility. Communications are public in nature. General school and district rules for behavior and communication apply. Technology is provided for students to access and store educationally relevant material and to conduct research. Technology access is given to students who agree to act in a responsible manner. Parent permission is required, and parents must agree to a waiver of claims and indemnification/hold harmless provision, which is set forth on the attached permission form.

Lowell Area Schools intends to provide technology for educational activities and does not intend to create a forum for non-instructional topics at any time. During school, teachers of younger students will guide them toward appropriate materials. Students using district technology are not permitted to do the following:

- Access offensive messages or pictures
- Use obscene or defamatory language
- Harass, insult, defame or attack others
- Damage computers, alter computer systems or computer networks
- Violate copyright laws
- Use another person's password
- Give out his/her name, address, or phone number online
- Trespass in another person's folders, work or files
- Intentionally waste limited resources
- Employ the network for commercial purposes
- Illegally install software
- Misrepresent other users on the local network or internet
- Accessing online services other than those provided by Lowell Area Schools

Violations may result in loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action. With this agreement, Lowell Area Schools acknowledges and is meeting The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) – Board policy #4520.

### **Visitors and Volunteers**

We encourage and promote school visits. For the safety of students, during the school day all of our doors will be locked except the main entrance near our main office.

In a continued effort to keep our schools as safe as possible and to comply with State law, we ask volunteer parents and community members to submit to criminal background checks. If you choose to participate as a volunteer, we ask that you complete a Volunteer Consent Form. The Volunteer Consent Form will be maintained solely at the Central Administrative Office and any response will be kept confidential with the Principal of the school building, Superintendent, and/or designee. Volunteer Consent Forms are available in the school office.

Student visitors must make prior arrangements with the classroom teacher who will determine if the visitation is appropriate.

In order to maintain safety and order in our building, we ask that you:

1. Call the office/teacher to let them know of your visit.
2. Enter through the main entrance only.
3. Check at the office for a visitor's pass and sign-in
4. Upon leaving the building, sign-out at the office.

Feel free to join your child for lunch any day. A prior call is never necessary in this instance. Just follow the above procedures of checking in at the office.