

Prairie Elementary Parent/Student Handbook



1700 1st Avenue SW
Worthington, MN 56187-1301
Phone: (507)727-1250 ~ Fax: (507)727-1255

[Heidi Meyer, Principal](#)
[Kari Gjerde, Assistant Principal](#)

Office Hours 7:00 am – 4:00 pm

Student Hours 8:20 am – 3:10 pm

For the welfare and safety of all students, please do not arrive at school prior to 7:30 a.m.

Attendance

Prairie Elementary believes that it is essential to collaborate with parents and families to ensure that children attend school. School attendance is instrumental in student performance. Students who are chronically absent from school will not perform as well as their classmates who attend school regularly. Consistency in attendance is vital to a student's progress both academically and socially. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure their child attends school and to inform the school of each absence. School personnel will attempt to contact the home if the absence has not been reported to ensure the safety of the child. If your child must be absent please call the number below.

Absence Line: (507) 727-1272

School responsibilities to improve school attendance:

- Take attendance each morning.
- If a student is absent, and no one from the home has called in, we call the home to ensure the safety of the student.
- Follow the School District and State mandated attendance policies.
- Send letters to parents when attendance is poor.
- Hold attendance meetings when letters have not had an impact.
- Attendance Officer will help with contacting families.
- Bilingual Parent Liaisons will help with contacting families.
- Refer families to Family Services if we see a need or concern.

- Host Parent/Teacher conferences 3-times a year.
 - Serve a nutritious breakfast every day.
 - Health Office assists students who are not feeling well.
 - Make our school a warm, inviting, and safe place to be.
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- **Parent responsibilities to improve school attendance:**
 - Stress the importance of a good education and the need to attend school.
 - Make sure your child gets a proper amount of sleep.
 - Have a bedtime routine so that your child is ready for bed in a timely fashion.
 - Make sure your child has a nutritious breakfast either at home or at school.
 - Help your child get up, or provide them with an alarm, so they have time to get ready for the day.
 - Watch the time, or provide an alarm clock, so they don't miss the bus.
 - If your child doesn't have a fever and they haven't thrown-up for 24-hours, they should be able to come to school.
 - If your child is sick, has an outside appointment, family emergency, vacation, or etc., please call the school and leave a message concerning the absence. If you cannot call, sign a note concerning the absence and have your child give the note to their teacher the next day they attend school.

For further information about District 518 attendance policy refer to www.isd.518.net >District>District Office>School District Policies Policy 503

Background Checks

It is the policy of the school district to seek a criminal history background check for applicants who receive an offer of employment with the school district and on all individuals who are offered the opportunity to provide athletic coaching services or other extracurricular academic coaching services to the school district, regardless of whether any compensation is paid. The school district may also elect to do background checks of volunteers, independent contractors and student employees in the school district.

Bullying Prohibition

The school district is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Acts of bullying, in any form, by either an individual student or a group of students, are prohibited on school district property, at school-related functions or activities, on school transportation, and by misuse of technology.

For further information about District 518 Bullying Prohibition policy refer to www.isd.518.net >District>District Office>School District Policies Policy 514

Child Abuse and Neglect

It is the policy of the school district to fully comply with Minn. Stat. § 626.556 requiring school personnel to report suspected child neglect or physical or sexual abuse. This responsibility is not taken lightly nor is it done without probable cause. Parents will be notified by the Nobles County Family Service Agency if this action has been taken.

Communication

Communication between home and school is essential for student success. Please feel encouraged to share pertinent information from home with your child's classroom teacher.

Please inform the school office (507-727-1250) of changes in address, phone numbers, parent or guardian workplace, or changes in parental marital status. This information is necessary for our records in case of emergency.

If you need to get a message to your child, please call the office and leave the message with office staff. For emergencies, students will be contacted. Other messages will be collected and distributed to students by 2:45 each day. All incoming calls regarding end-of-day procedures should be made by 2:30 to assure that your child (and teacher) receives the message. When possible, planning ahead alleviates extra calls to the office. Notes are appreciated when sharing daily information with classroom teachers. Phone messages will be forwarded to teachers during the school day but will likely not be addressed during student contact time.

Prairie Elementary uses the Seesaw online platform to communicate regularly with families. Your child's teacher can help you access Seesaw if you need assistance with setting up an account. You can access the Seesaw app on any electronic device. Please take time each day to visit with your child about their school day. Checking your child's backpack daily will also ensure that you are getting any important information you need.

At Prairie Elementary, we encourage and appreciate parental input and feedback. When discussing your ideas and/or concerns, we ask that you consider talking to your child's teacher first. Although we encourage contact with the classroom teacher first, we recognize that there are times when alternative contacts are necessary. In those cases, please use the following guideline (noting that if the concern is about a person in the line of process, please move to the next level):

1. Teacher contact
2. Building Principal contact
3. Superintendent contact
4. Board Member contact

Conferences

In the course of the school year, three parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled for each child. The conference dates are designated on the District 518 calendar. These conferences provide an opportunity to discuss your child's achievements and concerns with his/her teacher. This is also an opportunity to generally discuss your child's school experience and how to help him/her reach their potential. Please make every effort to attend and participate in these conference times. Conferences are an important part of your involvement. If you have a desire to meet with your child's teacher at a time other than the regularly scheduled conference time, contact the teacher before or after the student instructional day, send a note with your child, or call the office to leave a voicemail message for the teacher to return your call.

Discipline/Expectation Program

At Prairie Elementary we utilize a Responsive Classroom model. The Responsive Classroom model encourages students to begin developing key social skills necessary to be socially and academically successful.

The Responsive Classroom Approach centers on seven key principles:

1. The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
2. How children learn is as important as what they learn: Process and content go hand in hand.
3. The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
4. To be successful academically and socially, children need a set of social skills: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control.
5. Knowing the children we teach-individually, culturally, and developmentally-is as important as knowing the content we teach.
6. Knowing the families of the children we teach and working with them as partners is essential to children's education.
7. How the adults at school work together is as important as their individual competence: Lasting change begins with the adult community.

At the heart of the *Responsive Classroom* approach are ten classroom practices:

Morning Meeting - gathering as a whole class each morning to greet one another, share news, and warm up for the day ahead

Hopes and Dreams - helping students create classroom rules to ensure an environment that allows all class members to meet their learning goals

Interactive Modeling - teaching children to notice and internalize expected behaviors through a unique modeling technique

Positive Teacher Language - using words and tone as a tool to promote children's active learning, sense of community, and self-discipline

Logical Consequences - responding to misbehavior in a way that allows children to fix and learn from their mistakes while preserving their dignity

Guided Discovery - introducing classroom materials using a format that encourages independence, creativity, and responsibility

Academic Choice - increasing student learning by allowing students teacher-structured choices

Classroom Organization - setting up the physical room in ways that encourage students' independence, cooperation, and productivity

Working with Families - creating avenues for hearing parents' insights and helping them understand the school's teaching approaches

Collaborative Problem Solving - using conferencing, role playing, and other strategies to resolve problems with students

Although Prairie Elementary emphasizes the development of self-discipline, we also recognize that there are instances when it will be necessary to administer disciplinary measures. It is the position of the Prairie Elementary that a fair and equitable discipline policy will contribute to the quality of the student's educational experience.

School Wide Expectations:

- BE RESPECTFUL
- BE RESPONSIBLE
- BE SAFE

When misbehavior occurs, the following actions may be taken:

1. Take a break (student directed return)
2. Take a break (teacher directed return)
3. Loss of privilege
4. Buddy Classroom, Apology of Action Plan
5. Solutions and problem solving with Principal or Behavior Specialist

Discrimination

It is the policy of District #518 to comply with state and federal laws which prohibit discrimination in education programs, activities, or employment on grounds of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance or disability. Inquiries regarding compliance may be directed to the Office of the Superintendent at 1117 Marine Avenue, P.O. Box 878, Worthington, MN 56187 or telephone (507) 372-2172.

For further information about District 518 Discrimination Policies (including Section 504 and Title IX information) refer to www.isd.518.net >District>District Office>School District Policies Policy 521

Dress Code

Prairie Elementary staff believes that in order to maintain a safe environment conducive to learning, appropriate clothing needs to be worn. The parents/guardians and student are responsible to ensure neatness, cleanliness, and respectful appearance when coming to school. **Administrative judgment will determine appropriate dress.**

- Clothes should be clean and neat.
- Hats and caps must be removed upon entering the building.
- Clothing with inappropriate messages will not be allowed.
- Clothing that does not provide proper coverage will not be allowed.
- Physical Education classes require students to wear athletic tennis shoes.

For further information about District 518 Student Dress and Appearance Policy refer to www.isd.518.net > District>District Office>School District Policies Policy 504

Field Trips

All classrooms take at least one field trip each school year. These field trips either tie directly to the curriculum at the grade level or provide enrichment. The Annual Medical Release form is required to be signed and submitted prior to your child's field trip. All students are asked to bring \$10.00 at the beginning of the year to cover costs for field trips. This should be paid during Back-to-School conferences.

Harassment and Violence Prohibition

The school district strives to maintain a learning and working environment free from harassment and violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability. The school district prohibits any form of harassment or violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability.

For further information about District 518 Harassment and Violence Prohibition Policy refer to www.isd.518.net > District>District Office>School District Policies

Health Services

While your child is at school, the District #518 school nurse, along with other school personnel, work to provide a safe and healthy atmosphere. Please feel free to contact the office with any health concerns. Nursing services are available during regular school hours from 8:00 am- 3:30 pm. Parents are responsible for notifying other entities (bus company, extracurricular supervisors/coaches, etc.) regarding health conditions/concerns for their child.

Health Screening

Your child's hearing and vision will be screened during their 1st grade school year. These screenings do not replace medical check-ups by your family doctor. Parents will be notified if the screening results are not within normal limits for your child's age. If you do not want your child to participate in the health screenings, please contact the school nurse in writing at the beginning of the school year.

Healthy Habits

Healthy kids make better learners. Make sure your child gets plenty of rest. Provide your family with a nutritious breakfast each morning, or use the school breakfast program.

Frequent bathing, hair washing, and clean clothing help to promote good personal hygiene habits. Remind your child to brush their teeth regularly. It is recommended that each child see a dentist at least yearly.

Head lice can be a problem in schools. To prevent the spread of head lice, tell your child not to use someone else's comb, brush, hair clips, or hats. We also recommend that parents check their child's hair weekly for head lice to reduce the number of classroom outbreaks. Please notify the school health office if lice have been found so that we may alert other parents of the situation. All cases of head lice are kept confidential.

Home visits

Home visits by the school nurse are made at the request of the parent, school administrator, or other school personnel. Home visits are made when it is in the best interest of the child's educational experience.

Illness

Please call the attendance line each day your child is ill with the reason. Children who become ill at school will be sent home only after a parent/guardian or designated person has been notified. Please keep your child at home if they have a fever of 100 or higher or have vomited or had diarrhea in the past 24 hours. Written permission from the doctor should be sent to the school if a student returns before the recommended time.

Immunization Requirements:

Parents are required to provide the school with the month, day, and year of all required immunizations. If there is a medical reason why the child cannot be vaccinated, or if a parent objects to the immunizations, proper documentation must be provided to the school.

The following are required by the State of Minnesota **before** a student can go to school:

Age 5-6 (Kindergarten) – 5 DTaP, 4 Polio, 2 MMR, 3 Hep. B, 2 Varicella-or year of chickenpox disease

Age 7-11 (1st- 6th Grade) – 3 DTaP, 3 Polio, 2 MMR, 3 Hep. B, 2 Varicella-or year of disease,

Age 12 up (7th-12th Grade) – 1Tdap and 2 tetanus plus diphtheria doses, 3 Polio, 2 MMR, 3 Hep. B, 2 Varicella-or year of disease, 1 Meningococcal & booster

Medical Emergency Information and Accidents at School

Please inform the school if your child has a health condition or need that may require medical or emergency care during the school day. Having up-to-date health information will help school personnel keep your child as safe as possible while at school. In case of an emergency at school, first aid will be administered promptly. Emergency medical care will be initiated if appropriate. An attempt will be made to notify the parent or guardian before seeking additional medical attention, if any is needed.

Please notify the school office with emergency numbers for your child. Call the school immediately with any change in emergency phone numbers.

Medications at School

We strongly encourage that parents arrange to have students take their medication before or after school hours. However, we understand that there are times when it may be necessary for the student's health that medication and/or medical treatments be administered at school.

The District #518 School Board [Policy for Medication](#) and Health Office Guidelines for Medication Administration will be followed when administering any medications to students during school hours. If you would like a copy of the policy or guidelines, please contact the school health office.

If your child is to have any medication during school hours, you must contact the school nurse or school health office before the medication will be given. Medication will NOT be given without properly completed SCHOOL medication permission forms. School medication permission forms are available in the health office

or online at www.isd518.net. Click on >Medication Permission Form. Cough drops can be given but must be supplied by the parent with a note to the teacher, and both are kept in the teacher's desk.

Homework

Every student will have some homework during the year. The amount and type of homework varies according to grade and classroom teacher. Students are expected to return homework to school when due and completed to the best of their ability. Establishing a time and place for doing homework and giving assistance is very helpful. Should a problem come up with an assignment, please send a note with your child or contact his/her teacher at school. All students should spend time at home reading every day.

Inclement Weather

It is the general policy of District 518 to be open every scheduled school day. Official announcements regarding District 518 operations during inclement weather are broadcast over KWOA radio, 730 on your AM dial, and 93.5, 95.1, and 104.3 on your FM dial, beginning at 6:00 a.m. Announcements are also on KELOLAND- TV, keloland.com, and Channel 3. Shout Point, a district call-out system, will call each student's home to inform parents of the closing. **Students and parents are asked not to call radio stations or the school to inquire about school closing.** Information will also be posted on our district website, Facebook page, and Instagram page.

Safety of students and staff are of primary importance to District 518 in its attempt to be open each scheduled day. Some days, because of inclement weather, decisions need to be made whether or not to cancel school for the day, delay the start of school, or close school early. With a decision made by 6:00 a.m. in the case of a late start, the elementary and secondary students will ride their regularly scheduled buses two hours delayed. For Prairie, school begins at 10:20 a.m. on late start days. Have a plan in place for weather related school cancellations for your family.

When schools are closed, the district may implement a Learn From Home Day. This decision will be announced within the message on our call-out system and on our district website and social media sites.

Winter Recess:

- Make sure your child dresses appropriately for the weather. Students will go outside for recess as often as possible.
- Wear winter coats, hats, mittens, scarves, boots and snow pants. Students must have boots and snow pants in order to be allowed to play in snowy areas.
- Students will go outside if the wind chill is 0° or higher.
- Students **MUST** have a note from a doctor in order to stay inside if the wind chill is 0° or above.

Informational Fliers

Fliers to be distributed at Prairie Elementary should be approved by the principal. Approved fliers need to be copied and counted, ready for distribution to each classroom. Classroom teachers and office personnel will not be responsible for collection of returned materials.

Internet & Email Violations

Internet usage is a privilege and not a right. It is to be used only for legitimate educational purposes. The following types of misuse may result in loss of privilege and other possible consequences:

1. Harassment of others in an obscene, derogatory or other offensive manner. This could include sending sexually explicit or racially and gender inappropriate jokes, messages, etc. Threats against others would also fall into this category.
2. The school district reserves the right to discipline students for actions taken off-campus if the actions are intended to have an effect on a student or the actions adversely affect the safety and well-being of a student while at school.
3. Plagiarism of materials.
4. Violation of copyrighted works or trademarks.
5. Transmission of personal information about oneself or others.
6. Disruption of the network or programs; introduction of viruses.
7. Downloading obscene or pornographic materials.
8. Failure to follow directions of a supervisor in the use of the Internet. Free speech in student use of the Internet is limited in the same way it is in school newspapers. Supervisors can limit student access.

For further information about District 518 Internet Acceptable Use and Safety, and Electronic Communication Policy refer to www.isd.518.net >District>District Office>School District Policies Policy 524

iPad

Students at Prairie Elementary will be using iPads during the school day to equip students with digital learning skills. If you have any questions regarding iPads, please refer to the iPad Implementation Handbook or ask your child's teacher.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten registration is held in March. Kindergarten teachers will have conferences with parents and children before the start of school. **Children five years of age on or before September 1 may enter kindergarten at the beginning of the school year.** Physicals and current immunizations are required for students entering kindergarten.

Leaving School During the Day

There are times when it is necessary for a child to leave school early for an appointment, etc. We would appreciate it if you would attempt to schedule those appointments either before or after school, or on those days when school is not in session. However, when it is necessary for your child to be excused during school hours, we ask that you call the office with that information. When you come to get your child, please park your vehicle in the parking lot and report to the office. Do not park along the curb. If someone other than yourself is picking up your child, office personnel must receive a note or telephone call from you giving your permission. This individual must also report to the Prairie Elementary Office prior to the dismissal of your child. Your cooperation helps to ensure the safety of all children.

Learn From Home Days

Independent School District 518 may utilize Learn from Home Days in the event of inclement weather or school emergency. Learn from Home Days for Prairie Elementary students will include activities that will help them to practice skills they are learning in school. Activities like reading, playing games, and creating objects with items from home will be part of the Learn from Home Day. Details for Learn from Home Days can be found in a marked envelope in your child's backpack.

Attendance will be taken for the Learn from Home Day the next day that the student returns to school. Students will turn in evidence of activity completion. Teachers may send additional information out for parents on the Seesaw app to help guide the day's work.

In preparation for Learn from Home Days, teachers will be working with their students on the types of learning experiences and activities that may be assigned on these days. This preparation in normal class time will help set the expectation for students who will be expected to work on these activities at home on days when weather prevents them coming to school.

On the Learn from Home Day, teachers will be available for contact via the Seesaw app, email or over the phone during normal school day hours, from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. District families should feel free to contact their student's teacher during this timeframe with any questions about the day's activities.

Lockers/Desks

Pursuant to Minnesota statutes, school lockers and desks are the property of the school district. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers or desks provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of lockers and desks may be conducted by school personnel for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. The personal possessions of students within a school locker may be searched only when school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. As soon as practicable after the search of student's personal possessions, the school officials must provide notice of the search to students whose lockers or desks were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.

The personal possessions of students and/or a student's person may be searched when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. The search will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness.

Lost and Found

There is a "lost and found" area located near the cafeteria at Prairie. Students may also check at the office for lost property. Parents are encouraged to write their child's name on items like coats, boots, etc. if possible. Items that are unclaimed will be given to an appropriate agency after six months. We strongly discourage students bringing items of value to school.

Lunch

	<u>Lunch</u>	<u>Breakfast</u>
Adult	\$5.25	Not available
Grades K-5	Free	Free
Grades 6-12	Free	Free

Our school offers healthy meals each day. All students can get one breakfast and one lunch free of charge each day at school. Although no application is required to receive this free meal benefit, filling out the Application for Educational Benefits is still important! Your child(ren) may qualify for other benefits like reduced fees at school. Your application may also help the school qualify for education funds, discounts, and other meal programs.

Breakfast: Breakfast is available for students from 7:45-8:15 a.m. All students will receive free breakfast.

Lunch: The school serves a nutritional meal consisting of five components: protein (main dish), fruit, vegetables, bread, and milk. There is a first and second choice for the main dish. Children participating in hot lunch are required to select from at least three of the components. One component must be a fruit or vegetable.

Milk: Milk is served as part of the hot breakfast and lunch program with extra milk costing an additional \$.25. Students may also purchase milk to drink with their cold lunch. If a student wishes to purchase an extra milk or purchase one with their sack lunch the student will need to have money in their account or bring cash.

Media Center Guidelines

The media center is open from 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. daily.

Kindergarten, First and Second Grade students will check out 2 books every week. If the student has one book checked out they are allowed to check out one more book. If the student has two books checked out no more additional books will be checked out.

Overdue Book Policy:

Overdue books are defined as books that are not returned to the library on a given due date. Students are not allowed to check out more books than their grade level allows.

End of the Trimester Policy for Overdue Books:

At the end of a given trimester, students with overdue books will not be allowed to check out books. Students are given several reminders two weeks before the trimester ends that they have overdue book(s).

Paying for Damaged or Lost Books:

Damaged books will be reviewed by the Media Specialist. A decision will be made if the book can be repaired and put back on the shelf with a \$3.00 fine. The student will pay full cost to replace books that cannot be repaired. Books that aren't repairable will remain property of the district and will be discarded (not returned to students).

Lost book(s) must be paid by the student before they are allowed to check out again.

New Student Registration

Students new to the district need to register at the Community Ed Building. Please call (507)376-6105 to set up an appointment for registration.

Notification System

District 518 utilizes a notification system that will communicate events, activities, emergencies and other related information to students, parents, staff and community members. You have the right to refuse this service by providing a written statement of refusal to the district and/or contacting christian.robinson@isd518.net or call (507)727-1132 to unsubscribe which will occur within ten days of the notification to unsubscribe. The District utilizes this system to communicate many forms of information so please consider your choice carefully to ensure that it will not negatively affect your ability to receive important notifications.

Nuisance Items

Students are prohibited from possession or use of articles that are nuisances, illegal, distractions, or that may cause harm to persons or property at school and school-sponsored activities. Nuisance items such as electronic devices, cell phones, watches, cameras, laser pointers, trading cards, etc. may be confiscated and returned to the student at the discretion of the teacher and/or principal. Parents may be required to pick items up in the office. We strongly encourage your child **not** to bring items of value to school. The school will not be responsible for locating/replacing lost items brought to school. Prairie Elementary students are not allowed to use cell phones during the school day or communicate with anyone outside of school without the permission of school personnel.

Outside Groups Using School

Anyone wishing to use Prairie Elementary facilities after school hours must contact office personnel to learn its availability. Approval at the district level is also required. Groups using Prairie Elementary may be charged a fee and are required to leave the facilities in the same condition as found. Adult supervision is required. Students and adults using Prairie Elementary after school hours are expected to follow building rules. Upon completion of the scheduled activity, an adult is required to ensure all individuals have left the building, the doors are locked, and the alarms set.

Parent Involvement

Parents are the primary educator of their children. Your involvement with your child's elementary school experience is of utmost importance for his/her development. Parental involvement will benefit both you and your child.

Parents are partners in the educational development of children and they should play an active role in the development of school and system goals. Parent involvement includes:

- Attending conferences, meetings, classroom events, musical functions, and other school-related activities
- Developing new ideas regarding greater student achievement and learning opportunities
- Understanding curriculum
- Understanding student conduct and policies and procedures relative to student conduct
- Providing a safe school
- Building a feeling of pride toward Prairie Elementary in both students and parents
- Communicating with classroom teachers

Parents may inquire with classroom teachers regarding opportunities to volunteer in the classroom. We also encourage parent attendance at our reading events, family nights, and music programs. Parents may also visit for lunch; prior notification to the classroom teacher is appreciated.

For volunteers in the classroom, there is a form and additional information available in the Prairie office.

Parent Notification for Notice of Violent Behavior by Students

The school district will give notice to teachers and other appropriate school district staff before students with a history of violent behavior are placed in their classrooms. Prior to giving this notice, district officials will inform the student's parent or guardian that the notice will be given. The student's parents/guardians have the right to review and challenge their child's records, including the data documenting the history of violent behavior.

Parent Right to Know

If a parent requests it, the school district will provide information regarding the professional qualifications of his/her child's classroom teachers, including, at a minimum, the following:

1. whether the teacher has met state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
2. whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional licensing status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
3. the baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree;
4. whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

In addition, the school district will provide parents with information as to the level of achievement of their child in each of the state academic assessments. The school district will provide notice to parents if their child has been assigned to, or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified.

Parties/Special Events

It has become a custom that students bring treats on their birthday for the other students in the classroom. This is an optional practice and is mentioned here to inform you. We recommend one item/treat per student. No juices or drinks, please. We encourage healthy choices or non-food treats. A list of suggested healthy/non-food item treats will be shared with you by your teacher. Parents are discouraged from bringing cakes, flowers, balloons, party favors, etc. in order to keep the distraction to the learning environment to a minimum. Flowers and balloons are not allowed on the bus.

Pesticide Application

An estimated schedule of applications of pesticides is available for review or copying in the district office. If requested, parents may receive prior notice of each application.

Pet Policy

Due to the high number of students with allergies, animals with fur or feathers may only visit the building with prior authorization.

Pledge of Allegiance

As required by [Minnesota law, \(Article 120, May 27, 2003\)](#), all public schools shall recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America one or more times each week. The recitation shall be conducted as follows; 1) by each individual classroom teacher or the teacher's surrogate; or 2) over a school intercom system by a person designated by the school principal or other person having administrative control over the school. The school district must instruct students in the proper etiquette toward, correct display of, and respect for the flag, and in patriotic exercises. At Prairie Elementary the Pledge of Allegiance will be recited each morning as part of the morning announcements. A student may decline to participate, and students must respect all others in their choice to recite, or not recite, the pledge.

Photo Release Policy

In the course of the school year, students may be photographed/videotaped for educational and/or promotional purposes (including publications, presentations, or broadcasts via newspaper, internet or other media sources). Parents must provide written objection if they are opposed to their student being photographed for school purposes/events.

Report Cards

The Prairie Elementary school year is divided into three reporting periods. Parents of students will receive a Progress Report form after the completion of each reporting period. Please take the time to sit down with your child and discuss his/her progress.

The marking codes on Prairie's Progress Report have been designed to provide you with information about your child's effort and achievement levels based on the Minnesota State Standards. The document also summarizes your child's attendance on a trimester basis.

Retention

Retention of a student may be considered when professional staff and parents feel that it is in the best interest of the student. There is a specific process that is followed by classroom teachers when significant difficulties are exhibited by a student. When the procedures followed indicate that retention should be explored, a team convenes to make the determination based on gathered data. Physical development, maturity, emotional factors, and specific learning needs shall be considered as well as a student's scholastic achievement. The superintendent's decision shall be final.

School Safety and Security

Prairie Elementary follows the ISD 518 Crisis Management Plan. Embedded within that plan is annual fire and tornado drills as well as emergency response/lockdown/evacuation drills in order to promote and practice safety and security.

All ISD 518 facilities utilize an emergency response system where staff and students learn a process to use to make decisions when faced with critical situations. Staff and students are equipped to make decisions using the information they receive during an incident. Evacuation is emphasized as the best option when facing a crisis.

In the event of an emergency that requires students to be evacuated from a school building, the district has arranged a location in Worthington to serve as a Gathering Place. Students will be transported to this location where parents and family members may be safely reunited. In the event of a crisis incident, notification will specify the location where parents/guardians may pick up their children. It is critical that the areas around school facilities be kept free of traffic so that first responders can get reach facilities and buses can quickly transport students and staff to the Gathering Place. When informed of the Gathering Place, please do not attempt to go to school facilities.

The safety of students and staff are of the utmost importance to the district. Staff and students are trained to react during a crisis incident by employing a system that focuses on three response items including:

Evacuate

- Assess and leave area if safe to do so.
- Quickly go to the nearest and safest exit.
- Evacuate to a rally point.

Lockdown

- Lock and barricade the door.
- Spread out in the room.
- Be prepared to evacuate from a non-traditional exit
- Dial 911.

Counter

- To be used as a last resort when faced with immediate danger.
- Use objects to distract and confuse the intruder.

Please contact a district administrator if you have questions about how the district addresses school safety.

Sexual Harassment and Violence

School District #518 maintains a firm policy prohibiting sexual harassment and violence against students and employees. Sexual harassment is a pattern of behavior or words of a gender demeaning or sexual nature that are not welcome and which pressure, intimidate, or make the recipient uncomfortable. Sexual violence is an act of aggression, which includes a sexual act or sexual purpose. Students and employees are responsible for conducting themselves in a manner consistent with the spirit and intent of this policy. All persons are to be treated with respect and dignity. Any student or employee, or any third person with knowledge or belief of such conduct, should report the incident to the principal or superintendent. Reprisal or retaliation against someone who complains or who cooperates in the investigation of a complaint is prohibited. The consequences of a violation of this policy may include training in gender equity and sexual harassment issues, administrative conference with student and parents, reassignment of student, detention, suspension, exclusion/expulsion in accordance with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, referral to police or other outside agencies, or other action as the district deems appropriate.

For further information about District 518 Harassment and Violence Policy refer to www.isd.518.net > District>District Office>School District Policies Policy 413

Special Education Programs

In accordance with state and federal mandates, District #518 seeks out, assesses, and serves students with disabilities. District staff uses a comprehensive child study process to systematically screen, assess, and, if identified, provide special education and related services. When a referral is received, the building Child Study Committee meets to determine if any evaluation is necessary and by whom it should be done (school psychologist, special education teachers, speech/language clinician, etc.). If an evaluation is indicated, parents are notified by letter and asked for their approval. If consent is obtained, the evaluation is completed. After the evaluation is completed, general and special education personnel involved meet with parents to decide on an appropriate placement for the child. An individualized program is developed for the child and services are provided in accordance. Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are reviewed on at least an annual basis with school personnel and parents.

A copy of the Parent Rights and Procedural Safeguards pertaining to special education is available in the office.

Statewide Testing Information and Parental Refusal Form

Parents may refuse mandated state testing for their students by filling out and submitting the Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation Form, linked to the Handbook tab on the District website.

Go to: www.isd518.net>Parents/Students>Handbooks>Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation Form

Student Records

Student records are kept on each child for his/her entire school career. The cumulative folder contains such items as copies of progress reports, reading record cards, school attendance, etc. These records are confidential, and access to a student's record is limited to school employees working with that student, his/her parents, and the student. We request parents make an appointment to view their child's records. Parent/guardian permission must be obtained to release these records to another party.

Student Surveys

Occasionally, the school district utilizes surveys to obtain student opinions and information about students. For complete information on the rights of parents/guardians and eligible students about conducting surveys, collection, and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical examinations, see the district's Student Surveys policy.

For further information about District 518 Student Survey Policy refer to www.isd.518.net >District>District Office>School District Policies

Support Services

The following support services are available to students at Prairie Elementary. Please contact the office for information about these services.

- After School Academic Programs
- Bilingual Parent Liaisons
- Early Childhood Special Education
- English as a Second Language
- Special Education
- Intervention Services
- Translator/Interpreters
- School Social Worker
- School Counselor

Tobacco

School District #518 is a tobacco free environment. Tobacco is not permitted in school buildings, school vehicles, or on school grounds. Visitors are required to follow this policy.

For further information about District 518 Tobacco Policy refer to www.isd.518.net >District>District Office>School District Policies Policy 419

Transportation

Automobile Transportation

AM DROP-OFF (7:30 am to 8:15 am):

- Please pull up as far as you can into the Drop-Off Circle near the main entrance of the building. Four to five cars can be dropping off students at the same time. Please watch the attendant(s) for cues and pull up when they motion for you to do so.
- It is very important for the safety of our students and convenience/efficiency for our families that students be ready to exit the car as soon as it is your time to drop. Use the time where you are waiting in line to gather up materials to be ready to exit.
- Parents in the Drop-Off Circle should **not** exit their vehicles. If you feel that you have to exit your vehicle to assist your student then you will need to park in the visitor spots and walk them across. When you park and walk your student across, we ask that you wait for the cars to stop to drop rather than make the cars wait for you to cross.
- When you enter the lot, please enter from the East direction on 1st Avenue SW. This allows you to exit the lot either to the left or the right.

PM PICK-UP (After 3:00 pm):

- The car rider line at the end of the day forms near the east side of the building by the gyms.
- **NEW THIS YEAR—you may not enter the car rider line/back parking lot area until after 3:00 pm. If you arrive before 3:00 you will wait in the area marked in the main lot near the back lot entrance.**
- When you enter the lot, please enter from the East direction on 1st Avenue SW. This allows you to exit the lot either to the left or the right.
- You will be given a placard with your student(s) names. This placard should be placed in your front window before entering the Pick Up line. This practice helps with security and efficiency.
- Please communicate with the main office if someone different will be picking up your student.

Bus Transportation

Bus transportation is provided by District #518 for all elementary children. Each student will be allowed one pick up and one drop off location. Students from a split household with joint custody will be allowed two different pick up and drop off addresses, with a schedule provided to the school and bus company. For any changes (new address, changing daycare, etc.), please provide a 3-day advanced notice. Bus routes and schedules may change during the school year due to the mobility of the families in District #518. Riders should:

- Be ready at their pick-up spots five (5) minutes early
- Wear appropriate clothing in case of bad weather and/or mechanical failure
- Memorize their bus numbers
- Any changes must be communicated from parents/guardians. Students will adhere to the original plan unless communication is received from parents. We cannot rely on information provided by students only.

If you need to pick up your bus rider from school as a car rider, this change needs to be communicated via written note or direct call from the parent prior to 2:45 pm.

In order to maintain safety in and around a school bus, specific guidelines have been developed. The following acts are prohibited and may result in loss of bus privileges:

- Standing in a moving bus
- Placing any part of the body or any articles out the window
- Throwing items on the bus
- Excessive noise, which would tend to distract the bus driver
- Profane or obscene language or action
- Defacing or damaging the bus, inside or out
- Throwing items out the bus window (This offense may result in civil action)
- Smoking or chewing tobacco on the bus
- Fighting or intentionally provoking fights in or around the bus
- Possessing any type of weapon as defined by District 518 policy on the bus

Bus Discipline Procedures

Students transported in a school bus shall be under the authority of and responsible to the driver of the bus. Riding the school bus is a privilege that can be revoked for inappropriate behavior. Students are expected to follow the same standards of behavior while riding a bus as they are in school or at a school-sponsored activity. All school rules are in effect while a student is waiting at a bus stop or riding the bus. Continued disorderly conduct or persistent refusal to submit to the authority of the driver shall be sufficient reason for a pupil to be denied transportation in accordance with these policies. The driver of any school bus shall be responsible for the orderly conduct of the pupils transported. MS 121A.59 provides, “transportation is a privilege not a right for an eligible student.” Revocation of a student’s bus riding privilege is not an exclusion, expulsion, or suspension under the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act.

Video Monitoring

District 518 uses video monitoring equipment on school buses and within District 518 buildings and facilities.

Visits to the School

If you plan to visit the school, please check first with your child's teacher as to the best time and day to visit. All visitors must check in first in the office to get a visitor's pass before going to classrooms. Visits should be short with a specified time limit. Visits the first few weeks of school are discouraged, when routines are being established.

Parents who bring their students to school in the morning are asked to use the Drop Off circle to keep traffic flow running efficiently and for safety purposes. Parents who walk their children to the building must park in the lot, and will be asked to drop their student at the main doors. Because of high hallway and commons traffic and the number of students we feed in the cafeteria, parents are not able to come into the building prior to the start of the school day.

If you plan to visit the school during your child's lunch hour, please check in at the office to get a Visitor's Pass. You can pay for your lunch when you check in by cash or check. Bringing food into the cafeteria (fast food, etc.) is not permitted.

Siblings and children visiting from other schools will not be allowed to attend school with your child.

Withdrawing Students

Please contact the office if you are moving to another school district as soon as it is known, in order to receive the proper information regarding transfer procedures. The last date of attendance and your new address is needed. School records will be mailed as soon as the school to which your child has been enrolled has contacted us. Prairie Elementary will forward school records upon the request of the new district of residence. Teachers will summarize academic achievement and provide the receiving school with placement information.