

# SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK (Grades 6-12)



## **Preamble**

Welcome to Eastern Mennonite School! We are glad you are part of this community and hope this document helps you understand who we are as a school community.

## **Mission Statement**

Eastern Mennonite School joins home and church in calling students to faith in Jesus Christ, academic excellence, personal integrity, and compassionate service in the world.

## **Vision Statement**

Eastern Mennonite School aspires to reflect Christ's light as a learning community where every student belongs, thrives, and lives God's call.

*Eastern Mennonite School does not discriminate on the basis of any race, color, handicap, national, or ethnic origin, and admits students to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.*

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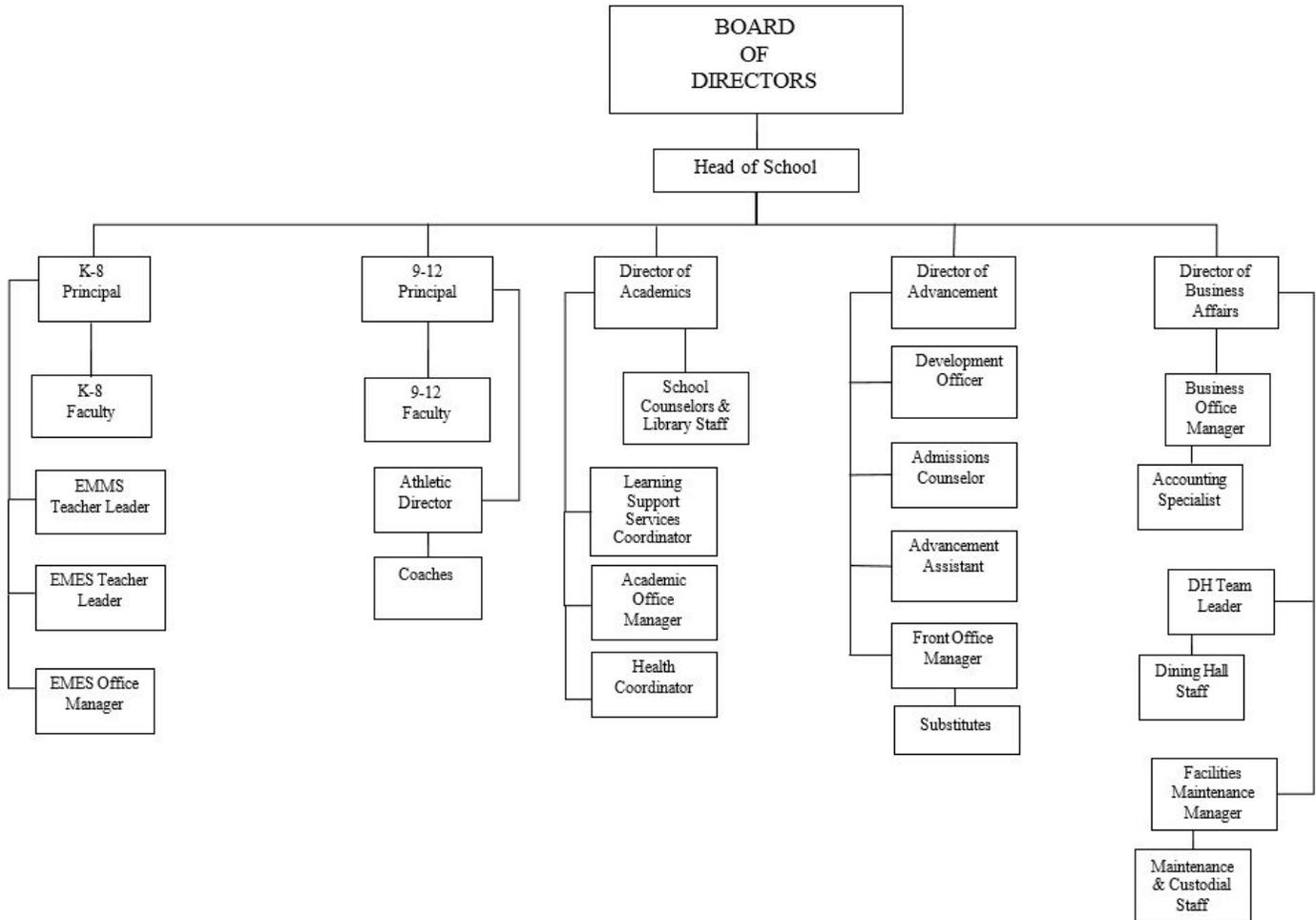
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# 1. Communication

## Organizational Chart



### Key Contacts (call 236-6000 to be connected to any of the following)

#### Concerns related to:

Academics  
 Admissions and reenrollment  
 Athletics  
 Attendance/general questions  
 College and career counseling  
 Dining services  
 Donations/Communications  
 Counseling  
 Counseling  
 Health/medications  
 HS students and faculty  
 MS students and faculty  
 School governance  
 Financial Services, Technology  
 Tuition/payments

#### Contact Person

Patsy Seitz  
 Marsha Thomas  
 Andrew Gascho  
 Christine Fairfield  
 Jodi Nisly Hertzler  
 Deb Pardini  
 Andrea S. Wenger  
 Deborah Katz  
 Gini Trotter  
 Joanna Moyer Diener  
 Justin King  
 Maria Archer  
 Paul Leaman  
 Michael Stoltzfus  
 Susie Hardy

#### Position

Director of Academics  
 Admissions Counselor  
 Athletic Director  
 Front Office Manager  
 College and Career Counselor  
 Dining Services Manager  
 Director of Advancement  
 K-12 Counselor  
 K-12 Counselor  
 Health Coordinator  
 High School Principal  
 K-8 Principal  
 Head of School  
 Director of Business Affairs  
 Business Office Manager

## 2. General Guidelines

### Accounts

We appreciate families keeping their accounts current. Please refer to your enrollment contract for detailed information regarding financial agreements with Eastern Mennonite School. A family's account must be current before their student may participate in fee-based activities such as Behind-the-Wheel, E-Term, special field trips, and extended summer trips.

- When payments are late or missed, the following protocol is enacted:
  - a. Immediately after a payment due date is missed or returned for non sufficient funds (NSF), the parent is notified via email from FACTS. FACTS continues to automatically communicate with parents as payments come due, with reminders of missed payments sent via the communication methods parents requested when they set up their FACTS account (email, phone, text).
  - b. When an account is 45 days past due (at least two missed payments), a letter from the Director of Business Affairs is sent via certified mail reiterating the importance of keeping the account up to date and outlining consequences of continued non-payment.
  - c. When an account is 60 days past due (two-three missed payments), the family is contacted via email with a follow-up phone call requesting a meeting to discuss next steps for resolution of the account, to include the following, in order of priority:
    - Student privilege limitations - the student will not be able to participate in optional co-curriculars that incur additional costs, including athletics, optional field trips, higher cost E-Terms, AP exams, behind the wheel, summer experiences, etc.
    - Re-configuring Payment Agreement - if there are temporary financial hardships, payments can be adjusted short-term, but will require catch-up payments before end of current year. (Mid-year changes to a payment agreement may result in future financial aid limitations.)
    - Securing a loan through a third-party financial institution to cover any past-due balance and remaining cost for current year. (This may result in a requirement for prepayment of at least a portion of tuition in future years.)
  - d. When an account is 90 days late (at least three missed payments), the Director of Business Affairs will initiate withdrawal for student(s) at the end of the current semester unless the account is brought current prior to withdrawal date. If balance remains unpaid at the time of withdrawal, transcripts will be held until a signed Promissory Note (including payment plan) is signed. If any post-withdrawal payments are missed a warrant-in-debt is secured and a collection option is pursued (wage garnishment, judgement lien, etc).

#### **Textbook replacement:**

Textbooks are provided for use and learning. Should a textbook need to be replaced due to damage or loss, the school expects the family to cover the cost of the book.

## **Announcements**

Daily announcements will be made at 8AM and at 3PM. Students are expected to be in their classroom seats and listening quietly. Announcements are also available on PowerSchool.

## **Attendance**

*To report an absence before 8:00 a.m. call the front office at 236-6000 to leave a message.*

Regular school attendance in combination with a healthy family life is paramount to success in the classroom. As a school community, our hope is to partner with families to limit elective absences and any resulting negative impacts on a student's academics. Students who miss more than one half of a school day may not participate in co-curricular activities regardless of the reason (drama performances may be an exception).

### **Important definitions:**

- *Excused absence:* An absence which is excused with parent/guardian permission to the principal or front office, is often related to illness, doctor appointments, or is school related.
- *Unexcused absence:* Absences in which more than one half of a period is missed, without parent/guardian permission to principal or front office.. (If the student is absent and parents do not call, the school office will attempt to contact parents by noon on the day the student is absent.)
- *Excessive absence:* A student having 15 cumulative absences of any type (excused, unexcused, or a combination of both) for either an entire school day or in a specific block or class.
- *Tardy:* A student is tardy if they enter a classroom after the beginning of class.
- *Unexcused Tardy:* Students arriving late to first period without a written note or other parent communication are considered unexcused.

### **Absence Policies:**

- *Excused absences:* We ask that parents notify the front office of absences due to illness, medical or dental appointments, or other personal reasons by phone or email as soon as possible (236-6000; [frontoffice@emhs.net](mailto:frontoffice@emhs.net)). A written or doctor's note supplied in advance or upon arrival is also sufficient.
- *Unexcused absences:* Any unauthorized absence from school or class will have the following consequences:
  1. A conference with the principal and communication with parents
  2. A plan for improvement will be designed during the conference
- *Excessive absences:* Any student who has one unexcused absence, or an absence without parent permission, will also be considered excessive absences and will result in an attendance improvement plan.
  - Students who have met the definition of excessive absences will result in an attendance improvement plan, where the principal, student, parent, and teacher(s) will meet to create a plan.
  - As part of this plan, the parent will be provided copies of the "EMS Medical Excuse Form" (which cites the date of the doctor visit and the exact dates that it was medically necessary for the student to be out of school), and may be asked to sign a "Consent to Exchange" so that the student, family, physician, and school staff can work together to create a successful plan for attendance improvement. In this regard, the parent must have the student's health care provider complete the EMS Medical Excuse Form, for each absence from that point on. In

addition, the parent will be responsible for submitting this form to the student's school within three days of the student's return to school in order for staff to be able to code the absence as excused. Additional absences that are not excused by a physician using the EMS Medical Excuse Form will be coded as unexcused and may result in the withdrawal from school and EMS notifying the local school district where the student resides of the student's change in enrollment status at EMS.

**Note:** Teachers are given the discretion to determine whether work missed due to unexcused absences can be made up and how much time is given to do so. We expect students to contact teachers or utilize our grading management program, PowerSchool, to develop a plan to make up the assignments. For extended illness, the student and/or parents should make specific arrangements with the teachers and/or counseling office.

#### **Attendance awards:**

- *Commended attendance:* Missing 0 days, having 0 tardies, 1+ appointments.
- *Perfect attendance:* Missing 0 days, having 0 tardies, 0 appointments (attending every minute of every day). Involvement in a school-sponsored activity does not count against this award.

**Absences** for appointments, partial-day illness, etc., will disqualify the student for perfect attendance but will not count against the commended attendance award.

#### **Co-curricular eligibility (see also: Campus Conduct):**

A student who misses school because of illness may not participate in co-curriculars that day unless the student has been in classes for the last half of the day (periods 5–8).

*Note: Unless there are other health problems, students are NOT excused for sleeping in after a late-night performance or athletic event.*

#### **Skipping classes/school:**

Students are expected to attend class and other required activities unless arrangements have been made between student, parent, and office. Students missing classes without proper permission will be disciplined under the same guidelines as the unexcused absence policy.

#### **Tardies:**

Tardies are divided into two types (tardy to school first period and tardy to class periods 2–8), with separate policies described below.

1. *Tardy to school* (first period): Students arriving late to school are considered tardy to first period and must secure a tardy slip from the office before going to class. **Important: A student must arrive before the second half of first period for lateness to be considered tardy. After the halfway point, first period lateness is considered an excused/unexcused absence (see "Important definitions" above) dependent on parent communication with the front office.**

First-period tardies will be recorded as follows... they are cumulative

- Tardy 1–4: No penalty regardless of reason
- After 4 tardies, then a meeting with the student, principal, parents, and teacher will be called to determine the reason for the tardies and to devise a plan for being on time to class
- If tardies continue, then consequences will be determined by the principal

*Note: Before/After-school detention takes priority over all school activities, including athletic practices and events.*

2. *Tardy for periods 2–8 (recorded cumulatively):*

High school (grades 9–12)

- Tardy 1–2: No penalty with parent contact made after the second tardy
- After 2 tardies, then a meeting with the student, principal, parents, and teacher will be called to determine the reason for the tardies and to devise a plan for being on time to class
- If tardies continue, then consequences will be determined by the principal which may include detention as well as other options.

Middle school (grades 6–8)

- Tardy 1–2: No penalty, warning given
- After 2 tardies, then a meeting with the student, principal, parents, and teacher will be called to determine the reason for the tardies and to devise a plan for being on time to class
- If tardies continue, then consequences will be determined by the principal which may include detention as well as other options.

*Note: This tardy policy for periods 2–8 applies only to the first five minutes of class. Tardies longer than five minutes could be considered skipping.*

## **Banquet**

Each year the juniors plan a banquet and program in honor of the seniors. The Junior-Senior Banquet enables juniors to express appreciation to the seniors for their contributions to the school. While the banquet has become a somewhat formal event, the school does not desire the banquet to become an extravagant affair.

### **Appropriate dress guidelines:**

The banquet is generally considered a dress-up occasion. However, the school expects that clothing should be modest and any attire is expected to meet or exceed school dress guidelines with the following exceptions: dress hats and strapless gowns are allowable for banquet.

### **Guest policy:**

Since the purpose of the Junior-Senior Banquet is for the members of the junior class to pay tribute to the graduating seniors with dinner, entertainment, and a time of fellowship, the banquet *is a celebration intended primarily for members of the senior class, the junior class, and the faculty*. Outside guests are permitted with proper permission and must be 10th grade or older. Such requests must be taken to the junior class secretary, with a signature of approval given by a class sponsor and the principal, no later than one week prior to the banquet.

## **Chapel**

Chapels are a required daily experience of worship and teaching designed to call students and faculty to greater faith in God, and to share in developing a more personal relationship with God. Chapel activities may include special guest speakers, singing, praying, small groups, discussions, and skits. Chapel provides a setting for spiritual teaching, inspiration, and community building. It is a visible extension of the components of our mission statement. Student input in chapel planning is provided through the Chapel Planning Committee, which

coordinates chapels in conjunction with the chapel coordinator.

Chapel is a sacred time for students, faculty, and staff to gather together. It is where we worship together, hear important stories and lessons, and are challenged in our faith journeys. Therefore, we ask everyone to enter chapel quietly, on time, and with an open spirit. We expect students, faculty, and staff to be attentive to the speaker and to participate appropriately.

Per EMS policy: Faculty members are required to attend chapel regularly and promptly, except for emergency reasons. Teachers who have assigned seats should sit in them.

*Note: Personal electronic device use is not permitted during chapel unless requested by the speaker. PEDs should be turned off (silent), and be out of sight. Food and drinks are prohibited in this area at all times.*

## **Co-curriculars**

### **Athletics:**

A wide range of athletic options is available for students in grades 6–12. Selection for most interscholastic teams is based on tryouts. Student athletes are expected to maintain the same attendance and academic standards. The athletic program is coordinated by the athletic director.

### **Clubs:**

Clubs play an active role in the life of students at Eastern Mennonite School. Students sign up for clubs which interest them and many choose to participate in multiple clubs. All clubs have a faculty sponsor to provide leadership and supervision. Each year, an effort is made to offer clubs that meet the interests of all age groups. Students may request a specific club to the principal if sufficient interest is expressed by a group of students.

### **Drama:**

Students are encouraged to participate in the dramatic performances scheduled throughout the school year. Students receive one complimentary admission to each dramatic performance, excluding musicals.

## **Counseling Services**

The goal of the counseling program at Eastern Mennonite School is to assist students in academic, career, and personal/social development through individual and group counseling as well as classroom lessons. This is a coordinated effort by faculty, staff, parents and Counseling Advisory Committee, which meets weekly.

### **There are many reasons a student might see a school counselor:**

Academic counseling aims to assist students and parents on academic options, developing a plan of studies, and as a link to additional academic resources when appropriate. Counselors direct students to opportunities that match their interests, both in and out of school.

College & Career counseling assists students in acquiring information and planning for post-secondary educational and career opportunities.

Personal/social counseling assists students in developing a greater understanding of themselves as they relate to the community around them, supports healthy and wise choices, and provides support in resolving conflicts.

Individual Counseling assists in helping students work through their unique requests or concerns. While EMS does not provide long term weekly counseling, connections and referrals can also be made with professional community mental health counselors as ongoing psychological needs necessitate.

Group Counseling may be provided surrounding specific themes of social development or other identified areas of interest or assessed needs. Parents/guardians are notified prior to any multi-session group counseling.

Classroom Counseling Lessons are when Counselors work collaboratively with teachers to develop and bring curriculum into the classroom. Topics relate to students’ academic, career or social development.

Access

Students may request an appointment with a counselor by email, through a PowerSchool link, or in the counseling suite. Students should ask teachers before leaving class when they wish to meet with a counselor. Parents and teachers may call or email counselors if they would like to request an appointment for their student. Alternately, counselors may request to see a student if a counselor becomes aware of a need.

Confidentiality Statement

At all times we seek to work with and honor parental involvement. All concerns of students and/or their families are met with appropriate and careful confidentiality. Where there exists a perceived threat of harm to self or others, additional protective procedures will also be followed. When necessary, other professional counsel will be obtained.

Opt-Out

If parents choose not to have their student participate in personal/social counseling or multi-session group counseling, parents must notify the school in writing.

**Daily Class Schedule (Bell Schedules)**

**Regular schedule**

1 <sup>st</sup>	8:00–8:41
2 <sup>nd</sup>	8:45–9:26
Chapel	9:30–9:49
3 <sup>rd</sup>	9:54–10:35
4 <sup>th</sup>	10:39–11:20
5 <sup>th</sup>	11:24–12:05
*Lunch	12:05–12:44
6 <sup>th</sup>	12:48–1:29
7 <sup>th</sup>	1:34–2:15
8 <sup>th</sup>	2:19–3:00
Orchestra	3:05–3:35 (Mon/Thurs)
Athletics, etc.,	begin at 3:40

Regular Schedule:

- \*Sixth/Seventh grade reading period 12:05-12:15
- Lunch dismissal 12:15

**Faculty meeting schedule (Tuesday)**

Orchestra	7:10–8:25
1 <sup>st</sup>	8:30–9:06
2 <sup>nd</sup>	9:10–9:46
Chapel	9:51–10:06
Homeroom	10:10–10:20
3 <sup>rd</sup>	10:24–11:00
4 <sup>th</sup>	11:04–11:40
5 <sup>th</sup>	11:44–12:20
*Lunch	12:20–12:59
6 <sup>th</sup>	1:03–1:39
7 <sup>th</sup>	1:44–2:20
8 <sup>th</sup>	2:24–3:00
Athletics, etc.,	begin at 3:40

Tuesday Schedule:

- \*Sixth/Seventh grade reading period 12:20-12:33
- Lunch dismissal 12:33

**School Campus Hours and Supervision:**

Classes begin and end as follows:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (first bell/tone at 7:55 a.m.)

Tuesday: 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (first bell/tone at 8:25 a.m.)

- Orchestra meets Monday and Thursday from 3:05 to 3:35 p.m. and Tuesday from 7:45 to 8:25 a.m.

In the interest of keeping everyone safe and supervised following the end of the school day, we encourage caregivers to pick up students by 3:15 p.m.

Middle and high school students who have a purpose to stay after school are welcome to be in the library until 4 p.m., or the commons or gym until 4:30 p.m.

If a student is staying after school, we expect caregivers to pick up all students by 4:30 p.m. unless they are attending a game or they have arranged an exception to this with a teacher or administrator.

For your information, an administrator is on duty after school each day until 4:30 p.m. At that time the administrator closes and locks all doors and will pull the gate across the lower hallway (near the gym.)

Students, please make sure to take all of your belongings with you to the locker room before practice.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips are used by teachers to enrich the learning activities of the classroom (see Academic Handbook for more information), and students are expected to participate. Parental permission for field trips is required.

### **Leadership Opportunities**

The Student Council Organization is made up of a middle and a high school division and seeks to address issues of interest to students at Eastern Mennonite School, including those dealing with student life. The SCO executive committee is elected from the student body at large. Representatives are elected to the SCO forum by each class.

Other leadership opportunities include class Officers, National Honor Society, Christmas Fund Drive Committee, student ambassadors, music, drama, and athletics.

### **Leaving School Grounds or Buildings**

Students are required to remain on the Eastern Mennonite School campus for the school day unless permission is granted by the office and the student has filled in an off-campus permit. The office must have a note, signed by a parent, in order to permit a student to leave campus. In emergencies, a phone call from a parent is acceptable. Students, at all times, must enter and exit through the school office.

### **Lost and Found**

Items left on the floor or on benches after school hours will be placed in the lost and found located in the front office. Books and instruments should be reclaimed the following day in the front office. Unclaimed clothing will be taken to Gift and Thrift at the end of each quarter.

Book bags, backpacks, and gym bags are to remain off the floor during the school day with the exception of designated areas during chapel. Lockers, shelves, and hooks are provided to accommodate these items.

## Medical Needs

**Medication Policy:** General over-the-counter medications (acetaminophen, ibuprofen, antihistamine, decongestant, antacid, cough drops or eye drops) will be available in the counseling or front office. Parents may give permission at the beginning of the school year for school staff to administer these medications to their students as needed during the school day.

If a student needs to take other medications during the school day, such as prescription medication (including Epipens and inhalers, and insulin/glucagon), BOTH of the following must be submitted to the school office:

1. A “**Medication Authorization Form**” for each medication. This form can be found on the school website. This form must be signed by the student’s parent/ guardian. It must also be **signed by a physician** if the medication is to be given longer than 10 working days, if the package states “consult physician,” or if there is a discrepancy between parents’ instructions and label/packaging instructions. If there is a change in the prescription during the school year, please send an updated form signed by the physician. This can be faxed to the school. (Fax # 540-236-6028)
2. **Original, labeled container.** All medicine must be submitted to the school office in the original container, and clearly labeled with the student’s name, medication name, instructions for administration, and the name of the physician who ordered the medication. We recommend that you ask your pharmacist for a “school bottle” with a complete label that includes the information mentioned above and the amount of medication that will be needed at school.

Immediately upon arrival at school, all medication must be brought to the counseling office by the student or parent. No medication may be carried/kept in a student’s pocket, purse, lunch box, book bag, or locker. Exceptions are a rescue inhaler, an emergency anaphylactic kit (Epipen), and insulin and glucagon, all with a written prescription provided to the school from the physician. The school staff shall observe administration of medication in the office. Parents/guardians may personally bring medication to the school office and administer it to their student at any time.

### **Illness/injury:**

The school maintains first aid supplies in the main office and counseling office for minor injuries. When the school cannot safely cope with a student illness or injury, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. Student records are kept up to date with current telephone numbers for home, parents’ workplaces, physician, and who to call in case of emergency. Parents should notify the school of any changes to this information if they occur during the year.

We want to try to have a healthy school, so please keep your student home when s/he is ill. Students do not learn well if they don’t feel well. Please notify the school if your student is home with a contagious illness.

Remain home for the following reasons:

- **Fever:** If your student's temperature is 100 degrees or more, keep him/ her home. Please be fever free without the use of fever reducing medicines for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- **Cold/ sore throat/ cough:** If your student has frequent, congested coughing, keep him/ her home. For strep throat, the student needs to be on antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- **Vomiting/diarrhea:** If your student has vomiting or persistent diarrhea in the evening or night before school, s/he should stay home.
- **General illness or malaise:** The student should stay home until s/he feels well enough to participate in school activities.

## **Safety**

### **Crisis alerts:**

In the event of a school-wide crisis, attempts will be made to reach each family unit by telephone, e-mail, and/or text message. Subscription to the text alerts system is opt-in and must be renewed annually by submitting information through the form at <http://link.emhs.net/alerts>.

### **Emergency drills:**

Fire drills are conducted periodically. Upon hearing or seeing the fire alarm, students and faculty are to close all windows and doors, turn out all lights, and walk to the designated exits without talking. They will proceed to a location 50 feet away from the school facility. When the fire drill is completed, students and faculty will be signaled to return to their activities.

### **Law enforcement:**

Eastern Mennonite School partners with local law enforcement agencies to institute restorative justice practices while ensuring the safety of our school community.

### **Searches:**

It is not our policy to conduct searches of students or their personal property without consent of a parent and/or law enforcement officials. Any school-owned property such as hallways and lockers may be periodically or randomly searched if there are valid safety concerns.

If it is deemed necessary by the administration, due to reasonable suspicion, to search a student's handbag, book bag, backpack, locker, automobile, or person, all searches will follow Virginia state guidelines.

### **Visitors/prospective students:**

For the safety of everyone, visitors coming on campus must enter the front entrance and go to the front office:

- to notify the school of their presence;
- to state the purpose of their visit;
- to sign the visitor's register or be accompanied by an administrator; and
- to obtain a visitor's pass, which is to be worn while on campus.

Prospective students are encouraged to visit Eastern Mennonite School during the school day. The following visitor guidelines must be adhered to throughout the visit. (These same guidelines also apply to other guests that an Eastern Mennonite School student may desire to bring to school.)

Prospective student visitors will:

1. request their parents contact admissions at Eastern Mennonite School for permission to visit and

- shadow a current student *at least one day in advance* of the desired visit;
2. dress and behave according to Eastern Mennonite School standards;
3. sign in at the admissions office; and
4. wear a readily visible visitor's pass or name tag at all times while on campus.
5. sign out in the admissions office.

*Note: Visitors during school hours are limited to family, alumni, church and school personnel, prospective students, and necessary local professionals. Anyone visiting for the purpose of socialization will be discouraged.*

### **School Closings**

Parents and students are welcome to schedule appointments on business days when school is closed even though offices are officially closed during these days.

Occasionally, Eastern Mennonite School will be closed or delayed due to snow or other inclement weather. Because weather and road conditions may vary based on location, when school does remain open, parents are expected to decide whether their children should attempt to travel to school. Schoolwork that is missed due to a parent's decision about the weather may be made up without penalty, upon satisfactory arrangements with the teacher. Some school closings due to inclement weather may be deemed "online instruction days."

Every effort will be made to announce school closings over WHSV-TV3; the radio stations WSVA, WMRA/WEMC, and WKCY; through text alerts; on the school website; and on the school Facebook pages by 6:30 a.m. On rare occasions, a delay may be followed by the decision to close school. In that situation, every effort will be made to announce the change two hours before the delayed starting time. Parents and students will be notified by text service. You may opt out of the text alerts system through the form at <http://link.emhs.net/alerts>.

### **Social Functions**

All social functions promoted in the name of Eastern Mennonite School must be properly sponsored by faculty and/or parents. The basic details of the social function—date, location, sponsors, etc.—must be arranged with the school office.

### **Solicitation, Promotion, and Distribution of Goods and Materials**

All non-school related solicitation of goods and materials is prohibited. All non-school related promotions, distributions, or postings must meet with the approval of the administration.

### **Transportation**

**Cars on campus:** (International students should see International Student Handbook for additional guidelines.) Parking lots are provided for student parking behind the school, at the west end of the classroom building, and east of the gym. Parking is not permitted in handicapped or visitor spaces. Proper driving is expected to maintain privileges.

After the start of school each morning, cars are not to leave the parking lots until the school day is over without permission from the office. (An off-campus permit must be obtained. The office requires parental permission before granting the permit.)

*Note: Students who need to retrieve something from their cars must seek permission from an administrator or*

*faculty member and sign out through the front office before leaving the building.*

**Bus guidelines:**

Riding to and from school in EMS-provided transportation, whether in athletic vans and buses, charter buses, or on public transportation is a privilege. Proper conduct and respect for the bus and driver is expected.

### **3. Community Expectations**

The EMS community believes a strong partnership with home and school will provide a safe and successful experience for our students.

The following are a few of the important tenets of our school culture:

- We expect all students to manage their behavior at all times in a manner which respects other persons and property.
- Learning the skills of self-discipline is an especially important part of the school experience.
- Teachers are given the authority to determine the culture of their individual classrooms.
- We encourage strong communication between parents and teachers to resolve classroom issues.
- As needed, administrators will offer support to students, parents, and faculty to create a positive learning environment.

#### **Acceptable Use Policy (Electronics; see also Appendix B)**

**Personal Electronic Devices (PED - phones, laptops, music, gaming, etc.):**

Eastern Mennonite School has adopted an open PED policy for our high school (grades 9-12; grades 6-8 see middle school policy below). Appropriate use of personal electronic devices is the expectation of all of our students. Teachers are given full authority to limit use within the culture of their classroom. We also recommend that parents utilize any necessary usage and content controls (available through local phone carriers or as third-party apps) while their child is on school grounds.

**Note: Use of any form of social media to bully, inflame, or defame others, on or off school grounds, will not be tolerated. This includes the misuse of pictures, words, or images of any kind.**

**Grades 9-12** - Unauthorized or inappropriate use of any PED in school will result in the following actions:

- 1st offense: PED is taken and given back at end of day. Warning given with option for further action if necessary.
- 2nd offense: Parents are notified and student will be required to turn in the PED to the office at the beginning of school to be picked up at the end of the day. The number of days for this “PED suspension” will be based on the severity of the infraction.

**Middle school PED policy: Away for the Day**

At EMMS, we are committed to teaching students how to use electronics to enrich their learning while helping them to be responsible digital citizens. We also recognize the need to support students in appropriate social and emotional growth. Electronic devices have a tendency to impede this growth. With this in mind, students are allowed to use cell phones and other electronic devices during the school day for educational purposes and with teacher permission, however in general, middle school students are expected to keep their personal devices turned off or on silent and stored away in their backpacks.

We recognize that students may forget to put their phone away before school begins. However, if a student's phone is seen or heard during the school day without permission from a teacher, it will be taken and given to the MS principal. The phone may be retrieved at the end of the day by the student, after a conversation with the principal. If inappropriate phone use becomes a pattern, parents will be notified and a plan for improvement will be developed with the student.

### **School computers/property:**

All computer work, graphics, and general computer use are expected to be consistent with the Eastern Mennonite School philosophy and the Technology Acceptable Use standards (see Appendix B). It is intended that students use Eastern Mennonite School computers only for course work required or elected within their classes. The following policy requirements will guide all computer use at EMS:

1. Schoolwork has priority over any other computer activity.
2. Computers may not be used to copy media in violation of copyright law.
3. Only Eastern Mennonite School–owned software may be used on school-owned computers.
4. Students may save data to the school’s technology systems. Students are responsible for backing up their files using a USB drive or cloud storage service. EMS is not responsible for student data that is lost or destroyed!
5. A student wishing to use an available computer in a space where a class is meeting is expected to get permission from the teacher.
6. All users are expected to log off appropriately so that the computer is ready for the next user.
7. The Internet is to be prioritized for school-related work. All Internet activity may be reviewed or monitored, and Internet access may be restricted or suspended at any time for failure to comply with usage guidelines.
8. Students who use computers inappropriately may be denied computer access privileges.

*Note: Computer use policies also apply to personal devices.*

### **Student Commons and Student Lounge:**

The Commons area offers students a space for quiet socialization and is managed by the SCO. This space is also used by many school and external groups so we want groups to enjoy the space and treat all furnishing and snack machines with care.

*Note: Student use of the lounge and commons is a privilege based on responsible student behavior.*

### **Courtyard:**

The outdoor courtyard is available to students before and after school and during the lunch hour after they have finished eating their lunch. During the school day, the courtyard may be used only for special activities as part of a teacher’s class.

### **Food and drink:**

No open drink items are permitted in the halls, library, or lockers. Eating in the classroom, library, or auditorium is not permitted. Teachers, at their discretion, may permit food and drink in the classroom for “special occasions” (celebrations, reading day, etc.). Only water in clear plastic bottles is permitted in the academic classroom setting. Teachers, at their discretion, may also prohibit gum in the classroom.

### **Hallways:**

Due to fire code and ease of movement through the school, students may not sit or lie on the hallway floors

during school hours. Books and gym bags must be placed on the hallway shelves.

**Areas Off Limits:**

- The auditorium (including the stage areas and foyer)\*
- The upper hallway and classrooms during lunch unless permission is obtained from a faculty member
- Any roof area
- Empty, unsupervised classrooms without permission

*\* The auditorium is used during the school day for chapel, specific class use, and performances. Permission must be granted for use of this space by individuals or groups for any other purpose.*

**Library:**

The library's environment should maximize a learning and study environment for the school community while classes are in session. Student groups who wish to socialize during study halls are encouraged to use the student commons.

**Guidelines:**

- The library is open on regular school days from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Tuesdays from 7:45–4:00). Materials may be checked out for two weeks.
- Renewal of materials is strongly encouraged though there will be fines of 10 cents a day on overdue materials, up to \$5.00 per item. Overdue notices will be given weekly in homerooms. If fines are not paid by the end of the school year, they will be added to student accounts.
- EMS Chromebooks may be checked out from the library during the day for school related use. Chromebooks must be returned promptly to the library circulation desk. Repeated neglect to return chromebooks or unnecessary wear will result in loss of checking out privileges for that student.
- During scheduled exams, the library will be open for individual quiet study. The Student Commons will be open during this time for group study.

Additional library resources, information, and assistance may be found on the library website at <http://www.emhs.net/library/>.

**Lockers:**

Lockers are provided for each 7th-12th grade student for the purpose of keeping books and school-related materials. Most lockers are not locked, so the property of other students must be respected. School insurance does *not* cover student items that are lost or stolen. Please take items of value to the front office for safekeeping. Lockers are assigned to individual students, but remain the property of the school and may be inspected by school personnel as deemed necessary. Students are advised to lock all valuables in their gym locker when participating in P.E. or an after-school athletic event.

Students wishing to keep a lock on their locker may lease a lock from the front office. The cost of the lock will be refunded when lock is returned. Only locks issued by the office may be placed on lockers at any time.

A dry-erase board on the front of each locker is provided for writing messages with dry-erase markers only. Markers of any type may not be used on the painted surface of lockers. Pictures, notes, papers, etc., may be placed on the locker only with the use of adhesive putty which may be obtained from the front office.

*Note: Only items that are in compliance with Eastern Mennonite School philosophy and objectives are permitted on lockers.*

## Lunch:

The EMS dining hall uses an electronic lunch account system called MealTime ([www.mymealtime.com](http://www.mymealtime.com)). This program, linked on our website, allows access and control of a student's lunch account online. Here, you can create an account and review all lunch activity including meals eaten and a la carte purchases.

## Guidelines:

- Students may not leave campus *for any reason* during the lunch hour. Special permission may be granted to eat lunch off campus when accompanied by a parent, mentor, or youth sponsor. The campus consists of the building and the immediate school property surrounding the building, including the parking lots to the east and west, the athletic fields to the south, and the front lawn. When permission to leave campus is granted, students are requested to fill in an Off-Campus Permit.
- Students must eat lunch in the dining hall or on the front lawn directly north of the dining hall during warmer weather. If they wish, seniors may spend time during their lunch hour at the tables located outside the entrance to the auditorium or in the courtyard between the commons and choir room.
- EMS students may have guests for lunch with prior approval of the principal. The guest must enter and sign in at the front office and wear a visitor's pass (see [Safety: Visitors/prospective students](#)).
- The upstairs hallway and classrooms are closed during lunch unless permission is obtained from a faculty member.
- The library will be open during lunch as a quiet place to read and study.
- The gym will also be open during lunch.
- Lunch dismissal order will be the same each day: Seniors will be dismissed first every day, followed by Juniors, Sophomores, Freshmen, 8th grade, 7th grade, then 6th grade students.
- Due to the differences in serving proportions, high school students should always eat first and will be allowed to move in front of middle school students.
- Middle school students have three options during lunch - stay in the dining hall, hang out in the gym, or study in the library. Middle school students may not be in other areas or wander the halls during lunch.

## Menu:

- The dining hall has two lunch options each day, unless there are special events/circumstances. In addition to the main entrée serving line, a salad bar is available on Monday–Wednesday, a taco bar on Thursday, and a potato bar on Friday (subject to change).
- Fees for meals purchased in the dining hall will be billed monthly through FACTS. Account balance and charge details can be viewed online at [mymealtime.com](http://mymealtime.com).
- Families eligible for the free or reduced lunch program should contact the business office for applications.
- Students with **food allergies** who wish to purchase a school lunch will be required to provide medical verification from a doctor. *NOTE: Adapted/modified lunches for such cases are available upon prior written request.*
- In accordance with federal law and US Department of Agriculture policy, Eastern Mennonite School is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### **Spectators at co-curricular/athletic events:**

Students, parents, and faculty are always expected to demonstrate behavior which reflects our school mission and shows good sportsmanship, whether on or off campus. Co-curricular activities provide opportunity to show respect and give positive encouragement to all participants. Students are expected to follow school conduct policies and parents need to ensure that there is adequate supervision for their children.

### **Personal Integrity**

At EMS, we are committed to supporting students in growing in personal integrity. We believe personal integrity is demonstrated in these ways at school.

1. Respecting the religious commitments and convictions of all students
2. Being honest with oneself and others
3. Earning grades and recognition without cheating
4. Showing respect to faculty, fellow students, and all others
5. Assisting in keeping the school and its grounds neat and clean
6. Practicing patience, joy, kindness, self-control, and other fruits of the spirit
7. Taking responsibility for one's own decisions and actions
8. Exhibiting self-discipline in adhering to school policies and regulations

Growth in strong Christian character requires the mutual support of the home, church, and school.

### **Commitment to a Safe Environment**

EMS is committed to a safe, secure, and substance-free campus and may involve local authorities to assist in assessing our campus for its vulnerabilities and potential breaches.

Eastern Mennonite School takes the position that a student's total quality of conduct is of concern to the school. *If there is a violation of acceptable behavior **off campus** which influences (or has the potential to influence) other students adversely, the school will deal with the problem in cooperation with the home and with the student's congregational mentor/pastor as applicable.* EMS always reserves the right to implement disciplinary procedures for student behavior infractions happening off campus or outside of school hours to preserve the safety and reputation of the school's community.

### **Co-curricular Eligibility**

#### **Defined Terms:**

Co-Curricular- (of an activity at a school) pursued in addition to the normal course of study.

#### **Academic Eligibility**

Co-curricular activities provide positive contributions to the life of the student and to the school. EMS also recognizes that this participation cannot come at the expense of academics.

#### **Monitoring Grades and Providing Support**

To support students and encourage success, counseling advisory will monitor students throughout their co-curricular activity. Teachers will complete progress reports for students earning a D or F or I at the mid quarter.

#### **Students on the D/F/I List:**

Middle and high school principals, athletic director, school counselor, academic lab teacher and or music/drama director will communicate with the student to determine the contributing factors for the low grade.

The student and the academic support persons will identify what additional help and/or consequences are needed to assist the student to achieve a passing grade within a reasonable time frame.

Those persons working with a student may require (but is not limited to) supervised work time in study hall, attendance in math lab, or supervised study sessions.

### **D/F/I Policy:**

At **mid-term of the quarter**, when DFI list is finalized, students with an **F or an Incomplete are not eligible** to participate in co-curricular activities **until they have a passing grade.**

At **mid-term of the quarter**, when DFI list is finalized, students with a **D will have a more structured study hall** where they are not to leave the study hall unless they have a pass to work with another teacher.

At end of quarter, when DFI list is finalized, if a student receives an F, the student has 7 days of ineligibility from date of when teacher final grades are due.

If you are failing at other points in the year, other than mid-term or end of quarter, counseling advisory will make a specific plan for that student.

*Note: Counseling Advisory has the ability to adjust expectations and consequences because at EMS we recognize there may be exceptions to this policy to meet the individual needs of our students.*

## **Cheating/Plagiarism**

Personal integrity is a character trait highly valued at EMS. All assessments, including tests, homework, and projects, are to be the work of the individual student unless the teacher has specifically stated that collaboration is permitted.

Cheating is wrongfully giving, taking, or presenting academic information with the intent to deceive. While plagiarism has always been a problem, the issue is compounded by the fact that many students labor under the mistaken belief that if something is on the Internet, it is public knowledge and doesn't need to be cited. In essence, plagiarism involves several issues related to the gathering of information and citing (or documenting) that information.

Plagiarism occurs when an individual takes the writings and/or ideas of another person and presents them as his/her own (with no citation). Following are some examples:

1. Copying material verbatim (and using quotation marks) from a source, but failing to cite the source.
2. Copying material verbatim and citing the source, but failing to use quotation marks.
3. Carefully (or not carefully) paraphrasing the source without giving the proper citation. (Paraphrasing is "borrowing" the idea and must be cited.)
4. Patchwork paraphrasing (in which the writer keeps many of the source's key words but rearranges the order) is a particularly insidious form of plagiarism—even if cited.

### **Cheating/plagiarism violations:**

In clear cases of cheating, the following scale of teacher response is suggested:

- **Level 1:** Student plagiarized less than a paragraph. Teacher uses this as an opportunity to teach and student is required to redo the assignment. Parent contact by teacher is made when appropriate.
- **Level 2:** Student plagiarized an entire paragraph or has committed a second offense. Teacher must contact parent(s) and student receives half of the earned credit.
- **Level 3:** Entire document is plagiarized or student has committed a third offense. Student receives a 0 for the assignment and parent is contacted.

*Note: At each level, a written record of facts will be established and may be entered in the student's electronic file.*

### **Same paper/same book:**

The same paper may not be submitted, the same book may not be read, nor may the same project be submitted to meet requirements in two or more courses unless the teachers of the courses have given their prior consent.

## **Restorative Discipline Model**

### **General guidelines:**

EMS provides a model of discipline that, when necessary, fosters and enables pathways toward healing. The goal of our restorative approach is to teach students appropriate ways to express regret and accept responsibility, while providing restitution. The primary focus is placed on repairing relationships and making sure all involved are heard. The end result: reconciliation.

Restorative discipline has two main focuses:

- The first is **building community**.  
The work and change that happens when discipline occurs cannot be successful unless all involved—students and adults—feel safe and valued in the community. Therefore, we work every day with everything we do, the decisions we make, and how we relate to each other, to create a community where all are welcome and feel as though they have a place. It is acceptable to disagree with each other, and our disagreements should become occasions to understand each other better.
- The second focus is **making things right, or reconciliation**.  
We assume that conflicts will happen and that students will make mistakes, some that are small, and some more costly. A consequence for misconduct might address the wrongdoing, but there might be more work to do in order to repair a relationship. Therefore, the goal is to make things right, not just to satisfy the consequences or endure the punishment.

Students who violate school procedural regulations and guidelines may be subject to disciplinary action using the restorative discipline model. It is our expectation that faculty handle minor occurrences and the principals be informed of a more serious offense.

In other situations, at the discretion of the head of school or Restorative Justice Advisory Group (composed of principal, student, parent(s), and appropriate faculty or staff member), disciplinary penalties or consequences for the unacceptable behaviors listed below will be determined and could include suspension or expulsion.

### **Unacceptable behaviors:**

We expect and find that the majority of Eastern Mennonite School students need very little help in making proper behavioral decisions. However, the following is a partial list of **unacceptable behaviors** on or off

campus. (This list is not intended to be exhaustive; it is illustrative of the sort of behaviors that are unacceptable.)

- Any activity which requires mandatory reporting to local legal authorities
- Belligerence or insubordination toward school personnel
- Bullying
- Disrespect for any other person
- Fighting or other confrontational physical contact with anyone
- Any form of harassment, intimidation, or exploitation, including inappropriate use of social media communication
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Lying or cheating
- Gambling
- Humor or epithets degrading people because of their color, national origin, politics, religious beliefs, etc.
- Profane, obscene, or vulgar language
- Property damage (caused by intent or carelessness)
- Stealing
- Possession, distribution, or use of tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, or look-alikes
- Possession of guns, knives, or other items which may injure another person
- Verbal abuse
- Any other behavior disruptive to the educational environment of EMS or found to be in violation of the mission of the school and the church as determined by the administration

**Controlled substances (Alcohol, Illegal and/or Harmful Drugs, Tobacco, and Inhalants):**

Use or possession of these substances is illegal for minors, and use of any of these substances is harmful to the body. Consequences for possession, distribution, or use of these substances on campus or during any school-sponsored event will have consequences. EMS reserves the right to implement disciplinary procedures for student behavior infractions happening off campus or outside of school hours to preserve the safety and reputation of the school’s community.

*Upon First offense:* The student and parents will meet with the Restorative Justice Advisory Group to listen to and be heard by those in the group. Consequences will be determined along with a plan to restore trust in the school community. In addition, consequences will be determined in the event there is a second offense. The student will also comply with any additional requirements (such as counseling and other behavioral management activities) deemed by school officials to be appropriate in addressing the situation.

**Restorative Justice Advisory Group procedures:**

In most situations, the RJ group will meet under the leadership of the principal. Below are the procedures for this discussion:

1. When a student violates procedures or demonstrates unacceptable behavior, an effort will be made to establish the details of the situation and discipline will be administered in accordance with the policies of the school. A hearing process may be used when facts cannot be established satisfactorily through normal procedures. This includes making sure all parties have the chance to express their perspective.
2. When a report is received regarding *criminal activity of the mandatory-reporting type*, the proper authorities will be called and the parents of the offending student will be notified. As applicable, student disciplinary procedural policy will be followed and enforced. Bomb threats, false fire alarms, smoke

bombs, fireworks, and distribution of pornographic images are considered a criminal offense and must be reported to proper authorities as required by Virginia state law.

3. When a report is received regarding unacceptable behavior that does not require mandatory reporting to local authorities, effort will be made to verify the story or stories reported, and the consequences established by the RJ Group will be followed and enforced.
4. Students are expected to cooperate fully in the Restorative Discipline process with faculty, administration and parents. This is part of the EMS community expectations. In this way trust can be restored within the community.

#### **Damages:**

Individual students will be assessed for the amount of damages to any part of the school property, including books, desks, walls, windows, etc. for which they are responsible.

#### **Detention:**

Students may be asked to serve detention time during lunch or before or after school. The purpose of this disciplinary option is to give the student time for reflection upon the situation. This may also give the students time to talk with an administrator and/or teacher, and make up missed time and work from the class.

#### **Poor school standing:**

Poor school standing is defined as the loss of the privilege to attend, participate in, or be a member of any school-related activity outside of the classroom setting, such as any co-curriculars or school-related events. A student may enter into poor school standing as a result of noncompliance to school disciplinary action, academic probation, or other appropriate actions deemed necessary by administration.

#### **Academic probation:**

Eastern Mennonite School recognizes that some students may reach points of failure in a class. Sometimes these periods are short-lived and require minimal support; others are more long-term and require intervention from the school and family. As a way to monitor students, the Counseling Office compiles a list of students who are earning a D, F or I (Incomplete) every 4 ½ weeks. Counseling Advisory reviews this list and collaborates with students, teachers, parents, coaches or directors to find a pathway toward a stronger academic performance.

When a student has failed first semester in a core class, he or she may pass the class if the second semester grade and the first semester grade together results in a 60% (or D-) or above.

Counseling Advisory will review senior grades at the conclusion of first semester. If any student has failed a course necessary for graduation, then the high school counselor will develop a plan to address the failing course. It may mean retaking it second semester or making arrangements for an online course. (Summer work will likely be required for second semester senior academic problems.)

The desire of the school is to ensure that all students experience academic successes in line with their interests and capacity. When they do not experience that success, the school will work with the families to see what can be done to create a plan to promote a positive school experience, either with us or at another school.

#### **Suspension:**

In some cases, the RJ Advisory Group may decide that inside or outside suspension is appropriate. The number of days will be determined by the RJ Advisory Group.

### **Suspension may take one of the following forms:**

*In-school suspension:* For in-school suspension the student will be asked to come to school, but rather than attend classes, the student will be given a private space and will be responsible to do all classwork provided by teachers. The student on in-school suspension will leave campus immediately after the school day and will not return for co-curricular activities.

*Off-campus suspension:* In off-campus suspension the student will be asked to stay at home for a designated number of days—this includes both classes and co-curricular activities. Academic work will be expected to be completed by the student during this time.

### **Dress Guidelines**

We recognize that each family in our EMS community has different dress expectations. We also recognize that dress can be a form of expression for many students. We believe that how the members of our community dress can contribute to or take away from a respectful and positive learning culture. Therefore, we have created the following guidelines to provide clarity for students and families about what we consider appropriate dress for school.

The policy seeks to make students feel safe, ensure student dignity, and facilitate restorative justice. *Note: EMS sponsored events outside of the normal school day (e.g. athletic or choral performances) may have specific expectations for student attire.*

### **We ask that students dress comfortably, modestly, and with respect for others following these guidelines:**

1. Any clothing that is not supportive of the EMS philosophy and objectives as outlined in this handbook or displays/references information that inflames or defames, or distracts from a healthy learning environment is prohibited.
2. Shorts should be no shorter than mid-thigh. Skirts should be no shorter than two inches above the knee. Leggings are appropriate when worn underneath dresses, tunics or skirts.
3. Shorts and pants should be zippered or buttoned, not elastic in the waist such as athletic shorts or yoga pants. Slacks, jeans, and “team style” or “jogger” warm ups are acceptable.
4. Shirts and blouses should cover the whole torso. Sleeveless blouses and shirts are acceptable as long as the torso, undergarments are covered, and shoulder straps are at least 3 fingers wide.
5. Writing on shirts should be respectful and appropriate for all ages.
6. Hats or bandanas should be worn outside only.
7. Clothing should be free from holes and rips.
8. One item of camouflage is acceptable if it follows the guidelines outlined above.

We believe that the manner in which adults at EMS address the dress guidelines is very important. Therefore, when faculty or staff observe that a student has not followed one of the guidelines above, he or she will have a conversation with the student. The adult will articulate the specific guidelines not being followed, and the student will be asked to change their dress if possible, or to make a different choice the next day. If a pattern of not following guidelines persists, then a conversation with the principal may occur and a plan will be developed. Our goal is to clarify the school’s expectations and to help our students make appropriate choices for school.

### **Peer Relationships**

Eastern Mennonite School believes that peer experiences shape the development and well-being of our students. It is our understanding that a child’s self-esteem and self-worth are developed by how they are treated by their peers, by having secure family relationships, and by developing a strong sense of community. EMS strives to

provide rich opportunities for healthy social development and interpersonal skills. We are committed to addressing inappropriate student behaviors as they arise through a process of respect, honesty, ownership of sin, forgiveness, and accountability, while considering the growth and developmental needs of our K–12 community. The following descriptions of inappropriate behavior will help students and parents to understand better what we expect of each student in our community.

**Bullying:**

Bullying another student, in or out of school, will not be tolerated. This includes any form of social media, pictures, photographs, or other methods that could be used for this purpose.

**Hazing:**

Hazing is a violation of human dignity and is strictly prohibited. Any action by an individual or group of persons which forces mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule can be classified as hazing.

**Harassment:**

Eastern Mennonite School is committed to maintaining a community environment in which all individuals treat one another with dignity and respect. The learning environment must be one in which all individuals are free to develop relationships, work, and learn without fear of intimidation, exploitation, harassment, humiliation, or degradation from the unwanted and unacceptable behavior of another. Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to, bullying, name calling, teasing, taunting, put-downs, and any behavior that makes for an uncomfortable learning environment.

To provide an environment of mutual respect, tolerance, and sensitivity, it is important that every member of the community recognize guidelines for appropriate behavior. Eastern Mennonite School is prepared to take action to prevent and correct any violations of this policy.. A complete copy of the harassment policy is included in this handbook in appendix A.

**Student interpersonal relationships:**

Issues regarding sexuality and peer relationships are extremely important because of the sensitive developmental nature of early youth. Students, along with teachers and parents, need to be aware of both the influences which support and those which undermine positive sexual development. When facing difficult situations which may include teasing and harassment, questions of sexual orientation, sexual pressure, abuse, or concern over body image, students are encouraged to seek the counsel of a trustworthy adult.

Students are asked to avoid public displays of affection (PDAs) and refrain from activity which focuses mental and physical energy mainly on physical sexuality. Overt and inappropriate affection, viewing pornography, or any sexual activity is not school appropriate. The EMS community believes that the potential for complex personal issues and for educational disruption is magnified by such behaviors.

**Personal Property**

The school expects all students to respect both school and personal property. Because we do not accept responsibility for personal property lost or stolen on campus, we advise students not to bring to school large sums of cash, expensive jewelry or clothing, gaming devices, or other unnecessary valuables.

**Unauthorized Entry/School Pranks**

Illegal entry or unauthorized presence in the school building(s) will result in a meeting with the RJ Advisory

Group and a plan for consequences will be determined.

## 4. Grievance Procedures

Teachers at Eastern Mennonite School seek to develop and maintain good working relationships with parents and students. Differences that arise among students, parents, and teachers must be dealt with ethically and in a spirit of cooperation. We seek to adhere to the principles of Matthew 18:15-17. To follow the process outlined in Matthew 18, all complaints should be registered in the following sequence:

1. Discuss concern with student's teacher. An honest effort must be made to work through the problem at this level.
2. If the problem remains unresolved, it is to be discussed with the principal.
3. After much effort to solve the problem at the previous levels, and if the problem is still not resolved to parent and student satisfaction, a written request may be submitted to the head of school, who will forward the request as an appeal to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may elect to handle the concern as an entire board or delegate the processing of the appeal to an appropriate board committee.

It is important that parents register complaints as they arise, as a school community we want to work together to live into our mission and vision.

## **Appendix A: Student Harassment Policy**

Eastern Mennonite School is committed to maintaining a community environment in which all individuals treat one another with dignity and respect. The learning environment must be one in which all individuals are free to develop relationships, work, and learn without fear of intimidation, exploitation, harassment, humiliation, or degradation from the unwanted and unacceptable behavior of another. Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to, bullying, name calling, teasing, taunting, put-downs, and any behavior that makes for an uncomfortable learning environment.

In order to provide an environment of mutual respect, tolerance, and sensitivity, it is important that every member of the community recognize guidelines for appropriate behavior. Eastern Mennonite School is prepared to take action to prevent and correct any violations of this policy. Anyone who violates this policy may be subject to discipline up to and including termination or expulsion.

### **Definition of sexual harassment:**

*Sexual harassment* means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, made by someone from or in the work or educational setting, under any of the following conditions:

1. Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's academic status or progress.
2. Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of academic decisions affecting the individual.
3. The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.
4. Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through this school.

### **Examples of sexual harassment:**

Unwelcome sexual conduct of this type can include a wide range of verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Among the types of conduct which would violate this policy are the following:

1. Unwanted sexual advances or propositions
2. Offering academic benefits in exchange for sexual favors
3. Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances
4. Visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters
5. Verbal conduct such as making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, or jokes
6. Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations
7. Physical conduct such as touching, assaulting, impeding, or blocking movements

### **If harassment occurs:**

Listed below is a suggested procedure of addressing a situation of harassment. It is recommended that an individual follow these steps. However, neither these steps nor their order are an individual's only option. Help can be found through many avenues. The most important step is to report the situation to one of the persons listed below. The purpose of the procedure is to help individuals receive the support and guidance necessary to

stop the harassment.

- Let the offending person or people know you want the behavior to stop. Say NO firmly. Look directly at them with a straight face to give a clear message about how you feel. Do not apologize.
- Keep a record of when, where, and how you have been mistreated. Include witnesses, direct quotes, actions, evidence, and any written communication.
- Contact someone at school about the situation: school counselors, principal, director of academics, faculty members.

Students who observe conduct of a harassing nature (sexual or otherwise) are also encouraged to report the matter to one of the school officials designated below.

**Where to report any type of harassment:**

The following individuals are specifically authorized to receive complaints and respond to questions regarding harassment:

Justin King	High School Principal	(540) 236-6013
Maria Archer	K-8 Principal	(540) 236-6002
Jodi Nisly Hertzler	College & Career Counselor	(540) 578-4346
Debbie Katz	School Counselor	(540) 236-6022
Gini Trotter	School Counselor	(540) 236-6031

The school phone number for these people is (540) 236-6000.

All parties involved will be offered support by the school counselors.

Every effort will be made to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the parties involved in any complaint. However, the school reserves the right to fully investigate every complaint, and to notify a student's parent/guardian and appropriate government officials as the circumstances warrant.

**Protection against retaliation:**

It is against school policy to discriminate or retaliate against any person who has filed a complaint concerning sexual harassment or who has testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in any investigation proceeding or hearing concerning sexual harassment.

**Procedure for investigation of the complaint and for taking corrective action:**

When one of the school officials designated in this policy receives a complaint, he or she shall immediately inform the principal. The principal will direct an investigation. If the investigation confirms the allegations, prompt corrective actions shall be taken. The individual who suffered the harassing conduct shall be informed of the corrective action taken. In addition, any employee or student found to be responsible for sexual harassment in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion or termination. The severity of the disciplinary action will be based upon the circumstances of the infraction.

## Appendix B: Technology – Acceptable Use Standards

**The purpose for our technology:** EMS endeavors to provide state-of-the-art technology for faculty, staff and students with the goal of preparing our students for educational and employment challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This technology includes access to the school network through lab and classroom computers, a student-accessible wireless network, and use of the Internet through a high-speed broadband connection. This worldwide forum of informational resources available through the EMS network is intended to be used for educational purposes only. Information Technology (IT) systems use is a privilege for students that carries specific responsibilities for the sake of others using the same technology, for the integrity of the system, for the good of the school community, and for the wholesome instruction of each student.

EMS expects all persons using the IT systems to exercise the highest level of respect for themselves, others, equipment/systems, and copyright laws. Failure to comply with these Acceptable Use Standards will result in the loss of privilege of using the EMS IT systems and/or result in additional consequences deemed appropriate as stated in the Student/Parent Handbook.

### **A: Personal Responsibility:**

IT systems are intended to be used for educational purposes. Persons using the systems are individually responsible for the material they create, use, send and receive. Personal responsibility for actions and communications is mandatory; anonymity is not permitted, nor is falsely representing another individual at logon or in communication. Using someone else's account and password is not permitted. Violations or attempted circumvention of system security and observed abuses of the system should be reported to EMS faculty or staff immediately. Reporting violations is essential for maintaining the integrity of the school's network and ensuring maximum system speed and efficiency for all users.

The network, and all uses of it, is subject to review and monitoring. There are ways the system can be misused and abused; there are modes of use that are not educational. There is information available through the Internet that is inappropriate in our setting as a Christian educational institution. System users should always strive to use the technology appropriately, wisely, honorably, and educationally. Examples of activities that are NOT educational in nature and do NOT belong in our school setting are listed below. This is not an exhaustive list. Students that use school technology in these ways or fail to follow the guidelines in this contract will lose their technology privileges and/or be subject to consequences as outlined in the Student/Parent Handbook.

The following is a partial list of unacceptable or non-educational activities:

- Downloading of any software, including freeware and games, to school-owned technology systems.
- Illegal downloading or misuse of copyrighted media.
- Playing of online or web-based games (unless expressly permitted by a teacher).
- Use of peer-to-peer file sharing services or websites.
- Visiting sites dedicated to violence, hatred, racism, terrorism, or weapons is strictly forbidden.
- Visiting sites containing pornographic, obscene, or risqué content is strictly forbidden.
- Attempting to disrupt system stability, override or bypass system restrictions or filtering, including attempts to hack or crack/guess passwords, and logging in to or accessing another student's account. These are serious criminal offenses and will be handled as such.

**All Internet activity is logged on the EMS firewall; observed inappropriate online activity will be reported to EMS administration. In addition, if EMS administration becomes aware of technology use violating any local, state, or federal law, the appropriate law enforcement agency will be notified.**

## **B: Responsibility to Others**

- Remember, all users have a duty to help maintain system integrity.
- Exercise courtesy and kindness in your content and language when using Internet resources. Racial, religious, cultural, or ethnic attacks will not be tolerated. Cyber-bullying, *whether done on or off-campus* will not be tolerated.
- Respect the privacy of other persons' data and online identity. If another person left a computer session logged in, log them off before using that computer.
- Do not change settings, degrade programs, or cause system disruption for other users.
- System problems or issues encountered should be reported immediately to the supervising faculty member, who will then work with the IT staff to resolve the problem.
- Use only your school-issued or personal account. Using another student's login account, or allowing another student to use your login account will result in immediate restrictions.

## **C: Responsibility to Equipment and the Network**

- Leave computers, printers, and work areas clean and in good operating condition. Do not move, unplug, or tamper with equipment.
- DO NOT eat or drink in the labs or around any computer equipment.
- System software used may only be that which the school can legally use. Copying or installing software on school-owned computers may be a licensing or copyright violation, and is prohibited.
- Copyrighted software may not be illegally borrowed or copied.
- Computer users should make every effort to keep the system free of malware. Report any suspicious email contents or attachments if accessed.
- Actively manage and organize your file space, storing only school related material that you need. Periodically, clean out and purge old files.
- Printing activities will be closely monitored. Students who print excessively will be warned, then charged a per-page fee or banned from using school printers if excessive printing continues.

**D: All policies herein also apply to student use of personal devices brought on campus. Students must ask for teacher permission before using student-owned laptops or other devices in any given class period.**

**E: EMS assumes no liability for data loss or corruption, damage to personal electronics, or prosecution that may result from our network or the Internet's use; these risks are assumed by individual users.**

## FAQs

### **IF YOU:**

are tardy to school

are tardy to a class 2-8 periods

were absent from school

anticipate an absence from school

are ill before coming to school

become ill in school

must leave school early for an appointment

lost something or found an item belonging to someone else

have a question about class schedule or a particular class

need information on careers or colleges

have a problem with your locker

need to confidentially report on something you have seen or heard

have a question about weather

are a victim or have concerns or questions about sexual harassment or emotional, physical, or substance abuse

want to take your temperature or need a band aid or other first aid supplies

have a menu suggestion

need adhesive or a dry-erase marker for your locker

have a friend who wants to visit

make a payment

have a problem with another student

need to take medication during the day

want to check something on the EMS website

### **THEN:**

go to the front office for a pass

take teacher a note or fill out green unexcused tardy slip

go to the office with a note the day returning to school

bring a parental note and complete a Permission for Absence form

have your parent or guardian call the front office by 8:00 a.m. (236-6000)

go to the counseling office and explain your situation

bring a parental note to front office before the beginning of that school day

go to the front office

go to the school counseling office

go to the college counseling office

go to high school principal's office

go to the school counseling office or principal's office

listen to local radio or TV station for information or go to EMS webpage

see the principal or a school counselor

go to the school counseling office

see the dining hall manager

go to the front office

go to the admissions office

write check to Eastern Mennonite School and take it to the business office

see your school counselor or the principal

go to the school counseling office

go to [www.easternmennonite.org](http://www.easternmennonite.org)