

POPLAR ELEMENTARY

Student Handbook

2025 - 2026



Superintendent
Dr. Keith Erickson
PO Box 458
Poplar, MT 59255
406-768-6602

Principal K-4
John Wetsit
PO Box 458
Poplar, MT 59255
406-768-6631

Associate Principal K-4
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PO Box 458
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PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

The Poplar Elementary School Student Handbook contains information that students and parents are likely to need during the school year. The handbook is organized alphabetically by topic. Throughout the handbook, the term the student's parent is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy. Please be aware that this document is updated annually, while policy adoption and revision is an ongoing process. Therefore, any changes in policy that affect student handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters and other communications. These changes will generally supersede provisions found in this handbook that have been made obsolete by a newly adopted policy.

Please note that references to policy codes are included to help parents confirm current policy. A copy of the District's Policy Manual is available in the school office.

In case of conflict between Board policies or any provisions of student handbooks, the provision of Board policy is to be followed.

Poplar School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The following District staff members have been designated to coordinate compliance with these requirements:

Title IX Coordinator

Frank Gourneau III

PO Box 458

Poplar, MT 59255

406-768-6831

SPED Coordinator\9-12 associate principal

Patricia Jo Black

PO Box 458

Poplar, MT 59255

406-768-6812

POPLAR SCHOOL DISTRICT

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Poplar Schools, in cooperation with parents and community, is to develop exemplary citizens through enthusiastic and knowledgeable guidance and instruction in a culturally enriched environment.



THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Organization

The legal name of this District is Poplar School District No. 9 & 9B, Roosevelt County, State of Montana. The District is classified as a second-class district and is operated according to the laws and regulations pertaining to a second-class district.

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

Membership

The District is governed by a Board of Trustees consisting of five (5) members. The Board's powers and duties include the broad authority to adopt and enforce all necessary policies for the management and government of the public schools. Except as otherwise provided by law, trustees shall hold office for terms of three (3) years, or until their successors are elected and qualified. Terms of trustees shall be staggered as provided by law.

All trustees shall participate on an equal basis with other members in all business transactions pertaining to the District. Official action by Board members must occur at a duly called and legally conducted meeting. A "meeting" is defined as the convening of a quorum of the constituent membership of the Board, whether in person or by means of electronic equipment, to hear, discuss, or act upon a matter over which the Board has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

School board members, as individuals, have no authority over school affairs, except as provided by law or as authorized by the Board.

Regular Board Meetings

Unless otherwise specified, all meetings will be held in the elementary school board room. Regular meetings shall be held at 5:10 p.m. on the second Monday of each month or at other times and places determined by a majority vote. Except for an unforeseen emergency, meetings must be held in a school building or in a publicly owned building located within the District. If regular meetings are to be held at places other than the place stated above or are adjourned to times other than the regular meeting time, notice of the meeting shall be made in the same manner as provided for special meetings. When a meeting date falls on a legal holiday, the meeting shall be held on the next business day. Posting of meetings will be placed conspicuously within the District in a manner that will receive public attention.

POPLAR SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Lori Smoker
Board Chairman
Poplar, MT 59255

Robyn Baker
Vice Chair
Poplar, MT 59255

Marva Chapman
Poplar, MT 59255

Jeff Berger
Poplar, MT 59255

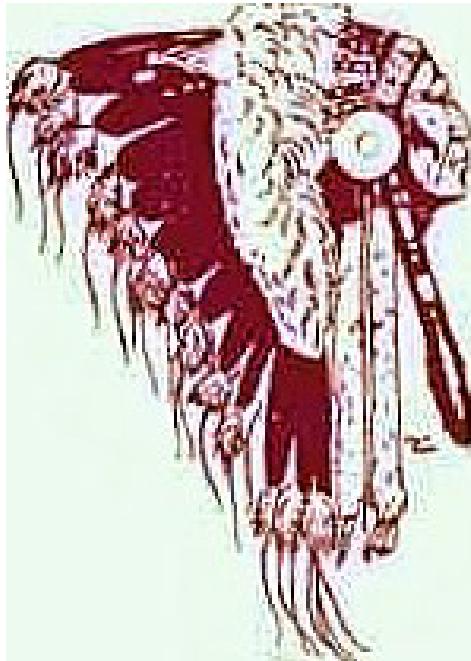
Kenneth Smoker Jr.
Poplar, MT 59255

POPLAR

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mission Statement

The mission of Poplar Elementary is to educate all students in academic and social skills needed to be successful. Our staff in cooperation with families and community will teach a challenging and culturally enriched curriculum in a safe, creative environment.



POPLAR *ELEMENTARY SCHOOL* *Belief Statements*

At Poplar Elementary School we believe...

- *Learning is a lifelong process*
- *All students can learn*
- *In respect for self, others and our environment*



POPLAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IMPORTANT CONTACTS

John Wetsit

K-4 Principal
PO Box 458
Poplar, MT 59255
768-6631

Greg Gourneau Jr.

K-4 Associate Principal
PO Box 458
Poplar, MT 59255
768-6634

Vacant

Elementary Secretary
PO Box 458
Poplar, MT 59255
768-6633

Becky Stensland

Elementary Home School Coordinator
PO Box 458
Poplar, MT 59255
768-6632

Christian Curtis

School Nurse
PO Box 458
Poplar, MT 59255
768-6610

Katie Crowley

Elementary Counselor
PO Box 458
Poplar, MT 59255
768-6616

Poplar Elementary School Staff Assignments 2025-2026

Pre K

Ms. Shari Daniels

KINDERGARTEN

Ms. Shannon Murphy
Mrs. Amy Benson
Mrs. Olivia Headdress
Mrs. Jane Crowe

FIRST GRADE

Mrs. Sarelle Escarcega
Ms. Tracy Knowlton
Ms. Dusti Marottek
Ms. Adella Pugh

SECOND GRADE

Mrs. Debbie Azure
Mrs. Haven Linder
Mrs. Theresa Murray
Mrs. Jennifer Medicine Cloud

THIRD GRADE

Mr. Adrian Spotted Bird
Mrs. Jessie Colon
Mr. Rolfe Schwartzkopf
Ms. Marly Firemoon

FOURTH GRADE

Mrs. Lanette Bidegaray
Ms. Jennifer Mandan
Mrs. Lana Sherman
Ms. Chelsie McKee
Ms. Janice Zabel

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Mrs. Leslie Moran
Ms. Janine Tan
Mrs. Shaira Delim
Mrs. Eden Vitor
Mrs. Maribel Wagas-Keith
Mrs. Lorelie Galo

ADMINISTRATION

Principal
Mr. John Wetsit
Assist. Principal
Mr. Greg Gourneau Jr.

COUNSELORS

Ms. Katie Crowley

Title 1

Mrs. Melissa Kohl-Granbois

Art/Digital Media

Mrs. Amanda Johnston

LIBRARY

Mrs. Rayna Schultes

MUSIC

Ms. Valerie Boyd

Technology

TBD

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Mr. Thomas Olsen

SPEECH

Chelsea Phipps
Tiffany Johnson (Online)

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

Lorri Colter

Reading Tutor

Sarah Thompson
Charlene Culbertson
Marilee Buckles

CENTRAL COPY

Mrs. Diane LaRoche

HOME-SCHOOL COORDINATOR

Becky Stensland

Administrative Assistant

TBD

SCHOOL NURSE

Christian Curtis

TIME-OUT ROOM

Ms. Janice White Eagle-Johnson

HPDP THERAPIST

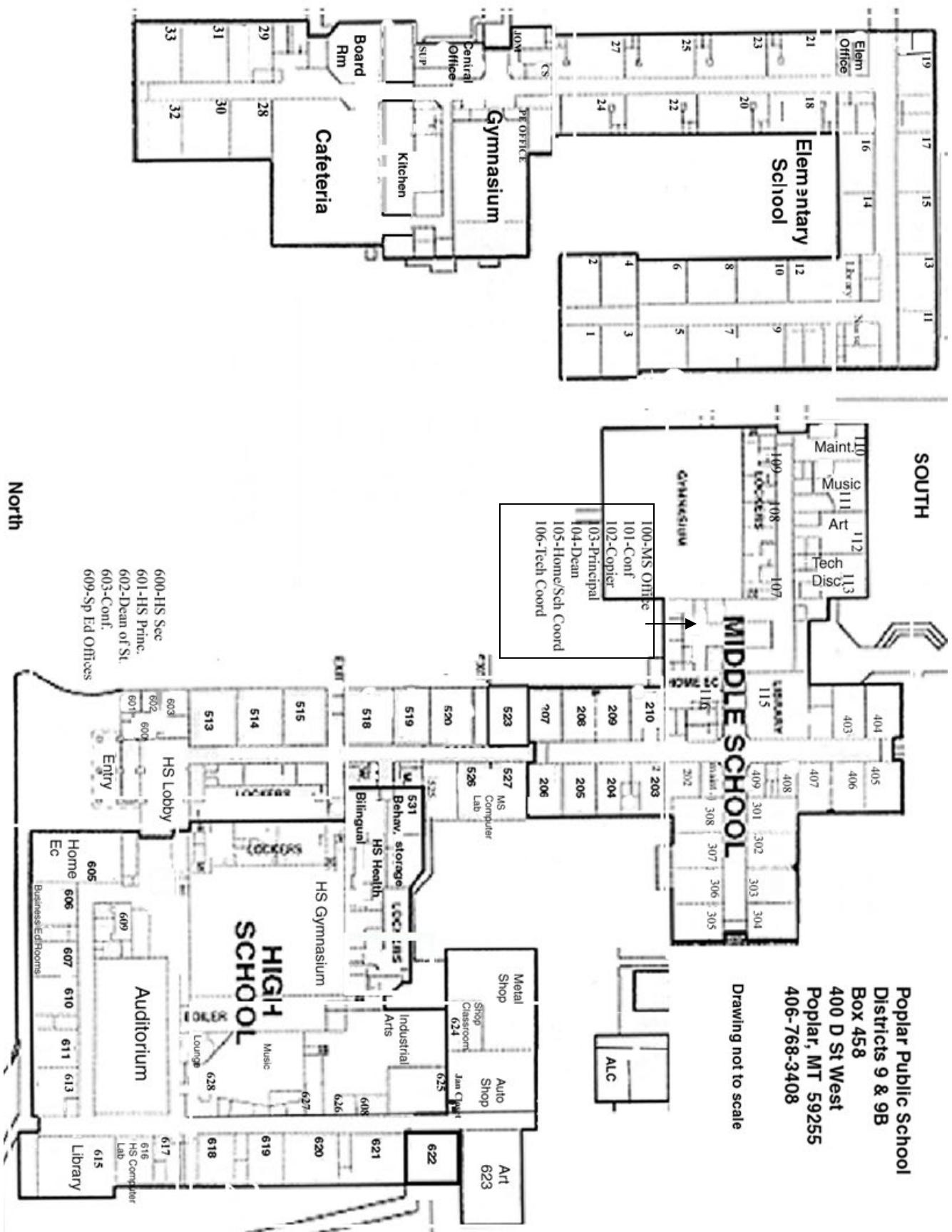
Connie Dahl

Paraprofessionals

Jessica Dionne
Annie Moran
Blossom Longee
Myra Daniels
Delrae Reddoor
Jolene Chopper
Vivian Baker
Leticia Carvalho
Joey Youngman
Julia Carpenter
Angela Chaboneau

POPLAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
DAILY SCHEDULE 2025- 2026

| | |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| 8:05 AM | BREAKFAST BELL GRADES K-4 |
| 8:25 AM | WARNING BELL |
| 8:30 AM | SCHOOL DAY BEGINS |
| 10:25-10:40 | 4 TH GRADE AM RECESS |
| 11:00-11:45 | KINDERGARTEN LUNCH / RECESS |
| 11:05-11:50 | 1 ST GRADE LUNCH / RECESS |
| 11:10-11:35 | 2 ND GRADE LUNCH / RECESS |
| 11:35-12:20 | 4 TH GRADE LUNCH |
| 12:10-12:55 | 3RD GRADE LUNCH / RECESS |
| 1:25-1:45 | 1ST PM RECESS |
| 1:45-2:05 | KINDERGARTEN RECESS |
| 1:50-2:10 | 2ND PM RECESS |
| 2:10-2:30 | 3RD PM RECESS |
| 2:25-2:40 | 4 th PM RECESS |
| 3:00 | K-2 DISMISSAL |
| 3:00-3:30 | BUS DUTY GRADES K-2 |
| 3:30 | 3RD AND 4TH DISMISSAL |



Drawing not to scale

File located at
H:\Everyone\Maps\3buildings.doc

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential for the student to make the most of his or her education to benefit from teacher-led activities, to build each day's learning on that of the previous day, and to grow as an individual.

State law requires:

- # A student between the ages of 7 and 16 **must** attend school unless the student is otherwise legally exempted or excused. A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her sixteenth birthday is required to attend each school day.

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent from school without permission, from any class or from required special programs, will be considered truant and subject to disciplinary action. Truancy may also result in assessment of a penalty by a court of law against the student and his or her parents.

- # To receive credit in a class, a student must attend at least **160** of the days the class is offered. A student who attends fewer than **160** of the days the class is offered may be retained unless the administration finds that the absences are the result of extenuating circumstances, such as:
 - *An extracurricular activity or public performance, approved by the administration.
 - *Religious instruction, up to two hours per week.
 - *A documented health care appointment if the student begins classes or returns to school on the same day as the appointment.
 - *A temporary absence resulting from any cause acceptable to the administration, including personal illness, or illness or death in the immediate family.
 - *A juvenile court proceeding documented by a probation officer.
 - *An absence required by state or local welfare authorities.
 - *A family emergency or unforeseen or unavoidable instance requiring immediate attention.
 - *An approved visit to a college campus.
- # When a student must be absent from school, the student upon returning to school must bring a note, signed by the parent/guardian, that describes the reason for the absence. A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted unless the student is 18 or older.
- # A student absent for any reason should promptly make up specific assignments missed and/or complete additional in-depth study assigned by the teacher. A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.
- # Class time is important. Doctor appointments should be scheduled, if possible, at times when the student will not miss instructional time.
- # A student who is tardy to class by more than 20 minutes will be counted absent for the first period. Repeated instances of tardiness will result in more severe disciplinary action.
- # When a student is checked out early for a class period the student is marked absent for the entire class period. Parents are therefore encouraged to wait until the end of the school day to pick up their children.

BULLYING/HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION/HAZING

Bullying (including cyberbullying), harassment, intimidation, or hazing, by students, staff, or third parties, is strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated. All complaints about behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated. Retaliation is prohibited against any person who reports or is thought to have reported a violation, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry. For additional information, please see Policy 3225.

CAFETERIA SERVICES

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily. Free meals are available to all students.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES / CONDITIONS

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

| | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Amebiasis | Hepatitis | Rubella (German Measles), including congenital |
| Campylobacteriosis | Influenza | Salmonellosis |
| Chickenpox | Lyme disease | Syphilis |
| Chlamydia | Malaria | Scabies |
| Colorado Tick Fever | Measles (Rubeola) | Shigellosis |
| Diphtheria | Meningitis | Streptococcal disease, invasive |
| Gastroenteritis | Mumps | Tuberculosis |
| Giardiasis | Pinkeye | Whooping Cough (Pertussis) |
| Hansen's disease | Ringworm of the scalp | |

COMPLAINTS BY STUDENTS / PARENTS

Usually, student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed simply by a phone call or a conference with the teacher. In general, a parent or student should first discuss the complaint with the individual involved. If unresolved, the District has adopted a uniform complaint procedure policy for most complaints with the exception of complaints/concerns regarding sexual discrimination and/or disability discrimination. If unresolved a written complaint and a request for a conference should be sent to the Principal. If still unresolved, the matter may be referred to the Superintendent. Under some circumstances, the District provides for the complaint to be presented to the Board of Trustees in the event the matter cannot be resolved at the administrative level.

Some complaints require different procedures. Any building office or the Superintendent's office can provide information regarding specific processes for filing complaints. For additional information, see policy 1700.

COMPUTER RESOURCES

To prepare students for an increasingly computerized society, the District has made a substantial investment in computer technology for instructional purposes. Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these resources; violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Students and parents should be aware that electronic communications e-mail using District computers is not private and may be monitored by District staff. For additional information, see policy 3612

CONDUCT

In order for students to take advantage of available learning opportunities and to be productive members of our campus community, each student is expected to:

- # Demonstrate courtesy - even when others do not.
- # Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline.
- # Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
- # Prepare for each class; take appropriate materials and assignments to class.
- # Meet District or building standards of grooming and dress.
- # Obey all building and classroom rules.
- # Respect the rights and privileges of other students, teachers, and other District staff.
- # Respect the property of others, including District property and facilities.
- # Cooperate with or assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline.

Applicability of School Rules and Discipline

To achieve the best possible learning environment for all our students, Poplar Elementary School rules and discipline will apply:

- # On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during or after school hours or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
- # Off school grounds at a school sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;
- # Traveling to and from school or a school activity, function or event; and
- # Anywhere, if the conduct may reasonably be considered to be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member, or an interference with school purposes of an educational function.

POPLAR ELEMENTARY'S SCHOOLWIDE BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

The Poplar Elementary faculty and staff believe that all students can achieve success at school. We have developed a school wide behavior management system which includes several positive student recognition programs and student consequence plans.

Within the framework of a positive classroom and school environment, students are expected to follow the school wide rules. When a student has difficulty with his or her behavior, there is a system in place which all teachers follow.

Behavior Management Programs

I FOLLOW THE RULES CLUB

This quarterly award program is designed for students who exhibit consistent outstanding behavior.

STUDENT OF THE WEEK

These awards are given out weekly by designated classroom teachers for academic, social and behavior skills.

RECESS BEHAVIORAL PLAN

This plan is monitored individually by grade levels to ensure playground safety. Children who have received three time-outs on the playground will lose recess time and serve classroom detention.

CAUGHT BEING GOOD: this will be given to students that have shown behavior above and beyond the regular expectations at recess. Ex. Helping a student that is afraid of heights down the towers. Playing with a new student without being asked. This ticket can be redeemed with the assistant principal for a prize.

TIME-OUT ROOM

This school wide program has been implemented to ensure that maximum learning takes place in the classroom. A time-out will be assigned when a student reaches the fourth step of a classroom discipline plan.

DETENTION

Recess detention will be held during recess time and will be assigned when a student reaches the fourth step of a classroom discipline plan.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ISS):

This school wide program has been implemented to ensure that maximum learning takes place in the classroom. An In-School Suspension (ISS) will be assigned by the administration when a student needs to serve more than 30 minutes out of the classroom setting.

OUT-OF- SCHOOL SUSPENSION (OSS):

Students may be suspended for major offenses (physical assault, sexual assault or harassment, retaliatory acts, weapons, destruction of property, theft, etc.)

POPLAR ELEMENTARY DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

Discipline measures are intended to correct misconduct, prevent its reoccurrence and promote responsible behavior. Hall behavior, common areas, and classroom disruptions will be under the direct supervision of the faculty. Every staff member is to be considered a supervisor of all students. Discipline is divided into the following categories with the action to be taken as specified below:

TIME-OUT OFFENSES (Minor Offenses)

When a student reaches the fourth step in the classroom discipline plan, he/she will be assigned a fifteen-minute time-out in the time-out room. Students who continue to display inappropriate conduct will progress through the following steps:

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| First time-out | letter sent home |
| Second time-out | letter sent home |
| Third time-out | letter sent home |
| Fourth time-out | <i>parent/teacher conference, initiated by teacher</i> |
| Fifth time-out | letter sent home |
| Sixth time-out | write up, 1 hr. ISS, loss of next grade level recess served in classroom, parents will be notified, and a FASST Team Referral will be made |
| Seventh time-out | letter sent home, loss of next recess served in grade level recess detention |
| Eighth time-out | letter sent home, loss of next recess served in grade level recess detention |
| Ninth time-out | letter sent home, loss of next recess served in grade level recess detention |
| Tenth time-out | letter sent home, loss of next recess served in grade level recess detention |
| Eleventh time-out | letter sent home, loss of next recess served in grade level recess detention |
| Twelfth time-out | write up, 2 hrs. ISS, loss of next grade level recess served in time-out room, parent/guardians will be notified |

Students who continue to display inappropriate conduct may be suspended by the administration for an extended period of time, placed on a long-term assistance program, or provided with an alternative education setting. Extreme behavior may result in a student appearing before the Board of Trustees for an expulsion hearing.

MAJOR OFFENSES

Physical assault, sexual assault or harassment, retaliatory acts, weapons, destruction of property, improper use of vehicle, use and/or possession of tobacco products, and theft.

Possession of a Weapon in a School Building

Any person who possesses, carries or stores a weapon in a school building shall face disciplinary action by the District and may also be referred to law enforcement for prosecution. In addition, a parent or guardian of any minor violating this policy who purposely and knowingly permits their child to carry, possess, or store a weapon may also be referred to law enforcement for possible prosecution.

For the purpose of this section only, the following terms are defined: "school building" shall be defined as all buildings owned or leased by a local school district that are used for instruction or for student activities; "weapons" shall be defined as anything that could be used for the purpose of committing a school or criminal offense.

The board may grant persons and entities advance permission to possess carry or store a weapon in a school. All persons who wish to possess, carry or store a weapon in a school building shall present this request to the Board in a regular meeting. It is solely within the Boards discretion whether to allow a person to possess, carry or store a weapon in a school building.

This policy does not apply to law enforcement personnel.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN:

FIRST OFFENSE - STEP 1: The student may be given up to a ten (10) day out-of-school suspension by the administration effective immediately and may be recommended for an expulsion hearing by the board. A disciplinary referral will be filled out and a copy will be sent home to the parent/guardian. The juvenile officer may be called upon to intervene and remove the student from the school. The student is expected to return to school following his/her suspension with his/her parent/guardian for a re-admittance conference with the building administration.

SECOND OFFENSE - STEP II: The student may be given up to a ten (10) day out-of-school suspension by the administration effective immediately and may be recommended for an expulsion hearing by the board. The juvenile officer may be called on to intervene. The parent/guardian will be notified. The student will return to school following his/her suspension with his/her parent/guardian for a re-admittance conference with the building principal.

The student will either be referred for expulsion or re-admittance with a long-term assistance program designed to assist the student review and re-mediate his/her problem. The parent/guardian will be involved in his/her child's assistance program.

MINOR OFFENSES

Improper conduct, non-compliance

FIRST OFFENSE: Student will be assigned 30 minutes of in-school suspension (ISS) by the administration. A disciplinary report will be filled out and a copy will be sent by the office to the parent/guardian.

SECOND OFFENSE: Student will be assigned in-school suspension (ISS) by the administration. A disciplinary report will be filled out and a copy will be sent by the office to the parent/guardian.

THIRD OFFENSE: Student will be assigned in-school suspension (ISS) by the administration. A disciplinary report will be filled out and a copy will be sent by the office to the parent/guardian.

FOURTH OFFENSE: Student will be assigned in-school suspension (ISS) by the administration. A disciplinary report will be filled out and a copy will be sent by the office to the parent/guardian. Student will be referred to the FASST Team by the classroom teacher.

FIFTH OFFENSE: Student will be assigned in-school suspension (ISS) by the administration. A disciplinary report will be filled out and a copy will be sent by the office to the parent/guardian. At the discretion of the administration the student may be suspended or be taken before the Board of Trustees for disciplinary action.

POPLAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE FOR PHYSICAL AGGRESSION

1st Offense: 2 hour In-School Suspension (ISS) Parent/guardian Called – Lunch Detention in the ISS room, Counselor Intervention

2nd Offense: 3 hours In-School Suspension (ISS) – Parent/guardian Called – (*Loss of 1 recess.*)
Student referred to FASST Team

3rd Offense: 1 day In-School Suspension (ISS) – Parent/guardian Conference – (*Loss of 2 recesses*)

4th Offense: 1 day Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) – Parent/guardian Conference – (*2 days loss of recess*), Student will be placed on a Behavior plan established by the Administrator team.

5th Offense: 2 days Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) – Parent/guardian Conference – (*3 days loss of recess*)
Parent must sit with student for one hour – After the detention the parent, student, and principal will schedule a hearing with Superintendent to determine if student should be recommended to the board for expulsion.

6th Offense: Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) – Student taken to the School Board for an Expulsion hearing.

Severity Provision: Depending on the nature and severity of physical aggression, more serious disciplinary consequences may be deemed appropriate. Disciplinary consequences should be appropriate based on the circumstances and are left to the discretion of the administration.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

No person who is employed or engaged by the District may inflict or cause to be inflicted corporal punishment on a student. Corporal punishment does not include, and district personnel are permitted to use reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for other students, school personnel, or other persons, or for the purpose of self-defense.

COUNSELING

Personal Counseling

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, or emotional issues, or substance abuse. The counselor may also make available information about community resources to address these concerns. Parent/guardians who wish to meet with the K-4 counselor should contact Katie Crowley at (406) 768-6630. Counselors will see students by appointment, or a student may drop by the office to visit with the counselors.

Please note: The school will not conduct examinations, testing, or treatment without first obtaining the parent/guardians written consent.

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIAL

School Materials

School publications distributed to students include: District Calendar, Student Handbook, and School Newsletter. All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the principal.

Non-School Materials

Written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials may not be posted, sold, circulated, or distributed on any school campus by a student or a non-student without the prior approval of the principal. Any student who posts material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action. Materials displayed without this approval will be removed.

DRESS AND GROOMING

The District's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, and minimize safety hazards. Students and parents may determine a student's personal dress and grooming standards, provided that they comply with the following guidelines: Appropriate attire is expected of all students. Clothing that creates a disturbance or interference to the educational environment will not be allowed. These items include, but are not limited to, short shorts, inappropriate skirts and dresses, muscle shirts, half shirts, extremely sagging pants, and clothing which allow the exposure of undergarments, and shirts with profane or suggestive wording. Immodest and disruptive dress, the wearing of garments advertising or condoning the use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs, or inappropriate slogans or innuendoes will not be allowed. Students with inappropriate clothing may be sent home to change clothes.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

Please note: Student clubs and performing groups such as the band, choir, and drill and athletic teams may establish standards of behavior including consequences for misbehavior that are stricter than those for students in general. If a violation is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the administrator will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization.

FEES

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds and are at no charge to a student. A student, however, is expected to provide his or her own pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks and may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including:

- # Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- # Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extra-curricular activities.
- # Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- # Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- # Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.
- # Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the District.
- # Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.

Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.

Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent/guardian are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the Elementary Principal.

FUND-RAISING

Student clubs or classes, outside organizations, and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the administration at least 10 days before the event.

Except as approved by the Superintendent, fund-raising by non-school groups is not permitted on school property.

GANG ACTIVITY

A gang is defined as a group of two or more persons who associate together and engage or promote gang related activities. Students may **not**:

Wear, possess, use, distribute, display or sell any clothing including but not restricted to hats, bandannas, rags, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols or items representation or a representation of any gang.

Engage in any act, either verbal or non-verbal, which show membership or affiliation in any gang and\or represent any gang.

Engage in any act furthering the interest of any gang or activity including, but not limited to:

- Soliciting membership in or affiliation with any gang.
- Soliciting any person to pay for protection or threatening any person explicitly, implicitly, with violence or any other illegal or prohibited act.
- Painting, writing, or otherwise inscribing gang related graffiti, messages symbols or signs on school property.
- Engaging in violence, extortion or any other criminal act or other violation of school property.
- Soliciting any person to engage in violence against any other person.

GRADING GUIDELINES:

POPLAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Grading Scale:

Grades: K – 2nd

E - Exemplary
S - Satisfactory
N - Needs Improvement
U - Unsatisfactory

Grades: 3rd – 4th

| | |
|---------------|----------------|
| Excellent | A - 90% - 100% |
| Above Average | B - 80% - 89% |
| Average | C - 70% - 79% |
| Below Average | D - 60% - 69% |
| Failing | F - Below 59% |

Kindergarten provides parents with a progress report each nine weeks.

HOMEWORK

Homework is a constructive tool in the teaching/learning process when geared to the needs and abilities of students. Purposeful assignments not only enhance student achievement but also develop self-discipline and associated good working habits.

Teachers may give homework to students to aid in the student's educational development. Homework should be an application or adaption of a classroom experience and should not be assigned for disciplinary purposes.

IMMUNIZATION

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical or religious reasons, the student will not be immunized. The immunizations required are: diphtheria, pertussis, rubeola (measles), rubella, mumps, poliomyelitis, varicella and tetanus.

A student who transfers into the District must provide complete immunization records prior to attending classes.

If a student's religious beliefs conflict with the requirement that the student be immunized, the student must present a statement signed by the student (or by the parent/guardian, if the student is a minor) stating that immunization conflicts

with the religious tenets and practices of the parent and student. This statement must be renewed yearly. This certificate will be maintained as part of the student's immunization records.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent/guardian must present a certificate signed by a physician licensed in the United States or Canada stating that, in the doctor's opinion, some or all of the required immunizations are not considered safe. This certificate must indicate the specific nature and probable duration of the medical condition or circumstances which contraindicate immunization. This certificate will be maintained as part of the student's immunization records. For further information, see Policy 3110.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Questioning of Students

Law enforcement or social service workers must contact students through the administrative office. Students will not usually be questioned or interviewed by law enforcement or other lawful authorities while at school. When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities, however, wish to question or interview a student at school or the principal requests that the student be interviewed at school:

- # The principal will verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority.
- # If the interview is not at the request of the principal, the principal shall ascertain the authority of law enforcement to question or interview the student at the school. If the interview is by court order or other exigencies exist (concern about loss/damage of evidence, flight from jurisdiction, or health, safety, or welfare of the student or other students or staff), the principal has the discretion to allow the interview to take place. Otherwise, if law enforcement can reasonably interview the student at a time when the student is not in school, the principal may, absent a court order, deny the request for an immediate interview of a student.
- # The principal will make reasonable efforts to notify parent unless the officer produces a court order prohibiting the notification of the parents.
- # In the event that a parent/guardian cannot be present or cannot be reached, the principal will observe the interview.
- # Law enforcement must comply with all legal requirements regarding notification of parent/guardians and consent prior to interviewing students.
- # Social service workers may be permitted to interview students at a school consistent with Montana law. The principal will observe the meeting if the social service worker declines to notify the parents.

Students Taken into Custody

State law requires the District to permit a student to be taken into legal custody by a law enforcement officer or probation officer to comply with a lawful court order, a warrant for arrest, or a law enforcement determination that probable cause exists for the arrest. To the extent practicable, the arrest should be conducted out of the view of other students in the administration offices. A social service worker may take custody of a student with a lawful court order or under the powers of MCA 41-3-301.

The principal will immediately notify the Superintendent and will make reasonable attempts to notify a parent unless the officer or official produces a court order prohibiting the notification of the parents. Because the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a custody action, notification will most likely be after the fact.

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

A student who must take prescription medicine during the school day that is necessary for his or her health and well-being must have written authorization signed by the parent/guardians and the licensed health care provider allowing the dispensation of the medication. The student must bring the medicine in its original, properly labeled container, to the school nurse. The school nurse will either give the medicine at the proper times or give the student permission to take the medication as directed.

A student who has authorization to possess and self-administer medication must have completed and filed, with the office, a written order for self-administration of a medication from a licensed health care provider or dentist as well as written authorization from the parent for the self-administration. The principal may authorize, in consultation with medical personnel, a student with asthma, severe allergies, or anaphylaxis to possess and self-administer emergency medication from an epinephrine pen (EpiPen) or asthma inhaler. The written order and written authorization must be provided annually.

For additional information, please see Policy 3416.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND RIGHTS

The District believes that the best educational result for each student occurs when all three partners are doing their best: the District staff, the student's parent/guardian, and the student. Such a partnership requires trust and much communication between home and school. To strengthen this partnership, every parent is urged to:

- # Encourage his or her child to put a high priority on education and commit to making the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- # Review the information in the student handbook with his or her child and sign and return the acknowledgment form(s) and the directory information notice. A parent with questions is encouraged to contact Mr. John Wetsit, Principal at 768-6630 for K-4.
- # Become familiar with all of the child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the District. Discuss with the counselor or principal any questions, such as concerns about placement, assignment, or early graduation, and the options available to the child. Monitor the child's academic progress and contact teachers as needed.
- # Attend scheduled conferences and request additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office at 768-6630 for K-4 for an appointment. A teacher will usually arrange to return the call or meet with the parent/guardian during his or her conference period or at a mutually convenient time before or after school.
- # Exercise the right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other aids, and to examine tests that have been administered to his or her child. See below **Protection of Student Rights**
- # Become a school volunteer. For further information, contact the principal at 786-6630.
- # Offer to serve as a parent representative on the District-level or campus-level planning committees formulating educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For further information contact the principal at 768-6630.

Addressing the Board when appropriate. See policies 1400 and 1441

PERSONAL LISTENING DEVICES/CELL PHONE POLICIES

Elementary School student use is prohibited within the confines of the elementary school building and playground areas. Devices (cell phones, headphones, games, etc.) will be confiscated and turned into the elementary office.

1st Offense – device confiscated and turned into the office. It is the student's responsibility to pick it up at the end of the day.

2nd Offense or more – device is confiscated, parent/guardian called, and parent/guardian is responsible for picking up the device from the office.

PRAYER

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt instructional or other activities of the school. The school will not require, encourage, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

The decision to promote a student to the next grade level shall be based on successful completion of the curriculum, attendance, performance based on standard achievement tests or other testing. Retention of students is a process that is followed when, in the judgment of the professional staff, it is in the best interest of the student. A student shall not be promoted based on age or other social reasons not related to academic performance. Parent/guardians have a right to disagree with retention and must go on record with their disagreement.

PROTECTION OF STUDENT RIGHTS

No student will be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation funded in whole or in part by the U. S. Department of Education that concerns:

- # Political affiliations.
- # Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or family.
- # Sexual behavior and attitudes.
- # Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, and demeaning behavior.
- # Criticism of other individuals with whom the student or the student's family has a close family relationship.
- # Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
- # Income, except when the information will be used to determine the student's eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program. Parent/guardians will be able to inspect any teaching materials used in connection with such a survey, analysis, or evaluation.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

A student will not be released from school at times other than at the end of the school day except with permission from the principal or designee and according to the building sign-out procedures. Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day.

A student who will need to leave school during the day must bring a note from his or her parent/guardian or call in to the office that morning. A student who has medical issues during the school day should, with the teacher's permission, report to the office or school nurse. The administrator or nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student's parent/guardian.

REPORT CARDS, PROGRESS REPORTS, AND CONFERENCES

Written reports of absences and student grades or performance in each class or subject are issued to parents/guardians at least once every nine weeks. Mid-term progress reports are issued to parents/guardians at least quarterly.

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the school within 10 days.

In grades Kindergarten – Fourth, achievement shall be reported to parent/guardians as:

Grading Scale:

Grades: K – 2nd

E - Exemplary
S - Satisfactory
N - Needs Improvement
U - Unsatisfactory

Grades: 3rd – 4th

| | |
|---------------|----------------|
| Excellent | A - 90% - 100% |
| Above Average | B - 80% - 89% |
| Average | C - 70% - 79% |
| Below Average | D - 60% - 69% |
| Failing | F - Below 59% |

Kindergarten provides parent/guardians with a progress report each nine weeks.

Parent/Teacher Conference

Parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled for a formal conference one time each school year. Informal conferences can be arranged at the parent/guardians request at any time.

SAFETY

Accident Prevention

Student safety on campus and at school-related events is a high priority of the District. Although the District has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student should:

- # Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- # Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, teachers, or bus drivers.
- # Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders on campus.

Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.

Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other District employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

Accident Insurance

The District cannot pay for medical expenses associated with a student's injury. The District does make available, however, an optional, low-cost accident insurance program for students, to assist parent/guardians in meeting medical expenses. A parent/guardian who desires coverage for his or her child will be responsible for paying insurance premiums and for submitting claims through the claims office.

Emergency Medical Treatment and Information

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the school will need to have written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment and information about allergies to medications, etc. Therefore, parents/guardians are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form. Parent/guardians should keep emergency care information up to date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.). Please contact the office to update any information.

Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies

From time to time, students, teachers, and other District employees will participate in drills of emergency procedures. When the alarm is sounded, students should follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

Emergency School-Closing Information: Emergency school closing information will be broadcast from

Radio Station KVCK – 1450 AM

Radio Station KVCK – 92.7 FM

SEARCHES

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that schools are safe and drug free, District officials may from time-to-time conduct searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as permitted by law. Searches may include the use of canines.

Students' Personal Effects

School officials may search a student and/or the student's personal effects (e.g., purses, backpacks, coats, etc.) when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will produce evidence that the student has violated or is violating the law or the District's rules. The search must be conducted in a manner which is reasonably related to its objectives and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction.

Students' Desks and Lockers

Students' desks and lockers are school property and remain under the control and jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student.

Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of the assigned desks and lockers. Students must be certain that the locker is locked, and that the combination is not available to others. School officials may cut locks in order to conduct a search.

Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by District policy, whether or not a student is present. Searches may also be conducted at random, in accordance with law and District policy. See policy 3231.

The parent/guardian will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker.

Vehicles on Campus

Vehicles parked on school property are under the jurisdiction of the school. School officials may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable cause to do so, with or without the presence of the student. A student has full responsibility for the security of his or her vehicle and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others.

Seizure of Property

Evidence produced by a search that reveals that a student has violated or is violating the law or District rules may be seized and impounded by school officials. When appropriate, such evidence may be transferred to law enforcement

authorities.

Evidence produced by a search may be used in a disciplinary proceeding against the student.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT / SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION

The District encourages parental and student support in its efforts to address and prevent sexual harassment and sexual discrimination in the public schools. Students and/or parents are encouraged to discuss their questions or concerns about the expectations in this area with a teacher, counselor, principal or Frank Gourneau III, who serves as the District Title IX coordinator for students.

Students must not engage in unwanted and unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed toward another student or a District employee. This prohibition applies whether the conduct is by word, gesture, or any other sexual conduct, including requests for sexual favors. All students are expected to treat other students and District employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop these behaviors when asked or told to stop.

A substantiated complaint against a student will result in appropriate disciplinary action, according to the nature of the offense.

Complaints may be submitted via the District's Title IX Grievance Procedure. Please refer to Policy 3225 for additional information regarding the District's prohibition against discrimination and harassment.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The District provides special programs for gifted and talented students and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the District or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact:

Special Education Coordinator
Patricia Black
PO Box 458
Poplar, MT 59255
406-768-6602

Gifted and Talented
TBD
PO Box 458
Poplar, MT 59255
406-768-6602

STUDENT RECORDS

A student's school records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. The District maintains two sets of records: a permanent record and a cumulative record. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters the District until the time the student withdraws or graduates. A copy of this record moves with the student from school to school.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records, if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The building principal will be responsible for maintenance, retention, or destruction of a student's permanent or cumulative records, in accordance with District procedure established by the Superintendent. The principal will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records. Access to records will be granted within 45 days of receipt of a written request. If circumstances prevent a parent/guardian or eligible student from inspecting the records, the District will either provide a copy of the requested records or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review the requested records.

Parent/guardians of a minor, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are the only persons who have general access to a student's records. "School officials with legitimate educational interests" include any employees, agents, or Trustees of the District; cooperatives of which the District is a member; or facilities with which the District contracts for the placement of students with disabilities, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are working with a student or otherwise performing functions the school would perform in accordance with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

The parent/guardians or student's right of access to, and copies of, student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher, records pertaining to former students of the District, and records maintained by school law enforcement officials for purposes other than school discipline do not have to be made available to the parent/guardians or student. Access will also not be granted to the parent/guardian or the student to confidential letters

and recommendations concerning admission to a post-secondary education institution, applications for employment, or receipt of an honor or award, if the student has waived his or her right of access after being advised of his or her right to obtain the names of all persons making such confidential letter or statements. See Policy 3600 for more information.

Access by Other Individuals and Entities

Certain officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records without prior consent by the parents or student (over 18 years of age). Disclosure to these governmental agencies may be done under some of the following circumstances:

The District may grant access to or release information from student records to employees or officials of the District or the Montana State Board of Education, provided a current, legitimate educational interest is shown.

The District may grant access to or release information from student records without parental consent or notification to any person, for the purpose of research, statistical reporting, or planning, provided that no student or parent/guardian can be identified from the information released, and the person to whom the information is released signs an affidavit agreeing to comply with all applicable statutes and rules pertaining to school student records.

The district will grant access to or release information from any student record as specifically required by federal or state statute.

The District may release student records or information in connection with an emergency, without parental consent, if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons. The superintendent or principal will make this decision, taking into consideration the nature of the emergency, the seriousness of the threat to the health and safety of the student or other persons, the need for such records to meet the emergency, and whether the persons to whom such records are released are in a position to deal with the emergency.

The District may disclose student records or information to the youth court and law enforcement authorities, pertaining to violations of the Montana Youth Court Act or criminal laws by the student.

The District will comply with an ex parte order requiring it to permit the U.S. Attorney General or designee to have access to a student's school records without notice to or consent of the student's parent/guardian.

The District may disclose student records in a court proceeding where the parent/guardian is a party to an action involving child abuse or neglect or dependency matters without parental consent or notification if ordered to make this disclosure.

The District may disclose student records to caseworkers or other Child Protective Services representatives when DPHHS/CPS is legally responsible for the care and protections of the student without notification or consent of the parent/guardian.

The District forwards a student's records on request and without prior parental consent to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Records are also released in accordance with court order or lawfully issued subpoena. Unless the subpoena is issued for law enforcement purposes and the subpoena orders that its contents, existence, or the information sought not be disclosed, the District will make a reasonable effort to notify the parent/guardian or eligible student in advance of compliance.

Parental consent is required to release the records in most circumstances. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release of records.

The District charges a nominal fee for copying records; however, no parent or student will be precluded from copying information because of financial hardship. An access log will also be maintained for each record with details those individuals accessing the records and their legitimate interest in the records.

Challenging Content of Records

Students over 18, and parent/guardians of minor students may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the District refuses the request to amend the records, the requestor has the right to ask for a hearing. If the records are not amended

as a result of the hearing, the requestor has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, parent/guardians and the student are not allowed to contest a student's grade in a course or references to expulsion and out-of-school suspensions through this process.

Directory Information

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone, including military recruiters and/or post-secondary institutions, who follow procedures for requesting it, unless the parent/guardian objects to the release of any or all directory information about the child. The opportunity to exercise such an objection was provided on the form signed by the parent/guardian to acknowledge receipt of this handbook. Directory information includes: a student's name, address, telephone number, electronic mail address, date of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, photographs, dates of attendance, and honors and awards received in school.

Maintenance of Records

Permanent records are maintained in perpetuity for every student who has enrolled in the District. Cumulative records will be maintained for eight (8) years after the student graduates or permanently leaves the District. Cumulative records which may be of continued assistance to a student with disabilities, who graduates or permanently withdraws from the District, may, after five (5) years, be transferred to the parents or to the student if the student has succeeded to the rights of the parent/guardian.

Rights under FERPA

Specific parental and eligible student rights are Appendix A in this handbook.

SUMMER SCHOOL

The Summer School program runs for four (4) weeks during the month of June. It has a weekly academic schedule consisting of four (4) days of academic activities with 1 activity day at the end of the week. The school day runs from 9:00 am until 2:30 pm. Classes are academically centered with emphasis placed on reading, writing, math and science. Enrichment activities to round out the day will include art, Native American enhancement, and physical education. The classes are open to all current Poplar Schools elementary students. Parents are responsible for getting students to classes as there is no summer bus transportation provided.

TEXTBOOKS

Board-approved textbooks are provided free of charge for each subject or class. Books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. A student who is issued a damaged book should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return a book issued by the school or damaging a book issued by the school may be charged to replace the book.

TRANSPORTATION

School Sponsored

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school to and from the event. The principal, however, may make an exception if the parent personally requests that the student be permitted to ride with the parent, or the parent presents before the scheduled trip a written request that the student be permitted to ride with an adult designated by the parent.

Buses and Other School Vehicles

The District makes school bus transportation available to all students living three or more miles from school. This service is provided at no cost to students. Bus routes and any subsequent changes are posted at the school. Further information may be obtained by calling Mr. Clint Linthicum, at 768-6612.

Students are expected to assist District staff in ensuring that buses remain in good condition and that transportation is provided safely. When riding school buses, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook. Students must:

Follow the driver's directions at all times.

Enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner at the designated bus stop nearest home.

Keep feet, books, band instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.

Not deface the bus or its equipment.

Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the bus.

Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the bus and before crossing in front of the bus.

When students ride in a District van or passenger car, seat belts must be fastened at all times.

Misconduct will be punished and bus-riding privileges may be suspended.

VIDEOTAPING OF STUDENTS

The District uses video cameras on District property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment. Video cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the administration. Students in violation of Board policies, administrative regulations, building rules, or law shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Others may be referred to law enforcement agencies.

Video recordings may become a part of a student's educational record. The District shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance and retention. Signs will be posted at various locations to inform students, staff, and members of the public that video surveillance cameras are in use.

VISITORS

Parents and others are welcome to visit District schools. For the safety of those within the school, all visitors must first report to the principal's office. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.