

**CONGRESS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
SUPPLEMENTAL STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK
for the 2023-2024 School Year**



Congress Elementary School
[421 E. Congress St., Sturgis, MI 49091](#)

Phone: (269) 659-1565

Attendance: (269) 659-1580

Transportation: (269) 659-1590

Fax: (269) 659-1567

Visit us at: <http://www.sturgisps.org>

Neola Board Policy: <http://www.neola.com/sturgis-mi/>

FOREWORD

This handbook is a supplemental handbook that was developed to go along with the district handbook. The district handbook can be found at sturgisps.org and answers many of the questions that are not answered in this supplemental document.

This student handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you may have during the school year and to provide specific information about certain Board policies and procedures. This handbook contains important information that you should know. Become familiar with the following information and keep the handbook available for frequent reference.

This handbook summarizes many of the official policies and administrative guidelines of the Board of Education and the District. To the extent that the handbook is ambiguous or conflicts with these policies and guidelines, the policies and guidelines shall control. This handbook is effective immediately and supersedes any prior handbook and other written material on the same subjects.

This handbook does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student, but only reflects the current status of the Board's policies and the School's rules as of the first day of the school year shown on the cover. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised after the beginning of the current school year, the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact your child's teacher or the office to discuss this matter. Please read and discuss this handbook with your child.

CONGRESS SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Together the parents, staff, and students of Congress School seek to LEAD.

Together we...

Learn by planning, listening, and believing in ourselves even when we make mistakes.

Encourage each other with kindness and respect.

Achieve to better ourselves and become lifelong learners.

Dream with courage, effort, perseverance, and character.

THE VISION OF CONGRESS SCHOOL

Our vision for Congress School:

Together we **LEAD** (Learn, Encourage, Achieve, Dream)

BELIEF STATEMENTS FOR CONGRESS SCHOOL

- * We believe that all children can learn.
- * We believe that everyone deserves to be treated with respect, and it is our job to model that behavior.
- * We believe behaviors, like academics, need to be taught.
- * We believe when children struggle or are not challenged, it is our job to change our instruction to meet their needs.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent Involvement means the participation of parents in regular two-way and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including:

- * Ensuring that parents are meaningfully involved in developing and implementing appropriate strategies for helping their child achieve the learning objectives that lead to accomplishing desired outcomes.
- * Providing a mutually supportive school and home environment which encourages learning.
- * Having parents as full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child.

BUILDING SCHEDULE

Adult supervision begins at the school at 8:15 AM, please make sure you drop students off after this time.

The school day ends at 3:30 PM, children should be picked up promptly. We understand that parents often have children to pick up at multiple buildings. We would suggest you begin with your youngest children first. Students waiting for a parent who is delayed will be supervised at the Walker St. entrance until 3:45 PM. If you arrive later than that, please pick your child up inside the building in the main office.

Breakfast will be served in the cafeteria this year starting at 8:15 AM. Please have your child to school by this time if you want to ensure that they have time to eat breakfast.

- Office Hours: 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
- School Day: 8:35 AM - 3:30 PM
- Half Day: 8:35 AM - 11:55 AM

INJURY AND ILLNESS

PLEASE BE SURE YOUR CHILD'S EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION IS CURRENT IN THE SCHOOL OFFICE SO YOU MAY BE CONTACTED, IF NECESSARY. WE MUST HAVE AN EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBER TO CALL.

Section 1 - GENERAL INFORMATION

Much more information can be found in the K-12 district handbook.

MEAL SERVICE

The Board believes the development of healthy behaviors and habits in regard to eating cannot be accomplished by the District alone. It will be necessary for the school staff, in addition to parents and the public at large, to be involved in a community-wide effort to promote, support, and model such healthy behaviors and habits. Parents interested in being involved should contact the Director of Foodservice at (269) 659-1546.

The School participates in the National School Lunch Program and makes lunch available to all students for free through a grant. Students may also bring their own lunch to school. Milk may be purchased for 50¢. When sending money for milk, it should be put in a sealed envelope with the child's name on the outside. You may send a check, cash, or pay at sendmoneytoschool.com. Breakfast will be served daily in the cafeteria at the start of the school day at no cost to all interested students.

Applications for the School's Free and Reduced Price Meal Program are distributed to all students. The packet still needs to be completed and returned as soon as possible in order to meet the requirements of the grant for the free meal program.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS AND DELAYS

Parents and students are responsible for knowing about emergency closings and delays. Information about emergency closings can be found at https://www.sturgisps.org/parents/school_closing_information Parents should instruct their children in the following areas in case parents are unable to be home when students arrive:

- What your child should do if he/she enters the house.
- What room should your child stay in.
- What NOT to touch, such as gas, electric outlets, and appliances.
- What to do if your house is locked.
- Where to go if not to your home.

PLEASE have instructions on file in the school office for emergencies.

Students will be directed to go to their usual destination unless there are other instructions should an emergency dismissal plan be put into effect.

PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL. Individual calls tie up the phone lines making them unavailable for emergency use.

In the event of a TORNADO WARNING or other emergency release, you may NOT pick up children other than your own WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION from the student's parents.

Please see the district handbook for more info.

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

We welcome and encourage volunteer help at Congress Elementary! Classroom teachers can always use an extra hand and students love to have the adult interaction in their room. Volunteers for one (1) day and short term resource service projects may be contacted and scheduled by the teacher desiring service. The teacher will then notify the Principal of all volunteers. Parents working at school or on field trips with children that aren't their own will need to complete a background check. These forms are available in the office.

Teachers often invite parents to accompany the class for activities as chaperones if space allows. Parents help us by supervising children under the direction of the teacher. We are NOT allowed to have children who are not students of Sturgis Public Schools on field trips. Since a field trip is considered an extension of school, SMOKING IS ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED.

REPORT CARDS and PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parents are always anxious to learn how their children are doing in school. Like most schools, our primary method of communicating this information is through the report card. We issue report cards two times a year. Teachers will contact you at other times as needed to keep you informed. If parents have concerns that need to be addressed please send your child's teacher an email or call the office and the teacher will return your call as soon as possible.

Congress Elementary uses a developmental grading key. During the Fall, we will hold parent teacher conferences. Teachers will schedule every family in grades K-2 with an appointment during this time.

A time is also provided for conferences in the Spring. These conferences will be scheduled at the teacher or parent's request.

RECESS

We encourage all children to participate in recess. If a child is too sick to go outside for recess, then we feel he/she should be kept home. We discourage children from staying inside. However, in rare circumstances such as returning from an extended illness, the student will be allowed to stay in for up to 2 days with a note from home. After 2 days, we would require a doctor's slip to allow a child to stay inside.

We are very sensitive to the weather conditions. We watch the temperatures and wind chill in the winter. Rainy conditions also mean we will be inside for recesses.

It is important for your child/children to be adequately dressed for the conditions when he/she comes to school. Children spend time outside everyday for recess and additionally for some PE activities if weather permits.

STUDENT PHOTOS

Your child's picture may be taken at school individually, or as part of a group. The pictures would be used for displays at school, in the yearbook, newsletters, the newspaper, flyers or for display on a school webpage or social media account. If you do not want your child's picture taken and displayed, please send a letter in writing to the Principal.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

Video cameras have been installed on school grounds for the protection of our students, staff, etc. Video recordings may be used as evidence of misbehavior, criminal activity, etc. and will be viewed and used in accordance with Federal law.

Section 2 - ACADEMICS

FIELD TRIPS

Throughout the school year there may be multiple field trips that your child's class will participate in through school. These trips are based on curriculum, fine arts, special events and end of the year activities. The family data sheet has a permission section for field trips that is completed at the beginning of the school year. Notification and details of the trips to parents will be communicated through school notices, teacher letters, a class newsletter and/or the school newsletter.

PROMOTION, PLACEMENT, AND RETENTION

Promotion to the next grade (or level) is based on the following criteria: current level of achievement; potential for success at the next level and; emotional, physical, social maturity. If your child is being considered for retention, families will be notified of this during Spring Parent/Teacher Conferences and a meeting will take place prior to the end of the year to make a final determination for the next school year.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

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

Section 3: Student Activities

All information applicable to this section can be found in the K-12 District Handbook.

Section 4 - STUDENT CONDUCT

SEE THE K-12 District Handbook for infraction definitions and board policies.

CONGRESS SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

We believe that children want and need guidance for behavior. We also believe that learning will be enhanced when students are behaving appropriately. Verbal praise, notes sent home and other classroom activities will be used to recognize good behavior. Congress School has implemented Tiered levels of Intervention regarding behavior as part of a positive behavior support model for all students.

The Congress Behavior Model includes the following components:

Clearly defined expectations for student behavior;
Incentives that reward appropriate student behavior;
Consequences that discourage continuing misbehavior.

Each situation involving a child will be dealt with based on the circumstance brought about by that situation. The school always seeks out ways in which to teach lessons around behavior, both positive and negative.

Section 5 - TRANSPORTATION

Refer to the K-12 handbook for information regarding transportation.

BUILDING DIRECTORY

School Phone Number: (269) 659-1565

Office Hours: 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Student Hours: 8:35 AM - 3:30 PM

Principal: Vince LaPorte

Secretary: Kim Flowers

Behavior Interventionist: David Smith

TEACHERS:

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>NAME</u>
K	Kaylee Munoz
K	Beverly Larimer
BK	Amy Claar
1st	Stephanie Pierson
1st	Stacey Yunker
2nd	Gretchen Cropsey
2nd	
Title 1	Lesley Starkey
Special Ed.	Amanda Feyes
Art	
Music	Sonja Duffy
P.E.	Jenifer Lampe and Sherry Coblentz

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS:

Karen St. Germain

Andrea Abbs

Julie Meyer

Amanda Stiles

Maritza Melendez

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In Compliance with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act of 1977, it is the policy of the Sturgis Public Schools District that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, disability, height, weight, or marital status be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination during any program, activity, service or in employment.

For information, contact:

Nicole Gittinger, Assistant Superintendent
107 W. West Street
Sturgis, MI 49091
(269) 659-1506

Initiation of the formal complaint procedures requires a written complaint.
All written complaints regarding harassment or discrimination of individuals shall be submitted to:

Responsible Administrator: Nicole Gittinger, Ass't Superintendent
ngittinger@sturgisps.org

Alternate Responsible Administrator: Nick Herblet, High School Principal
nherblet@sturgisps.org

For a complete document regarding specific grievance procedures, please see the Sturgis Public School's Website at: https://www.sturgisps.org/district/grievance_procedures

STURGIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
COMPLAINT FORM

Title VI Title IX Section 504 Title II Elliott-Larsen

Name: _____ Date _____

Address: _____
(Street)

_____ (City) _____ (Zip)

Telephone: _____ (Home) _____ (School or Work Location)

Status of person filing complaint: _____ Student _____ Employee
_____ Parent/Guardian _____ Other

Statement of Complaint (include type of discrimination charged and the specific incidents in which it occurred):

Signature of Complainant: _____

Date Complaint Filed: _____

Signature of person receiving complaint: _____

Date Received: _____ Complaint Number: _____

Complaint Authority: _____

Submit all copies to the local Assistant Superintendent. The person receiving the complaint will sign receipt, date and number the complaint. One copy will be returned to the complainant, one copy will be sent to the school or department affected by the complaint, and one copy will be retained by the Assistant Superintendent.

DISTRIBUTION: 1st copy – Assistant Superintendent
 2nd copy – School/Department
 3rd copy – Complainant

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