



# Family Handbook

2019 - 2020



Emerson  
SCHOOL

# **A K-8 school of higher learning**



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## MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

### EDUCATIONAL MISSION

The mission of Emerson School is to provide a whole child, multiple method approach to instruction for gifted and for academically talented students. Emerson School encourages creativity, problem solving, and the development of basic skills, while providing a warm, supportive environment that promotes responsibility for oneself and others.

### PHILOSOPHY

Children learn best in a caring environment in which each child's unique gifts and talents are celebrated. People learn with different styles and at different rates. Teachers work to accommodate individual needs, and to foster positive, realistic self-concepts. They work to promote self-reliance and self-discipline in students. In our school, cognitive and creative risk-taking become safe and valued. Our atmosphere encourages mutual respect. Children learn by doing, by being listened to, by participating, and by working together.

In working with gifted and academically talented students, Emerson seeks to teach basic skills, encourage higher-level thinking, and to nurture creativity. We address the needs of the whole child, and recognize the need for children to develop intellectually, artistically, physically, socially, and emotionally. The school endeavors to instill important values, including respect, responsibility, compassion, and honesty. In doing so, we promote the importance of contributing to the Emerson School community and the larger communities in which we live.

### STATEMENT OF GIFTEDNESS

The terms "gifted" and/or "academically talented" describe children who possess one or more unusually heightened innate or demonstrated abilities: excellent academic aptitude and/or achievement; sophisticated abstract, creative, or divergent thinking; advanced use of language; an acute sense of perception, strong powers of observation, and/or a keen sense of humor; distinct emotional sensitivity and/or intensity; extraordinary memory; persistence and resilience; motivation and intellectual curiosity; and outstanding talent in the performing and visual arts. The distinctive qualities which these students exhibit in some areas may exist in combination with average aptitude or relative weakness in others. Perhaps not surprisingly, since these students' gifts place them so far ahead of the "norm" in significant ways, uneven (asynchronous) patterns of development tend to characterize this population, and gifted and/or academically talented children tend not to conform to any one stereotype or checklist of traits.

### ROLE OF GIFTED EDUCATION

To support our mission, Emerson provides intellectually rich and appropriately challenging curricula, enlightened guidance, and an atmosphere of ongoing support and encouragement. By offering educational programs that emphasize breadth and depth of learning, we build a foundation that can lead gifted and/or academically talented children into balanced development. We recognize that gifted students, like all children, may be affected by learning differences, attention issues, or emotional difficulties which can interfere with self-expression and performance. These children can be susceptible to heightened levels of anxiety because



they are often highly aware both of their gifts and of discrepancies between their strengths and weaknesses. They may expect themselves or may be expected by others to achieve perfection. Emerson's role is to guide all of our students to make maximum use of their potential, to lead happy, engaged, meaningful lives, and to make significant contributions to society.

## **DIVERSITY**

Emerson School strives to make all students, faculty, administrators, and parents feel safe, respected and valued in her/his identity as full members of the school community. We are dedicated to an ever-increasingly diverse learning environment that will best prepare our students to intelligently engage in a complex, globally-interconnected society. At Emerson, diversity is thought of in terms of ethnicity, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, learning styles, socio-economic status, and family structure.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL**

Emerson School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender, body shape, disability, sexual orientation, or any other basis prohibited by federal, state, or local law in admissions and scholarship programs; the administration of its educational, athletic, artistic, or other school programs; or employment practices.

## **THE EMERSON SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP**

Emerson School is accredited by ISACS (Independent School Association of the Central States). Criteria for accreditation include an adherence to a model of decision making that is outlined in Attachment A. This model outlines how the Board of Trustees, the faculty, parents, and the Head of School work together to assure that an efficient and responsive educational environment is maintained.

The best education occurs in a community in which the student, the teacher, and the parent/guardian work in partnership. Such partnerships involve trust, mutual respect, and common understanding. Positive connections between home and school have a direct benefit on every student's learning. Even though different perspectives are understandable when educating a student, and while conflicts are sometimes inevitable, communication, and cooperation are essential in helping each student succeed.

As a school responsive to the needs of each child, Emerson School is a community that requires the resources and commitment of everyone involved. The school offers a challenging and creative curriculum, and also strives to understand and appreciate each student and his/her educational needs. Ongoing communication about how to provide quality education is essential.

### **Students as Partners**

The students who attend Emerson School possess a range of gifts and talents. The Admissions Committee seeks students who would benefit from the kind of education the school offers. The child who gains the most from Emerson has many of the following attributes:

- Respectful of self and others
- Responsible
- Academically capable

- Strong character and integrity
- Actively engaged in learning
- Self-reliant
- Self-confident but not arrogant
- Eager to learn
- Able to make good judgments
- Positive contributor to the life of the school
- Independent, analytical, and reflective thinker
- Self-motivated
- Curious
- Creative
- Able to manage his/her own time
- Hard-working
- Able to make decisions and solve problems
- Interested in a variety of activities and issues
- Effective communicator
- Organized
- Well-rounded

### **The School as a Partner**

Professional educators are attracted to Emerson primarily because of their desire to make a positive difference in the lives of children. The faculty, staff, and administration strive to remain current with educational practices. The school seeks talented and student-centered individuals who hold themselves to the highest standards.

It is Emerson's responsibility to determine curriculum, discipline, and general standards and procedures concerning the functioning and direction of the school. The character of the institution is expressed through many forms, including academics, fine arts, and athletic programs, as well as through community service, health and wellness, and numerous other curricular and extracurricular activities.

The faculty evaluates student progress frequently, and communicates that progress to parents regularly. Teachers strive to understand the whole child, and offer appropriate support to students needing help or enrichment. Such support is most successful when the home and the school are in partnership.

Emerson staff members, no matter what their role, strive to maintain a personable and professional relationship with all of the school's constituents. The resulting community is a dynamic and complex one meant to serve the students' education well.

### **Parents as Partners**

Parents rightly hold high expectations of Emerson School, just as the school holds itself to high standards. They are also typically proud of the school and of their child's successes. A positive relationship with school strengthens the educational partnership, which strengthens students' learning. Parents appreciate the school's belief that education is a high priority in a family's life, which can involve sacrifice as well as gain.





Just as teachers, staff, and administrators strive to be professional, Emerson School parents are expected to maintain a good relationship with the school. They recognize that the more positively they represent Emerson to the community at large, the stronger Emerson becomes for them and their children. They support their children and the school, knowing that the building and maintaining of a community requires resources of many types.

Understandably, there are occasional conflicts and problems, and the faculty and administration want to know when an issue requires attention. Working toward an acceptable resolution with the student's best interest at heart is everyone's goal.

Please know it is your prerogative and duty to call the school to report any and all situations that you believe are concerning, inappropriate, or dangerous. Rest assured that the school will investigate vigorously any reports, since we prize and value the reputation of our school as being a safe, secure, and welcoming environment. Additionally, should you have a concern regarding the interactions between your child and another child at the school, we urge you to contact the school first. Our experience has been that family-to-family communications regarding behavior can lead to further concern.

There are occasions in which parents or legal guardians are in disagreement with each other about a child as it relates to access to information or granting others access (e.g. curbside pickup). Please note that the School's policy is such:

A legal guardian or parent may have access to a child's educational records and information (such as schedule) regardless of custodial status, unless there is a legally binding document (i.e., court orders, court-filed or court-approved settlement agreements; consent orders; judgements; decrees) which specifically revokes his/her rights. Such a document must be shared with Emerson School.

A legal guardian or parent may not curtail the rights of the child's other legal guardian or parent, unless there is a legally binding document which specifically curtails his/her rights. As example, absent such a document, a parent may not forbid the child's other parent from picking up the child, granting permission for another to pick up the child, etc.

Parents often serve as volunteers at the school and attend a number of their children's activities. They also attend parent-teacher conferences, meet when necessary with faculty and administrators, and participate in a variety of events. Emerson is a small school, and the role that parents play is valued and appreciated.





## THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### DUTIES OF THE BOARD

The primary duties of the Board of Trustees include hiring and evaluating the Head of School, setting general institutional policies, strategic planning, fundraising, and assessing the school's effectiveness in manifesting the mission of the school.

Board members serve on one or more of the six standing committees. The committees include: Executive, Buildings and Grounds, Finance, Development, Marketing, and Governance.

In addition to committee work, Board members attend full Board meetings several times per year starting with a half-day board retreat in September. Newly-elected board members serve for a term of three years and may be re-elected to serve a second three-year term.

## COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

### CONDUCT AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH STUDENT AND FAMILY

In Emerson's caring community, we hope that students will develop self-esteem, respect for others, and a cooperative attitude. We live in an environment of strong trust, with high expectations and few rules. We believe that respect for the rights, feelings, belongings, and safety of others should guide the attitudes and behavior of students in all areas of school life. As students prove themselves trustworthy, the school offers them increasing freedom and responsibility.

#### Honor Code

Emerson School's Honor Code states that each student should be honest, respectful, and responsible. Students deserve to be in a school environment in which their peers follow this code.

- Honesty means being truthful to other people and to oneself.
- Respect includes a regard for other people's belongings and feelings, including respect for school property.
- Responsibility for one's actions involves being dependable. Students at Emerson are expected to follow through with what they say they will do.

In order for this Code to be successful, we must all agree to be honest, respectful, and responsible. If we follow this Honor Code, Emerson will be the kind of place we want it to be.



# VALUES

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We develop leaders who make the world a better place by living and practicing the following core values:

## CURIOSITY

Seeking out and learning from new ideas and information.

## CREATIVITY

Using one's mind and imagination to develop something new.

## EMPATHY

Understanding others and acting with good intent.

## RESILIENCE

Adjusting to change and challenges while striving to achieve goals.

## INTEGRITY

Being honest, trustworthy and ethical in our actions.



## **Responsibilities**

In order for all students at Emerson School to receive an equal opportunity for quality education and social development, the following expectations for behavior have been established. Students shall follow these basic guidelines in their daily attendance and when representing Emerson during off-campus activities. Behavioral expectations are the same regardless of the activity or location (e.g., After School Program, field trips, etc.)

- Come to school prepared to engage in one's personal, academic, and social development.
- Show respect for oneself, fellow students, faculty, staff, visitors, and guests.
- Respect personal property of the School and others.
- Help to maintain clean and safe hallways, restrooms, and classrooms.
- Stay on campus unless given the permission of, or in the company of, an authorized adult.
- Be honest.
- Arrive on time with the necessary assignments and materials.

We also ask our families to support our students by helping them to achieve these responsibilities as well as modelling them for their children.

## **Unacceptable Behaviors**

If students have questions about whether something they want to do or something they have seen others doing is a potential violation of the Honor Code or goes against our student responsibilities, they should always consult with a teacher, advisor, or other staff member. The following examples do not comprise an exhaustive list, but they should serve to illustrate the principles of violating our Honor Code. The School reserves the right to address unacceptable behaviors with consequences including (but not limited to) suspension, behavior probation, conditional renewal of enrollment contract, non-renewal of enrollment contract, and/or expulsion.

- Cheating, such as seeking, accepting, giving, or using unauthorized assistance or unfair advantage on any assignment; copying from another's test, quiz, project, or assignment; looking at someone else's test or quiz; and giving or getting information about a test or quiz before or while taking it
- Plagiarizing, such as copying paragraphs, sentences, or parts of sentences from someone else's writing without giving proper credit
- Forging a signature
- Destroying or vandalising property not belonging to oneself
- Using inappropriate written or spoken language, be it vulgar, profane, or rude
- Lying
- Fighting, hitting, bullying, and teasing
- Showing verbal, physical, or other outward demonstrations of disrespect for others
- Stealing
- Trespassing in another student's locker or desk; or entering a faculty or staff member's work space or lounge without permission
- Not following the Technology Acceptable Use Policy
- Acting unsafe in the building (e.g., running in the halls, playing ball inside the building, etc.)
- Disrupting classroom lessons
- Failing to follow a teacher's or administrator's directions, particularly when directions are given for the health and welfare of all students



- Leaving school grounds without permission of, or in the company of, an authorized adult.
- Using or possessing drugs or alcohol (e.g., vaping, Juuling, using prescription medication without permission of an authorized adult, drinking, smoking, etc.)
- Using or possessing weapons
- Using technology to record another community member without that member's permission

## **HARASSMENT**

### **Statement of Purpose and Scope**

Emerson School is firmly committed to a campus free from bullying, sexual harassment, or harassment due to sexual orientation. The purpose of this policy is to promote respectful interaction between the members of our community. This policy applies to sexual harassment only and not sexual assault or abuse. The Head of School will handle cases of assault or abuse immediately.

### **Policy**

Harassment of any kind, including by electronic means, directed at any member of the school community, is prohibited. This policy includes conduct on campus or at any activity connected with the school, including athletic contests, concerts, and social functions. In instances of harassment that take place off-campus, yet impact student learning during the school day, the School maintains the right to take appropriate disciplinary action.

### **Definition of Harassment**

Threats of violence, name-calling, put-downs, cruel rumors, social isolation, threatening looks, or other abusive behavior; or any intimidating, hostile, offensive, or inappropriate verbal or physical conduct may constitute harassment. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to the following: verbal harassment or abuse; oral or written, graphic communication of a sexual nature; pressure for sexual activity; repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications; or unwelcome touching.

### **Electronic Harassment**

Electronic harassment includes the use of, but is not limited to the following: email, blogs, chat rooms, texting, IM, or social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter to carry out the aforementioned definitions of verbal and written harassment.

### **Responsibility of the School Community**

All members of the school community are responsible for their conduct and should treat others with respect and dignity. Any individual who believes that he or she is the recipient of harassment or who witnesses harassment of any kind has a responsibility to the school community to take appropriate action. The recipient of any behavior that may constitute sexual harassment should make it known as soon as possible that the behavior is unwelcome. Behavior of a sexual nature that continues after identified as unwelcome should be reported to responsible school authorities. If the recipient chooses, he or she may ask a faculty member to speak to the instigators on his or her behalf. Any person who witnesses behavior that is not welcome should assist the recipient in his or her efforts to stop the possible harassment. Efforts should include informing the offending person that his or her behavior is unwelcome and/or reporting the incident to responsible school authorities.



### **Reporting and Investigation Process**

Reports of possible harassment of any kind should be made to the School Counselor, Lower School Director, Middle School Director, and/or Head of School. Any report of harassment will be treated seriously. Investigations will be handled as confidentially as possible and with compassion toward all parties involved. There shall be no retaliation against any person for reporting possible harassment or participating in an investigation under this policy. If there is any retaliation or a false accusation made toward any person making a report or participating in an investigation, the person or persons responsible shall be subject to the consequences outlined below.

### **POTTY TRAINING**

All students enrolled in Kindergarten are required to be fully potty trained. While occasional accidents may happen, children who have multiple accidents at school may be required to stay at home to reinforce potty training before returning to school.

### **DRESS CODE**

We are committed to empowering students to grow as responsible decision-makers. Therefore, we have three basic standards to help guide students and families in making appropriate clothing decisions for school. All clothing worn to school:

- must reflect the values of respect and responsibility
- must provide for a focused and active learning environment
- must help to assure safety in the classroom and on the playground

If, in the judgement of a teacher or administrator, these standards are not being followed, this will be communicated to the student and/or his/her parent(s)/legal guardians(s). The student may be asked to change clothes or be sent home. Should a student continually break these standards, disciplinary or remedial action will be taken.

### **GENDER IDENTITY POLICY**

Emerson School shall foster an educational environment that is welcoming, safe, and free from discrimination for all members of the community as they express their gender identity. This includes transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals. Discrimination, bullying, and harassment are prohibited; incidents of such will be managed in a manner consistent with the school's expectations of conduct and responsibilities.

#### **Gender Identity**

The school respects students' rights to discuss and express their gender identity openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much to share their personal information. The person best situated to determine a student's gender identity is the individual student. In the case where a student is not able to self-advocate, the request to treat the student in accordance with their gender identity will likely come from the student's parents or guardians. Should the child's self-advocacy be in opposition to the parents' or guardians' wishes, we will seek to facilitate a discussion with the family, while taking into account the child's wishes.



### **Names and Pronouns**

When requested by the parent/guardian and/or student, school staff should engage in reasonable and good faith efforts to address students by their chosen name and pronouns that correspond to their gender identity, regardless of whether there has been a legal name change. The chosen name, pronoun, and gender markers will be used in unofficial student records (e.g., yearbooks, newsletters, team rosters, etc.). Regarding official student records (e.g., report cards, transcripts), the school will seek to use the name, pronoun, and gender markers requested by the parent/guardian and/or student as well. It should be noted, though, that there may be circumstances in which differences on school records between a student's legal name/gender and requested name/gender may result in complication for the student outside of the school environment.

### **Activities and Facilities**

With regard to gender-based and gender-segregated activities and areas on school grounds, students shall have access to that which corresponds to their gender identity. All students have access to the use of unisex, single-occupant bathrooms. This policy shall be considered when new construction or renovations are planned for the school. Matters of personal privacy, including bathroom and sleeping arrangements for overnight field trips, will be addressed on a case-by-case basis, keeping in mind the well-being of the students. The school will seek solutions that are inclusive, respectful, and safe for all students.

### **Athletic Teams**

Presently, many middle school athletic teams follow Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) guidelines which are unclear regarding gender identity in sports participation. We will continue to monitor guidelines and best practices.

### **Faculty Education**

The school shall provide regular training for faculty, administration, and staff members regarding topics of gender identity.

## **DEVELOPING AND PROMOTING COMPASSION AND RESILIENCE**

Emerson School has a strong commitment to teaching students about healthy social interactions. In keeping with the school's mission, students are taught responsibility to self and others from kindergarten through 8th grade.

Kindergarten teachers begin the discussion by including as a thread in their everyday curriculum encouragement for students to respect themselves and others. The 1st grade social studies curriculum addresses social responsibility by presenting rules for school and for home. Many Lower School teachers begin each year by enlisting their students' help in articulating classroom rules about how students will treat one another. All 2nd and 3rd graders participate in friendship lunch groups. These lunches are comprised of four or five children who come to the school counselor's office during lunch once a week to play games and engage in activities with a social/friendship theme. The 2nd grade lunch program focuses on what it means to be a good friend, strategies for positive social relationships, and the development of positive communication skills. The 3rd grade program expands on concepts from the previous year and addresses conflict resolution and working together for a common goal.



We believe that the best way to encourage positive social interactions among peers is to help children understand the perspective of others. With that goal in mind, upper elementary students attend overnight and day camps and take part in challenge courses/team-building activities. Fifth grade students participate in a variety of community service projects, including forging relationships with residents from local senior living communities.

Emerson's technology classes cover discussions on Internet safety and emphasize the critical importance of kindness and sensitivity to others when using social media. These topics, introduced in kindergarten, are expanded upon in 3rd grade, when students receive their own school Internet accounts, through more formal lessons on constructive Internet behavior and how to handle cyber-bullying.

Building on these Lower School experiences, Middle School teachers continue to discuss the role of positive social relationships and empathy and offer opportunities to practice both. Prior to the first day of school, new Middle School students are invited to join us for a New Student Orientation. Part of this orientation is devoted to participating in activities designed to promote social responsibility. We feel that this foundation is key to the climate of the Middle School.

The Middle School advisory program encourages students to explore their personal talents and interests while learning to appreciate and value the diversity of Emerson's student body, school community, and academic program. Students are assigned to an advisor who serves as their advocate. For a more detailed description of the Advisory programs in the Middle School, please refer to that section of this handbook. Middle School students and faculty work together to promote the core values of the Middle School. Perseverance, integrity, and compassion are at the center of these programs, and of the expectations faculty members have for students and that students have for one another.

The Middle School advisory program encourages students to explore their personal talents and interests while learning to appreciate and value the diversity of Emerson's student body, school community, and academic program. Students are assigned to an advisor who serves as their advocate. For a more detailed description of the Advisory programs in the Middle School, please refer to that section of this handbook. Middle School students and faculty work together to promote the core values of the Middle School. Our school values of creativity, curiosity, resiliency, integrity and empathy are at the center of these programs, and of the expectations faculty members have for students and that students have for one another.

When students are unable to manage a social problem on their own, they are encouraged to seek the help of an adult at school. As part of their responsiveness to social concerns, teachers may sometimes request the school counselor's help. If it seems that community resources would be helpful (for example, consultation with outside professionals), Emerson does not hesitate to utilize these resources. Please refer to the "Discipline Process" section of this handbook to read about steps and consequences connected to harassment and/or relational aggression issues.

Emerson guides students in social interactions throughout their time at the school, heavily emphasizing respect and inclusiveness. We avoid labeling students and their behavior, as we believe strongly in the power of children learning from their social encounters and growing from their mistakes. We place a high value on helping students build resilience.





## THE DISCIPLINE PROCESS

Any consequences assigned by Emerson will be educational as well as punitive, with the goal of guiding the student to learn from the experience. Each infraction will be handled on an individual basis, coordinated by the Lower School Director, Middle School Director, or the student's teacher or advisor. The seriousness of the behavior, the circumstances surrounding it, and whether or not it is a first or repeated offense will all be taken into consideration. Consequences may include the following: a project (for example, a research paper), attendance at an appropriate educational workshop, community service, the loss of certain school privileges, suspension, or expulsion. The Head of School, Lower School Director, and/or Middle School Director will make a final decision about the consequences. When an infraction occurs, the following steps will be taken:

1. The student will talk to a staff member about what happened.
2. The staff member will decide whether to take immediate action and will notify the student's advisor, teacher, After School Director, Lower School Director, Middle School Director, or Head of School. Parents will be informed of the incident as soon as possible.
3. Depending on the seriousness of the incident, the advisor, teacher, coordinator, Lower School Director, Middle School Director, and/or Head of School (and other appropriate staff members) will meet to determine a course of action.
4. The course of action will be communicated to the student, parents, and appropriate staff. Possible consequences include, but are not limited to:
  - Writing a letter of apology
  - Natural or appropriate consequences including restitution
  - In-school suspension
  - Suspension from school
  - If suspended, the student will not be able to attend after-school activities on the day of the suspension (child care, practices, games, or performances)
  - Suspension from after-school activities/child-care (on days when student is in attendance at school)
  - Behavioral probation
  - Conditional renewal of contract
  - Non-renewal of contract
5. Expulsion from school. This serious consequence is given for a severe offense, an accumulation of offenses, or if it is in the School's or the student's best interest. A student may be expelled on his/her first offense if it is deemed serious enough. Students whose behavior, either on or off campus, is deemed contrary to the philosophy and goals of Emerson School may be asked to withdraw from the School or not be permitted to register for the following year. Emerson School does not refund tuition or fees for students who are suspended or expelled during the school year for disciplinary reasons.



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### **Disciplinary Actions for Violations of Acceptable Use Policy for Technology**

*See Attachments section for policy*

Actions taken will be based on the severity and frequency of the offense. Possible courses of action to users violating this policy are as follows:

- Users may be restricted from using school equipment and/or software for a length of time ranging from one day to one year.
- Users may lose the right to log on to the network and/or lose access to their Google Apps account.
- Users may be required to pay for any unauthorized expenses incurred or any damages caused.
- Users may be required to attend training sessions or perform research related to their inappropriate use of these technologies before being allowed to resume using computer equipment at Emerson School.
- Users may face additional disciplinary action deemed appropriate in keeping with the disciplinary policies and guidelines of Emerson School, including suspension or expulsion from Emerson School.



## IMPORTANT DETAILS AND PROCEDURES

### SCHOOL HOURS

- Lower School (Grades K-5) 8:30am – 2:45pm
- Middle School (Grades 6-8) 8:00am – 2:45pm
- Morning Child Care 7:30am – 8:15am
- After School Program 2:45pm – 6:00pm

### ATTENDANCE

The policy of Emerson School is that academic work comes first. We expect students to be in the classroom on time. We understand that there may be occasions where students may miss class, such as a pre-arranged appointment or obligation, funeral, or other family emergency.

#### Late Arrival

All students are expected to be in the classroom, ready to begin the day's lessons at the appropriate starting time. Excessive tardiness will result in review of the student's performance, discussion with the student's family, and consideration about whether advancement to the next grade is possible.

- Late students need to sign in at the appropriate office BEFORE going to their classroom.
- Tardies will be "excused" for medical or dental appointments, family emergencies, weather or excessive traffic related problems ONLY.
- Unexcused tardies appear on the student's transcript.
- Missed work may or may not be made up at the discretion of the teacher.
- A meeting will take place if missed classes or late arrival continues to be a problem. Goals and potential consequences will be outlined and kept in the student's file.

#### Unexpected Absences

If a student is absent due to illness or other emergency:

- Notify the office by 8:30am for Middle School and 9:00am for Lower School each day your child will be absent.
- If notification is not received, the absence will be marked "unexcused." After 24 hours, the absence and/or tardy will not be changed in the recording system. The attendance record can be accessed on RenWeb.
- All absences and tardies will appear on the student's transcript.
- In Middle School, it is the student's responsibility to find out what work has been missed and to make arrangements to complete the work in a timely manner. Homework assignments are posted on RenWeb after 4:00pm daily.
- If chronic absenteeism is determined to be a problem, a meeting will be scheduled to discuss goals and potential consequences. Notes from the meeting will be kept in the student's file.
- If a student needs to leave the school for a portion of the school day, he/she must bring a note from a parent/guardian. Lower School parents must sign their students out in the office, and Middle School students must sign out in the office and wait inside the building until a parent or guardian arrives to pick them up.
- Students are expected to attend school on all scheduled days. If a student is planning to be away for more than a portion of a school day, please refer to the section on pre-arranged absences.



- Students must attend a full day of school to be eligible to participate in after school activities including athletics, drama, band and orchestra assemblies and concerts, and social events.

### **Pre-Arranged Absence**

If a student must miss school for reasons other than illness or a family emergency, you must:

- Notify the school at least a week before the scheduled absence.
- Complete a "Pre-arranged Absence Form" which requires signatures from all of the student's teachers (available in the office).
- Return the form to the appropriate office for photocopying.
- Ensure that missed work be made up in a timely manner.

### **HEAD LICE**

Parents are encouraged to help prevent the spread of head lice by educating their children about its causes and spread. Unbiased information can be found at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website, including the following:

- Head lice is common in the US among children 3 to 12 years of age.
- Approximately 6 to 12 million children have infestations each year.
- Head lice are not a medical or public health hazard, nor are they a sign of uncleanness.
- Head-to-head contact with an already infested person is the most common way to get head lice.
- Because a child with an active head lice infestation (a) has already had the infestation for a month or more by the time it is discovered, (b) poses little risk to others, and (c) does not have a resulting health problem, he or she should remain in class but be discouraged from close direct head contact with others.

When the School is notified by the parent or legal guardian that his/her child has a case of lice, we notify families in that grade level that a case has been identified, while keeping the name of the student confidential. If we have reason to believe that there is possible spread beyond the grade level, such as through siblings, we will notify other grade levels as well. We routinely work with our children to educate them in smart practices, such as avoiding the sharing of clothing, brushes, etc.

### **STUDENT HEALTH**

#### **Sickness Policy**

*Do not send sick children to school.* A child who is not feeling well will have difficulty learning. Keeping sick children at home helps prevent the spread of contagious diseases.

Please keep your child home for the entire school day for any of the following conditions:

- he/she was sick the night before or the morning of
- he/she has a fever of over 100 degrees in the past 24 hours
- he/she has vomited in the past 24 hours

Children who present a fever at school or who vomit will be sent home.



Any child who is not well enough to go outside for recess is not well enough to be in school. A note from a physician is needed to exempt a student from recess or physical education.

If a student is unable to attend school due to a communicable disease that is serious in nature (i.e., pink eye, strep, etc.), the School must be notified so that we may inform other parents of the presence of the disease. The child's name will be kept confidential in such communications. The child may return to school once he/she has been on antibiotics for a full 24 hours.

### **Medication**

Medication should be administered during school hours only when an alternative solution does not exist. Parents of students with non-life threatening medical issues requiring the occasional use of inhalers, ibuprofen, acetaminophen, or other medications are required to complete an Authorization for Administration of Medication During School Hours form, which is available in the office (non-prescription, signed by parent; prescription, requires a doctor's signature) and medication must be provided by parent and in the original packaging. All medication is kept in the office.

Students cannot keep medication on their persons or in their lockers. Students should never take medication that the office is not aware of. The School cannot assume the responsibility for assuring that each dosage is delivered at a precise time. It is the student's responsibility to adhere to the schedule, and in cases where timing is critical, parents should be available to assume this responsibility.

- Prescription medication forms must be completed and signed by the prescribing physician.
- Non-prescription medication forms must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian. (The dose may not exceed the package recommendation without a doctor's note).
- All medication must be in the original container.
- Medication is stored in the office where it is not accessible to children.
- Refrigerated medication is stored in the staff refrigerator.
- Required medications will be taken on field trips.
- A physician's order stating that a medication must remain in the child's possession at all times must be provided to the school by the parent/guardian.
- The school Medical Assistant will administer medication according to physician/parent instructions.
- Medication administration is documented.
- The school Medical Assistant will administer an injectable medication such as epinephrine, only in a life-threatening situation. 911 will be called immediately.
- Unused medication will be released to parent/guardian only.
- Unclaimed medication will be destroyed at the end of the school year.

### **Healthcare Management**

Students with health problem(s) requiring possible care during school hours must have a medical management plan on file at the school, filled out by the student's physician, and signed by both physician and parent. A new plan shall be submitted to the school each year. The plans will explicitly state how much independence the student has in his/her care and how much self-care he/she is able to handle. Medical management plans should be turned in to the school Medical Assistant on the first day.



### **Sports and Physical Education Participation**

Students wishing to participate in sports teams at Emerson must have a current signed physical form on file in the office. Students who are restricted from participating in PE classes or other school activities due to medical reasons require a signed release from their doctor.

### **Injuries at School**

If a child sustains an injury at school, the injured child is sent to the school Medical Assistant. Details of the injury are gathered from the child. If the injury is determined to be severe, an Accident Report is completed, at which time parents are contacted.

Treatment is rendered based on need, and may include washing the affected area, applying a Band-Aid, and/or applying an ice pack.

### **Food Allergy Policy**

Students with potentially life-threatening food allergies are welcome members of the Emerson School community. We acknowledge our responsibility to develop a plan for these students, which both details emergency treatment and also proactively addresses conditions to prevent exposure to specific allergens. We believe that school and family should act as a team to protect these children, while also thoughtfully encouraging their independence.

We also take seriously our responsibility to educate our families, teachers, and students about life-threatening food allergies, hoping to create a community that sensitively differentiates strategies for food allergies in the same spirit as we support different learning styles and other health-related student needs.

In order to support our students and families, we put forth the following responsibilities:

#### ***Student Responsibilities:***

- Be responsible, as is appropriate for one's age, as much as possible for avoiding known allergens.
- Wash hands before and after eating.
- Do not trade or share food.
- Recognize the symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- Immediately notify an adult if symptoms or exposure to an allergen occur.

#### ***Family Responsibilities:***

- Notify the school of the child's allergies prior to the start of the school year, or as soon as such allergies are diagnosed, whichever comes first.
- Provide the school with all necessary medical paperwork, including an Allergy Action Plan, prior to the start of the school year.
- Provide the school with at least (2) up-to-date epinephrine auto injectors.
- Work collaboratively with school personnel to educate the school community with respect to food allergies and the potentially life-threatening nature of such allergies. This may include co-writing a letter with the classroom teacher to classroom families.
- Work collaboratively with the school to develop a proactive prevention plan that promotes increasing age-appropriate independence as the student grows and matures.



- Be willing to provide allergen-free snacks for your student to keep in the classroom so there is always something your child can choose from during an unplanned special event.
- Be willing to go on your student's off-campus trips if possible and if requested.

**School Responsibilities:**

- Provide and monitor annual training and education for faculty and staff regarding allergens, emergency procedures, and administration of an epinephrine auto-injector.
- Promote an inclusive, sensitive, and responsive school climate for students with life-threatening allergies.
- Be thoughtful about the use of food as reward, and seek alternatives in order to be as inclusive as possible.
- Inform the family if the student experiences an allergic reaction at school.
- Contact parents in the event that the child forgets or loses his/her lunch.
- Provide all employees and substitutes with a list of students with life-threatening allergies.
- Include ESPO in the educational process and when planning for all-school events and fundraisers.
- Seek to have multiple food options available for students, including allergen-free foods, when food is provided.
- Provide advance notice to all families when food options will be made available, and provide advance information on food allergens.
- Provide allergen-free lunch spaces, and notify other students without allergies that they may sit there only if they are eating a lunch that is free of the given allergen.
- Encourage families to attach a list of ingredients to food they bring to school events.

Emerson School emphasizes that all children, including those with life-threatening food allergies, are welcome to participate in all school activities. Parents/guardians of children with these serious allergies should be aware that circumstances may occasionally occur during school events which present a higher than usual risk level. If possible, parents/guardians should provide supervision during these events to keep the risk level as low as possible. These include, but are not limited to: bake sales, events with international foods, potluck meals, catered meals, and all-school social events.

While Emerson School is unable to guarantee that your student with life-threatening allergies will not be exposed accidentally to his/her allergens in the school environment, we will undertake reasonable efforts to keep his/her risks as minimal as possible. Thank you for sharing information about your child to support us in our efforts. Please contact the school immediately if you have any questions or concerns about plans to accommodate your child's needs.

**COMMUNICATION**

The staff, parents, and students of the Emerson community are united by the common desire to create and maintain open, direct, and efficient channels of communication between home and school. However, achieving common objectives is a complex task in a school of our size and requires both a set of formal procedures and informal protocols to work well.

During the first few weeks of the school year, parents are strongly encouraged to attend Curriculum Night to meet their child's teachers and to learn about a typical day.





### **Conferences**

Parent teacher conferences are held in the fall and the spring. Conferences give parents a chance to hear about their child's progress and raise specific questions that may have arisen. Parents should feel comfortable contacting their child's teacher or Middle School advisor any time they have a question or concern about school. Please do not enter the classrooms after the school day has begun. If you wish to see a teacher, please call or email to set up an appointment.

### **Newsletter and Website**

Most weeks during the school year, Emerson School emails an electronic newsletter the day before the last school day of the week. The newsletter contains calendar information, notice of upcoming meetings, descriptions of upcoming classes and activities, ESPO information, etc. Questions about the newsletter and website, as well as newsletter submissions, should be directed to the Director of Marketing and Communications.

### **RenWeb Parent Portal**

Emerson School uses RenWeb as its Student Information System (SIS). RenWeb is a web-based application that gives parents online access to school forms, their student and family information, notices, school calendar, and other school information. School forms and student and family information will be available via RenWeb initially.

### **School Directory**

The Emerson directory is available online through RenWeb, as well as in printed form in the Lower School Office. This directory is intended to be used only for school-related communication by Emerson School students, parents, faculty, and staff.

### **Visitors**

Parents are welcome at school any time. However, appointments should be made ahead of time if you desire a conference with a particular faculty member. All visitors must check in at the Middle or Lower School office.

### **Phone Use**

The phones in the offices and classrooms are for school use only. Teachers and office staff will make sensible exceptions if a child is distressed or has a compelling need to communicate with home. Students should report to the office if they feel ill or are injured, and should not use their cell phones to call parents. Students who miss the bus will be sent to childcare and then assisted in calling home.

### **Messages**

When parents need to contact their children at school, the office staff in both the Lower and Middle School will attempt to deliver the message as promptly as possible. Middle School messages are taped to the student's locker. In case of serious emergencies, students can be pulled from classes to come to the phone. Please do not call, text, email, or message your child during school hours.

Messages received in the office after 2:00pm are often difficult to deliver before dismissal. Please try to get messages into the office earlier in the day.



## EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

### **Inclement Weather**

Emerson uses a service called Parent Alert to make automated messages (typically email and text messages) to all families in case of a school closing. Please be sure your contact phone numbers are up to date in RenWeb. In general, a decision to close school is made by 6:00am on those days when inclement weather exists.

The decision to close is made solely at the discretion of the Head of School. In most cases, if Ann Arbor Public Schools are closed, Emerson will also be closed, although the Head of School may close school for other reasons including power outages or other events that make the building uninhabitable. In the case of extremely cold temperatures, a decision to close the school may be made independently of the Ann Arbor Public Schools. Our primary concern is for the well-being and safety of our students. If local conditions are such that you feel as though it would not be safe to travel, do not do so. We would rather a child miss a day of school than risk potential harm in attempting to attend.

### **Evacuation**

In the case of certain emergencies that require evacuation, Emerson has a School Evacuation Plan, which outlines procedures to take all children off campus to a safe location near the school. These plans, along with steps to be taken in case of fire, tornado, shelter-in-place, or the presence of a violent intruder, will be practiced regularly by all members of the school community.

If it ever becomes necessary to implement any aspect of these plans, parents will be notified through Parent Alert, an automated emergency contact system. The children's safety is our most important concern at all times and there are a few ways in which you can help.

- Be sure that the school has current contact information and email addresses for your family.
- Make certain that all information in your child's emergency contact list is accurate.
- Make sure that your child always has appropriate outdoor clothing, in case it becomes necessary to leave the building.

In the event that we are required to evacuate the campus, our off-campus emergency location is Shekinah Regional Apostolic Center (4600 Scio Church Road, Ann Arbor, 734-662-6040), located approximately one mile east of the School.

### **Weapons Policy**

Fulfilling our responsibility to protect students and employees from potential acts or threats of violence, to provide a disruption-free learning environment, and to ensure the continued safety of students, no person in possession of a dangerous weapon will be allowed on school property. A "dangerous weapon" shall include, but is not limited to, any gun or pistol or starter pistol, any type of knife, brass knuckles, iron bars, or any other device that may readily do harm to students or adults. An individual who possesses a valid concealed pistol license is also prohibited from carrying a concealed pistol or openly carrying a gun on school property.



The Head of School may grant exemptions to this policy with regard to an item deemed necessary for an educational purpose at school. Any such exception will be determined on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the educational staff.

The presence on school property of any dangerous weapon will constitute an emergency. In the presence of a dangerous weapon on school property, unless otherwise warranted, the school will exercise the ALICE protocol for emergency response, and law enforcement will be called.

This prohibition of weapons on school property does not apply to officers duly sworn to and in good standing with public law enforcement agencies.

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DRILLS

### Fire

The school conducts fire, tornado, Shelter-in-Place drills, and lockdown drills in accordance to State mandated guidelines. When the fire alarm sounds, teachers will escort their classes outside and away from the building using the nearest exit. Visiting parents, siblings, guests, or other non-Emerson staff or students must also immediately leave the building through the nearest exit. Office staff will verify that the building is empty. A staff member will be available to direct the fire department to the scene. Once it has been determined that the building is safe, the office staff will inform all that they may return to the building. No one should re-enter the building until the all clear has been issued.

### Tornado

When a tornado warning is issued, teachers will escort their classes to designated “safe areas” marked with Tornado Shelter signs. Visiting parents, siblings, guests, or other non-Emerson staff will also be escorted to designated areas.

### Shelter-in-Place

A Shelter-in-Place order occurs when the outside environment is not safe to enter. All students, staff, and visitors must immediately report inside and be prepared to stay inside until the area is clear. The air handlers will be turned off and buildings must be sealed if a toxic environment exists outside. When the announcement is made:

- Students are to be cleared from the halls immediately and report to assigned classrooms.
- Close all windows and doors and block any gaps between bottom of the door and floor.
- Take attendance and report according to student accounting and release procedures.
- Do not allow anyone to leave the classroom until instructed.
- No one should be admitted inside the building, once sealed.
- Wait for instructions.

*Note: A Shelter-in-Place will likely be a newsworthy event. If the sheltered status lasts for a prolonged period of time, parents will be notified via Parent Alert. During a crisis, the classroom phone should be used for emergency use only. Do not allow students to leave the classroom until instructed by administration or emergency providers.*



## ALICE Protocol

While Emerson School continues to be an extremely safe place for students to learn, incidents of school violence elsewhere remind us of the important role training and drills play in every school's safety preparations. Based on the expert analysis of these events, public and independent schools across Washtenaw County have partnered with Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office, the Ann Arbor Police Department, and other local law enforcement agencies to develop and to train staff in new procedures intended to keep students as safe as possible during school emergencies.

Research has led the way for a new emergency response protocol called ALICE, which stands for:

- **Alert:** Get the word out. Use clear, concise language to convey the type and location of the event.
- **Lockdown:** Lock the doors. Continue to lockdown students in a secure area.
- **Inform:** Keep staff and students informed of the location of an intruder. Communication keeps the intruder off balance and allows for good decision making by staff.
- **Counter:** Apply skills learned in training to distract, confuse, and gain control of an intruder situation.
- **Evacuate:** Reduce the number of people potentially in harm's way, and get them as quickly as possible to safer locations.

Because of the proven effectiveness, every Washtenaw Intermediate School District school and many independent schools have participated in ALICE training, including Emerson School. Using the above method, Emerson faculty and staff (not students) have learned effective responses to a range of school emergencies, including the highly unlikely possibility of a school intruder.

### *What is Not Happening as Part of ALICE Training*

- **Staff are not being trained to make any attempt to subdue intruders outside of their secure area.** The School will provide the research-based knowledge and skills so, if faced with a life or death situation, they can use it to diminish any chance of harm to their students and themselves.
- **Students will not be trained in the ALICE response protocols.** Understanding that threats to our students and staff are very complicated subjects to discuss, the School does not want to cause undue stress or invoke fear in students. This training is intended to provide staff with additional options and the ability to consider those options now, in order to be better prepared to lead and protect their students.

## LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Should a parent wish to have a teacher or other employee of the School complete a letter of recommendation for a student for school admission, the parent must first contact the appropriate Office Manager (Lower School or Middle School). Recommendation letters may be reviewed by the Lower School Director, Middle School Director, and/or Head of School before they are sent directly to the receiving school. They are kept confidential to the letter writer, Head of School, Middle School Director, and Lower School Director.

## PERSONAL PROPERTY/LOST AND FOUND

The School cannot accept responsibility for missing items. All clothing and school supplies should be labeled clearly. Lost and Found bins are located near the Lower School entrance. Items not claimed will periodically be donated to a local charity.



## PET VISITS

To ensure the safety of all members of the school community, all animals must be leashed or contained at all times and under the direct control of an adult. Animal visits should be pre-arranged, and pets may not be brought into the building on a daily basis out of consideration for those community members with animal allergies. There may be special circumstances surrounding a pet visit, including but not limited to, therapy or service dogs, and we will make every effort to accommodate those situations.

## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthday parties and private parties are to be guided by a spirit of inclusion and sensitivity to the feelings of everyone. A simple celebration in the classroom is fine. Check with your child's teacher about possible birthday treats and a convenient time to celebrate. Should you bring in birthday treats, please communicate with your child's teacher regarding any classmates with food allergies, and please consider bringing a treat that may be enjoyed by all members of the classroom. Please do not distribute private party invitations at school. In the case of slumber parties, please drop off gear at the home of the host; it should not accompany the child to school.

Students may wish to donate books to the Emerson library in honor of their birthdays. Books will receive a special bookplate inscribed with the student's name. For the timing and selection of books, please see the librarian.

## CELL PHONES

Cell phones brought to school must remain "off" and not used during school hours. Cell phones must be kept in lockers during the school day, and may only be used between 2:45pm and 3:05pm to contact parents. Cell phones used during school hours will be taken away and given to the Office Manager. **Please do not call or text your child on his/her cell phone during school hours.**

## SMART WATCHES

Smart watches and other devices with cellular connectivity may not be used during the day to make or receive calls and/or text messages. Smart watches used inappropriately during school hours will be taken away and given to the appropriate Office Manager. **As with cell phones, please do not call or text your child on his/her smart watch during school hours.**

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Emerson School does not allow students to use certain electronic devices during school hours. Items that students may not use include, but are not limited to, iPods, MP3 Players, and portable game devices. It is important to the learning environment of the school and the success of each child that students participate fully in school, and we feel that the use of these items is distracting. All items of this nature that are found in school will be kept in the Lower or Middle School Office until retrieved by the student's parent or guardian.

## TEXTBOOKS

Emerson School is partnering with MBS Direct to provide textbook services. This program provides convenient online ordering, accurate and timely fulfillment, and overall service for our parents and students. Directions for purchasing textbooks can be found at [www.emerson-school.org](http://www.emerson-school.org) under the Parent Resources link or you may go directly to MBS website at [www.mbsdirect.net](http://www.mbsdirect.net).



Middle School student schedules will be on students' lockers the first day of school. A list of locker assignments will be posted on the Middle School science room windows and bulletin boards located near the bathrooms. Enrollment paperwork is available online through ParentWeb. All paperwork, including the health form, must be completed and turned in to the office before Middle School students will receive their schedules.

Most books for Lower School students are provided as needed by Lower School teachers.

## **MEDIA USE**

Photos, videos, and audio recordings are periodically taken during the school day and may capture your child's likeness and/or work. This media is primarily used to celebrate achievements, and to share events and day-to-day activities within the Emerson community (e.g. newsletters, emails, website, social media, school publications, etc.). Parents who wish to exclude their child from any media use are given an opportunity to opt out in the online enrollment form, or they can contact the Director of Marketing and Communications in writing.

Note: Due to the nature of classroom and school activities, all students may appear in group (three or more students) photos, videos, and/or audio recordings, including those who have declined media use. Additionally, Emerson cannot be responsible for the actions of any individuals and/or organizations not employed by Emerson, which may include parents, third-party vendors, destinations outside of Emerson, etc.

Emerson School can not be responsible for photos, videos, and/or audio recordings taken by third parties (e.g. outside summer camp groups, field trip sites, etc.).

## **GUIDELINES FOR TECHNOLOGY USAGE AT EMERSON**

Students are granted access to Emerson's computer lab, laptop carts, and other digital learning tools. Students are also granted access to Emerson's wired and wireless data network, and licensed application software.

A complete description of the rights and responsibilities of both the school and the student with regard to computer usage, including disciplinary action for violations, is contained in the Acceptable Use Policy for Technology.

### **Technology Program Mission**

The mission of the Emerson School Technology Program is to enhance learning and teaching through increased access to information, communications, teacher training, collaboration, and dissemination of successful educational practices, methods, and resources. Each year, Emerson students have increased access to computers on campus. This access to computers and the latest technology benefits students, faculty, and parents throughout the School. Everyone in the Emerson community will have the opportunity to add to his/her own education and share information with others around the globe.

It is important to realize that the use of computers on the Emerson campus is a privilege. Unauthorized use and/or access of the school's computer hardware and the Emerson network, or any illegal use of software will not be tolerated. While using the Internet through Emerson's connection, students do so as a representative of Emerson School.



### **Middle School Bring Your Own Device to School Program (BYOD)**

Emerson School expects Middle School students to bring in their own device for use in class. Technology is a powerful learning tool. Educational use is the primary reason for Emerson to implement a BYOD initiative. The guidelines below outline our expectations for the use of technology at Emerson School.

- Device usage is solely at the discretion of teachers and staff. Students should not access devices until asked to do so by their teacher. Students should expect that devices will not be needed in every class period, but will be utilized as directed by teachers.
- Internet access provided by Emerson School is filtered. Device and Internet usage are subject to Emerson's Acceptable Use Policy.
- Device use during lunch, recess, and any free period is not allowed, except with permission from and supervision by a teacher.
- Devices should be brought to school each day fully charged. Classrooms will have only a limited number of seats available for students to charge their computers while working on class assignments. Students should bring their charging cord and/or a fully charged spare battery.
- Student devices will have access to the internet and school printers while connected to Emerson's WiFi network.
- Emerson's teachers and Technology Staff are not responsible for the maintenance or repair of any student's device.
- Students should never leave their device unattended. In order to protect devices, they should be placed in a case or backpack while not in use. Devices should be stored in the student's locker. Students may bring a combination lock for their locker as outlined in the Family Handbook. Students are encouraged to take their device home with them every day.
- Respect of personal property is vital in this initiative. Students should only handle their own device.
- Any violation of these guidelines may result in the loss of technology privileges and/or further disciplinary actions as outlined in the Family Handbook.
- Emerson School is not responsible for lost or stolen equipment.

A device checklist is available on the school website and will help ensure that the device you choose will enable your student to participate fully in class when required.

### **Middle School Bring Your Own Device Rental Program**

A limited number of rental devices are available. Rental devices are not for every-day use, but for situations where a student's device is out-of-service for repairs or other longer-term events.

- All aspects of the Acceptable Use Policy apply when using a rental device.
- The student will be able to use the rented device at school and at home. A charger will also be provided. Device and charger are to be returned in the same condition as received. If the device is damaged or lost, the family will be responsible for the replacement cost of the devices.
- Rental devices are available at no-charge for up to 14 days (2 weeks). After 14 days, a rental fee of \$10/day charge will be added to the student's account.





## **PHOTOCOPYING**

It is expected that all students will come to class prepared for the day's work. If that work involves photocopies, the student should have all required copies made at a convenient copy center prior to coming to school. The photocopiers at school are not intended for student use. All students who are using computers at home for their assignments should print that work at home. If a school computer is used, the printer at that location should be used. No printing is available for students at any other location. We ask that parents and students not use the school photocopiers.

## **USE OF THE BUILDING AND GROUNDS BY EMERSON AND NON-EMERSON GROUPS**

Emerson-sponsored events, and those outside events that have received permission from the administration, may be held in the building or on the grounds. This policy is necessary to ensure the security of our building and grounds.

Those who wish to use Emerson facilities for school-related activities must complete a "Room, Equipment and Event Reservations" form and submit it at least two weeks prior to the planned event. Any scheduling requests for the Arts and Innovation Center should be directed to the AIC Systems Manager, David Moon, who can be reached at [dmoon@emerson-school.org](mailto:dmoon@emerson-school.org).

## **FACULTY GIFTS**

Emerson teachers appreciate the support extended to them by ESPO, classroom representatives, and individual parents. Buying modest gifts for teachers is allowed but not expected. Some classes choose to purchase a group gift for a teacher, at the option of the students and parents.



## PEOPLE AND PROCEDURES

*Please refer to the directory at the back of this publication for a list of all faculty and staff with their contact information. Contact information and bios are also available online at [www.emerson-school.org/faculty](http://www.emerson-school.org/faculty).*

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chair	Maria Coolican
Vice Chair	Jeff Warren
Treasurer	Steven Strauss
Secretary	Michelle Weaver
Trustee	Bill Beuche
Trustee	Kemba Braynon
Trustee	Luis Del Rio
Trustee	Tim Dickinson
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Trustee	Abbie Lawrence-Jacobson
Trustee	Dave McDowell
Trustee	Diana Rooks
Trustee	Charles Scrase
Trustee	Peter Toogood
Trustee	Allison Zeglis

### EMERSON SCHOOL PARENT ORGANIZATION (ESPO)

Chair	Lisa Ranzini
Co-Chair	Terry Chang
Treasurer	Cindy Woo



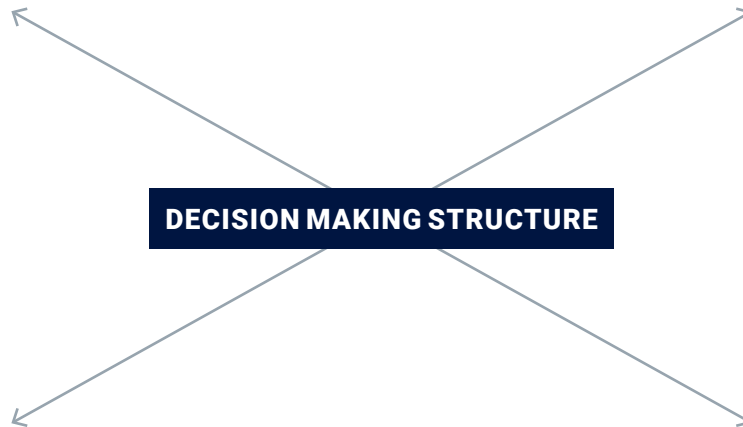
## ISACS MODEL FOR DECISION MAKING

### **The Board**

Self-perpetuating. As trustees, articulate the mission; set general policies; finance the operation; plan for the future; assess the institution; hire and support the Head of School.

### **The Faculty**

Appointed and evaluated by the Head of School. As teachers, educate and care about students; meet the needs of the school's customers; grow professionally in order to lead the educational development of the program.



### **The Parents/Parent Association**

Self-perpetuating and self-selected as "customers" and "patrons" of the school. Parent Association (ESPO) = Parents' voice: support the school; develop a positive and welcoming climate for all parents; work closely with the school in meeting its current needs; offer forum for parental input; mechanism for school communication to parents.

### **The Head of School**

Appointed by the Board of Trustees, its only employee, oversees (with administration/staff) the day-to-day operations; executes the mission and policies of the school (as set by the Board); serves as the faculty's advocate, colleague, and boss; the liaison among Board, faculty, and parents.



## ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND PROTOCOL

### Head of School

The Head is responsible for every aspect of the operation and management of the school, and acts as liaison among the Board, faculty, and parents. The Head meets with teachers to discuss matters of curriculum and discipline, as well as the progress of individual students. Parents are encouraged to direct concerns to the faculty, advisors, Director of Lower School, Director of Middle School, Lower School Coordinators, and staff first before contacting the Head of School. However, they are happy to address issues that cannot be answered by the faculty and staff.

### Lower School and Middle School Directors

The Lower School and Middle School Director coordinates all programming, curriculum, personnel, student issues, and communication. They meet regularly with the Head of School, faculty members, and Lower School Coordinators. All Lower School inquiries should be directed to the Lower School Director, and all Middle School inquiries should be directed to the Middle School Director.

### Lower School / Grade Level Representatives

The Lower School / Grade Level Representatives work closely with the Head of School, Lower School Director, Middle School Director, and faculty members, facilitate Middle School and Lower School staff meetings, and serve as resources to the faculty.

### Lower School Homeroom Teachers

Lower School students are assigned a homeroom teacher who is responsible for teaching the core subjects and is each student's primary contact. During the course of the day, students leave their homeroom classes to visit the various Specialists teachers.

### Middle School Advisors

Each student in the Middle School is assigned to an advisor. Advisors serve a number of important functions. They provide informal and personal guidance for students about all areas of school life. They serve as an advocate for students with other members of the faculty and administration. They collect and receive pertinent information from the faculty about their advisees and serve as a liaison between the school and parents.

Students check in with their advisors and meet with them in groups on a regular basis throughout the school week. Advisory groups also discuss and engage in a variety of age-appropriate activities designed to meet the social, emotional, and physical needs of Middle School students. Advisors often problem solve with students about school issues, social issues, study strategies, etc. This informal guidance system does not preclude a student forming close attachments with other faculty, nor does it prohibit parents from dealing directly with the faculty or calling other school staff who might be helpful. It is a system that is designed to help support students and parents.

The Middle School Director oversees the advisor placement process as well as their programming details, which includes our middle school community service days.



### **Learning Support and Counseling**

To support students with whatever emotional or learning needs that may arise, the Emerson Learning Support Center includes a full-time Counselor, an early grades Learning Specialist, an intermediate grades Learning Specialist, and a middle school Learning Specialist. Please contact your child's teacher to discuss whether Learning Support or counseling may be appropriate for your child.

### **Admissions and Financial Aid**

The Director of Admissions and Financial Aid is responsible for welcoming new families into Emerson School, and helping current families stay here. This person also coordinates admissions events and tours, the testing and screening of all prospective students, and oversees financial aid for current and prospective families.

The vast majority of prospective families learn about Emerson from our current families. If you know someone who might be considering Emerson, please encourage the prospective family to contact the Director of Admissions, and let her know you've been talking about Emerson so we can thank you.

### **Business Operations**

The Director of Business Operations is responsible for the financial and risk management of the school. The Assistant Director of Business Operations manages online and auto payments. Parents are encouraged to contact the Assistant Director of Business Operations regarding specific billing concerns. The Controller completes the business office team by processing payroll, producing financial statements and overseeing an annual audit.

### **Marketing and Communications**

The Director of Marketing and Communications is responsible for all of Emerson's branding, publications, message consistency, newsletters, emails, website management, advertising, and public relations.

- **Internal Communications**

A top priority is keeping families aware of news, changes, activities, and other school-related items that might impact your students. Please read the weekly newsletter and any mid-week news emails.

- **Public Relations**

Please direct all media inquiries to the Director of Marketing and Communications, who will send information on behalf of the school and/or connect them with the most appropriate spokesperson. Likewise, if you have an idea that media might be interested in, please contact the Director of Marketing and Communications to help craft the message and make contact with the media outlet.

- **Marketing and Branding**

It is important to maintain a consistent brand identity that accurately represents Emerson School. To help ensure that, please do not use the Emerson logo or create any materials on behalf of the School without first contacting the Director of Marketing and Communications. Emerson's Brand Standards are available upon request.

- **Website**

The school's website is a destination for both current and prospective families. If you notice any inaccuracies, or have any suggestions for improvement, please contact the Director of Marketing and Communications.

## **Development**

The Director of Development is responsible for all fundraising programs, special events including the annual Emerson Auction, as well as donor and alumni relations. The Development Office consists of the Director of Development whose primary focus is building a culture of philanthropy through a variety of fundraising opportunities. The Development Associate's primary focus is gift processing and reporting for the Annual Fund program along with supporting the Annual Auction along with parent volunteers.

At Emerson, as at virtually all independent schools, tuition, flexible tuition, and fees do not cover the complete cost of educating our children or maintaining our facilities. Setting tuition at a level that is affordable to the greatest number of families results in a gap between our expenses and our revenues. The balance of funding for our annual budget and capital projects comes through our fundraising efforts with our families, alumni and alumni parents, grandparents and friends. Emerson aspires and encourages 100% participation from its Board of Trustees, Faculty, Staff, and families. Gifts at any level are welcomed and appreciated.

Emerson has benefitted from a long tradition of giving, which has helped make it the outstanding school that it is today. Contributions of time, talent, knowledge, and resources are all valued gifts. Our community has been built on such contributions, and we rely on the participation of all Emerson families in supporting our current and future needs. During the year, you will hear about ways you can contribute to the Annual Fund and the Auction, Emerson's two primary fundraising activities.

- **The Emerson Annual Fund**

The Annual Fund raises gifts for annual operational support for Emerson School. It provides for financial aid, faculty professional development, and special projects that are not covered by tuition. We strongly encourage all families, Trustees, faculty, and staff to support the Annual Fund every year. Each gift, regardless of size, makes an impact. Your participation is what matters most. Unlike tuition, gifts to the Annual Fund are tax-deductible. Annual Fund gifts and pledges are accepted in several forms (cash, check, credit card, or stock) and may be given online at [www.emerson-school.org/give](http://www.emerson-school.org/give), or directly to the Development Office. Gift and pledge forms and reply envelopes are available in the Lower School and Middle School Offices and the Development Office.

Unlike tuition, gifts to the Annual Fund are tax deductible. Annual Fund gifts and pledges are accepted in several forms (cash, check, credit card, or stock) and may be given online at [www.emerson-school.org/give](http://www.emerson-school.org/give), or directly to the Development Office. Gift and pledge forms and reply envelopes are available in the Lower School and Middle School Offices and the Development Office.

- **The Emerson Auction**

Emerson School's annual Auction is held in the spring. The event brings members of the Emerson community together for a fabulous evening of fun, friendship, food, and giving. Parent volunteers help make it possible, and we hope you will join others in sharing your time and expertise. Please contact the Special Events Associate if you would like to volunteer or if you have questions regarding Auction tickets, donations, sponsorships, or advertising.



- **Other Fundraising Initiatives**

Periodically, Emerson undertakes special, multi-year campaigns to fund major initiatives that fall outside the scope of annual budgets. These campaigns provided the funding to construct Emerson's Arts and Innovation Center, expand the Middle School, renovate the Library, construct the K-2 and Specials wings, and more. Much is asked of our donors, and we are very sensitive to competing requests for your annual gift support. Emerson's priority is participation in the Annual Fund and Auction. Additional fundraising activities are kept to a minimum. Exceptions may include food or clothing drives, or collections for classroom projects. All fundraising activities must be approved and coordinated by the Development Office. The following are the criteria for approval of a fundraising activity:

- The timing of the event or activity should not conflict with other similar activities that are already on the school calendar, including planned solicitations.
- No individual, company, or foundation should be approached for a donation to the school without the express consent of the Development Office.
- Any written materials created for a fundraising project must be approved by the Development Office before being mailed or posted.
- All discussions and decisions about restricted gifts, including acceptance, will take into account other fundraising activities and the general needs of Emerson School, as determined by the Development Committee of the Board of Trustees.

- **Gifts-In-Kind**

Non-cash gifts of tangible property or professional time and talent are often welcome. Please contact the Development Office to determine the acceptability of such gifts. The IRS places the responsibility for the valuation of in-kind gifts on the donor. For proper acknowledgment of your gift, please complete and return a Gift-In-Kind Transmittal Form, available from the Development Office. Forms can also be found online at [emerson-school.org/give](http://emerson-school.org/give).





## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

### THE EMERSON SCHOOL PARENT ORGANIZATION (ESPO)

[www.emerson-school.org/espo](http://www.emerson-school.org/espo) | [espo@emerson-school.org](mailto:espo@emerson-school.org)

At Emerson, we are fortunate to have a very active parent organization, called the Emerson School Parent Organization (ESPO), which serves as a link between the parents and the school and sponsors a number of important volunteer events and activities. As well as several social occasions, ESPO sponsors events each year that support curriculum enrichment, community building, and “friendraising” activities, including but not limited to the ESPO Welcome Back Coffee, Halloween Carnival, Thanksgiving Bake Sale, Teacher Appreciation Lunch, and Book Fair, and it organizes the Pizza Lunch program. The proceeds from these activities have provided our children with numerous cultural performances, resident artists, educational equipment, playground equipment, and library books.

Officers are elected each year at the annual meeting in May. Please email ESPO if you would like to find out more about how you can get involved at [espo@emerson-school.org](mailto:espo@emerson-school.org).

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Parents make many valuable contributions to the School as volunteers. Opportunities include ESPO-sponsored events and activities, both one-time and ongoing; school events such as the annual Auction, fairs, performances, etc.; and classroom activities organized by your child’s teachers.

## WHAT AND WHERE

### CLASSROOMS

Lower School classrooms are open from 8:15am to 3:00pm. Middle School, classrooms are open from 7:45am to 3:00pm. Students are not allowed in classrooms without a faculty member present, except by permission.

### GYMNASIUM

The gymnasium is used for physical education classes, certain athletic contests, and special events. Students should not enter without adult supervision. Students are required to keep a pair of rubber-soled gym shoes at school. No food or drink is permitted in the gym. A Room Reservation Form must be completed to reserve the gym for use outside of regular classes.

### LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER (LMC)

Our LMC houses an outstanding collection of books and technological resources. The LMC is open from 8:00am to 3:00pm daily. Students have regularly scheduled library times, but may also obtain permission from their teachers to visit the library during class. The school expects that students will handle library materials with appropriate care and return them when they are due. All students will be asked to pay for lost or damaged books.



## LOCKERS

Students in Grades 1 - 8 are assigned hall lockers. Kindergarten students are assigned cubbies for books and belongings. Lockers are the property of the school.

- Please do not leave perishable food items in lockers overnight.
- Each student will be assigned one locker and may not switch lockers with another student or use more than the one that is assigned.
- Do not put stickers on the inside or outside of lockers. Magnets, paper, or cardboard may be used to attach decorations.
- Everything brought to school on a regular basis must fit in a locker with the door shut. Backpacks that do not fit into the lockers are not permitted.
- Attachments to the outside of lockers are not permitted.
- A locker cleaning charge will be assessed if a locker needs to be cleaned or is damaged at the end of the year.
- We strongly advise students not to bring valuables to school.
- If a Middle School student wishes, he/she can attach a combination lock to a locker, but must give the combination to the Middle School Office Manager. Only combination locks are permitted.
- Bathrooms may not be used to store personal belongings.
- Musical instruments must be stored in the music room, not in the hallway. Instruments left in the hallway will be moved to the office and must be collected there by the student/owner.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips offer enrichment to students as well as a direct way for parents to get involved in their child's school life. Teachers need parental help for transportation and supervision. To drive on a field trip, parents must first be approved as a volunteer driver. Volunteer drivers are to complete a Parent Volunteer Driver form and submit this to the Lower or Middle School Office Manager in advance of the trip. This form is available on RenWeb. A parent representative may work with the teacher to coordinate and organize drivers for all scheduled trips. If you are considering driving and bringing a younger child, ask if this is appropriate. If you can drive, the teacher or parent representative will give you the list of children you will be asked to take.

On the driver's form you will agree to follow traffic laws and ensure that every passenger is secured in a seat belt or booster seat whenever the car is in motion. On any school trip, the school insurance policy provides liability coverage. The driver is responsible for supervising the students in the car and may convey personal expectations to his/her group about conduct in the car and during the field trip.

In order to ensure that the field trip is a safe and successful one for all parties, we ask parent chaperones to following these guidelines:

- Follow the directions as given by the teacher or administrator leading the field trip.
- Do not change plans for your group, such as making additional stops, skipping planned activities, or leaving early.
- Follow all school rules, and ensure that students do so as well.
- In the event that a student becomes ill or injured, bring this to the immediate attention of the teacher or administrator leading the field trip.
- In the event that you feel a child should receive disciplinary action for not following school rules, inform a teacher or administrator in the group, and allow him/her to decide if and how such action should be dispensed.

- Supervise your students at all times, and count frequently to make sure you have your entire group with you.
- Know what to do in the case of an emergency.
- Do not be alone with an individual student.
- Do not administer medications to students.
- Be fully present, and avoid doing personal or outside work while chaperoning. If you need to step aside from chaperoning to complete outside work or respond to a personal matter, first ensure that the teacher or administrator leading the field trip can provide you with temporary coverage.
- Avoid providing special treats (such as snacks, drinks, or rewards) for your group of students. Not only does this lead to feelings of unequal treatment among other groups, it can conflict with students' food allergy plans.
- Faculty and staff have dedicated great energy and time to planning these experiences, we welcome your thoughts on possible itinerary suggestions and ideas during this planning process. Please do not deviate, alter, or encourage changes from the final itinerary while on the trip.
- The use of tobacco, alcohol, or other banned substances on school trips is prohibited.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL TRIPS

Emerson Middle School often takes off-campus trips to allow students to further investigate an area of study. These trips are made possible through the cooperation of many of our families, as they serve either as drivers or as chaperones on trips that rely on commercial transportation. Teachers will send home information about overnight trips and arrange a time to go over details with all parents. They will inform parents if students need to take particular clothing for planned activities. Separate forms are required for any medication to be given to students on each trip. All students are expected to follow Emerson's behavioral guidelines when on school-sponsored trips. It is expected that any parent who has offered his/her services as a driver will be treated with the same respect that is afforded all students and staff. Each parent will serve as a supervisor during field trips.

Students are expected to participate in the trip's organized activities just as they would at school. If for health or other reasons they are unable to do so, their parents should discuss this with the teacher before the trip. Field trips, especially those including an overnight stay, are scheduled well in advance and may require additional fees. Financial assistance may be available if the cost of the trip creates a hardship for the family. The school staff requests that parents and students alike regard the school field trip as an important component of the curriculum, and asks that they not pull a student out of the trips for athletic practices or games, extracurricular lessons, or vacations.

If a student is unable to participate in the annual end-of-the-year curricular trip, parents must make alternative arrangements for that student, as classes will not be offered at Emerson for the duration of the trip.

Please note that independent trips organized by Emerson faculty or staff outside of school are not endorsed by the school. This includes world language trips abroad during the summer months.



## HOW THE DAY GOES

### CURBSIDE DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

Curbside Service is offered as a convenient, efficient way for parents and/or guardians to drop off and pick up their student(s). Parents or guardians who wish to walk their students into or out of the building may use the lot at the end of the middle school. Cars should not park at the curb any time of the day.

For the safety of our students, we strongly encourage drivers to refrain from using cell phones during drop-off and pick-up times.

#### Morning Curbside Drop-Off

- Please pull all the way forward in the curbside service lane.
- Staff members will assist K-5 students in getting out of their cars.
- Middle School drivers are asked to remain in a single line and pull forward to drop off passengers in the same manner.
- *Do not* pull in and out of the drop-off lane as it is extremely dangerous for everyone.
- Each child will have time to exit the car in a timely and safe manner.

#### Afternoon Curbside Pick-Up Service

- Visor signs (provided in the first day packet) must be displayed on the passenger side visor during afternoon curbside pick-up.
- Pull all the way forward in the Curbside Service lane – Once vehicles have stopped, children will be assisted into cars, and drivers will be directed to exit.
- Children will NOT be allowed to enter on the street side of the vehicle, except with adult assistance.
- Drivers must remain in their car to facilitate traffic flow.
- Drivers picking up older students should enter the parking lot and line up in the holding pattern lanes. Please remember to turn off your car while you wait in line.
- It is important to remember to follow those directing traffic to maintain traffic flow and safety.
- A bus parking/loading zone is located at the east end of the parking lot to provide a safer environment for our children.
- We have made every effort to be mindful of our neighbors on Scio Church Road, and the staff member posted at the entry drive will guide drivers either to the curbside lane or to the “holding pattern lanes.”
- We ask that all vehicles yield to buses entering and exiting the campus, as well as in our parking lot.
- All students not picked up at 3:00pm will come inside and sign in to the After School Program. Parents arriving after 3:00pm must park their car and come inside to the library to sign their child out of the program.

#### ESPO Anti-Idling Initiative

- **Please don't idle while you're waiting in line before curbside begins**

Lines of idling cars produce the ideal scenario for maximum exposure to harmful pollutants. It's fine to allow some distance between your car and the car in front of you while you wait: you won't get to your child any later.



- **If you're stopped for more than 10 seconds, turn it off**

Idling for more than 10 seconds uses more fuel than restarting your engine. Whether you're dropping off your kids at school or using the ATM, if you're stopped for more than 10 seconds, turn your car off.

- **Idling pollutes**

Idling one car for five minutes per day can emit as many as 25 pounds of harmful air pollutants and 260 pounds of carbon dioxide per year, a primary greenhouse gas.

## **EARLY ARRIVAL – BEFORE SCHOOL CARE**

Morning Child Care is available from 7:30am – 8:15am. Lower School students arriving before 8:15am must report to the Morning Child Care Program in the library. The school does not open until 7:30am.

## **THE SCHOOL DAY**

The Middle School day begins at 8:00am and ends at 2:45pm. Please make sure your child is on time so class can start promptly. The first Middle School bell rings at 7:55am. Students are expected to be seated and ready for class by 8:00am, when the second bell sounds.

Each trimester, Middle School students have a series of core classes that include Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, and Science. They also take a World Language and Enrichment Classes (P.E., Health, Performing and Visual Arts), taught on a rotation schedule. All 6th grade students will take Introduction to Middle School during their first trimester in the fall. In addition, each student chooses two Electives from a variety of classes each trimester. Band and Orchestra are full year commitments.

The Lower School day begins at 8:30am, and ends at 2:45pm. Each Lower School classroom has its own daily schedule of Language Arts, Social Studies, and Math, as well as Specials classes (including QUEST, World Languages, Art, Music, Library, and P.E.). The school is organized into trimesters.

## **LUNCH**

Families are expected to arrange for lunch for their children each day. Students may always have their child bring a brown-bag lunch from home. Alternatively, lunch service is offered through an outside vendor and delivered Monday through Thursday, with a few exceptions. Parents may arrange to purchase meals through the lunch service with the link provided by the school. Milk can be ordered for lunches Monday through Thursday. Additionally, ESPO provides a pizza lunch on Fridays, with a few exceptions. A link will also be provided for families to sign up and purchase pizza lunches and Friday milk orders.

Students may bring in a morning snack from home.

Please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Food must be eaten in designated areas. Currently we do not allow students to eat in the gym, the library, the Arts and Innovation Center, the computer lab, or the Innovation Lab.
- Label lunch bags or boxes with student's name.
- School refrigerators are not available for student lunches.
- Microwaves are not always available for student use.
- Do not leave perishable food in lockers overnight.



## RECESS

All Emerson students will go outside for recess each day as long as the temperature with the wind chill is zero degrees or greater. All students should dress appropriately for the weather, including boots, hats, gloves and even snow pants during the winter. Although students are supervised by adults during recess time, there are risks inherent to playing outdoors on swing sets, slides, and other playground equipment.

### Sledding

When the hill on the back of the playground is covered with snow, we also offer supervised sledding as an option for all students. In order to sled, students **MUST** wear all of the following: boots, snow pants, winter jacket, hat and gloves/mittens. Emerson School ensures that all reasonable safety precautions are taken. The sledding rules are reviewed with all students in advance and enforced by the supervisors. Students violating the rules or engaging in unsafe behavior will not be allowed to sled.

## AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Emerson's After School Program is provided as an extra service of the school, independent of the school enrollment contract. The program provides a safe and resource-rich alternative "neighborhood" playground for Emerson students, as well as an array of adult-led, structured activities. Free play with friends, quiet time to read or study, supervised computer time, and games comprise the core of the program. A simple snack is provided each day right after school, with an additional snack at 4:30pm. The program runs from 2:45pm to 6:00pm each full day of school and adheres to the strict formal check-in and check-out procedures required by the State of Michigan; so be sure to park and come into the library to sign your child out each day. Rates for the After School Program are charged by the half-hour, with a strict penalty for late pick-up. Details can be found in the After School Program Parent Guide on our website.

All students staying after school not directly involved in after school sports, clubs, or other organized activities will be checked into the After School Program at 2:45pm. Students who have a game or other activities at times later than 2:45pm will be checked into the program and then checked out at the time of their activity. The After School Program staff also offers a number of special full-day child care options from 8:00am to 6:00pm on various school days when there is no school. Details will be sent home via email prior to these days, complete with registration information.

## ENRICHMENT CLASSES AND MUSIC LESSONS

Emerson offers a wide variety of after school enrichment classes, such as chess, art, robots, and computer programming. The school year is divided into three separate sessions, and classes vary according to each session. Class offerings are sent home via email shortly before each session begins and registration occurs at that time. Enrichment classes are billed to your student's account and child care charges do not apply while your child is in his/her class. Music lessons for many instruments are available throughout the school year. Lessons begin the third week in September and continue through May. If you are interested in music lessons, please contact the After School Program Director. Scholarships may be available for lessons and/or musical instruments.

The purposes of after school enrichment classes and music lessons are to provide opportunities for self-improvement and a convenient alternative to taking after school lessons off-site. *These classes are scheduled by the After School Program but are not a part of the child care agreement. Therefore, please keep in mind that a tax receipt for childcare services will not reflect times spent in these classes, nor their fees.*



## BUSES

Emerson's students have the opportunity to ride either the Ann Arbor Public School bus or a privately contracted bus. We provide these guidelines and expectations to ensure that all students may experience a peaceful, safe ride to and from school.

All bus riders should demonstrate Emerson's core values of empathy and integrity. We hold the bus environment to the same standards as the classroom environment. To that end, all riders must do the following:

- Cooperate with the bus driver and follow directions respectfully
- Remain seated while the bus is in motion
- Stay in one seat for the entirety of the trip
- Keep the aisles of the bus clear
- Maintain a neat and tidy space
- Keep all parts of the body inside the vehicle

Additionally, riders may not do the following:

- Eat or drink
- Use cell phones
- Open windows without the bus driver's permission
- Bring anything onto the bus that might cause harm or injury
- Take photos or videos

Unacceptable behaviors as outlined in this Family Handbook are also not permitted on the bus. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Destroying or vandalising property
- Using inappropriate language
- Lying
- Fighting, hitting, bullying, and teasing
- Showing verbal, physical, or other outward demonstrations of disrespect for others
- Stealing
- Photographing, videotaping, or otherwise using a cell phone inappropriately

Should a bus rider engage in misbehavior on the bus, the bus driver will notify the appropriate Division Head and/or Head of School. The student may be removed from the bus for the week, the month, or the remainder of the school year.

### Emerson Bus

A privately chartered bus service is available for all Emerson School families. Space is limited and registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Enrollment is an annual commitment with service five days a week. Pick-up and drop-off locations, times, and costs can be found at [www.emerson-school.org/bus](http://www.emerson-school.org/bus).

### Ann Arbor Public Schools Bus

Bus service is available to all families who live in the Ann Arbor Public Schools district at no cost (families pay for this via taxes). The schedule may vary by school year, but all families with students who intend to ride the AAPS to or from Emerson must register at the beginning of the school year. Pick-up and drop-off locations and times can be found at [www.emerson-school.org/bus](http://www.emerson-school.org/bus).



Buses are available for Emerson students' use only on days when AAPS are in session. It should be noted that when Emerson dismisses at noon, no buses are provided. The same parameters for pick-up and drop-off apply to all Emerson students as they do to students from the public schools. Designated morning pick-up and transfer locations are specified by AAPS.

Students must ride their assigned bus to their assigned stop on a regular basis. No guest riders will be allowed to ride with a "regular" bus rider. It is the parents' responsibility to inform students whether or not they are to take the bus. Parents should also inform teachers of routines and changes to routines. Avoid last minute calls to school, as these cause frustration for both students and staff.

### **Morning Bus**

Lower School students must check into childcare immediately upon arrival at Emerson. Those students will not be charged for childcare on days when they ride the bus to school.

### **Bus Dismissal**

In order to facilitate a safe and timely bus departure, Emerson School will follow these steps:

- All busses will leave promptly at 2:55pm. Any student who misses the bus will sign into the After School Program, call home to notify parents, and be charged accordingly.
- Middle School students are to enter busses on his/her own directly at dismissal at 2:45pm.
- Lower School students are to gather immediately upon dismissal with the appropriate teacher or administrator in the main entrance of the school, and then enter the busses as a group no later than 2:55pm.
- Any changes to the regular bus pickup must be communicated by the parent or legal guardian to either the Lower School Office Manager or Middle School Office Manager no later than 2pm. You may notify either one by email or by phone. This included notification of a child's after school activities, sickness, doctor appointments, and so on. We will not make a change to regular bus pickup based upon a student's stated plans, only based upon a parent communication.
- For Emerson's contracted bus, if a parent is not present to pick up the child at the appointed time, the child will be returned to Emerson School, signed into the After School Program, and charged accordingly.
- No child may be placed on the bus without being registered with Emerson School for the Ann Arbor Public School Bus or the Emerson School bus.
- Parents should wait for their children at a safe location. Crossing streets to pick up or drop off children should be avoided.

### **Bus Contacts**

- Ann Arbor Public Schools Transportation Department: 734-994-2330
- Emerson School Lower School Office Manager: 734-665-5662, ext. 4

### **CARPOOL MAP**

It's easy to find other Emerson families who live nearby and coordinate carpool groups with the ESPO Carpool Map. Only families who opt-in to participate are visible on the map, and only those who participate can view it. To learn more and opt-in to participate, visit [www.emerson-school.org/carpool](http://www.emerson-school.org/carpool).





## ACADEMIC INFORMATION

### SCHEDULES

Lower School families will be notified by email of classroom placement approximately two weeks prior to the start of school.

Middle School schedules for the first trimester will be given to students on the first day of school. At the start of each new trimester, students will receive their new schedules in their first period class of the new/current trimester, which will be posted by the bathrooms and on the Middle School bulletin boards.

### HOMEWORK

In the Lower School, teachers begin assigning a reasonable, gradually increasing amount of formal homework in the middle to upper grades. Emerson's goal is to teach students to assume full responsibility for having appropriate materials available and organized, and for completing their homework in a timely manner. Most Middle School students average approximately 1½ to 2 hours of homework each night (roughly 20 minutes per academic subject per night), with additional time occasionally required for special projects. The school recommends that parents help their children with occasional reminders, but as much as possible, encourage independence in homework completion. Students are encouraged to check Google Calendar nightly for homework assignments especially if the student was absent from school.

### STUDENT PERFORMANCE

#### Progress and Interim Reports

Emerson teachers report on student progress at the end of each trimester. Lower School reports include detailed checklists assessing academic skills and social and learning behaviors, as well as personal comments about each child. Middle School teachers also assign students a grade for most classes. Middle School teachers may also send home progress reports at the midterm (six weeks in) of each trimester. Progress reports are generally sent for students who are receiving a "C" grade or below, or have made significant progress in either a positive or negative direction in that class. Additionally, many middle school teachers make their gradebooks available online through RenWeb, with the understanding that these will be updated at least every two weeks throughout the trimester.

#### Evaluation Forms for Testing

Should a parent wish to have a teacher or other employee of the School complete an outside evaluation form or letter for a student as part of the student's professional testing or evaluation (e.g., behavior, academic, psychological, etc.), the parent must first contact the Assistant Head of School, who serves as the point person for all such forms. Forms and letters are sent directly to the receiving testing agent and will be kept confidential to the letter writer, Head of School, Lower School Director, Middle School Director, School Counselor, and Learning Support Center.

#### Graduation Requirements

Emerson's Middle School students are expected to complete homework and put forth their best effort. In grades 6-8, a student must have an average of C or higher in year-long classes in order to move to the next level (unless special circumstances exist). In the 8th grade, if a student has not earned a C or higher in his/her year-long classes, the school will evaluate closely whether or not to grant a diploma.



If it seems at any point that even with considerable support a child is unable to experience success at Emerson, teachers and a member of the administration will meet with parents to evaluate the appropriateness of the school's program for the student.

## **COUNSELING AND LEARNING SUPPORT**

To support students with whatever emotional or learning needs that may arise, Emerson has a number of specialists who make up the Learning Support Center. Should you believe that your child would benefit from Learning Support services, please contact your child's teacher, the appropriate Division Head, or the Counseling and Learning Support Coordinator.

### **Mission**

To develop and nurture the whole child by skill building and supporting the student's self-understanding and self-advocacy.

### **Counseling and Learning Support Staff**

- Counselor and Learning Support Coordinator
- Middle School Learning Specialist
- Learning Specialists

### **Focus**

- To provide proactive classroom support for student learning so as to minimize the need for individual remediation and support
- To provide individual and small group remediation and support for students as needed or called for by diagnosis

### **Prioritization of Student Services**

- Students with diagnosed disabilities
- Students for whom there are learning differences suspected by the Learning Support team and teachers
- Additional students about whom a Learning Support team or teacher has concerns

### **What Learning Support Does**

- Identify and support student needs:
- Observe classes
- Coach students in executive skills
- Work with the counselor to develop educational plans documenting classroom accommodations to which students are entitled based on their diagnoses
- Provide small group reading support as appropriate to the grade
- Complete and maintain progress monitoring data on all students enrolled in the program
- Perform intake, mid-year, and end-of-the year benchmark assessments on enrolled students
- Work with homeroom teachers to design and perform small group instruction, as requested
- Discuss learning challenges with parents
- Refer families for further testing
- Collaborate with homeroom teachers on small group and individual learning goals

- Individually tutor students with diagnosed learning disabilities
- Work with teachers on student transition between grade levels
- When requested, work with classroom teachers to differentiate instruction to ability level and modify curriculum and assessments for diagnosed learning disabled students
- Provide recommendations in universal design to connect students with alternative ways to display mastery via technology
- Maintain detailed notes of completed work, suspensions, and progress on learning goals for each individual tutoring session
- Attend division meetings

#### **What Learning Support Doesn't Do**

- Focus on completion of homework assignments and/or classroom assignments
- Provide academic enrichment in subject areas
- Whole class teaching

### **LOWER SCHOOL ACADEMIC CENTER FOR ENRICHMENT (A.C.E.)**

#### **Objective**

To enrich and support curriculum design, instruction, and student achievement.

#### **Faculty**

- K-5 Language Arts Academic Specialist
- K-5 Math Academic Specialist

#### **Focus**

- to provide enrichment to students through effective whole group practices, small group enrichments, and individualized learning activities
- to collaborate with teachers to develop differentiated lessons based on student's unique learning profiles, so that all are engaged and challenged
- to assist teachers with tracking data to determine the effectiveness of enrichments (i.e., math inventories, reading inventories, graded word lists)
- to implement a multi-disciplinary approach through the use of kinesthetic activities, the applied arts, technology, and the multiple intelligences
- to develop assessments as needed
- to collaborate with content and grade-level teams to promote an environment of cross-curricular critical thinking
- to assist teachers (through ongoing assessment) in identifying students, both returning and new, who might benefit from an extra layer of challenge
- to deliver content and instruction to students with purpose, passion, and a willingness to do "whatever it takes" to help students succeed

#### **Prioritization of Student Enrichment**

- Students identified by faculty or academic administration who may benefit from enhanced academic activities
- Students who show a desire and willingness for academic challenges



### **Process**

- When an educator has determined that a student (or students) would benefit from academic enrichment, he or she should first bring this information to the Academic Enrichment Center. Enrichment is available to any student whose academic development suggests a need for enhanced activities.
- Teachers may request enrichment activities and lesson enhancement for their classroom, small groups, and/or individuals. Teachers may also request assistance in creating supplemental materials from the Academic Specialists.
- When a parent requests enrichment, he or she must first direct the request to the main classroom teacher. The classroom teacher will collaborate with the Academic Enrichment Specialists to determine how best to fill that need.

### **What Academic Specialists Do Not Do**

- Provide services to students based solely upon parent request
- Make referrals to families for further testing of students
- Suggest a medical diagnosis of a student
- Work with the Counselor to develop educational plans
- Document classroom activities and accommodations
- Assist students with homework and classwork completion
- Offer remediation help to struggling students

### **AWARDS**

Awards are presented at the end of the school year during an all-school Awards Assembly. Recognition is given for outstanding performance on National Latin, French, and Spanish Exams, and various math and science contests. There are also awards for citizenship, athletics, and performance and visual arts.

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL ELECTIVES**

Middle School students choose two afternoon electives each trimester. A variety of classes are offered, including Band, Orchestra, ceramics, jewelry making, Science Olympiad, outdoor education, drama, newspaper, and quilting, to name a few. Band and Orchestra are a full-year commitment, but most electives change every trimester. Students are encouraged to sample a wide variety of electives during their Middle School years.

It is the student's responsibility to complete the elective request form online by the deadline. The faculty will choose electives for students who do not turn in a request form on time. The drop and add process is not available to students who do not submit their elective form on time.



## SPECIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Emerson faculty, staff, and ESPO volunteers provide a stimulating atmosphere for learning throughout the year through a variety of all-school and grade-specific events and activities. Examples include:

- Hosting visiting authors and musicians
- Science Fair
- End-of-year Art and Music Events
- Annual Alumni Concert and Dinner
- Geography Bee
- Field Day
- Middle School Fall Musical and Spring Play
- Middle School dances
- Jump Start for rising Kindergarteners

## SUMMER AT EMERSON

Summer at Emerson offers eight weeks of half-day, week-long camps each summer. Our camps are available for students who have just completed Kindergarten through eighth grade, regardless of school attended. Morning camps run from 9:00am – 12:00pm and afternoon camps run from 1:00pm – 4:00pm. Campers can choose a morning and afternoon camp for a full-day experience. Extended childcare is offered for an additional fee before and after camp, from 8:00am – 9:00am and 4:00pm – 6:00pm. Summer at Emerson online registration opens at 12:01am on February 1st. Additional information can be found online at [www.SummerAtEmerson.org](http://www.SummerAtEmerson.org).





## ATTACHMENTS

### ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR TECHNOLOGY

#### Mission

The mission of the Emerson School Technology program is to enhance learning and teaching through increased access to information, communications, teacher training, collaboration, and dissemination of successful educational practices, methods, and resources.

#### General Principles

- The school network and Internet access are provided for school-related purposes to staff, students, and parents who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Access to technology resources, like other Emerson School resources, entails responsibility.
- Users are responsible for appropriate behavior on the network and Internet just as they are in a classroom or hallway. Users are expected to communicate electronically with others in a respectful and constructive manner, in keeping with the expectations for interpersonal conduct at Emerson. Users are expected to treat computer and network equipment with care, just as they would all Emerson school property.
- Emerson School strives to create an environment in which personal privacy is respected. Network storage should be treated like school lockers or school desks. Users are expected to respect the privacy of others, and refrain from unauthorized intrusions into other students' files. At the same time, users should not assume that what they store on the network will remain private under all circumstances. Administrators and faculty reserve the right to review files and communications to evaluate work, to remove inappropriate files as necessary, to maintain system integrity and to ensure that users are using the system responsibly.
- Emerson is committed to maintaining an environment that protects personal privacy. Emerson School will not require that users reveal any personal information over the Internet. School activities will avoid the use of sites that require the submission of personal information and staff will monitor users to help prevent the inadvertent release of accurate personal information to such sites.
- Emerson School is committed to freedom of speech and access to information that meet the educational mission of the School. Freedom of speech and access to information will be honored within the guidelines set forth by school policies.
- Emerson School encourages the participation of its faculty, staff and students in educational communities through publication of work on the Internet. At the same time, Emerson expects work published electronically (and in print) to meet high standards for quality, and to comply with copyright laws. Before any student's work is published on the Internet and affiliated with Emerson School, it must meet certain content guidelines determined by Emerson's administration; at a minimum, work to be published on the Internet shall comply with the Code of Student Conduct.

#### School Responsibilities

Emerson School will strive to educate its community in the appropriate use of computer and Internet resources, and will do its best to provide error-free, dependable computer access. Each student will participate in a discussion about using school technology and the Internet, including network etiquette ("netiquette") and copyrighted materials. It is expected that the Internet will be used only in a supervised setting. Emerson faculty members are responsible for supervision of students in the computer labs and classrooms. During school,





teachers will guide students in finding appropriate material on the Internet. While every effort will be made to promote the proper use of the Internet and monitor student use, it is impossible for Emerson School to restrict access to all controversial materials. Outside of school, families bear the responsibility for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow, just as they do with other information sources such as television and radio. Emerson School intends to provide information to its community to assist parents in understanding the issues and concerns regarding the Internet and its use.

Emerson School strongly encourages parents to discuss the rights and responsibilities and the spirit of this Acceptable Use Policy with their child, and to be involved with Internet use at home. Emerson administration, faculty, and community members are available to discuss any concerns that you or your child may have.

### **Student Rights**

- Users have the right to use all computer equipment and software for which they have received training for school-related purposes and for recreation when appropriate.
- Users have the right to have a network account and access to the services that it provides (E-mail (if provided), network log-on, disk storage, etc.). This account is meant for school activities such as: educational research, communication, and production.
- Emerson School will provide students in grades 2-8 with their own Google Apps account (email, word processing, spreadsheet and presentation). This account is part of Emerson's own Google domain and is subject to Emerson's terms and guidelines in this Acceptable Use Policy.
- Users have the right to access information from outside resources via the Internet that facilitates learning, personal academic growth, and educational information exchange. Internet use must occur in a supervised environment.
- Users have the conditional right to privacy within the guidelines set forth in this policy. This includes privacy of passwords and personal information.

### **Student Responsibilities**

- Users are responsible for maintaining the privacy of passwords. Users shall not attempt to learn another user's password, or attempt to access another user's account without authorization from a teacher. Users shall not circumvent or disable desktop or network security programs or measures.
- Each user is responsible for all material in his/her network account and accepts responsibility for preventing pornographic or obscene material from entering the school via the Internet or other sources.
- Users are responsible for using their network account space for school purposes. Files including, but not limited to, MP3 files, other music files, image files, video files, game programs, etc. shall not be kept on network accounts unless part of a class project assigned and approved by a teacher. Inappropriate files will be deleted.
- Users are not permitted to install any software on school computers.
- Users are responsible for adhering to copyright guidelines in the use of hardware and software, and in the copying of text or files from the Internet and from other resources.
- Users are expected to use systems for interpersonal communication in a responsible manner, and shall not send harassing or threatening e-mail, nor send e-mail under a forged name.
- Students who are under 13 years of age may not access sites or resources that require the user to be 13 years of age to legally have an account on the site. Examples would be Facebook, personal GMail accounts, Twitter, and Instagram. If the student is 13 years of age or older, then access must be for school-related projects and with approval of Emerson staff or faculty.



- Users will not reveal personal information about themselves or others over the Internet; this information includes, but is not limited to: a first or last name, a home or other address, a telephone number, a social security number, a valid email address (except for specific monitored class assignments), or other information which may be linked to a particular user. If needed, staff will register at specific educational sites used as part of the curriculum.
- Users have the responsibility to notify a system administrator of any hardware, software, or security problems on the Emerson network or the Internet.
- Users must respect the integrity of the Emerson computers and the network system and shall not intentionally take actions to infiltrate a computer or the network. Users shall not damage or alter the software components of a computer or the network, and must take prudent precautions to avoid introducing computer viruses into a computer or the network or face disciplinary action.
- Users will act in a manner consistent with the Emerson School Student Code of Conduct.
- Users are responsible for properly using and caring for the hardware and software for which they have been trained to use and refraining from using any technology for which they have not been trained.

### **Middle School Bring Your Own Device Program**

As part of the Middle School Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Program, students are expected to bring in a laptop, tablet, or similar personal computing device for use in and out of class. Student's devices should be fully charged and ready to be used every day.

### **Non-School Computers and Personal Technology Devices**

Use of computers, laptop/chromebook computers, and any other portable computing devices or accessories such as iPads, iPhones, iPods, smartphones, digital cameras, flash drives and other storage devices not owned by Emerson School and brought in to the school by students, parents, visitors, or staff shall fall under the terms of this Acceptable Use Policy and the following guidelines and conditions:

- Devices such as laptops, chromebooks, or tablets are only to be used in a responsible, non-disruptive manner. If any misuse occurs that is not in accordance with the Emerson School Student Code of Conduct, said items may be temporarily confiscated by a faculty member.
- Usage of personal audio/visual devices such as smartphones, iPods, gaming devices and video players is not allowed, unless otherwise authorized by a faculty member.
- Connectivity to the school network and resources, such as network storage, Internet access, and printer access cannot be guaranteed and school-owned connectivity equipment or wireless access points may not be available.
- Any repairs, installations, or software and connectivity support will be the responsibility of the computer owner. Emerson School shall not be liable for any damage, loss, or theft of personally owned computer equipment or data loss sustained while at school. Access to power outlets to power or recharge laptop computers or other devices may not be available.
- Any such computers must meet certain minimum requirements, including but not limited to: installation of functioning anti-virus software with current virus pattern files; and all installed software must be licensed to the owner. Access to Emerson's wireless network and printers is a privilege.

All provisions regarding use and content contained in this Acceptable Use Policy shall apply to any computers brought into the school. Emerson School reserves the right to require the users of any such computers to sign an additional Acceptable Use Agreement before permitting connection to the school network or resources.



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## NOTES





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A K-8 SCHOOL OF HIGHER LEARNING.

[emerson-school.org](http://emerson-school.org)