Student/Parent Handbook

2019-2020 School Year
Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to Two Mile Prairie (TMP). The faculty and staff look forward to getting acquainted and working with you. At TMP you will find a dedicated faculty, staff, and PTA striving to create the best educational environment for student learning and committed to meeting your child’s educational needs. Each student is an individual with special learning characteristics. We believe that with the student best effort, parent support, and our educational expertise—great learning will occur!

During the summer months, TMP teachers continued their learning by attending many workshops, college classes, and staff development sessions on a wide range of topics. The number of hours they put in over the summer is impressive and critical to their continued development as educators. During the 2019 – 2020 school year, we will continue our efforts to better educate ALL of our children. Our main focus will be on reading comprehension, writing, and math. Many of our teachers have been instrumental in the development of our district-wide curriculum and the improvements that have been made over the past several years. We use data from the Missouri and Columbia School Improvement Plans, as well as, standardized tests to evaluate TMP's educational program and mission. We continue to be very successful with over 80% of our children performing at or above grade level. We have challenged ourselves to maintain our high achievement with this group AND to improve the academic success of the other 20%. Using the information from the state and local testing, your involvement and support, we will continue to strive to create the best school possible for your children.

This handbook along with the COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS STUDENT HANDBOOK are two ways we use to communicate general guidelines, procedures, and policies of TMP and Columbia's elementary schools. Please familiarize yourself with the information and refer back to it throughout the year as situations arise. Creating an environment where all students are safe and able to maximize their educational achievement are the goals of these guidelines, procedures, and policies.

Please call me at 214-3560 if you have questions, or feel free to come to the main office at anytime.

Respectfully,

Kristen Palmer, Principal
School Information:

School Colors: Red and White  
School Mascot: Digger, the Prairie Dog  
Partners in Education: Horton Animal Hospital & Clinic, and Elks Lodge

Important Numbers:

Adventure Club's Office  884-2582  
Adventure Club at TMP  214-3564  
Two Mile Prairie Office 214-3560  
Two Mile Prairie Fax 214-3561  
STA (Student Transportation of America), Bus Company 573-214-3860

Animals at School:

All animals brought to school must have prior approval by the principal and classroom teacher. Safety precautions must be taken for various types of animals. Observation for rabies is required if a bite occurs. Animals should be accompanied by an adult (parent) that can help show the animal and then take it home.

Arrival and Departure:

School Hours:
7:20 a.m. Arrival, Breakfast, Recess  
7:40 a.m. Official Start of School Day (Grades K-5)  
2:40 p.m. Dismissal (Grades K-5)  
12:10 p.m. Early Dismissal for Teacher Collaboration (Grades K-5)

Students may arrive at school as early as 7:20 a.m. Because there is no supervision prior to 7:20, students may not arrive earlier than that designated time.

Please keep your child's teacher informed about how your child is to get home from school. If they are leaving school in any manner other than their normal one, please send a note or phone the school before 2:00 pm.

For your child's protection, we cannot honor requests to leave school with a person other than a parent unless that person has been listed on your emergency info. or we have been notified by you.

If your child needs to leave school early for an appointment, please send a note or call the school office. Your child will be called to the office when you arrive to pick them up. Please make arrangements before school for students going home with classmates, or attending scouts, clubs, and other after school activities.
Behavior:

A safe, secure, and orderly environment is necessary for teachers to teach and students to learn. At TMP, creating that environment is the responsibility of the parents, students, faculty and staff. Each individual is expected to do their best to make TMP a great place to grow and learn. We use PBS (Positive Behavior Support). We stress the expectations of kind, safe, responsible, respectful and cooperative. We promise to work closely with you to ensure a successful year for your child. See the STUDENT HANDBOOK FOR THE COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS for further details.

Bus Transportation:

All TMP students are eligible for bus transportation provided by Student Transportation of America, if they live more than one mile from the school and are in our attendance area. If you have questions regarding transportation contact Student Transportation of America (STA) at 214-3860.

The highest standards of safety are expected of TMP Students when riding a school bus. Any student not living up to these high standards will receive a bus ticket from the bus driver. Bus tickets will be used to help students understand the importance of safe conduct. Students, who consistently do not follow the bus safety guidelines, will be suspended from riding the bus. See the STUDENT HANDBOOK FOR THE COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS for further details.

Check-In Policy:

Visitors: All parents or visitors to the school should check in at the office upon arrival to receive a name tag and apprise the staff of your intended destination. Tours of the school are available by appointment.

Classroom Visits: Parents are welcome in your child's classroom. As a courtesy to teachers, we ask that you phone ahead when a visit is planned. Please check in at the office when you arrive. In order to minimize classroom interruptions and distractions, please refrain from bringing small children when you visit.

Attendance:

Regular school attendance improves academic performance and achievement. Research clearly shows that good school attendance is especially critical during the elementary school years in order for a child to learn how to read. Even more dramatic is research which indicates that a student who misses a lot of school and is behind academically by the end of third grade may never catch up. When absent, students cannot ask questions, participate in class discussions, do small-group activities, perform class experiments, or receive individual help. In addition, missing school can result in poor work habits, lower grades, reduced confidence, lower self-esteem, a lack of self-discipline, behavior problems, and a habit of missing more school in future years. The state of Missouri, the Columbia Public School District and each building are monitoring and tracking student attendance. I routinely monitor the monthly attendance and periodically check with classroom teachers when there are attendance concerns. In addition, after each trimester, the district lists those students who have 5 absences or more. Columbia Public School District guidelines state that when a student has been absent more than five (5) days per semester or ten (10) during a school year, the absences will become a
major concern. When absences become excessive, I am required to contact parents and determine what actions must be taken. Obviously, missing school due to illness or family emergencies are understandable. However, excessive absences are detrimental to your child’s best interest. Help your child establish good attendance habits.

Conferences:

Regular Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of the first and second trimesters. You will receive more information prior to the designated dates. However, you are encouraged to contact us at any time you want to discuss your child's progress. If you need to speak to your child's teacher by phone, please contact the TMP office and a message will be given to the teacher to return your call.

Please refrain from holding impromptu conferences during PTA events, or school visits because of a lack of time and privacy. Please call to arrange a time that is convenient for both you and the teacher.

Confidentiality:

TMP makes every effort to respect the confidentiality of our students. Volunteers in the school understand that any and all observations they make of children during their time in the school are confidential and not open for discussion. Further, no student records or information may be released without written consent of the parents.

Dress Code:

The general style of dress and appearance should be appropriate for elementary age children in a learning environment. As a rule, students may wear clothing you deem appropriate as long as it does not call excess attention to itself or to your child, and thus disturb the educational atmosphere of the school. Clothing which is too tight, revealing, or which contains writing that might be offensive to others should be avoided.

Students do participate in physical education and/ or recess daily. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather and physical activity. Sandals, flip-flops, and heels should not be worn as they create a safety issue during recess. Tennis shoes are recommended.

To help reduce the number of lost articles, it is strongly recommended that you put your child's first and last name in all clothing.

No Fidgets, Gum, Candy, Toys & Money at School:

Please discuss with your child that school is a place for learning. Fidgets, candy, gum and toys only serve to distract students from learning. We ask parents to monitor their child to see that these items are left at home. No playground equipment should be brought from home. Gum is not allowed at school unless there is a special event sponsored by your child's teacher.

There are a number of times when you may be sending extra money to school. This money should be placed in a small envelope and have the child's name, amount, and what it is for on the outside of the envelope. If you find it necessary to send a large amount of money with your
child for personal reasons, instruct your child to give the money to the office until the close of the day. Teachers cannot be responsible for lost money.

Parties:

School Parties: During the year, three parties (Fall Festival, Winter Holiday, and Valentine's Day) are sponsored by the school. Room parents for each room confer with the teacher, organize the parties, and provide treats for students. Parents, who wish to help, may sign up through their child’s classroom teacher.

Birthday Parties: Any student may bring a simple treat on their birthday to be distributed to their classmates near the end of the day. Please call your child's teacher to arrange a time that works well with the class schedule. No surprise parties for students or teachers. Please do not send any treat items that require teachers to cut up. Please provide napkins or plates for serving. **Birthday invitations may be passed out at school ONLY IF ALL classmates are invited. This is a school-wide policy. Please contact the teacher so these can be passed out in Friday Folders.**

Physical Education:

Please keep up the ABCD days for special classes. In your packet a calendar is on the back of a better explaining ABCD days. When students have PE they should **wear tennis shoes for safety** and may not participate without them. Girls should wear shorts under their dresses or wear jeans/slacks.

Participation in the program will be required unless the child is excused for health reasons. Parents may write a note excusing the child from participation for up to two consecutive class periods. **A physician's note is required for a more extended period.**

PTA:

The TMP PTA is an active and vital part of our school. One of the PTA's goals for this school year is having all parents involved in their children's school. This is a wonderful goal because of the positive impact it will have on the students of TMP. Please find a way to contribute time and talents to this organization. As the old saying goes, "Many hands make light work". **Please tell Mrs. Palmer if you have a particular skill or talent that you would be willing to share with the children at an assembly.**

Recess:

Students should **dress appropriately for outside play at all times since we go out whenever possible.** All children are to wear a coat when the temperature is below 30 degrees. Above that temperature, coats are worn at the discretion of teachers for students in grades K-3 and at the student's discretion in grades four and five.

During the winter months, frequent checks are made concerning temperature and wind velocity to determine the length of the recess period. Please do not send notes requesting that students stay inside because it is, "too cold."
School Cancellation:

Cancellation of school, due to weather or other conditions, will be broadcast on local TV and radio stations. You may also check the Columbia Public School’s website and sign up for CPS alert to receive information via cell phone.

Solicitation:

Columbia Public Schools Rules and Regulations V-8-9: No agent, solicitor or other person shall distribute materials, solicit, offer for sale, or sell any subscription, policy service, article or thing whatsoever to any employee or pupil while the employee or pupil is upon the property of the Columbia Public Schools.

Student Health:

It is our belief that the health status of a child bears a direct relationship to the quality of his/her educational achievement. Parents have the basic responsibility for the health of their children. The school health program exists to assist parents in carrying out their responsibilities.

Generally, children should not be sent to school if, during the previous twenty-four (24) hours, they have exhibited any of the following symptoms:
1. temperature of 100 degrees or more;
2. vomiting or diarrhea;
3. unusual or unexplained rash;
4. severe coughs or colds.

Children will be sent home if they come to school with any of the above symptoms or if any of these symptoms occur during the school day.

Medication: No over-the-counter drugs are available at school or may be administered by school personnel. In order for prescription medication to be administered by the school staff, an "Authorization and Release" form must be completed. This form may be obtained in the school office. If you visit with most doctors, they can write the prescription so that the medicine does not have to be given at school.

Additional information about health care, health related policies and "Authorization and Release" forms are available in the STUDENT HANDBOOK FOR THE COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

Telephone:

Students will not use the office phone for personal calls except in an emergency and only with staff permission. In the event students receive a call, they will be called out of class only in case of an emergency.