

WELCOME TO ERMINESKIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Tânisi Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to another school year at EES. We are honored to be given the tremendous responsibility to work with your awasak this year.

We continue to make improvements in literacy and numeracy in the school. With very focused and intentional work with the teachers, support staff, and students, we are beginning to notice tremendous growth.

It is Ermineskin Elementary School's goal to deliver a Nêhiyawewin education. We want to create strong Cree leaders. We can do this by setting a very high standard of education that encompasses the Cree language, the Cree values and living the Cree Way.

At EES we develop leaders who live by principles such as honesty, kindness, courage, respect, and love. We are proud to be a *Leader in Me* school which means our awasak gain life-long skills such as setting goals, leading with courage, being proactive, and synergizing with others. Every child has greatness within and it is our goal to acknowledge and nurture that greatness. We are the first indigenous Lighthouse School in the world!

Remember you play a very important role in educating your child. Setting up consistent routines like bed time, reading to your children every day, and encouraging your child to come to school every day are some simple ways you can assist us at the school. We are on the cusp of creating tremendous change for our awawisak so our Cree language and culture is honored and nurtured, but recognizing our awasisak gain the necessary skills to be competitive in the modern world.

Thank you for supporting us this year. It is going to be a year to remember.

Doris Auger, Principal

“Parents are teachers, guides, leaders, protectors and providers for their children.”

Iyanla Vangazant

CREE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Cree language, values and culture are a part of our daily life at the Ermineskin Elementary School. We start our day by playing the flag song, morning prayer and daily announcements in Cree. Basic Cree words, phrases, syllabics and numbers are integrated in all grades. We offer Néhíyawátsowin (land based activities) that are culturally based. We also integrate Cree Language and values into all aspects of our program.

The Cree program encompasses the Spiritual, Physical, Mental and Emotional aspects of our culture. Special events held at Ermineskin Elementary School include; the annual Pow-Wow, Round Dances, Feast, Cree Culture Camps, Land-based programming, Storytelling, Daily Smudging. We also have a student drum group, the Ermineskin Juniors, who practice weekly and attend many events in and around the community. Elders and other community members are invited to come to the Elementary School on a regular basis to share their knowledge with us. Pride in being Cree is instilled in the students and staff feels proud to support this.

LEADER IN ME

Ermineskin Elementary is a “Leader In Me School”. Students are taught the seven habits to create a positive school environment and are given opportunities to become leaders themselves. We achieved Lighthouse Status in 2021 making us the first Indigenous Lighthouse School in the world!

1. Be Proactive
2. Begin with the End in Mind
3. Put First Things First
4. Think Win Win
5. Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood
6. Synergize
7. Sharpen the Saw

The
Leader in Me™

great happens here

STUDENT CONDUCT

All members of the school community have a responsibility to ensure that students and staff are provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful, safe learning and working environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.

Parents help students meet the Student Code of Conduct when they:

- 1.1. Take an active role in the child's educational success, including assisting the child in complying with the Student Code of Conduct;
- 1.2. Ensure that the parent's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment; and
- 1.3. Encourage, foster and advance collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with teachers, principals, other school staff and professionals providing supports and services in the school.

The Ermineskin Elementary School staff is dedicated to fostering a friendly, safe and welcoming school environment. We are committed to ensuring that the learning environment fosters positive relationships.

All children need clear, consistent expectations and structure in order to develop responsibility for their own behavior and learning. We will achieve this by instilling our Cree values and embracing the seven habits and modeling proactive behavior.

We encompass *The Leader in Me* process at EES to empower students to become effective leaders. All students have the capacity to lead in their own lives and affect those around them by making positive choices. Students will become confident in making positive choices and through this process they will be given opportunities to correct their behaviors. Outlined below are some of the strategies we may use:

- Mediation
- Counseling
- Elder support
- Home visits
- Restorative/Healing circles
- Student Support Team Meetings
- Cultural ceremonies
- Classroom presentations
- Mentor influence
- Breakfast program
- Youth worker support

There may be times when we need to exercise more of a structured consequence. Some of these may include:

- Privileges revoked
- In and out of school suspension
- Out of school suspension
- Behavior Plan
- Outside Agency support (RCMP, Family and Child Services, Mental Health, etc)

BULLYING

As we all know bullying is a serious issue in schools across the country. We are dealing with this through restorative practices and embracing the seven habits to build positive relationships. To curb bullying in our school, there is an expectation that parents are active participants during this process.

Bullying is defined as the repeated, persistent, and aggressive behavior directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feeling, self-esteem or reputation. Bullying occurs in a situation where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and others) can create problems with children who do not use it appropriately. As parents, we must monitor what they post and educate them. We must also model what appropriate usage looks like. We must not use it as a means to hurt others, speak poorly of others, or bully. Many of the bullying incidents that are occurring in the school are initiated through social media. The school will take action on any cyber bullying that is brought to our attention. It is serious and will be dealt with in a proactive manner.

In order to keep your children safe on social media, it is important that you are aware of what they are using, but also that you are monitoring their use regularly.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Ermineskin Elementary School library strives to provide good quality literature for all students and teachers. We are moving towards the library being viewed as a **Learning Commons** area where students can access all forms of literature and technology. In addition, students can access this space to get additional support. All students will have an opportunity to access books for research and personal reading.

Students are responsible for anything they sign out, and must pay for any lost items.

“We only get one chance to prepare children for a world none of us can possibly predict, what are we going to do with that one chance?”

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance and achievement are directly related. We want every student to be successful and for that to happen, every student must attend school every day and to be on time.

School attendance is not the sole responsibility of the student, but is a shared responsibility between the student, parent/guardian and the school system. Communication between the home and school is essential for this partnership to work.

Procedures for Unexcused Absence:

If a student is not present and we have not heard from the parent by 9:30, an automated call goes home. If unexcused absences continue, the teacher will contact the parents with a call, letter, or home visit. Continued poor attendance will result in a meeting with the principal, an Elder, and a possible letter of commitment.

When all reasonable efforts have been made by the school to improve the student's attendance, the principal may refer a student to outside agencies to explore further solutions to resolve the attendance problem (HUB). Outside agencies include housing, Maskwacis Health, Child and Family Services, RCMP, and other agencies that seem appropriate. In extreme cases, there is the possibility of student registration being denied for the following year and referrals will be made to the MESC superintendent for further follow up.

We have a mandated 100 minutes of uninterrupted literacy time that begins promptly at 8:40 and it is very important that your children are here by that time. Our focus is to get your child reading and writing at grade level and we need your support to do this.

We will recognize and reward students with excellent attendance at the end of each year.

Help Your Child Succeed in School: Build the Habit of Good Attendance Early School success goes hand in hand with good attendance!

DID YOU KNOW?

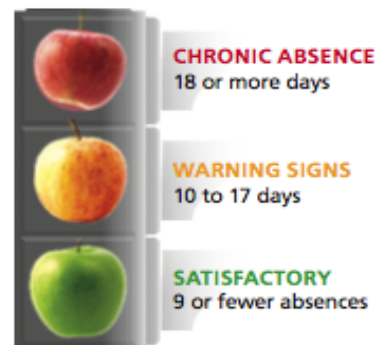
- Starting in kindergarten, too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school.
- Missing 10 percent (or about 18 days) can make it harder to learn to read.
- Students can still fall behind if they miss just a day or two days every few weeks.
- Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
- Absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.

Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school—and themselves. Start building this habit in preschool so they learn right away that going to school on time, every day is important. Good attendance will help children do well in high school, college, and at work.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Set a regular bed time and morning routine.
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
- Find out what day school starts and make sure your child has the required shots.
- Introduce your child to her teachers and classmates before school starts to help her transition.
- Don't let your child stay home unless she is truly sick. Keep in mind complaints of a stomach ache or headache can be a sign of anxiety and not a reason to stay home.
- If your child seems anxious about going to school, talk to teachers, school counselors, or other parents for advice on how to make her feel comfortable and excited about learning.
- Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbor, or another parent.
- Avoid medical appointments and extended trips when school is in session.

When Do Absences Become a Problem?



Note: These numbers assume a 180-day school year.

STUDENT TARDINESS

Uninterrupted daily attendance is extremely important to the total development of the child. Therefore, regular, daily, punctual attendance is required if students are to succeed.

Tardiness is a failure to appear on time and is considered a form of absence.

If a student arrives after 8:40 they will be considered late, after 10:35 in the morning, they will be considered absent for the morning.

If the pattern/rate of tardiness is concerning, the school will take steps to work with the parent to correct this.

TRESPASSING, DISTURBING AND INTERRUPTING SCHOOL PROCEEDINGS

Beliefs

MESC believes that the sole purpose of the school facilities and grounds is the education of students who are registered and attending our schools. The Commission will provide a safe and caring learning environment for students and staff.

Procedures

1. No person shall disturb or interrupt the proceedings of a school or system related function.
2. No person shall disturb or interrupt the proceedings of a school meeting or board meeting.
3. No person shall loiter or trespass in a school building or on MESC property.
4. Principals who identify a person disturbing or interrupting the proceedings of their respective schools shall request the individual to leave.
5. If the individual refuses to leave, the principal is advised to phone the R.C.M.P. and have the person removed.
6. If the individual leaves but returns at another time or date, the principal should advise the individual in the presence of a witness or by double-registered letter that on the next unauthorized visit, charges may be laid.
7. On the third occasion, request the R.C.M.P. to charge the individual.
8. In the case of an unauthorized individual who frequents the school or school grounds and who may not necessarily be disrupting the proceedings of a school (i.e. disturbing a class) but who is creating problems real or suspected for students, teachers, and/or administrators, it is suggested that the following procedure be followed:
 - 8.1. Identify the individual and either in the presence of a witness or preferably in a double registered letter advise the individual that unauthorized persons are not to frequent the school building or grounds. Further advise the individual that charges may be laid should there be a recurrence.
 - 8.2. Should there be a recurrence of trespassing, principals are advised to contact the R.C.M.P. and request that charges are laid.
 - 8.3. In all such cases the Superintendent shall be advised in writing of the facts of the case.
9. **DISMISSAL TIME - Student learning is greatly affected when parents interrupt school proceedings by picking up students before the home time bell. Parents are expected to wait until their child is dismissed. Parents also need to arrive on time so children are not left unsupervised waiting for their ride.**

SCHOOL TIMETABLE

Class periods are 40 minutes in length. Classes should dismiss punctually and should expect to resume when the next bell sounds. Teachers supervise the hallways during class change. Students are considered late once the bell sounds.

Ermineskin Elementary School runs on a Monday to Friday schedule.

BUSES	8:25 to 8:40
Morning Announcements	8:50 to 9:00
Block 1	9:00 to 9:40
Block 2	9:40 to 10:20
DIV 1 Recess	10:20 to 10:35
Block 3	10:35 to 11:15
Block 4	11:15 to 11:55
DIV 1 LUNCH	11:55 to 12:12
DIV 2 LUNCH	12:15 to 12:35
Block 5	12:35 to 1:15
Block 6	1:15 to 1:55
DIV 2 Recess	1:55 to 2:10
Block 7	2:10 to 2:50
Block 8	2:50 to 3:30
BUSES	3:30 to 3:40

LUNCH

It is our goal to provide a healthy morning snack and nutritious lunch for all students at Ermineskin Elementary School. All grades one to six students will receive this daily at no cost to the parents. Parents have the option of providing their child's lunch if they choose.

1. We encourage students to make and bring well-balanced, homemade lunches as opposed to highly processed, expensively packaged lunches.
2. Pop and energy drinks are not permitted at school.
3. All students should remember to wash their hands before & after they eat.
4. Students should always remain seated during lunch.
5. Lunches should be kept in a designated place in the classroom and not in the lockers. Please do not send items that need to be heated.
6. Students should not take food outside at recess break. Sufficient time should be allowed for children to eat their lunch.

Home Communication

The school will provide a monthly newsletter that outlines the calendar and important information. It is the parent's responsibility to read and ensure they are aware of all upcoming events. It will be sent home the first week of every month and will also be emailed to parents. It can also be found on the school website and Facebook page. Facebook is another means of communication for the school. You will find out about events, exciting news, and all the learning that is happening. **EES also uses School Messenger to communicate important information with the parents. This device is also used to inform parents of their child's absence each day.**

Each homeroom teacher will ensure regular updates are made with parents. Teachers may use weekly newsletters, an online application like "Remind", and notices as needed. In addition to this, teachers will contact by phone, text, or email if there is further information that needs to be shared.

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the school has updated contact information.

Home Reading

All classrooms will be participating in a home reading program as directed by their teacher. It is an expectation that this is done daily and the home reading packet is returned. Please ensure your child is respecting the books brought home and they are returned in the same condition. Please support and encourage your child by ensuring they complete their home reading daily.

School Technology

The school will be providing one to one chromebooks for grades 1-6 students. Ipads will also be used in some classrooms. Students who intentionally damage any device will be expected to pay for the repair. In addition, any students found using the devices inappropriately, may lose privileges and parents will be contacted. *All students must have parents agree to an Internet Use Parental Permission upon registration to access school technology.*

Electronic Devices

With 21st century learning, electronic devices can be a valuable part of the learning process. It will be up to the teacher's discretion as to the extent of their use in the classroom. If they interfere with learning or cause problems, the teacher may hold them until the end of the day. In some circumstances, they may be held by administration for a parent to pick up. The school will not be held responsible for any lost, stolen or broken items.

Leaving School Premises

Students are required to remain on the school premises throughout the entire day. Students must have written permission or a telephone call from parents for each occasion they are to leave the school grounds. Students are not allowed to go to the Junior High during school hours.

Scooter, Skateboards & Bikes

Students are required to bring a note if they have permission to go to the skateboard park after school. Bike racks are available, so parents are encouraged to send locks to secure their child's property. Students are not permitted to use their scooters, skateboards or bikes on school property during school hours. *The school will not be held responsible for any lost, stolen or broken items.*

Lost and Found

Lost and found boxes are located in the pedway to the Kindergarten and under the stairwells. Students and parents are encouraged to check and go through the lost and found box on a regular basis to see if items belong to them. It is recommended that all student items be labeled. Any items not claimed in June will be donated to a local charity.

Telephone Use And Messages

The school telephone is for business & emergency use only. Students will not be called to the telephone unless it is an emergency. ***Students will not be allowed to use the telephone to phone home for lunch or to go to a friend's house.***

Illness and Injury

The school assumes responsibility for the physical well-being of the students when they are at school or on a school-sponsored activity. While every effort is made to ensure safety, it is impossible to guard completely against injury or illness of students. In the case of an injury at school, an incident report will be sent home and parents may be contacted. **Please ensure contact and emergency contact information is up to date.**

Picking up your child

All visitors including parents MUST report to the front office upon arrival. **Please do not go directly to your child's classroom and disrupt instruction at any time.** We want to ensure the safety of all students therefore parents must get permission to proceed to their child's classroom. Under no circumstances visitors shall interrupt classes.

Head Gear and Hoodies

Hats and hoodies are permitted in the school, but students are expected to be respectful and remove them when needed. If they become a problem, teachers or administration may hold them until the end of the day.

Appropriate Clothing

Students are expected to dress in a respectful manner. Offensive slogans or pictures, revealing clothing or gang related items such as bandanas are not permitted. All students are also expected to wear indoor footwear in the school at all times.

HEAD LICE & BED BUGS

Head lice, also known as pediculosis, and bed bugs can be controlled if treated rapidly and appropriately with thorough follow up. Lice and bed bug infestations have very little to do with cleanliness; they spread at random without discrimination. The emotional reactions and stigma are due to the subject of many prejudices and myths. However, lice and bed bug infestations create a large nuisance factor and expense for parents.

Head Lice

Students who may have been exposed to lice or nits outside of school or in school will receive a letter informing them of the incident. For any students where it is suspected or confirmed that they may have contracted lice at home, the letter will include instructions on how to identify and treat head lice.

Bed Bugs

Students who may have been exposed to bed bugs outside of school or in school will receive a letter informing them of the incident. For any students where it is suspected or confirmed that they may have bed bugs in their home, the letter will include instructions on how to identify and treat bed bugs.

If there continues to be ongoing concerns with head lice or bed bugs, the school may ask a child stay home until the condition has been remedied.

Field Trips

Ermineskin Elementary School offers many field trip experiences for our grade 1-6 students, both on and off site. Students will still require permission forms to attend any field trips. The school will provide lunches for all field trips. *Parents may be required to attend a field trip if behavior and safety are a concern.* Parents understand if certain risks and injuries occur then supervisors will act on their behalf in an emergency.

BUSSING

MESC TRANSPORTATION (780) 585-3333

Changes in bussing are not permitted

1. Students are expected to be at the road at their designated stop prior to the arrival of the bus. Stay off the traveled roadway at all times while waiting for the bus.
2. Watch your step and use the handrail when getting on and off the bus.
3. Upon discharging and if you live on the opposite side of the road, cross only in front of the bus and at least fifteen feet ahead. Cross only when safe to do so and under the guidance of the driver.
4. Passengers must not stand or move about within the bus, while the bus is in motion. Only registered students are to be transported.
5. You must not hang any objects or part of your body out of the bus windows.
6. Smoking or the use of chewing tobacco or the use of vulgar language is prohibited on the bus.
7. Noise on the bus shall be kept to minimum. You may talk quietly to the person beside you. Loud noises, shouting, etc. are dangerously distracting to the driver.
8. The driver shall be in full control of the passengers while loading and unloading. The driver will report misbehavior to the principal and through consultation, the principal may suspend a passenger from school privileges. Notice in writing of suspension of school bus privileges will be given to the parent by the bus driver.

Bussing – Parent Responsibility

1. Be certain that your children are at the bus on time and wait on their side of the road until the driver directs them to cross safely.
2. If your child is not picked up, contact MESC Transportation immediately.
3. Provide the necessary protection of your children when going to and from the bus stop.
4. Accept responsibility for the proper conduct of your children prior to boarding a bus, during the daily trips and upon discharge.
5. Make certain that your children are properly dressed in case of emergencies during cold or wet weather.

6. Parents will be responsible for any damage to a bus by their children.
7. Encourage children to obey all traffic rules and school bus regulations.
8. Any bussing concerns such as fighting, bullying or any children not arriving home on time please contact the school principal.
9. If parents continue to have bussing concerns, put it in writing and submit it to the the school principal.

Bus Status can be monitored by parents at <https://mesc.busstatus.ca/#school/8144> or using the BUS APP. Parents can check if buses are running, or on time. For up to date bussing information, download the BUS APP today.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

MESC is responsible for ensuring that each of its students is provided with an education. Therefore, schools shall remain open to students during the times and dates established by the Board.

Procedures

1. School bus services may be suspended due to adverse road or weather conditions that jeopardize the safety of students, however, schools will remain open.
2. Parents are not required to send their children to school if, in their judgment, weather or road conditions are detrimental to the safety, or well being of their children.
3. Parents who have brought their children to school on days when school bus services are suspended will be responsible for picking up their children.
 - *Any of the following factors, or combinations of factors, shall serve as guidelines for considering the suspension of school bus services. Temperature of -30 degrees celsius with or without a wind chill factor as reported by the weather office for the area in question;
 - *Visibility of less than 30 meters;
 - *Road closures by the R.C.M.P, municipal or other local road officials.
 - *When school bus services are suspended, schools shall remain open to students.
4. Normally busses will not run early if inclement weather conditions develop during the day. Students will remain at the school until the end of the day, unless picked up by their parents.
5. For the safety of students it is the responsibility of the parents to ensure:
 - *That their children are suitably dressed for coping with weather conditions.
 - *Arrangements have been made for alternate shelter for their child(ren) if no one is home

Programs and Events offered at Ermineskin Elementary School

Our school understands all children have varying needs and abilities. In order to create the best learning environment possible we have a number of programs, events, and supports available to our students.

- Cree Language program
- Nehiyawastowin
- Sweats
- Pipe Ceremony
- Feasts
- Round Dance
- Storytelling with Elders
- Pow Wow
- Elder onsite
- Home Liaison support
- Backpack food program
- Universal lunch program
- Breakfast snack program
- Counseling (individual and group)
- Youth mentor support
- Athletic teams
- Drum group
- Art teams
- Leadership teams
- Clean/Green thumb team
- Parent support program
- DARE and Aboriginal Shield
- Parent workshops

- Cultural camps
- Grade 4 overnight Camp
- Science day camp
- School wide presentations
- Accelerated Reading program
- Mathletics program
- Home reading program
- One to one Chrome books for Gr. 3-6
- Ipad accessibility to all students
- Full service library
- 3-D printing
- Archery
- Speech and Language support
- Occupational Therapy support
- Model Schools Literacy Project
- Student support team meetings
- Behavioral support with access to consultants
- Leader in Me focus
- Interactions classroom
- Numerous free field trips for every grade
- Mistatim program
- STEM lab

