

# Student and Parent Handbook 2025-2026

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians,

### Welcome to Michael Strembitsky School!

We are committed to creating a positive and inclusive learning environment where every student can thrive. Our goal is to work with you as partners to help each student reach their full potential.

Our faculty uses a collaborative approach to teaching, offering a blend of whole-class, group, and individual instruction. We believe in providing engaging, real-world learning opportunities that allow students to explore their passions and develop the skills needed for the future.

We value the relationships between students, staff, and parents, and we believe that mutual respect and trust are essential for success.

Please read the student handbook carefully, as it outlines our shared expectations.

We are excited for a great year of learning and success!

Your partner in learning,



Chad Sheppard  
Principal

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### **MR. MICHAEL STREMBITSKY**

Michael A. Strembitsky, a prominent figure in Canadian public education, served as the eighth Superintendent of Schools for **Edmonton Public Schools** from **1973 to 1995**. He is best known for pioneering a **site-based decision-making** model, which was the first of its kind in a large North American school division.

#### **Key Contributions and Legacy**

- **Site-Based Management:** Strembitsky empowered individual schools by giving principals control over their finances, staffing, and the ability to select services from the central office. This decentralized approach shifted power away from the central administration and closer to the school level.
- **Open Boundaries and Program Choice:** He introduced a system of **open boundaries**, allowing parents to choose which school their children attended. This was paired with a variety of **bilingual programming options**, including Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, German, Hebrew, and Ukrainian, providing parents with more say in their children's education.
- **Diversity in Leadership:** During his tenure, there was a substantial increase in the number of **female senior administrators**, promoting greater diversity within the division's leadership.
- **Consultancy:** After retiring from Edmonton Public Schools in 1995, Strembitsky became an education consultant, sharing his expertise in site-based management with school jurisdictions globally, including in the United States, New Zealand, Germany, and Hong Kong.

Strembitsky's innovative reforms led to a fundamental transformation of Edmonton's public school system, earning him the moniker "guru of site-based school management" and recognition as one of the **100 Edmontonian's of the Century** by the Edmonton Journal in May 2004.

Michael A. Strembitsky's personal standards and diverse interests, career success and contributions to public education, are recognized by the Award of Excellence presented in his name to three deserving students each year.

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## **GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION**

### **ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL**

#### *Reporting Absences and Late Arrivals:*

To ensure the safety of all students, please notify the school office if your child will be absent or late. You can call our 24-hour attendance line at **780-392-3500** and leave a detailed message.

#### **Your message should include:**

- Your child's full name and the correct spelling of their last name.
- Their teacher's name.
- The reason for the absence.
- Your phone number.

#### *Unexcused Absences:*

Please note that certain reasons for absence are considered unexcused, such as family vacations, sports tournaments, or dance competitions. If a student is frequently absent for unexcused reasons, we will contact the family and may refer the matter to the Attendance Board. For more details, please see the Student Absence Reporting document.

#### *Illness at School:*

Generally, a child who is too sick to go outside for recess is too sick to be at school. If your child comes to school with a severe cold or another illness, we will call you or your emergency contact to have them picked up. It is our policy that if a student is well enough to be at school, they are well enough to go outside for fresh air at recess.

#### *Student Responsibilities*

When a student is absent, it is their responsibility to catch up on any missed schoolwork. We encourage students to find a "learning partner" in their class to help share information. Students should also check SchoolZone or Google Classroom for assignments.

#### *Absences for Extended Holidays:*

We ask that you schedule family holidays during school breaks. A lot of learning happens in the classroom, and when you take your child out of school for a vacation, you are taking on the responsibility for their learning during that time. If you do plan a trip during school time, please let us know in advance. Teachers are not required to create special lessons for students on vacation, and your child's report card may reflect this with "IEA" (insufficient evidence available) or "CMU" (course mark unavailable) for those subjects.

### **DEVELOPING COMPETENCIES FOR SUCCESSFUL LEARNING AND LIVING**

At MSS, in correlation with the current curriculum, we also focus on competencies which students need to develop over time and through a set of related curricular outcomes. A **competency** is an interrelated set of attitudes, skills and knowledge that is drawn upon and applied to a particular context for successful learning and living. Through the projects we develop, we hope our students will develop these important life skills and knowledge. Some of the competencies we focus on include:

Embedding these competencies in instruction enables us to develop engaging and relevant learning experiences that meet the needs of all students.

### **RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

At Michael Strembitsky School, we believe that technology can be a powerful tool to enhance learning, enabling students to obtain information and to collaborate with others across the school, the Division, and the world in purposeful educational activities. Integrating twenty-first century technologies into teaching and learning at Michael Strembitsky School not only supports curricular outcomes across several subject areas, but provides students with immediate connections to learning opportunities that would never before have been possible.

We expect all Michael Strembitsky students to model the qualities of good digital citizenship by following standards of acceptable use and ethical practices when using either school-owned technology (software, hardware, Internet) or their own personal electronic devices (such as a laptop computer, chrome book, phone, iPod, tablet, etc.).

#### [Responsible Use of Technology Agreement](#)

### **ALL GRADES - ELECTRONICS POLICY**

#### *Our Policy on Personal Electronics:*

At our school, we want to create a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment for everyone. To achieve this, we have a policy that limits the use of personal electronic devices during the school day. We believe this approach helps students focus on their schoolwork and encourages them to socialize and be active during breaks. This policy is based on research that shows limiting personal devices can lead to academic improvements, better mental health, and fewer cases of cyberbullying.

#### *School Technology:*

We have already provided all the technology students need for their learning. A variety of devices, including Chromebooks and PCs, are available for students to use in class. We also have phones in every classroom and the office for students to use during breaks if they need to call home.

#### *Policy Details:*

**No Personal Devices: Students may not use personal electronic devices (like cell phones) at any time while on school grounds. If your child must bring a cell phone, it must be kept in their locker at all times. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen devices.**

- **Confiscation:** Any personal device seen at school will be confiscated, logged, and held until the end of the school day.
- **Repeated Offenses:** If a device is confiscated more than once, we will contact a guardian to create a plan to help the student follow the rules.

- **Exceptions:** Teachers may grant permission for students to use devices for specific classroom activities or as part of a student's special accommodations.
- **Junior High Students:** Junior high students can use their own Chromebooks, earbuds, or headphones during class if the teacher allows it for a specific lesson.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us create the best possible learning environment for our students.

### **ALLERGIES: MSS IS A NUT AND SCENT SENSITIVE SCHOOL**

Food allergies are a serious concern at our school. To keep our students and staff safe, we need your help in creating a **nut-free environment**. For some people, even a small amount of contact with nuts can cause a severe, life-threatening reaction. To prevent this, please do not send any nut products in school lunches or snacks. Remember to check the ingredients of all packaged foods, like granola bars, as many may contain traces of nuts.

#### *Scent-Sensitive Environment:*

Our school is also a **scent-sensitive environment**. Please do not use scented or fragranced products when at school, as these can be problematic for people with asthma or allergies. By avoiding these products, you are helping to create a safer and healthier space for everyone.

### **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Your child's safety is our top priority. To ensure a smooth start to the day, please make sure your child arrives at their assigned school entrance right before class begins. Teacher supervision starts at 8:20 a.m., so no one will be outside supervising students before then.

#### **Arrival Times:**

- **Junior High Students:** Can enter through the front door and go to their lockers starting at **8:10 a.m.**
- **Elementary Students:** A teacher will welcome you into the school at the first bell, which rings at **8:20 a.m.**

If the weather is bad, all elementary students will be invited into the main hallways to wait for the first bell. We expect all students to behave well while they wait.

#### **Dismissal:**

After school, all students should go directly home or to their after-school care program unless they are staying for a pre-arranged activity like a tutorial or club.

### **ASSESSING AND REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS**

We keep you informed about your child's progress throughout the year through formal and informal updates. Teachers will discuss how students are graded and assessed with them in a way they can understand. When possible, students will be involved in decisions about how they are assessed. To help students succeed, teachers will provide rubrics, study guides, and other materials for major assignments before they are due. We use a variety of tools to measure student growth, including:

- Teacher observations
- Oral and written assignments
- Projects
- Tests

If your child is working below their grade level, this will be noted on their progress report. We encourage you to contact your child's teacher by phone, email, or in person if you have any questions or concerns. You can also find information about your child's academic progress and behavior on SchoolZone and through scheduled parent-teacher conferences. For more details about our assessment policy, please visit our school's website.

### **BIRTHDAYS**

Individual classroom teachers find different ways to celebrate birthdays and other special occasions. Classroom celebrations will be communicated to parents via SchoolZone. Our teachers are focused on learning and teaching; teachers are unable to distribute/post personal party invitations, organize playdates, etc. Thank you for your understanding.

### **BUILDING CHARACTER EDUCATION**

At Michael Strembitsky School, we believe that all students have the right to learn and all teachers have the right to teach in a safe and productive environment. We focus on helping students develop strong character. Teachers will actively teach and model important traits like:

- Honesty and trustworthiness
- Respect and empathy
- Perseverance and hard work
- Kindness and generosity
- Responsibility and fairness

We also continuously emphasize the importance of having a positive attitude, putting in a good effort, showing leadership, and achieving high competencies and attendance.

### **CELLULAR PHONES**

Cell phones, smartwatches and headphones will be restricted during instructional time.

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER**

We must have your current contact information, including home and emergency numbers, in case of an emergency or if your child becomes ill. If your address, home phone number, or work number changes, please update the "Student Information Correction" form on SchoolZone.

To change your address, you must provide three proofs of residency, such as:

- A mortgage document
- A utility bill (not a cell phone bill)
- A property tax bill
- A lease agreement
- A bank statement

We no longer accept a driver's license as proof of residency.

### **COLD AND INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

Elementary students have recess to take a break and get fresh air. It's important that students are dressed appropriately for the weather to be outside for about 15 minutes.

#### *Cold Weather Policy*

- When the temperature is colder than **-23°C** (including wind-chill) or during extreme storms, recess will be held indoors.
- Students will remain in the school under teacher supervision.
- **Schools generally do not close for cold weather or snow.** Edmonton Public Schools will stay open unless the weather is extremely severe.
- Any school closures will be announced on local television and radio.

#### *What to Wear*

Please make sure your child is dressed for the weather, which includes:

- Coats, Hats, Mittens, Scarves, Boots, Ski pants

#### *Pickup Time*

Please pick up your child **promptly** after the dismissal bell. With the wind-chill often being dangerously cold, it is not safe for students to wait outside for a long time.

### **CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION**

Classroom organization is based on student needs and enrollment numbers. Every class has a mix of students with different abilities, talents, and interests to create an inclusive learning environment. If we need to make changes to class groupings, we ask for your support in helping your child understand that these changes are made in the best interest of all students. We will let you know about any changes as soon as possible

### **COMMUNICATION WITH SCHOOL**

You can contact the school by phone at **780-392-3500** or by email at **michaelstrembitsky@epsb.ca**.

#### *Teacher Communication:*

The school and teachers use many methods to communicate with parents, including:

- **Phone calls and emails**
- **Parent-teacher conferences**
- **Progress reports**
- **SchoolZone updates**

If you would like to speak with a teacher, it is best to ask them what their preferred method of communication is. We encourage you to make an appointment to discuss any information that could help with your child's learning program.

### **DIVISION PRIORITIES**

Through an extensive consultation process with stakeholders, the Edmonton Public Schools Board of Trustees has established the following values, mission and priority outcomes:

#### **VISION**

Enhancing pathways for student success

#### **MISSION**

Our commitment to high-quality public education serves the community and empowers each student to live a life of dignity, fulfilment, empathy and possibility.

#### **VALUES**

Accountability, collaboration, equity and integrity

#### **2022–26 Division Priorities**

1. **Build on outstanding learning opportunities for all students.**
2. **Advance action towards anti-racism and reconciliation.**
3. **Promote a comprehensive approach to student and staff well-being and mental health.**

Learn about the Division's strategic goals and priorities in the [Division Strategic Plan 2022-2026](#)

### **DOGS AT SCHOOL**

Many parents enjoy walking their dogs while picking up their children. However, please be aware of the following rules:

- **Dogs are not allowed inside the school building** at any time without special permission.

#### *Edmonton City Bylaws* 🐕

To ensure the safety of all, especially children, please follow these city bylaws for dogs in school parks:

- **Maintain a distance of at least 10 meters (33 feet)** from the school building, playgrounds, sports fields, and picnic areas.

- **Keep your dog on a leash** at all times.
- **Always clean up after your pet.**

For more information, you can contact Edmonton Animal Services at **311** or visit their website.

#### *Community Respect:*

Please be respectful to everyone in the community, whether they are dog owners or not. If a serious issue arises that you cannot resolve with a simple conversation, you can contact Animal By-Law at **311**. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our school community safe and friendly for everyone.

#### **DRESS CODE**

Students at Edmonton Public Schools should dress in a way that creates a welcoming, respectful, and safe learning environment. The dress code is fair and does not discriminate based on race, gender, religion, or body type.

#### *What is Acceptable?*

Students are allowed to wear items like **durags, turbans, hijabs, and burkas** as these are considered appropriate. The key is to choose clothing that is respectful and safe for school.

#### *Safety First* ⚠️

Your safety is our top priority. For this reason, students are not allowed to wear clothing or accessories that could be a safety risk. For example, **lanyards are not permitted** to be worn around the neck.

#### *Be a Role Model*

The dress code encourages students to make clothing choices that are appropriate for a learning environment, project a positive image, and prepare them for the future.

#### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

In the unlikely event of an emergency in the school, staff and students are trained in emergency response procedures. These procedures cover evacuation drills, natural disasters (i.e., tornadoes), and intruders in the school (security alert & lockdown procedures). In the event that the school must be evacuated, our receiving school is Jan Reimer School. Parents would receive notification through a phone fan out.

**Jan Reimer School** - 360 Orchards Blvd SW, Edmonton AB T6X 1A2      Phone: 587-489-4716

#### **ENTRANCES**

On the first day of school, students will be told which entrance to use when they arrive. This information will also be available on the school website and SchoolZone. Classes start at **8:25 a.m.** If a student arrives after this time, they must use the **front entrance** and check in at the office to get a late slip. For safety, all other doors will be locked after students have entered the building.

#### **FEES**

Please ensure that all fees are paid as per established deadlines and prior to any field trip or special event. **Student fees are charged for items that are not covered by the school budget.** Parents are encouraged to pay all fees through SchoolZone with a Visa or MasterCard. We request that fees be paid in full by the first week of October. Your timely attention to this matter is always greatly appreciated.

#### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are a fun and memorable way for students to get hands-on learning experiences that support what they're studying in class.

##### *How to Get Your Child Ready*

- **Notification:** You will be notified about every field trip, including its purpose, what it covers in the curriculum, the cost, and any other requirements.
- **Consent & Payment:** To ensure your child can go, you must complete the consent form and pay any fees through **SchoolZone** before the trip. **Verbal consent is not accepted.**

- **Financial Assistance:** If you need help with the cost, please speak to your child's teacher or the principal. Your child will not be denied a field trip due to a lack of funds.

If a student is unable to go on a field trip for any other reason, they will be accommodated in another class. Please make sure to fill out all forms on SchoolZone by the due date to avoid disappointment. The school administration has the right to deny a student from participating in a field trip if needed

## **FOOTWEAR**

To keep our school clean and safe, we have a few rules about footwear:

### *Elementary Students (Grades 1-3)*

- Please leave outdoor shoes on the boot racks located at the entrances.
- You must have a separate pair of indoor shoes with non-marking soles.

### *All Students (Grades 1-9)*

- **Indoor Shoes:** You must have an extra pair of shoes for indoor use, and they should have non-marking soles.
- **Labeling:** All footwear should be labeled with your child's full name.
- **Safety:** For safety reasons, bare feet are not allowed, and shoes with wheels in the sole are prohibited.

### *Visitors and Lost Shoes*

- **Visitors:** We ask that all visitors remove their dirty shoes at the door to help keep our floors clean.
- **Lost Items:** The school is not responsible for lost shoes, but we will do our best to help your child find them.

## **ILLNESS / INJURIES**

### *When Your Child Is Sick or Injured at School:*

If your child gets sick or hurt at school, our first priority is their well-being.

- **Illness:** If a student becomes ill, we will contact a parent or emergency contact to have them picked up. While waiting, the child will rest comfortably in our infirmary. If we believe the illness is serious, we will seek and follow medical advice.
- **Serious Injury:** For serious injuries, we will immediately administer first aid and attempt to contact you. If we can't reach you and the injury is serious, a staff member will take the student to the nearest clinic or hospital. In critical cases, we will call an ambulance, which will be at the expense of the parent or guardian. A staff member will stay with your child until you arrive.
- **Minor Injury:** For minor injuries like bumps and scrapes, we will provide first aid at school but won't contact you.

To ensure we can always reach you, please make sure we have your **current phone number** and an **alternative emergency contact**. Many of our staff members have current Emergency First Aid and CPR training.

### *Physical Activity Exemptions:*

If your child needs to be excused from recess or physical education:

- **3 days or less:** A note from a parent or guardian is required.
- **More than 3 days:** You must provide a doctor's note.

## **INSURANCE**

Parents are reminded that insurance protection to cover costs that may be incurred as a result of accident or injury to a student is the personal responsibility of the home. The school does not provide insurance of this nature. Please see [Voluntary student accident insurance](#) for your information.

## **LATES**

Being on time is an important life skill. Research shows that being consistently late or absent can negatively impact a student's success, including their chances of graduating high school.

### *Being Late for Class:*

- Students are considered late if they are not in their homeroom by the second bell in the morning or



- afternoon.
- Arriving late is disruptive to the classroom and means the student misses valuable instruction time.
- If your child is late, they must enter through the **front entrance** and check in at the general office before going to class.

#### *Dealing with Consistent Lateness*

- If a student is often late, their teacher will contact you to create a plan to solve the problem together.
- If the plan doesn't work, a meeting may be arranged with the administration, parents, and student to find a solution.

### **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

To help students succeed, we believe in a structured and orderly learning environment. We prioritize teaching good work habits and organizational skills. We have high standards for student behavior to ensure the classroom is focused and free from distractions. When a student acts inappropriately, we will clearly and promptly communicate the consequences to both the student and their parents. Our approach to discipline is firm but fair. We model good manners, expect mutual respect, and encourage students to persevere. Throughout the year, we help students learn important skills such as:

- How to listen and follow directions
- Making good decisions
- Apologizing
- Ignoring distractions
- Sharing

This focus helps us develop our students into responsible citizens with strong character.

### **LIBRARY LEARNING COMMONS**

Our Library Learning Commons is a place for students to work on projects, do research, and collaborate, both in person and online. We are continually adding to our collection with new books, graphic novels, eBooks, online resources, films, and other media to provide a wide variety of materials for students and staff to enjoy and use for research.

#### *Borrowing and Rules:*

- **Check-out:** You must check out any item you borrow from the library.
- **Responsibility:** You are responsible for returning all items on time and in good condition.
- **Fees:** There will be a charge for any lost or damaged items.

Detailed rules for using the library will be shared with all students and staff at the beginning of the school year.

### **LOCKERS**

Students will be assigned a locker by their homeroom teacher for their personal belongings.

#### *Locker Use and Rules:*

- **Junior High students** will use their lockers to store books and materials since they switch classrooms throughout the day.
- Students should **not share their locker or combination** with anyone else.
- They may buy their own lock for their hallway locker.
- **Locker care:** Students are responsible for keeping their locker in good condition. If a student damages their locker, including drawing graffiti on it, they will be charged for the repair costs.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

- **Lost Items:** We have two lost and found boxes for misplaced items.
- **Donations:** Unclaimed items are donated to charity three times a year in December, March, and June.
- **Tip:** Encourage your child to stuff their mittens, hats, and scarves into their coat sleeves to prevent them from getting lost.

### **LUNCH**

Our school offers a supervised lunch program for students in Grades 1-6. This service is available on a regular or drop-in basis for a fee that covers supervision costs only, as we do not provide food. However, we strongly encourage parents to have their children go home for lunch whenever possible. Taking a break from the school environment can be very beneficial for a child's physical, mental, and social well-being.

#### *Lunch Program Expectations:*

For the safety and well-being of all students, we have clear expectations for those who stay for lunch:

- **Behavior:** Students must be respectful and responsible. Inappropriate behavior will be addressed immediately, and repeated issues may lead to suspension from the program.
- **Campus Rules:** Students in Grades 1-6 must stay on school grounds during the entire lunch hour unless a parent has provided written permission for them to leave.
- **Eating & Food:**
  - Students should eat quietly at their desks.
  - **Do not share food** due to allergy concerns.
  - Bring your own utensils. **Glass containers are not allowed** for safety reasons.
  - There are **no microwaves available**, so please pack a cold lunch or use a thermos for warm food.
- **Clean-up:** Students are responsible for cleaning their own area and disposing of trash and recycling properly.
- **Supervision:** Students must follow all instructions from the lunch supervisors.

#### *Lunch Schedule & Supervision*

- **Grades 1-3:** Students will eat lunch in their classroom from **11:38 AM - 11:58 AM**, then have recess in an assigned play area from **11:58 AM - 12:18 PM**.
- **Grades 4-6:** Students will have recess in an assigned play area from **11:38 AM - 11:58 AM**, then eat lunch in their classroom from **11:58 AM - 12:18 PM**.

Both elementary and junior high students will be supervised by assigned staff members who will follow all provincial health protocols, including hand washing.

### **MEDICATION**

The school has strict rules for giving medication to students.

#### *Prescribed Medication*

If your child needs to take **prescription medication** at school regularly or infrequently, you must fill out a **Medication Management Form**. This form ensures all information is accurate. The homeroom teacher will keep all prescribed medication locked in a secure place.

#### *Non-Prescribed Medication*

For **non-prescribed medications** like Tylenol, you must send a note with the following details:

- **Date:** When you wrote the note.
- **Dosage:** The exact amount (e.g., "1 regular Tylenol").
- **Frequency/Time:** How often and when it should be given (e.g., "9:00 am and 2:00 pm").
- **Duration:** For how long (e.g., "for today & tomorrow").

The medication must be in its **original container** and clearly labeled. It will also be kept locked. Please note that the school **does not have a supply of any medication** like Tylenol, Aspirin, or Benadryl. If a medication plan is needed, teachers will work with parents to create one.

### **NUTRITION**

At our school, we want to promote healthy eating habits. To do this, we ask for your help in encouraging good nutrition and dental care. We discourage students from eating candy, soft drinks, and "junk food" at school and on the playground. We encourage you to support this by not including these items in your child's lunch. You can help your child make smart choices by involving them in preparing their own lunches and snacks. This is a great opportunity to talk with them about choosing foods from the "choose most often" and "choose sometimes" categories. By working together to promote healthy eating, we can help our students have a healthy body and mind. *(Note: Junior High students will also have a 15-minute wellness break each morning.)*

### **"O CANADA" AND MORNING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

We start every Monday at Michael Strembitsky School with the singing of "O Canada" and the reading of any school announcements. We express our appreciation to students, staff, parents, and guests who stop whatever they are doing and stand when they hear "O Canada" playing over the intercom. These are important school practices that contribute to a consistent routine and reflective start to the school day. Upon completion of the announcements, our teachers and students immediately begin to engage in teaching and learning.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Our school supports the mandate from Alberta learning to increase students' physical activity levels so that students are better able to learn and to develop positive habits needed for a healthy, active lifestyle.

Procedure for students changing for Physical Education class:

- All students are required to wear appropriate clothing to participate in the regular program of physical education.
- Proper footwear must be worn at all times due to safety regulations. All students are required to have a pair of indoor and outdoor runners.
- The teacher is the final judge as to whether it is too cold to participate in an outdoor program for physical education. Students must be properly clothed when participating in outdoor physical education activities. It is not excusable in cold weather for not having appropriate clothing, footwear, or outerwear.

### **OUT-OF-BOUNDS AREAS**

During school hours students are **not** permitted to play in the following areas:

- all parking lots or front school lawn, near the garbage dumpsters, the bicycle rack areas, the tobogganing hill

All students must remain on school grounds for the entire school day unless they are going home for lunch or have written parental permission.

### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND SCHOOL COUNCIL**

Education is built on strong relationships. We believe that when parents, students, teachers, and staff work together, we create a thriving community focused on student learning.

We encourage all parents to get involved and attend our parent meetings. Your involvement makes a big difference, whether it's through:

- Speaking to classes
- Tutoring students
- Assisting in the Learning Commons
- Helping with school events

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All parents are welcome to join our **School Council** meetings, which are held at the beginning of each month at 6:30 p.m. via Google Meet. These meetings are a great way to:

- Share your ideas and provide feedback to the administration.
- Work with parents, teachers, and community members to improve our school.
- Help enhance student learning.

The School Council advises the principal on educational issues, but the principal and the school board remain responsible for the school's daily operations and overall decisions.

Joining the School Council is a great way to form a working partnership with the school and have a voice in your child's education.

At this time, the parent groups associated with our school include:

- *Michael Strembitsky School Council*
- *Strembitsky Parent Foundation*

More information at: <https://michaelstrembitsky.epsb.ca> under "Parent Groups"

### **PARKING AND STUDENT DROP OFF/PICK UP**

Safe drop off and pick up of students at Michael Strembitsky School is of primary importance to us. Our school is a very busy place especially in the hour before school starts and the hour after school ends. In order to ensure the safest environment possible, we would ask you to follow these guidelines when arriving or departing our school.

There will be staff and/or volunteers in safety vests assisting the flow of traffic. Students, *please respectfully follow their instructions at all times.*

- Be aware of your surroundings! Cars move quickly - be on the lookout.
- When your parent or guardian comes to pick you up, let them move to the next available place in the line and wait until they stop before approaching the car. Once the car has stopped, quickly get in and buckle up so the next student can be picked up.

*Suggestions to help make coming to school or getting home easier:*

- Walk or bike to school
- Carpool - share a ride to school
- If you must drive, ask your parent or guardian to park a block or so from the school and walk with you the rest of the way.

Please take extra care when crossing the street by looking both ways before you cross and only crossing at designated crosswalks.

### **SECURITY**

The safety of everyone at Michael Strembitsky School is our top priority. To keep everyone safe, we have a few important procedures:

#### *Building Access*

- All school doors are locked throughout the day.
- Visitors and volunteers must use the front door and report to the office when they arrive and leave.
- Staff members have keys to enter the building from any door. When supervising students outside, they wear reflective vests so they're easy to spot.
- If your child arrives late, they must enter through the front door and get a late slip from the office.
- Tarmac entrances are only open during recess and lunch for students to get back inside.

### **SELF PROPELLED VEHICLES AND PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Your child is responsible for their own personal property. We encourage students to leave toys and electronics (unless needed for school) at home, as the school is not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen items.

#### *Electronics and Valuables:*

- **Label Everything:** All personal items, especially electronics, should be clearly marked with your child's name and address.
- **Protection:** We recommend using a protective bag for transporting devices.
- **Junior High:** Junior high students should keep valuables, like purses, locked in their lockers. Do not bring valuables to P.E. class or ask teachers to hold them.
- **Labeling:** Please label all clothing, lunch kits, books, and other personal items to make it easier to return them if they are lost.

### *Bicycles and Other Vehicles*

- **Bike Racks:** Bicycles, scooters, and skateboards must be locked in the designated rack area. This area is off-limits except when parking or retrieving your vehicle.
- **Safety:** For legal and safety reasons, students must wear helmets.
- **On School Grounds:** Do not ride bicycles, scooters, or skateboards on school property, including the playground or parking lot.

**Responsibility:** The school is not financially responsible for stolen or damaged vehicles, but we will help students try to recover their property.

### **SCHOOL SUPPLY LISTS**

Please refer to <https://michaelstrembitsky.epsb.ca> under “Parent Resources” for Gr K-9 School Supply Lists.

### **SCHOOLZONE**

**SchoolZone is our main way of communicating with you and your child.** We expect all parents and students to use it regularly.

#### *How SchoolZone Helps*

- **Students** can see their daily homework and class announcements from teachers in a calendar format. This helps them stay organized and manage their time.
- **Parents** can stay informed and actively involved in their child's learning.

*You can find a lot of useful information on SchoolZone, including:*

- Attendance records
- Report cards and progress reports
- School and district news
- School newsletters
- Access to educational resources

#### *When to Use SchoolZone:*

Check SchoolZone first if:

- You or your child are unsure about homework assignments.
- Your child is absent and needs to find out about missed work.
- A student has forgotten a handout at school.
- 

Every student and parent will have a **SchoolZone account**. If you don't have internet access at home, you can log in from any computer with an internet connection. If you don't have your account or password information, please contact the main office. Parents will also need to use their account to complete online forms and to pre-enroll their child for the next school year.

### **SCHOOL WEBSITE**

The Michael Strembitsky School website is an ever-growing resource for students, parents and staff. You will find relevant information about school policies and expectations. Stay connected to staff members using the email addresses that can be found on the website. Information about programs and resources available to students and parents can also be found on our school's website. The Parent section will provide important notices and dates for upcoming meetings, as well as information about parking, lunch program, transportation, etc. Our website address is: <http://michaelstrembitsky.epsb.ca>

### **STUDENT LEADERSHIP AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR INVOLVEMENT**

We value student involvement in our school and encourage students to participate as much as possible in school activities. Although grade restrictions may apply in some areas, we have activities for everyone. Involvement provides opportunities for students to accept and demonstrate responsibility. A variety of extracurricular opportunities will be offered at Michael Strembitsky School during the noon hour or after school. These opportunities will be cross-graded and on a volunteer basis. Extracurricular opportunities provide students with enriched educational experiences to enhance learning and to build upon our students' varying interests.

### **STUDENT-OWNED DEVICES**

At Michael Strembitsky School, we believe that technology can be a powerful tool to enhance learning that enables students to access, work with and communicate knowledge and information. With the use of the Google platform, students are now able to access their documents, presentations and school-assigned Gmail account anywhere, anytime on any device. Devices that support Google Chrome, and therefore the Google platform include: Smartphones, Tablet computers, Chrome books and Laptops. Students who bring their own devices still fall under the Responsible Use of Technology Agreement when at school; however, our school continues to provide students from Kindergarten to grade 9 with access to technology for class work as required.

### **SUPERVISION**

We request that students arrive at school so that they will have a minimum amount of waiting time before beginning classes (**staff supervision outdoors does not start until 8:10 a.m.**). When the weather is very cold or wet, students will be welcomed into the main hallways until the bell rings. All students are asked to practice good behavior when waiting in the entrances. At dismissal time, students are to proceed directly home or to their after school care. At 8:20 a.m. all Junior High students may enter through their assigned door and go directly to their homeroom location.

### **TELEPHONE**

Students can use the school phones in the office and classrooms, but only with permission and at appropriate times. During class, cell phone use is not allowed. If you give your child a cell phone for emergencies, please remind them to keep it in their locker (or backpack for elementary students) during school hours. To minimize the need for students to use the school phone, please arrange after-school activities with them ahead of time. The school phone should not be used to ask for permission to "stay and play" or "go to a friend's house." We also expect students to be responsible and remember to bring their homework, lunches, and field trip forms to school. If a student absolutely needs to make a phone call, they can do so during recess or lunch breaks.

### **VANDALISM**

To keep our school safe and prevent vandalism, we need your help. If you see anything suspicious, like someone on the roof, breaking windows, or destroying plants and equipment, please call the Edmonton Police at 780-423-4567. When you call, give them our school's name, Michael Strembitsky School, and the address, 4110 Savaryn Drive. Briefly describe what you see. Vandalism is expensive for taxpayers, so please report it, even though our school has an alarm system. Edmonton Public Schools will prosecute anyone who vandalizes the property.

For more information about the school's security program, you can call Division Security at **780-429-8295**.

### **VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS**

Visitors, including parents and guests, are welcome at our school. However, to ensure the safety of our students and staff, all visitors must follow a few rules. Please sign in at the office and get a visitor pass before going anywhere else in the school. If you are a volunteer, you must register with the school. This includes filling out a Volunteer Registration Form. Additionally, volunteers who coach, chaperone overnight field trips, or drive students will need to complete a police records check. For the extra forms and to find out what identification you need for the police check, please contact Mrs. McWhinnie the business office. Please note that if a police check reveals information that raises concerns, you may not be able to volunteer.

You can also read the full policy here: <https://epsb.ca/ourdistrict/policy/f/fbce-ar>.

Michael Strembitsky School values the contributions of our parent group and parent volunteers. Together we work to promote the well-being and effectiveness of our students and programs. We value any contribution you are able to make. Volunteering in our school is one way for parents to show their children that they value their education.