



## Parent Handbook 2021-2022

### **Welcome and Mission**

Welcome to Elmwood Village Charter Schools. Our mission is to provide a stimulating and engaging learning environment that recognizes student capability, fosters connectedness to immediate and broader communities, and offers ways to contribute to school life. EVCS believes that all children can and will learn at high levels when provided with the right learning conditions.

### **Who to Contact**

**Contact List: Hertel**

**Contact List: Days Park**

### **Leadership Team**

Liz Fisher, Principal, EVCS Hertel

Danielle Bruno, Principal, EVCS Days Park

Liz Evans, Director of Operations

Anne Wechsler, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

### **Assistant Principals**

Catrice D. Huff, Assistant Principal, EVCS Hertel

David Phillips, Assistant Principal, EVCS Days Park

### **Staff Directory**

The complete staff directory is available at: <http://www.evcsbuffalo.org/>.

### **Board of Trustees**

A charter school is an independent public school that is autonomous from the Board of Education of the district in which it resides. It is governed by its own Board of Trustees with oversight from the New York State Education Department. Our board member list and the board's meeting schedule are available on our website. All meetings are open to the public.

### **EVCS Online**

Follow our social media and bookmark these sites for timely updates.

**Website:** [www.evcsbuffalo.org](http://www.evcsbuffalo.org)

#### **Social Media:**

Facebook:

- EVCS Hertel: [facebook.com/evcs2](https://www.facebook.com/evcs2)
- EVCS Days Park: [facebook.com/evcsdayspark/](https://www.facebook.com/evcsdayspark/)
- EVCS District: [facebook.com/elmwoodvillage.charterschools.1](https://www.facebook.com/elmwoodvillage.charterschools.1)
- Instagram: [@evcsbuffalo](https://www.instagram.com/evcsbuffalo)



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### Visitor Policy

For the health and safety of all, no visitors are currently allowed at school during school hours. Some school events will take place on campus and information about campus visitors will be sent out in advance of each event.

### School Hours

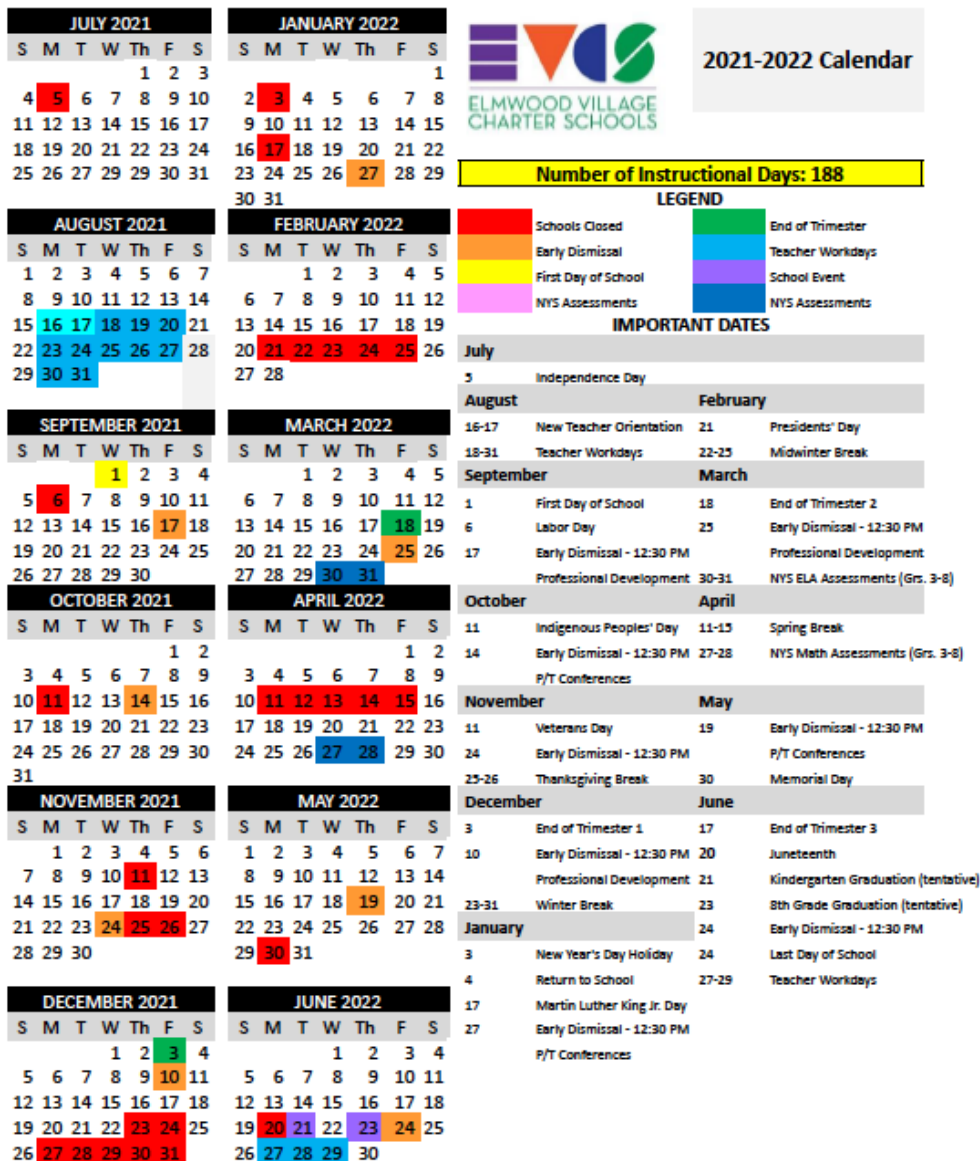
8:00 AM—3:30 PM.

Families who drive to school may drop off no earlier than 7:30 AM.

Families who pick up from school will have a scheduled pick up time between 3:05-3:30 PM.

Breakfast and lunch are available at no charge for all students.

### Calendar





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### **Informational Events**

Event dates can be found on the [school calendar](#). Also, watch for text and email reminders.

- **Meet the Teacher Night:** teachers discuss academic expectations and curriculum.
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences:** held three times a year, conferences are a valuable opportunity to discuss your child's progress. All parents/guardians are encouraged to attend. Teachers will inform families about scheduling parent-teacher conferences.

### **Admissions/Enrollment Policy**

#### **Admissions Policy:**

Elmwood Village Charter Schools (EVCS) are public schools of choice, and there are no tuition or fees required for attendance. Admission to Elmwood Village Charter School Days Park and Hertel is done through a random lottery drawing that is open to the public. In order to enter a child in the lottery, parents/guardians must submit a completed application by April 1. Names of students are randomly selected by EVCS's lottery and registration management program, School Mint. For those who are interested, more information on the randomization process is available at the lottery.

Preference is given first to returning students, then to siblings of currently enrolled students, then to the children of current EVCS staff members, then to residents of Buffalo, and then all other eligible students who have submitted their application by the deadline. Proof of residence is required at the time of registration. Families of students admitted to EVCS through the lottery as a Buffalo resident must live within the City of Buffalo on the first day of the school year for which they were admitted. Any families not residing within the City of Buffalo on the first day of school will forfeit their spot to the next eligible student on the waiting list for that grade level.

Sibling preference applies only to siblings of those students who are currently attending the campus of Elmwood Village Charter School that they are applying to. Hertel students with siblings in grades not offered at Hertel will receive preference for grades 7 & 8 at Days Park. Sibling preference will apply to children who are accepted through the lottery once that student is **officially registered**. At that time, that child's sibling will be moved from the general waiting list to the bottom of the sibling waiting list. In the event that there are more siblings applying for admission than available seats, a sibling lottery will be held at the time of the general lottery.

Staff preference applies only to children of EVCS staff members who are employed as regular,



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permanent employees working under contract at the time of the lottery. Staff preference does not apply to the children of temporary, per diem, outsourced service providers, nor to independent contractors serving the school. Staff members benefiting from the staff preference must be employed at EVCS on the first day of the school year for which their children were admitted. Any staff member not still employed at EVCS on the first day of school will forfeit their child's spot to the next eligible student on the waiting list for that grade level. In the event that there are more children of staff members applying for admission than available seats, a staff lottery will be held at the time of the general lottery.

Elmwood Village Charter Schools will draw all of the names of children that were submitted for the lottery. Once all available slots have been filled, EVCS will draw names for the waiting list. Students will be put on the waiting list in the order that their names were drawn. **For first through eighth grades, names of students are drawn only for a waiting list**, and the waiting list is used to fill seats as they become available. The waiting list is refreshed with the most current lottery results each year, so parents whose children were not admitted into the school must enter the lottery annually. **Waiting lists do not roll over from one year to the next.**

All lottery acceptances are preliminary acceptances. This means that acceptance does not become final until EVCS receives all necessary paperwork, including an authentic copy of a child's birth certificate, proof of residence, immunization records, and a completed registration packet. For students entering first through eighth grades, EVCS also requires academic records from a child's previous school, and a copy of the child's final report card showing whether or not he/she was promoted to the next grade level.

Parents/guardians are welcome to be present at the lottery drawing. All parents/guardians will be notified in writing of their children's acceptance or place on the waiting list. Lottery results are not given by phone or e-mail, but will be available through your SchoolMint account. Parents/guardians of students who are admitted into school must complete the registration packet within one week of notification that the packet has available to parents/guardians online, or the seat will be offered to the next child on the waiting list.

Elmwood Village Charter Schools does not discriminate in its admission of students on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, native language, disability, or the marital status or sexual orientation of a child's parents.

### **Code of Conduct**

Creating a positive and safe learning environment is critical for student and school success -- a responsibility shared by students, parents, staff and administration. When everyone works cooperatively to prevent problems and promote success, the need for disciplinary action is reduced.



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**Required:** at the beginning of each school year, all parents/guardians must review the EVCS [Code of Conduct](#) with their children, and sign and return [the last page](#).

### **Technology**

EVCS's many technology resources include SMART Boards, Chromebooks, and iPads. School technology is to be used for educational purposes only, and under the direction of a teacher, teaching assistant, or library/media specialist. The school's Acceptable Use Policy is included in the Code of Conduct. Please review the Acceptable Use Policy with your child(ren). Any student found in violation of the Acceptable Use Policy will have his/her technology privileges suspended or revoked.

### **Student Discipline Policy (including Special Education Discipline Policy)**

From [pages 2 - 5 of the Student Code of Conduct](#):

The Cooperative Discipline and Responsive Classroom approaches are used throughout the school, whether in person or in the event of remote instruction. These models are proactive approaches to establishing a positive student culture.

### **Student Discipline Within the Responsive Classroom and Cooperative Discipline Models**

All students are expected to adhere to the EVCS Code of Conduct regardless of the mode of instruction in which they participate (e.g., virtual, in-person). We expect students to respect the rights and privileges of others and accept responsibility for their own actions and the consequences of their behavior. Our approach, first and foremost, is to be proactive:

- Establish a calm, peaceful, and orderly environment for learning.
- Give students the opportunity to be capable, connected, and contributing members of the school community (Cooperative Discipline).
- Teach and help children to develop self-control and self-discipline.
- Teach children to be responsible members of a democratic community.
- Promote and model respectful, kind, and healthy interactions.

### **When responding to misbehavior, we aim to:**

- Help children become aware of their actions.
- Help children become aware of how their actions can bring positive and negative consequences to themselves and others.
- Use respectful strategies to stop misbehavior and restore positive behavior as quickly as possible.
- Preserve the dignity of every child.

Each class will make an agreed-upon list of the class rules regarding behavioral expectations, which students may revisit. The class rules will include pictures/drawings for students not yet



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reading. Teachers will also teach the rules for the school community encompassing appropriate behavior when participating in field trips, community service projects, attending performances, and dealing with conflict. Classroom rules will echo the school-wide standards.

During in-person school, additional techniques to be used for creating an orderly learning environment in the classroom may include a “take-a-break” spot or a “buddy classroom,” when feasible. This will be a place where children go to reflect on behavior before returning to the group. It will provide the student having difficulty following rules with an opportunity to decompress, reflect, and rejoin the class. The teacher will assess the immediate needs of the child and take time to discuss issues and problem solve. The teacher will communicate with the parent(s)/guardian(s) if the child continually exhibits behaviors counter to the rule system of the classroom and schedule a conference with the parent(s)/guardian(s). A Wellness Room has been established regardless of the method of instruction used if a child needs a space other than the classroom to reflect on his/her behavior.

The Principal or Assistant Principal of the school will interact with students on a daily basis to assist teachers in reaching our goal of helping all children succeed. Informal visits to the Principal’s or Assistant Principal’s office for a conference, intervention, reminders or reprimands should not be interpreted as formal disciplinary action. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified whenever formal disciplinary action is taken by an administrator.

### **Chronic Problems**

If disruptive behavior continues after initial interventions with the student, a teacher or administrator will contact parents/guardians. Suspension or a formal time-out may be required when a student’s conduct results in the need to temporarily remove the student from the classroom community. An administrator will conduct a re-entry meeting with the student prior to his/her return to school from suspension at which time the School’s behavioral expectations will be reviewed and reinforced.

In the case of students with significant behavioral concerns, the Student Support Team may be consulted. The Student Support Team consists of school professionals and the Principal. Together, they confer to offer the student’s teacher possible strategies or determine appropriate interventions to address the student’s behaviors. Such strategies might include developing a behavioral plan which incorporates principles of frequency, intensity and duration of target behaviors; determining antecedents, concurrent events and consequences that exacerbate problem behaviors; identifying skill deficits that contribute to the behavior(s). Such plan may also set forth a set of strategies to address the student’s conduct that may include: developing a contract with the student, and implementing an individual behavior management plan using positive reinforcement. If this collaborative opportunity does not lead to student improvement, a more formal behavior intervention plan or other alternative measures may be



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necessary.

**Short-Term Suspensions and Discipline of Students with 504 Plans**

in the [Code of Conduct](#) and page 8 of Section 504 Procedures Manual (document available)

**Dress Code**

page 11 of the [Code of Conduct](#)

**Student Retention/Promotion Policy**

See: [Student Retention/Promotion Policy](#) (document available)

**Complaint Policy**

Complaint Policy (which should clearly articulate how to file a formal complaint alleging a violation of law or the charter, and provide appropriate appeals information)

See: [Complaint Policy](#)

**Health Services Policy including Medication Policy**

EVCS has a licensed nurse on premises during school hours. Parents/guardians should notify the school nurse of any health-related issues. Our medical director has advised us to strictly follow the policy illustrated in the diagram below.

**I NEED TO STAY HOME IF...**

I HAVE A NEW SORE THROAT, RUNNY/STUFFY NOSE, COUGH, HEADACHE	I HAVE A FEVER	I AM VOMITING	I HAVE DIARRHEA	I HAVE A RASH	I HAVE HEAD LICE	I HAVE AN EYE INFECTION	I HAVE BEEN IN THE HOSPITAL
Symptoms started the past 24 hours	Temperature of 100.0 or higher	Within the past 24 hours	Within the past 24 hours	Rash on any part of the body that is itchy	Itchy head, active lice	Red, itchy and/or crusty eye drainage	Hospital stay and/or ER visit
<b>I AM READY TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL WHEN I AM...</b>							
Feeling better and it's been 24 hours after symptoms begin	Fever free for 24 hours without use of medication	Free from vomiting for 24 hours and at least 2 solid meals	Free from Diarrhea for at least 24 hours	Released by my doctor to return with a note that I am not contagious	Treated for LICE at home and proof is provided to the nurse	Released by my doctor to return to school with documentation	Released by my doctor to return to school with documentation

**Food Allergies**

Please notify the school nurse and your child’s teacher of any food-related allergies. A medical plan from your child’s physician must be kept on file in the Health Office. We ask that all families



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remain sensitive to students' food allergies.

### Snacks

Please refrain from sending in any snacks or treats for the class that contain any nut products. Nuts are prohibited in our classrooms.

Families wishing to provide a snack or treat for special events should check with the classroom teacher first. If the teacher feels that a snack is acceptable, preferred choices are healthy, whole, store-bought snacks in original packaging with manufacturer's label. We cannot accept any home-baked or home-canned goods. Whole foods, such as fruits and vegetables, are recommended snacks and treats.

Children with food allergies are not permitted to eat any homemade snacks or treats -- these families are encouraged to provide substitute snacks as an alternative on hand at school. Sharing of food in the cafeteria is not permitted, and our cafeteria includes nut-free tables.

### Medications

If your child needs to take prescription medication during the school day, please contact the school nurse. New York State Law requires:

- Parents or guardians must personally deliver the medication to the school health office or a school official (unless a self-carry order form is signed by the parent/guardian and a NYS licensed physician).
- All medication must remain in properly labeled pharmacy or original over-the-counter (OTC) containers.
- A new prescription/medication form signed by the medical provider is required at the beginning of every school year.
- The parent/guardian must sign the medication permission form before a student can use the medication.

In accordance with New York State Law, teachers or employees of a school, other than a licensed nurse, cannot administer or assist with medications unless the student is deemed "self-directed" by his or her physician. Parents/guardians may authorize an adult to assist their child on a field trip if the parent/guardian cannot attend.

In order for a child to be deemed "self-directed," there must be an order from the child's physician stating that the child is self-directed, and parent permission for the child to be self-directed under the supervision of a staff member. In order for the child to be "self-directed," he/she must be able to do the following:

- Recognize the medication (*i.e.*, color, shape, size, etc.)
- Determine the correct dosage needed (*i.e.*, one tablet, 2 puffs, 3 units, etc.).





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- Identify the time that the medication is needed during the school day (*i.e.*, lunch time, before/after PE class, etc.).
- Describe how to take the medication from original labeled pharmacy container or original OTC container, and administer it to themselves or direct a staff member to assist by correct route (*i.e.*, oral, nasal, inhaled, topical, etc.).
- Describe why (purpose) the medication is taken and under what circumstances it is appropriate to do so (*i.e.*, to improve attention, headache, shortness of breath, etc.).
- Describe what happens when the medication is not taken (*i.e.* unable to breathe, etc.).
- Describe when to refuse to take the medication (*i.e.*, wrong color, shape, amount, etc.).

If you or your child's physician do not feel that your child can be deemed "self-directed," options for field trips include:

- Chaperoning the field trip yourself.
- Providing written permission to another adult who is chaperoning the field trip and is willing/able to administer your child's medication.

Parents are encouraged to discuss this issue with the child's physician, so that all students may be safe and have their medical needs met. Medication forms are available on our website or may be obtained from the main office. Your physician may use his/her own form if desired.

### **Vaccinations**

New York State Law prohibits children from attending school unless they are current on all required vaccinations. This law is strictly enforced. Please contact the school nurse with any questions about vaccination requirements.

Current School Year New York State Immunization Requirements for School Entrance/Attendance may be found at:

<https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/2370.pdf>

### **Personnel Policies and/or Employee Manual**

[Employee Handbook](#) (document available)

### **Collective Bargaining Agreement(s), if applicable**

*Not applicable.*

### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA")**

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") policies, annual notices, and sample waiver form, if applicable (see the Confidentiality of Student Records guidance at



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[www.newyorkcharters.org/category/operational-resources/compliance/](http://www.newyorkcharters.org/category/operational-resources/compliance/) for more information)

[FERPA Documents](#) (documents available)

### **Section 504**

**Policies and procedures for implementing Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to serve students with disabilities not covered by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

[Section 504 Procedures Manual](#) (document available)

### **Freedom of Information Law (“FOIL”) Notice**

Freedom of Information Law (“FOIL”) Notice, which should, at a minimum, identify the records access officer and the records access appeals officer (and appropriate contact information for each), FOIL “regulations,” information subject matter list, and the FOIL list of officers and employees (which should identify all personnel, including the board, along with their public office addresses and any public salaries). See the FOIL guidance at [www.newyorkcharters.org/category/operational-resources/compliance/](http://www.newyorkcharters.org/category/operational-resources/compliance/) for more information.

EVCS’s FOIL Policy is published here:

<https://www.evcsbuffalo.org/about-elmwood-village-charter-schools/>

The PDF is:

[http://www.evcsbuffalo.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/FOIL\\_Elmwood-Village-Charter-Schools.pdf](http://www.evcsbuffalo.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/FOIL_Elmwood-Village-Charter-Schools.pdf)

### **Teacher Certification Processes and Procedures**

**Teacher Certification Processes and Procedures:** Please submit a narrative that explains how the school(s) approach(es) hiring qualified teachers including any methods to get uncertified teachers on a path to gaining certification. Include how the school monitors certification status and supports teachers to ensure the school remains compliant with the Act. Include any higher education or external partnerships that the education corporation maintains to support teachers gaining, maintaining, or extending certification.

[Teacher Certification Processes and Procedures](#) (internal document)

### **Right to Know**

Parents are entitled to request information about the professional qualifications of their child’s classroom teacher(s) and any paraprofessionals that assist in the classroom. Parents are entitled to know:

- Whether the teacher has met New York State certification criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which



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New York State certification criteria have been waived.

- The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.
- To obtain this information, call Hertel at 716-424-0555, or email Mrs. Fisher at [efisher@elmwoodvillageschool.org](mailto:efisher@elmwoodvillageschool.org). At Days Park, call 716-886-4581, or email Mrs. Bruno at [dbruno@elmwoodvillageschool.org](mailto:dbruno@elmwoodvillageschool.org).

### **Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment**

**Responsive Classroom:** Elmwood Village Charter Schools embraces the Responsive Classroom model. Responsive Classroom is an approach to elementary and middle school education that emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a safe school community.

The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum, and social responsibility is an integral part of daily classroom life. The goal of Responsive Classroom is optimal student learning. More information about the Responsive Classroom (RC) approach can be found on the [RC website](#).

**Key Responsive Classroom components are found on our website.**

**Grading and reporting:** EVCS operates on a trimester schedule, with three marking periods and report cards. This provides teachers with more time to assess student progress between report cards. This is particularly important for younger students, as they transition to a new grade level and may require additional review time at the beginning of the year. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled halfway through each marking period, providing additional opportunities for teachers and guardians to communicate about student progress.

**Below is abbreviated from [D4a\\_Educational Program\\_Elmwood Village Charter School Hertel-rev](#) (internal document)**

**Curriculum:** EVCS's curriculum has been developed to provide the conditions for all students to achieve at high levels.

**Special subjects and specialists:** The curriculum includes Spanish, physical education, visual art, cultural dance, and music. Specialists on staff include ENL, Library Media, Counselor, Behavior Therapist, and more.

**Math:** EVCS uses Zearn curriculum for Math in grades K-6. Zearn utilizes a rotational group model, allowing students to receive teacher-led instruction in smaller groups, and additional



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practice with content via online digital lessons where concept exploration is anchored in concrete objects and pictures, students receive supportive feedback on every problem, and they are offered multiple chances to learn from mistakes.

EVCS seventh and eighth grade Math classes are departmentalized and taught by subject specialists. Teachers build units and lessons aligned to the NYS Next Generation Learning Standards. Teachers use Engage NY modules as a resource and supplement with additional resources.

EVCS offers Regents Algebra in addition to 8<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics to those students whose scores and work habits have qualified them to take this advanced math course. Passing the Regents exam can earn EVCS 8<sup>th</sup> graders high school credit.

**English Language Arts (ELA):** ELA is taught in alignment with the NYS Next Generation Learning Standards.

**Reading:** In 2021-2022, EVCS will be working to incorporate instructional practices aligned with the Science of Reading into ELA instruction, shifting from a balanced literacy approach to a structured literacy approach. Students in grades K-3 will receive daily code-based, explicit, systematic, and sequential instruction with Really Great Reading curriculum. In these grades, language comprehension (background knowledge, vocabulary, literacy knowledge, etc.) will be taught through McGraw-Hill Wonders. In grade 3, teachers will begin to incorporate some whole class novel-based instruction.

In grades 4-6 instruction is primarily built around novels and paired non-fiction texts used to build background knowledge. The novels have been carefully selected to provide “mirrors and windows” for our students, allowing them opportunities to see themselves in the literature, along with opportunities to learn about people and cultures different from their own. In addition, texts represent a variety of genres.

**Writing:** EVCS will teach writing through a combination of content embedded writing (that will occur during reading, Science, and Social Studies) and the Writing Workshop model. EVCS uses the “writing workshop” approach developed by Lucy Calkins and the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project to teach writing. This approach holds that writing is a process, with distinct phases. Students collect ideas, develop those ideas, write first drafts, revise, edit, proofread, and finally publish with the expectation that their writing will be read by others. By involving children in this process, they become more active in their own education and see themselves as writers. Students receive instruction in narrative, expository, informational, poetic, and procedural writing.



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**New York State Assessments:** In accordance with Federal and State requirements, all students in public and charter schools in grades 3-8 must take all state assessments administered at those grade levels. These tests are considered to be part of the course of study for each grade level. State assessments in Grades 3-8: English Language Arts and Mathematics; in Grades 5 and 8: Science.

**EVCS does not “teach to the test.”** Our teachers and specialists minimize test anxiety as much as possible. We recognize that state assessments are just one way to evaluate the outcomes of our curriculum and instruction, and they are neither the focus of our efforts, nor the sole indicator of a child’s academic achievement. As such, we deliver and review multiple sources of formative and summative assessments throughout the year to monitor and measure student progress and growth.

**Class Placements:** Per our Board policy, families cannot request specific teachers for their child(ren). EVCS staff thoughtfully places each child in a class with the intention of maximizing academic and social growth.

**Curriculum Opt Out:** EVCS was founded on the principles of diversity, with the express intention of forming an inclusive community where all students feel welcomed and valued. To that end, EVCS strives to educate students about the diversity of people and ideas that exist in our society, and give them access to information that will broaden their perspective of the world around them. When children learn about other cultures, it helps them understand the diverse values, ideas, and traditions of all people.

EVCS does not entertain parent requests to opt out of curriculum. When it comes to the academic curriculum a school chooses to teach, schools have broad latitude to determine appropriate instruction. EVCS makes decisions and takes particular actions to impart a broad spectrum of views and ideas to its students, encouraging students to consider multiple perspectives before forming their own conclusions.

Time spent understanding and appreciating differences benefits everyone. It is equally important to stress the similarities among all people. Research shows that when students’ identities are understood and appreciated by teachers, they do better in school. They feel more accepted and part of their school community.

If you have any questions or concerns about the content presented in school, contact Anne Wechsler, Director of Curriculum and Instruction at [awechsler@elmwoodvillageschool.org](mailto:awechsler@elmwoodvillageschool.org).

### **Food Services**

Elmwood Village Charter Schools partner with the Buffalo Public Schools Food Service program to meet the nutritional needs of our students. Breakfast and lunch are available to all students,



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free of charge, for the entire school year. For meal information, visit:

<https://www.evcsbuffalo.org/for-parents-and-students/school-menus-student-nutrition/>.

EVCS participates in the Community Eligibility Option (CEO) under the National School Lunch program. In order to provide free breakfast and lunch to our students, it is important that EVERY family completes the Household Income Verification Application.

**Household Income Application—Important:** In the beginning of the school year, every EVCS family must complete the Household Income Verification Application sent home. This is extremely important information used for federal grant money and charter accountability. If you know that your family is not eligible, you may write “not eligible” with the name(s) of your child(ren) and return it to school.

### **Communication**

At EVCS, we value and encourage open communication between home and school. We endeavor to send most communication electronically. Please notify the school of any changes to your preferred email address, at 716-424-0555 (Hertel); or 716-886-4581 (Days Park).

**Student Management System:** School correspondence, including the school calendar and lunch menu, will be sent via email through our student management system, PowerSchool.

Non-custodial parents who wish to receive correspondence from the school should make sure that a current email address is on file with the main office and with your child’s teacher(s).

(Non-custodial parents are also welcome to keep a communication folder in the main office at the school for hard copies of all correspondence.)

**EVCS Alerts and School News:** EVCS uses an online messaging system to reach all families in a timely fashion. All parents/guardians will receive important text notifications and emails, and school administration e-newsletters throughout the school year. Submit changes of contact information to the office.

**Classroom News:** Teachers will send classroom e-newsletters, with updates about curriculum, field trips, special projects and events, and more.

**School Closings** due to inclement weather: Elmwood Village Charter Schools will be closed when the Buffalo Public Schools are closed. School closings are announced via text and email messages; EVCS’s website; local television channels 2, 4, and 7; and on the school’s Facebook pages.

**Family Directory:** EVCS distributes a campus family directory early in the school year. At the time of registration, families may opt in or out of having their contact information included in



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the directory. Information found in the directory is confidential; families may not:

- share directory information with anyone outside of the school community
- use the information for marketing
- use the information for political or commercial solicitation.

### **Community Association**

Each campus of Elmwood Village Charter Schools has an active parent-teacher Community Association (CA). All parents/guardians with children enrolled in school are members of the CA and are encouraged to attend monthly meetings. The CA's meeting schedules and officer lists are published on our website.

EVCS is a community school. Parent/guardian participation in school activities and events helps us to provide more high-quality opportunities for students, and helps to build the sense of belonging and ownership that are vital to strong school communities. We encourage all members of our school community to contribute to school life in at least one way. To support or participate in activities sponsored by the CA, please view the website for activities that may interest you, and be sure to check your email for event announcements.

**CA Fundraiser events:** are open to all members of the EVCS community. Please watch for messages from school with information about these events.

### **Other Charitable Contributions**

Charter schools receive significantly less funding per student than traditional public schools. Your support helps our schools achieve our mission, which is based on a belief in the capabilities of every child. Donations can be made by contacting the Business Manager, Sharon DeTamble, at [sdetamble@elmwoodvillageschool.org](mailto:sdetamble@elmwoodvillageschool.org), or through [PayPal](#).

### **Custody**

Parents must bring custody papers to the school to inform us of custodial arrangements or issues regarding non-custodial parents. Please make school personnel aware of any potential risks to your child from a non-custodial parent, and contact the office if you have questions about custody or documentation currently in your child's student records.

### **Safety and Security**

Safety of all members of the EVCS community is our top priority.

- Parents, guests, and visitors to the school must be "buzzed" in through the main doors of the building and sign in/out at the main office.
- Upon arrival, parents, guests, and visitors will be asked to give their name and the child's



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name.

- The main entrance of the building is monitored by a security camera, and surveillance cameras are positioned throughout the interior and exterior of the school.
- Parents, guests, and visitors may not enter a classroom unless invited to do so by the teacher (*i.e.* parents, guardians, guest volunteers).
- All students at EVCS are minors, and it is expected that parents will not approach another person's child to discuss grievances, arrange play dates, change dismissal procedures, or share any other information that should only be discussed with the child's parent or guardian.
- Emergency safety procedures are reviewed and updated on a regular basis.
- Fire, lockdown, and other safety drills are conducted at least twelve (12) times per year.

**Student safety:** Please review student safety guidelines found in the [Code of Conduct](#). Safety instructions during arrival and dismissal, and more can be found in this document and on our website.

### **Reports of Child Abuse or Neglect**

**Public Notice:** 1-800-342-3720 is the toll-free telephone number operated by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), to receive reports of child abuse or neglect. To access the OCFS website, visit <http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cps/>.

**Noticia Pública:** 1-800-342-3720 es el número de teléfono gratuito operado por la Oficina de Servicios para Niños y Familias del Estado de Nueva York (OCFS), para recibir informes de abuso o negligencia infantil.

Para acceder al sitio web de OCFS, visite <http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cps/>.

### **Technology**

EVCS is a school with many technology resources, including SMART Boards, Chromebooks, and iPads. School technology is to be used for educational purposes only, and under the direction of a teacher, teaching assistant, or library/media specialist. The school's Acceptable Use Policy is included in the [Code of Conduct](#). Please review the Acceptable Use Policy with your child(ren). Any student found in violation of the Acceptable Use Policy will have his/her technology privileges suspended or revoked.

### **Transportation**

**Bus transportation:** is provided by the Buffalo Public School District or the student's district of





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residence. Students must adhere to all rules established by the district of residence and EVCS. Bus transportation is a privilege that may be suspended if a student does not follow established rules. The EVCS [Code of Conduct](#) applies to students on school buses. Bus drivers have the right to suspend a student from the bus for unacceptable behavior.

Review the BPS Transportation Office letter you receive in the beginning of the school year. Ensure that drop-off and pick-up information is correct. Notify BPS of any incorrect information.

An adult must be present to receive a kindergarten student at the bus stop. The driver will not release a kindergarten student without an adult present.

If EVCS is aware that your child's bus will be late, an alert will be sent from school. You can also access the progress of your child's bus through the [FirstStudent App](#). School Dismissal Manager emails will inform you when your child has boarded the bus at the end of the school day.

You may also call the bus terminal to determine the estimated time of arrival at your child's bus stop. Phone numbers are on our [website](#).

### **Changes in Dismissal Procedures**

Timely communication about changes in dismissal is essential. Because student safety is our foremost concern:

- We will not release children unless we have explicit communication from the parent/guardian about any dismissal change.
- No last-minute dismissal changes (with the exception of emergencies). Families must make dismissal changes in [School Dismissal Manager](#) in a timely fashion, so that classrooms receive notification prior to the beginning of dismissal, and to protect instructional time. Allow at least two hours prior to dismissal for changes.
- Be courteous of school staff during dismissal time; refrain from calling the main office during the last two hours of school, except in the case of emergencies. We appreciate your cooperation.
- If you want your child to walk or take a Metro Bus home, provide signed, written permission to release your child without an adult.
- **Students will not be released to any adult who is not on the approved pick-up list**, unless the parent/guardian sends written permission to release the student to another adult. The adult will be required to show photo identification before the child is released.

### **Parent Transportation**

Families may wish to provide their own transportation to and from school.

**Arrival:** Morning drop-off begins at 7:30 AM. All students may pick up a free meal at Grab n' Go breakfast tables on the way to their classrooms.



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**Student safety** is the utmost priority at arrival and dismissal. Please observe the following:

- Obey all parking and traffic flow signs.
- In order to maintain a smooth flow of traffic, please be ready to have your child enter/exit the car quickly. Drivers, please remain in your vehicles.
- Cars must come to a full stop, and pull up adjacent to a curb; children must enter/exit the passenger side of the vehicle. Students are not permitted to exit cars in the middle of the lot.
- Refrain from double parking and stopping (in the bus loop at Hertel) (on the street at Days Park) for drop offs and pick ups.
- Exercise extreme caution whenever entering or exiting the parking lot and street; watch for children who may be crossing the entrance to the lot or street.
- Pull away from the building slowly. Be particularly careful when backing up (small children may be in a blind-spot below the driver's line of sight).
- Students should not cross between parked cars. Please remind students to look carefully whenever walking/crossing near cars at all times, especially during arrival and dismissal.
- Be courteous of our neighbors — please do not block streets and driveways.
- Unaccompanied vehicles must not be left on campus. Cars parked illegally may be ticketed and / or towed.

**Dismissal Procedures and Expectations:** Parent pick-up for dismissal is 3:05 PM to 3:30 PM.

- Dismissal is coordinated with the [School Dismissal Manager](#)'s FastLane system. All families are required to access this system to let EVCS know how children will be dismissed each school day.
- Be sure you have updated your child's dismissal plan in [School Dismissal Manager](#) (online or using the app).
- When entering campus, check in with a FastLane attendant. Have your FastLane Pin # handy, or self check-in using the app.
- Once the attendant has checked you in, proceed to the designated pick-up area.
- As with morning drop off, please follow traffic flow to prevent congestion, and safety precautions: do not get out of your vehicle unless you must assist a younger child. All children must load on the curb side of the vehicle. Instruct your child NOT to step out onto the street to access the backseat. Obey all traffic regulations, direction of flow, and speeds; be courteous.
- Staff members will be ready outside, to confirm what student(s) you are picking up and that students are on their way.
- Parents/guardians are not allowed in the building. If you are required to pick up your child outside the dismissal time period, communicate with the main office in advance to make arrangements.

### **After Dismissal: Afterschool**

For your convenience, EVCS partners with afterschool providers at each campus, to offer free or low cost afterschool child care.



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At Hertel: BestSelf Behavioral Health (BSBH) Afterschool Program runs an on-site afterschool enrichment program. At Days Park: Boys & Girls Club (BGC) runs the on-site program. The BSBH and BGC programs are not affiliated with EVCS; most BSBH and BGC afterschool program staff members are not employees of EVCS. An EVCS administrator will be present on campus during afterschool program hours.

Registration for these programs is on a first-come, first-served basis. Space is limited. In the first weeks of school, please watch your email for announcements on how to apply.

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***We hope that this handbook has provided you with helpful information about Elmwood Village Charter Schools. Please note that this document is not all-inclusive. If you have questions, or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact the school at any time.***

***Best wishes for an enjoyable school year for you and your child!***