



---

Clarkfield Area Charter School

***“A school of excellence that fosters a love of learning  
that allows all students to reach their maximum  
potential.”***

***2011-12***

***Student/Parent Handbook***

# Clarkfield Area Charter School Staff 2011-2012

## **Board of Education**

Chairman	Brenda Risa
Vice –Chairman	Kathy Koetter
Secretary	Heidi Sacharison
Treasurer	Julie Dikken
Clerk	Dana Wilson

## **Elementary Faculty**

Director	Kathy Koetter	<a href="mailto:kkoetter@clarkfieldareacharter.com">kkoetter@clarkfieldareacharter.com</a>
Administrative Assistant	Kay Dann	<a href="mailto:kdann@clarkfieldareacharter.com">kdann@clarkfieldareacharter.com</a>
School Psychologist	Karin Falness	<a href="mailto:kfalness@clarkfieldareacharter.com">kfalness@clarkfieldareacharter.com</a>
Speech Clinician	Deb Moore	<a href="mailto:deb.moorse@swsc.org">deb.moorse@swsc.org</a>
Special Education	Becky Todd	<a href="mailto:btodd@clarkfieldareacharter.com">btodd@clarkfieldareacharter.com</a>
Title I Teacher	Julie Dikken	<a href="mailto:jdikken@clarkfieldareacharter.com">jdikken@clarkfieldareacharter.com</a>
Kindergarten Teacher	Sue Jans	<a href="mailto:sjans@clarkfieldareacharter.com">sjans@clarkfieldareacharter.com</a>
First Grade Teacher	Angie Ashling	<a href="mailto:aashling@clarkfieldareacharter.com">aashling@clarkfieldareacharter.com</a>
Second Grade Teacher	Heidi Huseby	<a href="mailto:hhuseby@clarkfieldareacharter.com">hhuseby@clarkfieldareacharter.com</a>
Third grade Teacher	Nikki Linscheid	<a href="mailto:nlinscheid@clarkfieldareacharter.com">nlinscheid@clarkfieldareacharter.com</a>
Fourth Grade Teacher	Hayley Knoop	<a href="mailto:hknoop@clarkfieldareacharter.com">hknoop@clarkfieldareacharter.com</a>
Fifth Grade Teacher	David Schwarz	<a href="mailto:dschwarz@clarkfieldareacharter.com">dschwarz@clarkfieldareacharter.com</a>
Sixth Grade teacher	David Schwarz	<a href="mailto:dschwarz@clarkfieldareacharter.com">dschwarz@clarkfieldareacharter.com</a>
Music Teacher	Adam Christie	<a href="mailto:achristie@clarkfieldareacharter.com">achristie@clarkfieldareacharter.com</a>
Para Professionals	Mary Hegna	<a href="mailto:mhegna@clarkfieldareacharter.com">mhegna@clarkfieldareacharter.com</a>
	Krystal Koepf	<a href="mailto:kkoepf@clarkfieldareacharter.com">kkoepf@clarkfieldareacharter.com</a>

## **Food Service Faculty**

Food Service Director	Sue Toft	<a href="mailto:stoft@clarkfieldareacharter.com">stoft@clarkfieldareacharter.com</a>
Food Service Assistant	Donna Craig	

## **Maintenance**

Custodians	David Schwarz
	Doug Moll

## **Our Vision:**

A regionally recognized school of excellence that empowers all learners to reach their maximum potential.

## **Values:**

**S**tudent needs first

**H**onesty

**I**ntegrity

**R**espect

**T**eamwork

**Mission:** *The school is known for...*

**D**eveloping the love of learning

**P**reparing all students to be successful in junior high school and beyond

**A** family atmosphere

**V**aluing community partnerships

**F**inancial Responsibility

**E**xcellence in Teaching

## **Attendance Policy**

At Clarkfield Area Charter School we believe consistent attendance is a vital part of student success. Our expectation is to have students miss as little class time as possible. Please call the morning of the day the student is absent. On the day your child returns to school they are to bring a written excuse to their teacher when they return to class. The written excuse should include a reason for the absence and a parent signature. Parents/Guardians should also contact the school office prior to school starting (8:00am) if their student will be absent.

An absence or tardy will be considered *Excused* for the following reasons:

Illness

Serious illness in student's immediate family

Death in student's immediate family, close friend, or relative

Medical or Dental appointment that can not be scheduled at any other time (excessive absences will require doctor verification)

Any absence without a parent/guardian excuse will be considered *Unexcused*. An absence will also be considered unexcused if no written excuse or phone call is received the second day of the absence. The school reserves the right to request verification on all calls and notes. For absences of three days or more a doctor's note may be requested from the school before the absence will be considered excused.

Any student absent from school without excuse for seven days in any school year is considered truant. Truant students will be referred to the County Attorney's Office.

If you know in advance that your child will be absent please notify the school as soon as possible so your child's teacher can prepare any assignments for him in a timely manner. Please try to schedule appointments outside of regular school hours whenever possible. **We ask that you please come inside the building and sign your child in/out of the building.**

### Behavior Policy

Our school's vision statement says that CACS faculty and staff, along with strong parental partnerships, will guide each student to reach his or her full academic and social potential in order to ensure success in his or her future, with this in mind...

<b>Above The Line</b>	
<b>Be Respectful</b>	<b>Be Safe</b>
<b>Be Responsible</b>	<b>Be Cooperative</b>
<b>Be Polite</b>	<b>Be A Worker</b>
<b>Below The Line</b>	
<b>Swearing</b>	<b>Hitting</b>
<b>Teasing</b>	<b>Uncooperative</b>
<b>Budging in Line</b>	<b>Wasting Time</b>
<b>Bottom Line</b>	
<b>Weapons</b>	<b>Assault</b>
<b>Racial or Sexual</b>	<b>Vandalism</b>
<b>Harrassment</b>	

We have revised our discipline policy at CACS. The revised plan is based on the Above The Line Program. The goal of the Above The Line Program is to **promote a safe, caring, environment** where all students are **taught the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behavior.**

In our program, behavior is divided into three Groups, Above The Line, Below The Line, and Bottom Line. The three behavior categories with Sample behaviors are provided in the box to the left.

Students have discussed Above The Line and Below The Line behaviors with their teachers. We expect each child to demonstrate Above The Line behaviors.

If a student makes a bad behavioral choice, they will be asked if they would like to "Fix It" or if they would like a consequence. If the child selects a "Fix It" option, the child will be expected to assume responsibility for developing a plan for fixing the problem that he or she caused. If the child selects a consequence, the consequence will be worked out with the child and the adult in charge.

We do not have a consequence for every Below The Line Behavior. Our goal is to make consequences and fix-it plans related to the Below The Line behavior to allow the students to learn the correct behavior. The consequence will be delivered respectfully and reasonably.

There are some behaviors that are considered totally inappropriate at school. Although it is rare to see these behaviors, they are considered Bottom Line Behaviors. If a

student demonstrates a Bottom Line Behavior, it will require involvement by the director, lead teacher, parent(s) / guardian(s) and possibly legal authority.

### **Birthday Treats**

We welcome any student to bring treats for their birthday if they wish. Any treat brought to school must be commercially made. Please ensure there are sufficient treats for all students in your child's class. Due to peanut allergies in our school we ask that treats not contain peanuts.

Students are welcome to share invitations to a home party in school if all the boys and girls in the class are invited to the party; otherwise invitations are not to be shared during school hours.

### **Books and Equipment**

Students are responsible to care for any books and/or equipment provided to them to keep it in the best possible condition. Excess damage will be fined to the student at a rate deemed appropriate by the school considering the age and prior condition of the book or equipment.

### **Computer Use Policy**

In an ever-changing society, Clarkfield Area Charter School recognizes the importance of technological education for all students. We use computers and the Internet on a regular basis to provide students with current data and the skills to locate and use online resources as well as to communicate with other students and individuals as necessary for their education. We view computer/technology use as a privilege, not a right. The following is expected of our students, and is our Acceptable Use Policy:

- Be Polite
- Use Appropriate Language
- Do not reveal any personal data

Unacceptable use of school networks, computers, software, Internet, e-mail, includes but is not limited to: accessing, downloading, viewing, or storing, or printing obscene, pornographic, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful, or sexually explicit material or language.

### **Conferences**

At Clarkfield Area Charter School we value open communication between parents, teachers, students, and administration. Parents are welcome to schedule individual conferences at any time with their child's teacher. Conferences will be held twice per year. This offers an opportunity to discuss learning styles, past successes and challenges, and set personal learning goals and physical fitness goals for the year

## **Curriculum**

Clarkfield Area Charter School offers a high quality core curriculum as well as enriching exploratory opportunities. The core curriculum is aligned to the Minnesota Academic Standards and meets all requirements set by the state of Minnesota. Throughout each school day students will experience mathematics, language arts, reading, social studies, science, and physical education. K-6 students will also receive instruction in music, health, and art and grades 3-6 will have a technology and library course.

## **Community-Based Learning**

Clarkfield Area Charter School's educational program includes community-based learning as an approach to instructing students. This approach allows students to:

- help determine the needs of the community and empowers them to identify solutions
- benefit both the community and themselves
- learn in a variety of subject areas
- satisfy educational goals
- work with all ages

Teachers supplement their instruction by utilizing community members, local experts and business owners as guest speakers. They will share their expertise and experiences about the local environment, government, and business community along with knowledge of history and the importance of physical activity to help bring learning to life. These guest speakers will be selected based on units being studied by the class and will be aligned with Minnesota state standards. Students experience new and ever-changing learning opportunities by having community experts teach them about their specialty area and they have the added advantage of knowing the people in their community care about them and want to be involved in their education.

## **Discipline**

Please refer to the Clarkfield Area Charter School Discipline Policy. A copy of the complete discipline policy that was adopted by the school board is available for your review in the elementary office. If you would like a copy of the policy, please contact the school.

## **Dress Code**

We believe student dress is a reflection of student attitude. Student dress should be neat and appropriate at all times while on school property. School officials

will determine appropriateness of student dress on a consistent basis, considering the following:

- Student dress should be appropriate for outside play.
- Any clothing advertising illegal substances will not be allowed.
- No undergarments should be visible.
- Clothing with sexual or profane innuendo or language will not be allowed.
- No gang related symbols will be tolerated.
- No hats/caps worn inside the school building

School staff may require a student to change their dress or grooming when it causes distraction to themselves or others. If needed, a parent may be asked to bring a change of clothing to the school for the student.

### **Dress For Outdoors**

It is important that your child come to school dressed for outdoor activity as well as indoor. During the winter recess students need wear boots, a hat, gloves or mittens, and a jacket. Boots should be able to manageable by the child to put on by themselves. All students should have snow pants available. All clothing should have the child's name marked clearly on the inside. Please help your child come to school dressed appropriately. Children will go outside daily unless the wind chill does not permit.

### **Electronic Devices**

We discourage students from bringing personal electronic devices to school. These include, but are not limited to, cell phones, CD players, MP3 players, laptops, etc. . . If a student chooses to bring one of these items to school they must keep it turned off and put away during the school day. The school is not responsible for any lost or stolen items. If a student brings one of these items to school and a staff member takes it from them they will receive a warning upon the first offense and will get the item back at the end of the school day. The second offense will result in the parent having to come in to get the item back.

### **Emergency Information**

The school must be able to reach a parent or guardian in case of an emergency. Emergency contact information will be requested from each family at the start of the school year. It is important that any changes be reported to the school office immediately.

In the case of an emergency or inclement weather, school may be dismissed early. Busses will be sent in a timely manner to ensure students arrive home safely. If a student is to go someplace other than home parents need to let the office know. The following TV/radio stations will report early morning announcements as well as early dismissal information.

Radio:           KDMA 1460 AM/KMGM 105.5/FM – Montevideo/Granite Falls  
                      KMHL 1400 AM – Marshall

WCCO 830 AM – Minneapolis, St. Paul  
KDJS 95.3 FM – Willmar  
K-Q102 102.5 FM – Willmar  
KKCK 99.7 – Marshall  
TV: KSAX/KSTP – Channel 5 – Alexandria  
WCCO – Channel 4 – Minneapolis, St. Paul  
Website

## **Family Involvement**

Clarkfield Area Charter School strongly encourages each family to volunteer a minimum of 20 hours a year. Volunteering can take a variety of different forms from helping in the classroom, supervising after school extra curricular activities, chaperoning field trips, serving on board committees, cutting out letters for a bulletin board from the leisure of your own home, and as needed by staff. In addition, attending student/parent/teacher conferences and assisting your child with homework or tutoring another child are also volunteer hours. The charter school development team believes that for a student to be successful there needs to be support from the school, parents, and students. However, it is understood that participation will not impact a student's enrollment opportunity.

## **Field Trips**

As a part of our focus on community-based education, classes may occasionally take a field trip. Teachers will send a permission slip home with details of the trip in advance. These permission slips must be returned for a student to be eligible to attend. A student may be considered ineligible for the trip as a school consequence; in this case an alternative learning experience will be offered to that student on the day of the field trip.

## **Food Service**

For the 2010-2011 school year, meal prices are as follows: student breakfast \$1.20, student lunch \$2.10; reduced price lunch \$.40, adult lunch \$3.25, half-pint milk price, \$.40; milk ticket for milk break (25 milks) \$10.00. Milk break is not covered under the free and reduced program. It is a prepay system.(Kindergarten milk for milk break is free as it is provided through a State Department program.) To help the school reach its goal of being a financially responsible organization please keep lunch accounts current! Family accounts that reach -\$25.00 will only be offered a peanut butter sandwich and milk for lunch.

## **Forbidden Items**

There are many items that have no place within our school facility or on school grounds. They include, but are not limited to, guns, knives, weapons, cigarettes, drugs, water guns, and pornography. Students will be suspended for bringing any of these items to school. There may also be criminal consequences.

### **Grading Policy**

Student grade reports will be printed for parents at the end of each quarter and for student conferences. Teachers will inform parents of the grading scale used in each classroom.

In some instances, if a student is not achieving academic success, it may be necessary to repeat a grade or course to master the content. In such a case, a meeting will be called with the student, parent, teacher, and school director to determine the most appropriate course of action.

### **Health Office**

The Minnesota Department of Health has requested that schools monitor certain illnesses and diseases. These include the following:

The Health office is to monitor Influenza Like Illnesses. When a parent calls in for a student absence due to illness, the school will ask these questions: Does the child have a fever? And if the child has a fever is there also a cough or sore throat? The answers to these questions is critical in monitoring Influenza in the school.

The health office is required to report any of the following diseases to the MN Department of Health: Chicken Pox, Pertussis, Whooping Cough, Measles, Mumps or Rubella. The school is also to report any student who is diagnosed with Shingles. You may contact the Health Office with this information. It will be kept confidential and protected by HIPPA, though it will be reported to the Minnesota Department of Health as required.

Please contact the school if you have any questions regarding your child's health as well as what you would like communicated with their teachers. **We do not have a full time nurse on staff.**

### **Homework Policy**

At Clarkfield Area Charter School, we recognize homework as an aspect of school success. Students should expect some homework assigned on a daily basis. While we strongly encourage students to miss as little school as possible, we understand that from time to time a student will miss class due to some circumstance. For each day a student is absent he will be allowed one day upon his return to complete the work he missed for full credit. For extended absences, a reasonable due date for the missed work may be arranged with the teacher.

Parents can call the school to arrange to pick up homework assignments for their child.

If a student has been suspended from school, parents can arrange to pick up homework assignments in the office. The work is due upon the first day the student returns to class for full credit. No extra time will be offered.

## **Lost and Found**

Any items found should be brought to the office immediately. Students can describe the lost item to a staff member to pick it up. Small and valuable items (such as watches, rings, etc.) are kept in a separate place in the office, students must identify the lost item before it is given to them. Items left in the lost and found after the end of the school year (or if the amount in the lost and found becomes excessive) will be either given to a local charity or disposed of. **Please put your child's name on all clothing and equipment brought to school.** If there is a name on the item that is found, they will get it back.

## **Medications**

Medications are most safely given in the home setting. Your child can be medicated at home rather than school for most acute illnesses. For example, if your child needs an antibiotic for an ear infection and the doctor had prescribed medication to be given three times a day, give one dose before school, one dose when they return from school and dose before bedtime.

Medications that must be given during school hours for some chronic conditions are asthma, diabetes, and ADHD, etc. Since we do not have a full time nurse, school staff will be administering the medication.

The school medication policy must be followed in order for your child to receive medications in the school.

The following steps are required:

A. Complete a "Physician's Order for Giving Medications in School" form obtained from the office that includes the following information:

1. Physician's signature
2. Parent signature
3. Name of medication, dosage, time to be given, purpose, and any side effects.

Please indicate if any medication was given before school.

B. All prescription medications must be brought to school by a parent/ legal guardian and then picked up at the end of the school year or when the child no longer requires it.

C. All prescription medications and over the counter medications must be sent in the original container. For your child's safety, medications will not be accepted in baggies or old medication bottles.

Medications will not be administered to your child at school if you do not follow the school medication policy.

## **Pledge of Allegiance**

Minnesota Statutes 121A.11 mandates that all public schools in Minnesota recite the Pledge of Allegiance weekly. “Anyone who does not wish to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance for any reason may elect not to do so. Students must respect another person’s right to make that choice”.

## **Pupil Fair Dismissal Act**

The Fair Dismissal Act applies to any student being denied the current educational program. It does not include a student being removed from class. Clarkfield Area Charter School follows this policy; a copy of the policy is available in the school office for review.

## **Records**

Parents have the right to review and inspect school records. Requests to review student records should be made to the school Director, who will arrange for the records to be reviewed.

## **Report Cards**

Report cards will be printed at the end of each academic quarter. This report will show student progress in academic areas and may also show progress in areas of student habits and social growth. Grades will reflect students’ daily work, quizzes, tests, and class participation. Students with Special Needs may be graded in a manner deemed appropriate by their Special Needs Teacher and their IEP.

## **School Portraits**

Individual student classroom pictures will be taken September 26, 2011. Spring pictures are scheduled for April 12, 2012. Specific information will be sent to you before picture day.

## **School Hours**

School hours are from 8:00 – 3:30. Please do not drop your child off before 7:45 a.m. There is no supervision available at the school for students before 7:45 a.m. or after 3:30 p.m.

## **School Visits**

We encourage you to visit your student's classroom. If you would like to visit your child's classroom we encourage you to make arrangements for the visits with the teacher beforehand. This allows the teacher to schedule activities that might be of interest to you. Please do not bring preschool children with you for your visit. We have their presence to be disruptive to the classroom. Whenever visiting the school, please check in at the office and sign in before heading to the classroom.

## **Smoke Free Environment**

Clarkfield Area Charter School is smoke and tobacco free. Smoking and the use of tobacco had been identified as a major health concern; in an effort to provide a safe, healthy, and clean environment for all students, staff, and community members smoking and the use of tobacco products is prohibited both in the school and on school grounds.

## **Telephone Calls**

Students may be reached by leaving a message for them with the school office during the school day. Students will not be excused for phone calls. Students are encouraged not to make any phone calls during the school day. In the case of an emergency, students may be allowed to make a call from the school office. We ask that any after-school plans be arranged before the school day begins.

Teachers are often not available to take calls during the school day either. If a parent needs to contact a teacher, they can either send an e-mail to the teacher or leave a message with the school office. The teacher can then call the parent back at his earliest convenience.

## **Testing**

Clarkfield Area Charter School staff believes that students develop a love of learning by identifying their individual learning style. In the fall of each year, all students will be tested to determine their learning style. Teachers which will use the identification of students learning styles to create instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.

CACS use the NWEA MAP Assessment Tests, given in the fall and spring, in addition to non-traditional assessment methods, such as portfolios, presentations, models, charts and other displays to ensure students are achieving adequate individual goals. Test scores will be reviewed and areas of concern will be addressed to

increase student achievement. It is our goal to have our students meet or exceed their individual growth projections.

### **Visitors Policy**

At Clarkfield Area Charter School we appreciate parent and community member enthusiasm with our students' education. In an effort to maintain a safe environment for all our students, we request that all visitors sign in at the school office upon entering the school. We also ask that you sign out when leaving the school building.

### **Volunteer Policy**

Clarkfield Area Charter School uses community experts and local residents as "educators." Lesson plans include speakers, such as local residents and business owners; research using textbooks and the Internet; and potential community-based projects. Using community experts to help educate the children offers an opportunity for students to sharpen their listening, note-taking and interviewing skills, which all enhance many aspects of our literacy program. Volunteer time can and should be arranged with the classroom teachers and are asked to check in at the office upon arrival. The school volunteer policy can be found in the school office or on the school web site.

## 2011-2012 Clarkfield Area Charter School Student/Parent Handbook

We have read and discussed the CACS handbook and understand all students will be held accountable for following the procedures and policies identified. We also understand and will accept any school consequence awarded for breaching these policies.

\_\_\_\_\_

print student name

\_\_\_\_\_

student signature

\_\_\_\_\_

parent signature

\_\_\_\_\_

parent signature

### Clarkfield Area Charter School Parent Permission for Student to be Photographed and/or Video Taped and Audio Recorded

During the course of the school year classroom teachers, student teachers, and/or the local newspaper may photograph or video tape our students. Pictures may be used in a local newspaper, in school publications, newsletters, school projects, or in the school annual. We may also use photos and/or audio recordings on our website.

Please indicate whether or not you give permission for the following:

- My student may be photographed, video taped, or audio recorded Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- My child's work may be published on the web site Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- My child's first initials may be used on the web site Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- My child may be included in a group photo on the web site Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Internet Use

Our internet use policy can be found on pages 2-3 of this handbook. Students will review the policy during the first week of school. I understand that any violation of this policy may be a violation of the law as well. I also understand that any violation could result in revocation of access privileges, a school consequence, and/or appropriate legal action.

\_\_\_\_\_

student signature

\_\_\_\_\_

date

As a parent/guardian of this student, I understand that access is designed for educational purposes. I understand that it is impossible for the school staff or district to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold them responsible for materials accessed on the Internet. I also accept full responsibility for supervision if

and when my student's use is not in a school setting. I give permission for my student to use the Internet for educational purposes.

---

parent/guardian signature

date