

Mills Lawn School



Parent and Student Handbook 2021-2022



OUR MISSION

"Our mission is to produce capable, lifelong learners who demonstrate positive qualities of citizenship, character, and self."

Our staff members, parents, and members of the broader Yellow Springs community are dedicated to excellence in education at service to our students. Above all else, Mills Lawn strives to be a good place for people to be – a place where intriguing things go on throughout the day. Mills Lawn is a place where people arrive early and enjoy lingering at the end of the day. We want our school to be an exciting place where children and adults learn in an atmosphere of warmth, cooperation, and respect.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT OUR SCHOOL!

Mills Lawn School was designated a “National School of Excellence” in 1999. We are proud of that designation and are committed to living up to expectations of excellence. We continue to distinguish ourselves through our “Project-based Learning” approach that focuses on creativity, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking to prepare students to be 21st century learners. Our academic merits and ratings on state assessments continue to demonstrate the effectiveness and excellence of our school community.

We continue to distinguish ourselves as a school that strategically integrates arts and sciences! We were designated “A National School of the Arts” in 1999. Every year, we ensure all students experience the world of art and science through a variety of “hands on” approaches that engage the imagination and spur creativity. Each year we strive to incorporate scientists and artists in residency at Mills Lawn! Each residency can last from one to three weeks and creates dynamic learning opportunities.

At Mills Lawn, it is our intent to incorporate reading, writing, and math across all curricular areas. We also seek to integrate instruction and learning experiences with the performing and visual arts. Our PBL approach is unique in the state. This approach recognizes that every student has special interests and talents. We make room in our busy week so that students may explore their interests and develop their talents. Our focus is on our students and we value them as individuals.

We are proud of our school and welcome our community to join us in our mission. Each spring, at our annual Volunteer Appreciation Tea, we thank over 100 volunteers who come to Mills Lawn to help our students learn and assist our teachers. Mills Lawn students like to come to school! We encourage a positive culture in which students can feel safe, both emotionally and physically.

Information Disclosure - The Yellow Springs Schools may disclose directory information unless the school principal receives a written objection form from the parent/guardian or eligible student to disclosure within 20 days of the date of the notice. The parent/guardian may object to all or part of the directory information.

Directory information may include school record information that is not considered an invasion of privacy. This includes: the student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, degrees and awards, school sponsored activities and sports program information such as height and weight. (Directory information is found in Student Records Policy 8330)

Equal Education Opportunity – This district provides an equal educational opportunity for all students.

Any person who believes that s/he has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her race, color, disability, religion, gender or national origin while at school or a school activity should immediately contact the School District's Compliance Officer:

Terri Holden, Superintendent
937.767.7381

Any student making a complaint or participating in a school investigation will be protected from retaliation. The Compliance Officer can provide additional information concerning equal access to educational opportunity.

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Hours of Operation

Start of School:

Mills Lawn teachers are not required to be in the building before 7:50 A.M. (although most are in the building much earlier.) Students are welcome in classrooms at 7:50 A.M. Students arriving after 8:00 A.M. will be considered tardy.

At the End of the Day:

At 2:20 P.M., teachers begin to prepare the children for dismissal. At 2:25 P.M., the afternoon announcements are made and when all the buses have arrived, bus riders are dismissed. Typically all the bus riders are loaded and the buses are heading out of the school parking lot by 2:30 P.M. After all of the buses have gone, we dismiss the walkers and those children going to the After School Care Program.

If you pick up your child at the end of the day, please do not arrive at school before 2:25 P.M. **Please park your car so that your child enters the car from the sidewalk and can use a crosswalk to cross the street if needed.** Try to pick up your child in the same place every day. Traffic is never allowed in the lower parking lot before 3:30 P.M.

Mills Lawn Office Policies / Information

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential for your child's success in school. Almost all subjects are sequential and require that your child demonstrate mastery of particular concepts. When your child is absent, particularly if his/her absence is persistent, he/she will soon fall behind and school can become a stressful place. Please see 'ABSENCE AND TARDINESS' for the school policy regarding excused and unexcused absences and tardies. Your encouragement and insistence on good attendance will help form good habits for your child as they grow older.

ABSENCES AND TARDINESS

Excused Absences/Tardies:

State law requires attendance at school for children between the ages of 6 and 18. According to Ohio Administrative Code of the State Department of Education (3301-51-13) and/or the Yellow Springs Board of Education, the following are considered valid reasons for being absent from school:

- 1) Personal illness: For absences of more than 5 consecutive days due to illness, a certificate from a physician may be required in order to excuse the absence.
- 2) Illness in the family: the law states this cannot apply to children under fourteen years of age. 3) Quarantine of the home: The length of an absence under this provision is limited to the length of quarantine as established by the appropriate health officials.
- 4) Death of a relative: Limited to a period of 3 days unless parents/guardians request a longer absence and can show reasonable cause.
- 5) Observance of religious holidays: Any child of any religious faith shall be excused if his/her absence is for the purpose of observing a religious holiday consistent with his creed or belief. 6)

Other circumstances:

- a. medical and dental appointments (with note for an appointment)
- b. participation in school-related activities (field trips)
- c. family trip (see below under vacations)
- d. others not listed above but approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee

When your child is absent from school, please call the office before 8:30 A.M. to let office personnel know the reason for your child's absence. If we do not hear from you by 8:30 A.M., the automated system will call you to inform you of your child's absence within 120 minutes of the start of the school day.

Unexcused Absences/Tardies:

This includes any absence from school which is not authorized by the regulations of the State Board of Education and/or the policies of the Yellow Springs School Board. If unexcused absences/tardies become frequent, the school office will send letters and also request a meeting to ensure there is a plan for remediating this issue.

Returning from an Absence:

If you call the office the day of your child's absence no note is required. If you do not call, a note is required the day your child returns to school. The note needs to specify the reason for the absence and needs to have your signature. **If you do not provide a note or a phone call, the absence will be counted as unexcused.**

Tardy to School: AFTER 8:00 A.M.

We expect all students, teachers and staff members to be on time every day. We begin each day with valuable activities including the morning news and morning meetings which help set the tone for the day. When your child is late for school, he/she misses this valuable informational time. His/her tardiness often breaks the classroom continuity and this causes a loss of instructional time for everyone.

Your child is tardy if he/she arrives at school after 8:00 A.M.

When your child is tardy, he/she needs to come to the office for a tardy slip, which he/she will need to show to his/her classroom teacher. Without a parental note that describes the reason for the tardiness, all tardiness is unexcused. (See excused and unexcused absences/tardies) **Sleeping-in is not an acceptable reason for your child to be tardy.** When your child accrues several unexcused tardies, you will be notified and a conference with the principal will be scheduled. **If a student accrues five unexcused tardies, these will be counted as one unexcused absence. The appropriate procedures will be followed to ensure students arrive at school on time.**

Vacations:

Please avoid taking your child out of school for family vacations. If you must vacation when school is in session, please discuss the matter with your child's classroom teacher to make the necessary arrangements for your child to complete school assignments while he/she is absent. **You must submit a note to the school principal 1 week prior to the vacation describing the dates of the vacation in order for approval.** Your child's record of attendance and excusal is contingent upon principal approval and only 5 days total will be considered as an "excused absence" per year.

Truancy Policies: If your child misses school frequently and meets the definition of truant (see below), we will be working together on a plan to ensure that attendance improves.

House Bill 410 defines "habitually truant" as the following:

- Absent 30 or more consecutive hours (equivalent to approximately 4.5 days) without a legitimate excuse;
- Absent 42 or more hours (equivalent to approximately 6.5 days) in one school month without a legitimate excuse; or
- Absent 72 or more hours (equivalent to approximately 11 days) in one school year without a legitimate excuse.

House Bill 410 defines "excessively absent" as the following:

- Absent 38 or more hours (equivalent to approximately 6 days) in one school month with or without a legitimate excuse; or
- Absent 65 or more hours (equivalent to 10 days) in one school year with or without a legitimate excuse.

Leaving School:

Students may leave school premises during the school day with parent permission and if accompanied by a parent or designee. You will need to notify the office in writing or verbally over the phone explaining why your child needs to leave school, what time he/she will be picked-up and by whom. Children are to be picked up and signed out from the front office, not from the classrooms or outside of the building.

Make-Up Work Following an Absence or Tardy:

Making up work that is missed during absences is the responsibility of the student. Assignments need to be made up promptly and your child needs to work with his or her teacher to ensure that all missed assignments have been completed.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Arrival: TOGETHER WE NEED TO ENSURE STUDENT SAFETY! STUDENTS MUST EXIT THE CAR ON THE SIDEWALK SIDE AND CROSS THE STREET ONLY AT CROSSWALKS! Between the hours of 7:30 A.M. and 3:30 P.M. **NO vehicle traffic**, except school buses and delivery trucks, will be permitted in the lower paved area behind the school. If you bring your child to school, drop him/her off by pulling into the school loading zones on Walnut and Limestone Streets. On Walnut Street, your vehicle needs to be pointing south and your child needs to exit your car on the right side. On Limestone Street, your vehicle needs to be pointing west and your child needs to exit on the right side of the vehicle. Please do not drop off your child in the back of the building. Students are to enter the building through the doors that face either Walnut or Limestone streets. Students are invited into the school and allowed to walk to their classrooms between 7:50 and 8:00. **Students are NOT to be in classrooms, including the library and gym, before the 7:50.** If your child comes to school before 7:50 AM, he/she is to wait outside if the weather is good or come into the hall and wait if the weather is inclement. **Since there is no way to provide supervision before 7:50 A.M., please drop your child off as close to 7:50 A.M. as possible.**

Bike, scooter and/or skate board riders are expected to dismount and walk to the building as soon as they are on school property (School property includes all perimeter sidewalks). There are many cars, buses, and children arriving at MLS each morning, so riding a bike or scooter up to the door or bike rack could endanger many people.

Walkers and bike riders need to obey all of the safety patrol crossing guards. Safety patrol crossing

guards are posted on the corners of Elm and Phillips, Limestone and Phillips, Xenia Ave. and Limestone, Elm and Walnut/Short, Elm and Winter, and Limestone and Walnut Streets. Walkers should use the front sidewalks and enter through the school doors facing Walnut or Limestone streets.

Dismissal: TOGETHER WE NEED TO ENSURE STUDENT SAFETY! STUDENTS MUST EXIT THE CAR ON THE SIDEWALK SIDE AND CROSS THE STREET ONLY AT CROSSWALKS! Every afternoon at 2:20 the teachers and children begin getting ready for dismissal. At 2:25, an announcement is made that all children who ride the bus should be dismissed. When the buses are loaded and have left the parking lot, we dismiss walkers and after school care students. Dismissal is generally complete by 2:30 P.M. If you pick your child up after school you do not need to arrive before 2:25 P.M. Please remember to point your car going south on Walnut and west on Limestone, so that the children do not have to cross the street to meet you.

After dismissal, all Mills Lawn students need to leave the premises. We do not provide supervision after school has been dismissed and expect all students to vacate the school grounds immediately after school. Please instruct your child to go directly home from school.

CHANGES IN ADDRESS/TELEPHONE

It is of utmost importance that we be able to contact you at all times; therefore, it is crucial that we have up-to-date phone numbers and addresses for your family at all times! Please notify the school office at once if you have had a change of address or phone number. Let us know immediately if you add or change your cell phone number. For the safety and well being of your child, we must be able to reach you at all times during each school day.

ADMISSIONS

The Yellow Springs Board of Education has established entrance requirements that are consistent with state statutes and sound educational practice to ensure equitable treatment of all eligible children.

Kindergarten:

To be eligible for entrance into Kindergarten, your child must be five years old by August 1st. Pre-registration takes place in the spring. Bring your child's birth certificate and immunization records when you enroll. At the time of registration, you will be given an Ohio Health History form, which you will need to take to your family doctor for completion. A kindergarten orientation meeting and parent/teacher conferences are held before and during the year to provide parents with more information concerning the kindergarten experience.

First Grade:

To be eligible for admittance into the first grade, students need to have completed an accredited, state approved kindergarten program AND be at least six years old by August 1st. Students transferring from other schools need to provide immunization records, copies of academic records and proof of residency. Residency within the Yellow Springs School District must be established before a student enters school unless the School Board and/or Superintendent grant a waiver.

MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS

We are more than happy to convey messages to your child concerning doctor and dentist appointments, left-behind lunches or lunch money and arrangements for after school care. However, we need you to **call before 1:00 PM** to change after school plans. The end of the day is one of the most active times in our school, and if you call after 1:00 PM, we may not be able to get your message to your child before he/she has gotten onto the bus.

Medical Information

IMMUNIZATIONS

The State of Ohio requires that children be immunized against mumps, polio, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, measles (rubeola and rubella.), chicken pox and hepatitis B. An up-to-date immunization record must be on file in the school office. **For parents of kindergarten students and new students, we need an up-to- date immunization record from you or your health care provider within two weeks after the first day of school or your child will not be able to continue his/her attendance at Mills Lawn until such records are forwarded to our office.**

EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION

The YS School Board has established a policy that every student must have an Emergency Medical Authorization Form (EMAF) completed, signed and on file in the school office by the end of the second day of school. We copy each child's EMAF and they are sent with the teacher on all school trips and overnights. This form is vital to your child's well being and is distributed to all parents at the beginning of each year.

MEDICATIONS AND HEALTH

Office personnel will be happy to facilitate the process if your child needs to take medication during the school day. There are School Board Policies that govern this process and the following guidelines will need to be observed:

- ❖ Please consult your physician about your child's medication schedule to see if it is necessary to administer medication at school.
- ❖ A **Medication Request and Authorization Form**, completed and signed by the family doctor and the parent/guardian, must be on file in the office before we can give, or your child can take any medications at school; (Medication Request and Authorization Forms are available upon request in the office.)
- ❖ All medications will be administered in the school office under the supervision of the principal or the principal's designee.
- ❖ You will need to bring your child's medication to school, or you can make arrangements in advance to send medication into school with your child's bus driver. It is recommended that you keep a 2 to 4 week supply of your child's medication in the school office.
- ❖ **Do not send medication to school with your child.** The only exception to this policy is if

your child needs emergency medications for allergies and/or reactions to bee stings.

❖ For each prescribed medication, the container will need to have a pharmacist's label with the following information:

1. Your child's name
2. Your doctor's name
3. The date
4. The pharmacy's name and telephone number
5. The name of the medication
6. The prescribed dosage and frequency
7. Any special handling and/or storage instructions

We do not provide full-time health services during the school day. Your child needs to come to school well rested, well fed and clean. Do not send your child to school if his/her temperature is at/above 100 degrees, he/she has vomited, has diarrhea or any communicable illness/disease. Please keep your child at home for 24 "symptom free" hours before returning to school. If your child has special health care needs, you will need to contact the school nurse to develop a comprehensive health plan for your child while he/she is at school.

Student Life

LUNCH PROCEDURES

You are more than welcome to have lunch with your child in the cafeteria. As a matter of fact, you are invited to come and dine with your child whenever you like! If you would like to buy lunch, please call the office by 9:00 A.M. so we can include your request in the lunch count for that day.

Lunch menus are also available upon request in the office or on the school website.

Lunch Money: SCHOOL LUNCHES COST \$2.75

Every day children come to the office needing to borrow lunch or milk money. We will lend lunch or milk money to students with the understanding that the debt will be paid the next day. With the prompt repayment of borrowed lunch money, there will always be money to loan.

Lunch Times:

Below is a tentative lunch schedule which is subject to change.

- 10:45 - 11:15 Kindergarten Lunch
- 11:15 - 11:45 First and Second Grade Lunch
- 11:45 - 12:15 Third and Fourth Grade Lunch
- 12:15 - 12:40 Fifth and Sixth Grade Lunch



A balanced nutritional meal is prepared daily. The price of a lunch at Mills Lawn for the 2021-2022 school year is \$2.75 or \$0.50 for reduced-priced lunch. Milk is included as part of a purchased lunch; additional milk costs \$0.50. If your child forgets his/her lunch money or packed lunch he/she may come to the office and call home.

Free and Reduced Lunch Program:

Every Mills Lawn Family receives the application form for the Free and/or Reduced Lunch Program. Your family may qualify for this federally funded program. Please take the time to complete all of the forms that your child brings home at the beginning of each year.

Buying Pre-paid Lunches:

You are encouraged to buy your child's lunch for a week or more. If sending a check, make your check payable to Mills Lawn. You can also put money on your child's account via our website under the "Parents" section. Daily payments can be handled by the student or classroom teacher in grades K-2nd.

EXPECTATIONS FOR BEHAVIOR

"Our mission is to produce capable, lifelong learners who demonstrate positive qualities of citizenship, character, and self."

Appropriate Behavior:

Students, staff, parents, and community members are expected to interact with each other in a positive manner. Our common goal is to create a safe and respectful climate where students can explore learning in thoughtful and creative ways. We teach and encourage every MLS student to demonstrate the "Skills for Life" which are honesty, respect, cooperation, responsibility and personal best. The adults at MLS are committed to guiding and helping students develop self-discipline and a sense of personal responsibility for their behavior and work habits as they develop into global citizens. We consider this a shared responsibility between home and school.

It is our belief that students have the ability to problem solve and work through conflict when given support and the appropriate tools to use. The discipline approach at Mills Lawn is about learning and not about punishment. Consequences for inappropriate behavior are designed to be logical (meaning they match the severity and particulars of the offense) and teach the appropriate behavior. Almost all situations are resolved between the student and the staff member and do not require the involvement of the principal. Our purpose as educators is to help each student grow positively through each situation, whatever the situation might be.

Process for Behavioral Intervention or Conflict Resolution:

- Students involved write a student statement to explain what happened (statements will be scribed or facilitated by staff depending on student need).
- Student statements are reviewed and used to help facilitate a discussion.
- Interviews are conducted with all parties involved (usually separately) to help piece together the events and circumstances as well as interpret different perspectives.
- Additional information is sought as needed to get a clearer picture.
- Problem-solving and conflict resolution conferences are held between all parties (unless this is determined to be counterproductive) to increase understanding and find productive solutions to ensure justice is restored and to help all parties move forward in a positive manner.
- "Love & Logic", "Responsive Classroom", and other student-centered approaches help to inform our philosophy and process with classroom management and conflict resolution as rapport-building and school climate.

Behavior Interventions:

Consequences for inappropriate behavior may include, but are not limited to the following:

- ✓ Student writes a student statement recounting his/her behavior and the reasons behind it
- ✓ Private conference held with student
- ✓ Parent contact made
- ✓ Lunchtime, recess, afterschool intervention or detention
- ✓ Community Service
- ✓ Finding creative ways to give “time” back
- ✓ Time out inside the classroom and/or in another classroom
- ✓ In-school restriction or out-of-school suspension
- ✓ Loss of bus riding privilege
- ✓ Expulsion from Yellow Springs Exempted Village School District

Disciplinary Action:

The principal (or designee) may use the following guidelines at their discretion. If an alternative behavior modification is more appropriate, it will be used. Restitution will be required in cases of theft or vandalism. Within the investigation of any incident/situation (rumor or truth) the parent, student, and other authorities will be informed when deemed necessary, or required by law.

The following level system is aligned to the conduct code to guide administration:

- **Level 1:** Detention (Recess, lunch, afterschool)
- **Level 2:** Afterschool detention, In-School Restriction or Out-of-School Suspension
- **Level 3:** Two to Ten days Out-of-School Suspension
- **Level 4:** Expulsion

Note: The school will treat "in-room" minor offenses "in-room". Persistent violation may result in more severe discipline; parents will be notified regarding student behavior.

Rules of Expected Behavior:

Appropriate behavior is expected of members of the school community in any classroom, school building, school grounds, district property, and/or at any school-related activity -- which can include any school-sponsored event, field trip, curricular and/or extracurricular activity. Such a scope applies to any student conduct code listed below. Teachers may establish additional rules for specific classrooms. This approach allows for the individual differences of teachers and classes.

Any Mills Lawn teacher, teacher's aide, custodian, student teacher, secretary, kitchen helper, or parent volunteer has the authority to intervene when a student or students are misbehaving. The following are types of inappropriate behaviors that are never acceptable and will require intervention:

- Defiance or failure to respond to a reasonable request
- Physical aggression (i.e. hitting, shoving, kicking, tackling, bumping, etc.)
- Bullying or intentionally hurting another person physically, emotionally or socially
- Stealing, gambling, forgery, or extortion
- Teasing, hazing (harassment)
- Unethical actions such as lying and/or cheating
- Using profanity or inappropriate language

- Vandalism (damaging school or private property)
- Disruption of the educational process in the classroom or a school activity
- Using personal electronic devices (cell phones, iPods, etc.) during the school day
- Possession of tobacco products or an illicit drug or narcotic
- Possession of a knife (**any kind of knife, including a small pocket knife**) or dangerous object
- Possession of a firearm or a facsimile thereof, (meaning a toy gun of any color or size) incendiary devices (including stink and smoke bombs, caps, bullets and/or fireworks)
- Violation of the Yellow Springs School Board Policies and Procedures
- Violation of COVID Safety Protocols: A student shall not disregard COVID-related safety expectations, including but not limited to proper mask-wearing, social distancing, and mask etiquette.

Suspensions:

The principal assigns suspensions from school, school activities and/or from bus services. A suspension is the consequence for a very serious infraction of school and/or district policies and procedures. Typically students may be suspended for a period of one to ten days for the following behaviors:

- Threatening another person with physical violence (Level 2 – 3)
- Possession of tobacco, alcohol and/or an illegal substance (Level 2 – 4)
- Vandalism and/or damage to school or personal property (Level 2 – 3)
- Possession of a weapon, the facsimile of a weapon, or dangerous object or knife (Level 2 – 4)
- Physically fighting with another person (Level 2 – 3)
- Continual disruptive behavior that interferes with the school and/or classroom environment (Level 2 – 3)

The pupil (or his parent/guardian) has a right to appeal suspensions. The appeal needs to be made in writing to the Superintendent of Schools within 72 hours of the offense. Pupils have the right to be represented by legal counsel at the hearing.

Expulsions:

Expulsions are very rare at the elementary level and would only be considered if a student's behavior has been extremely disruptive or requires removal from the school setting to ensure safety. Expulsions require a hearing with the Superintendent and are held on behalf of the Board of Education.

In accordance with House Bill 64, any student may be expelled or placed in an alternative setting for one year if the student brings a firearm onto school district property. A student may be expelled for up to one year for bringing a knife, gun, or any other weapon/dangerous object onto school property.

Care of School Property:

Students will be held responsible for the proper care of books, furniture, computers and computer software, playground equipment and all other school property. Students who destroy, damage, or cause the loss of property will be required to pay for the damages or replace the property. Additional consequences may apply in these situations.

Cheating and Plagiarism:

Cheating and plagiarism are strictly prohibited and may result in a student's work being collected. A failing grade can be assigned depending on the circumstance and parents/guardians will be notified. Repeated cheating and plagiarism are grounds for suspension from school.

Dress: (NO FLIP FLOPS, PLEASE!)

It is expected that Mills Lawn students dress appropriately. Please do not send your child to school in short shorts, halter tops, **flip flops**, **roller shoes** or t-shirts and or caps that advertise tobacco, alcohol or have writing on them of an inappropriate nature (profanity, sexual innuendos, etc.)

During the winter months we send the children out for recess if the wind chill factor is at or near +20 degrees. Your child needs to come to school dressed for outdoor recess. Please be sure that he/she has a hat and gloves, and when it snows, boots.

Inappropriate Dress:

Students' dress and appearance reflect in both a positive and negative way upon the school and the student body. Dress which is distracting to the educational process or presents a health or safety hazard will not be allowed. Clothing will not:

- Contain any reference to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or make statements that are sexual in nature, nor display any statements or pictures that can be classified as racially, ethnically, or sexually insensitive, or of a violent nature.
- Be revealing such as short shorts. (What is too short? The student should extend his/her arm down and if the fingertips do not touch the hem line, it is too short...i.e., finger tips must rest at your side and be touching fabric.)
- Have spaghetti straps, bare midriff tops, halter tops, tube tops, or low cut tops (no cleavage). No skin shall be visible between the blouse or shirt and the item covering the lower body. Straps must be at least one inch wide. Example: _____ width.
- No sunglasses will be worn during school hours.
- Shoes must be worn at all times.

First offense – students violating the dress code will be provided with appropriate clothing from the school that must be returned. A meeting with the principal or his designee(s) will take place regarding appropriate modes of appearance and dress.

Second offense – parent(s) will be contacted to have appropriate clothing brought in.

Third offense – parent(s) will be contacted and the student will be dismissed from school.

For repeated offenses – additional penalties may be imposed at the discretion of the administration. Administration will make the final decision on what is or is not appropriate (**Level 1-2**).

ANTI-BULLYING

At Mills Lawn we are committed to creating an environment free of bullying. Bullying behavior is defined as use of power repeatedly and intentionally to hurt or intimidate another person physically, emotionally, and/or socially. Bullying, intimidation and harassment in any form of any member or guest of the school community is strictly forbidden. **Any person who has been subjected to or observed acts of bullying, intimidation, and/or harassment is strongly encouraged to report to any teacher, counselor, staff, parent, or the principal.** Off-campus activities that have a negative effect or that are transferred into the school will be dealt with as such. See Yellow Springs Board of Education Policy 5517.01

What to do if your child is bullied or witnesses bullying:

Treat bullying as a loss experience and please contact your child's teacher and/or the principal

if your child is grieving the loss of:

- ❖ Face in front of peers
- ❖ Safety
- ❖ Self-esteem
- ❖ Sense of belonging and acceptance
- ❖ Sense of power over his or her life
- ❖ Hope for a better tomorrow

What to do:

- Comfort your child and explain that you are proud of him/her for reporting this behavior.
- Be gentle with your child during this discussion and realize this is difficult and complicated; he or she may be reluctant to discuss what is happening so be patient.
- Listen to your child's experience and concerns so that you are well-informed and can help them think of proactive strategies to feel better and help solve the problem.
- Ask questions so that you understand the context of the situation and what the circumstances may have been; often, there are many layers that may help increase your understanding about this interaction, the cause(s), and the different roles of those involved.
- Tell your child that he or she can get support with this problem from home and school. Empower your child to report the situation (as needed) and work with the school staff to make it better and move forward with problem-solving.
- Tell your child that bullying behavior is not alright and that they have a right to feel safe and comfortable at school.
- Take this situation seriously and use it as an opportunity to teach your child and others about the values of justice, respect, and cooperation.
- Be open to a dialogue with the teacher/principal and seek more information so that you don't assume the worst. There is often more information that will provide a bigger picture and will help to fill in the details of the entire interaction or situation.

STAY SAFE. SPEAK UP! STUDENT SAFETY REPORTING SYSTEMS (Anonymous):



Yellow Springs Schools is fully committed to your safety and well-being. That's why we're using the **Stay Safe. Speak Up! Student Safety Reporting System** that allows students, parents, and staff to submit safety concerns to school officials.

If you, or someone you know, is being bullied, harassed, considering suicide, bringing a weapon to school, or has any other safety concern, you can easily submit a report in one of three ways:

1. **Mobile App.** Download the **Stay Safe. Speak Up!** mobile app and enter our unique District Code to submit reports directly from your smartphone. **DISTRICT CODE: YSS**
2. **Phone.** Call **1-866-547-8362** to leave a voice message or speak with a trained, live attendant. Attendants can initiate contact with various national crisis hotlines if a student needs help in dealing with a personal emergency.
3. **Online.** Go to the district's website and click on the **Stay Safe. Speak Up!** button to access the online form from a desktop computer or laptop.

Students and parents are encouraged to report bullying to school officials. Students can also access the **Stay Safe. Speak Up! Reporting System** to 24/7/365 to anonymously report harassment, threats, suspicious behavior or other concerns which may jeopardize the safety of students, employees or

school facilities. Concerns may include weapons, drugs/alcohol abuse, suspicious behavior, suicide/self abuse, problem relationships, sexual assault, fights/violence/abuse, bullying/harassment/threats, theft/vandalism, health concerns/HIV/AIDS.

Your voice matters, and we are counting on you to help us make Yellow Springs Schools a positive environment for all students.

CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR

Behavior in the Cafeteria:

At Mills Lawn, all students are expected to help create a comfortable lunch room environment. We hope students enjoy their lunch and eat their full meal while remaining seated during the lunch period. Please encourage your child to eat his/her meal and try not to be wasteful. Students need their energy to focus in school and should be using the lunch period primarily to recharge and relax. Students are allowed to socialize in a reasonable manner as long as the noise level is appropriate and they are working on their lunch. Staff members on duty are meant to assist students and ensure that it is a safe environment. At times, students may have difficulty complying with lunch room norms and behavioral interventions (stated previously) will be used to promote a positive lunchroom environment.

BUS ROUTES AND APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Bus routes and stops are established by the transportation supervisor. If you have questions and/or requests regarding routes or stops, please contact the bus coordinator in the School Board office, at 767-7381.

Appropriate Bus Riding Behavior:

Any time your child rides on the school bus he/she is expected to behave appropriately.

The following rules are for students riding school buses in Ohio:

1. Pupils shall arrive at their designated bus stop before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
2. Pupils must wait in a location clear of traffic and keep off private property.
3. Behavior at the bus stop must not be threatening to the person or property of any individual.
4. Upon boarding the bus, pupils must go directly to an available or assigned seat and sit down.
5. Pupils must remain seated, keeping aisles and exits clear (feet and legs must be kept out of the aisles at all times)
6. Pupils must observe classroom conduct and obey the driver promptly and respectfully. Noise must be kept to a minimum. Quiet conversation is permitted.
7. The use of profane language is prohibited.
8. Pupils may not eat or drink on the bus except as required for medical reasons.
9. Pupils may not have any object that could be considered a weapon on the bus.
10. Pupils may not be in possession of tobacco products, alcohol or illegal drugs
11. Pupils must not throw or pass objects on, from, or into the bus.
12. Pupils may carry onto the bus only objects that can be held in their laps.
Animals are not permitted on the bus.
13. Pupils must board and leave the bus at assigned locations unless they have parental and administrative authorization to do otherwise.
14. Pupils must not put their heads, arms, body or legs out of the bus window.

Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior on the bus:

When a student violates a bus rule and/or procedure, the bus driver may fill out a Bus Referral and give that report to the principal. The principal will notify the parent(s) and meet with the student concerning his/her behavior and how to avoid that behavior in the future. The principal will issue a warning to the student that a second bus referral could result in the loss of bus privileges. If bus issues arise, parents will be asked to help resolve the situation to avoid suspensions. Continued issues with bus safety could result in bus suspensions / loss of riding privileges for the school year including field trips, trips to sporting contests, and any other activity that involves a Yellow Springs school bus.

BICYCLES, SCOOTERS, and SKATEBOARDS

We suggest that you record your child's bicycle serial number and register it with the Village Police. When traveling to and from school, students need to obey all traffic regulations. Students who ride **bicycles, scooters and skateboards may never ride them on school grounds (including sidewalks)**. The school and district assume no responsibility for bicycles, scooters or skateboards. There are three bicycle racks on school property for the children to use. We strongly urge that all bikes be locked to the racks provided. While school is in session, your child will need to make arrangements with his/her classroom teacher for the storage of his/her scooter and/or skateboard.

CLASSROOM PARTIES

Classroom parties may be held to celebrate a variety of special days, including your child's birthday. Your child's teacher may solicit treats for this special occasion. If you want to bring in treats for your child's class please contact your child's teacher. If your child is having a party at home and you want to bring invitations to school and pass them out in his/her class, **you will need to ensure that every student in the classroom gets an invitation.** Some won't come, but to avoid hurt feelings, we insist that you invite all children in the class.

CHEWING GUM

Please do not allow your child to bring gum to school, or to be chewing it when he/she leaves each morning. Children are extremely careless with the disposal of their chewing gum. The removal of chewing gum from furniture, out of drains and carpeting can require costly repairs and takes up valuable custodial time. **Chewing gum is not permitted in school.**

EMERGENCY DRILLS, FIRE, TORNADO AND CRISIS

Your child's safety is of utmost importance to us. It would be very helpful if you would please speak to your child about the importance of drills. Please instruct your child to remain silent during emergency drills at school so that he/she will not miss vital information or instructions. We make every effort to have at least one fire drill a month, several tornado drills beginning in late February, and at least one 'lock down' or crisis drills during each school year. Detailed evacuation instructions and maps are posted near the door of every room in the building. You are welcome to read the district's Crisis Plan. Security cameras have been installed in certain hallway locations for student security and protection. They are not to be tampered with. Doorbell entry system has been installed for student and staff safety.

FIELD TRIPS

Various field trips are scheduled throughout the school year. These trips are intended to supplement grade level curricula and introduce our students to community and area resources. You will receive advance notice of all field trips. This notification will include the purpose of the trip, the date, and traveling and lunch arrangements. On some occasions a small amount of money may be requested from each student to help defray the cost of the trip. At the beginning of each school year parents are asked to sign a field trip permission slip. The permission slip is kept on file and represents your blanket permission for your child to go on all the field trips with his/her class for the year. **THERE MUST BE AN EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION FORM ON FILE IN THE OFFICE BEFORE YOUR CHILD CAN PARTICIPATE IN FIELD TRIPS.** The school's and/or a teacher's personal cell phone and a copy of each child's EMAF is taken along on every field trip. In case of an accident, every attempt will be made to notify you before your child is taken to a hospital and/or treated by a doctor. At all times, school staff will accompany your child. If necessary, we will contact the police and ask for their assistance in notifying you. Your child will not be sent home unless and until a responsible adult is there to receive him/her.

LOST AND FOUND

Student clothing and other personal articles accumulate in the lost and found box. The lost and found box is located in the entryway by the music room/gym. Often this box is overflowing and we encourage you to come and look for your child's lost personal articles at any time.

Several times during the school year you will be notified in the school's monthly newsletter that we are laying out all the lost and found. During the fall and spring parent/teacher conferences, you'll find the lost and found articles spread out on tables in the hall by the office.

We could reduce the amount of lost and found articles if you would please **LABEL YOUR CHILD'S POSSESSIONS** with his/her name.

PICTURE DAY

Picture Day is usually scheduled for mid-September with retakes happening in mid-October. Your child will bring home the details concerning picture day the first week of school. There may be limited PTO funds available to help defray the cost of pictures for those families who need some assistance. If you would like to apply for some of these funds, call the principal.

RECESSES

Typically, all students have a 10-15 minute restroom and morning or afternoon snack break daily. We also try to incorporate movement breaks and brain-based research during classroom time to ensure students are actively learning rather than sitting for long periods. Students in grades 1st– 6th will participate in a 30 minute recess around their lunch period. Kindergarten students have a unique recess schedule due to the structure of their program. Students go out for recess unless the wind chill factor drops at or below a +20 degrees or if it is raining, or has been raining enough to make the ground muddy and/or the playground equipment too wet to play on. Please send your child to school with suitable

clothing that will allow him/her to go out and enjoy the play.

All recesses at Mills Lawn are supervised and the children know and are reminded often of the rules that govern the playground. You are certainly welcome to visit during recess and observe. However, parents visiting during recess and/or lunch must wear a visitor badge from the office, and please, do not bring younger children due to safety concerns.

Your child will need a note from you giving him/her permission to stay in at recess. Generally, when a child stays in at recess, they come to the office with a book and read. We believe that the free play of recess is an essential part of the overall program. Recess helps all of our students develop and maintain good health through physical activity and provides opportunities for children to develop and practice their social skills.

TOYS



Do not let your child bring his or her toys to school. We cannot, nor will we be responsible for lost, stolen or broken toys. Toys include CD, DVD & iPods, hand-held games, trading cards, transformers, stuffed animals, dolls, etc.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Children's Center After School Program (CCASP) is a not-for-profit program that is licensed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). They offer high quality, affordable care for children from kindergarten through sixth grade. The Yellow Springs Community Children's Center (office located at 320 Corry Street, Yellow Springs, OH.) runs the CCASP. CCASP offers care from 2:45 to 6:00 P.M. Monday through Friday when MLS is in session. For additional information visit www.childrens-center.com. You may also reach out to them by calling 937-767-7236 or emailing info@childrens-center.com.

Academic Policies

PROGRESS REPORTS

At the end of every quarter, written progress reports will be provided. Midway through each quarter teachers have the option of sending home midterm progress reports as well. The following symbols are used on MLS progress reports:

Kindergarten: Grades 1-3 Grade 4 Grades 5-6 S = Satisfactory P= Progressing Successfully S = Satisfactory A= Excellent I = Improving I = Improving I = Improving B = Good N = Needs Improvement N= Extra Attention Needed N = Needs Improvement C = Average U = Unsatisfactory / = not applicable U = Unsatisfactory D = Poor NA = Not applicable U = Unsatisfactory

Students in grades K-1 do not receive 'grades' until the end of 2nd quarter. Fourth grade students receive letter grades in Math and Spelling: A = Excellent, B = Good, C= Average, D = Poor and U= Unsatisfactory.

The grading scale established by School Board Policy is as follows:

90 -100% = A 70-79% = C

80 – 89% = B 60-69% = D

Below 59% is unsatisfactory

MANDATORY ASSESSMENTS

Currently all students in grades K-6 take mandatory assessments in various subjects. All Kindergarten students participate in the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA). 1st and 2nd grades do a diagnostic test in reading and math. The results of the readiness and diagnostic tests are not reported to the state and are not part of the District Report Card.

AIR test results are reported to the state and are used to assess your child’s proficiency as well as the district’s academic performance. The following achievement tests will be given during the 2021-2022 school year:

3rd graders: take achievement tests in reading and math

4th graders: take achievement tests in reading and math

5th graders: take achievement tests in the areas of reading, math, and science

6th graders: take achievement tests in the areas of reading and math

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Retention is a difficult decision that must be carefully considered by parents and school staff. The most effective use of retention seems to be in Kindergarten and/or 1st Grade, and then only if the child demonstrates academic, emotional and social immaturity for the next grade. If your child’s teacher is considering a recommendation of retention, you should be informed about concerns early in the year and intervention protocols will be followed. Parents will have the final decision after discussing the concerns with the principal and classroom teacher.

STUDENT PLACEMENT GUIDELINES

We are committed to maximizing the learning and social environment through balanced classrooms that provide an achievement range, peer assistance, social development and the promotion of self-esteem. Classroom placement is based on student learning needs, gender, ethnicity, and student-to-teacher ratio. As a school, we strive to support our students in all ways while ensuring that our class lists are balanced, equitable, and support a culture of inclusivity. Our teachers spend many hours creating these lists to ensure that every class is positioned for success and that students are set up for a positive experience the next school year. We consider academic and social needs as well as gender, diversity, and any special considerations. We believe that every teacher at Mills Lawn is equipped to serve students well and teach at a very high level, and as a result we do not allow for parent requests for class placement.

HOMWORK

The quantity of homework will vary from grade level to grade level. Educational research says homework quantity for students in 1st grade should be between 10 and 15 minutes each evening, and for each grade level after, the quantity should increase by 10 minutes per grade level. Typically, primary grade homework is restricted to reading and math. In the upper grades (4th-6th), students will have extended project homework assignments in addition to math and language arts.

If your child is absent for more than one day and you would like to make a request for his/her homework, please call the office by 9:30 A.M. on the second day of absence. We will gather your child's assignments and have them waiting for you in the office between 2:45 and 3:15 P.M.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION PROCESS

The Response to Intervention (RTI) Team is comprised of a collection of staff members who have expertise in various areas and knowledge of the student. The sole purpose of RTI is to assist the classroom teacher in creating, planning and implementing interventions for students who are struggling due to behavior, academics, health and/or attendance issues. Typically, the classroom teacher refers a student to the RTI; however, referrals have been made by school staff members other than the classroom teacher, parents/guardians, private therapists and family doctors.

The RTI team meets regularly to discuss concerns and make recommendations for intervention planning. Parents/Guardians are notified that their child has been referred to RTI and are urged to attend the meeting. At the initial meeting, the classroom teacher and parents share what they consider to be the student's strengths, background information, the reason for the referral and the concerns of the person making the referral. After all the pertinent information is shared and questions are asked, the team collectively suggests 2 to 4 interventions and/or classroom accommodations that will help the student be more successful. After 6 to 8 weeks, a review is scheduled so that progress or the lack thereof can be monitored.

If you would like to learn more about the Intervention Assistance Team, please do not hesitate to call the school's guidance counselor or principal.

School Resources

LIBRARY: GREENE COUNTY'S AND OURS

The Mills Lawn Library:

We are very proud of our library. We have a wonderfully diverse collection that all MLS students and teachers enjoy. Unfortunately, each year our collection has diminished. We do all that we can to recover the cost of lost, stolen and/or damaged books. Please consider that we would rather spend our limited library dollars on new books and build our collection, than to spend our library dollars replacing books. Please ask your child weekly about the books that he/she checks out of the library. Help your child remember return dates and check your son or daughter's room regularly for 'lost' Mills Lawn Library books.

The Yellow Springs Community Library:

Please be aware that if your child goes to the Yellow Springs Community Library after school that there is no supervision or protection for your child there. The Staff of the Community Library are there to assist the public with the use of the library and to enforce those behaviors that make using the library possible.

COMPUTER USE, INTERNET, GAMES

Computer Use:

Before your child can use any of the school's computers, classroom teachers will explain the guidelines for the use of technology equipment. An 'Acceptable Use Policy' form is sent home with your child. The 'Acceptable Use Policy' form needs to be signed by you and your child to confirm that you both understand the School Board Policy regarding the use of the school's technology equipment. Your child will be able to use school technology equipment AFTER you sign the Acceptable Use Policy. Please read the guidelines to which you must agree before your child will be permitted to use MLS technology equipment:

Guidelines for the use of Technology:

- ◆ Do not use a computer to harm other people or their work.
This includes deleting someone's work or writing something unkind.
- ◆ Use all technology equipment with care.
- ◆ Changing or deleting items on any computer in the building can only be done with a teacher's permission.
- ◆ Downloading from the World Wide Web without the teacher's permission is prohibited.
- ◆ Visiting chat rooms is prohibited.
- ◆ Students are to view, display and send messages that are friendly, helpful and appropriate.
- ◆ Students are not to look at, read or access any person's files.
- ◆ Students may not load or download software of any kind onto or from the school's computers
- ◆ If, by accident, a student finds something on the web or on the desktop that is in violation of these guidelines, he/she is to tell an adult immediately.
- ◆ Failure to follow these guidelines could result in a suspension from school, and/or a suspension of your child's use of school technology equipment.

Internet:

We are very proud of The Mills Lawn Website which has been visited by tens of thousands of people. This Internet site provides vital school information, highlights events and has links to classroom happenings and news. There are also links on the MLS website for homework help and search engines.

As part of our ongoing respect of the family's wishes, we want you to decide whether or not you will allow your child's picture to be used on our website. Each parent/guardian will need to sign a letter that gives us permission to place your child's picture (never any names) on our website. (You should have received this letter with your child's back to school materials and forms.)

Computer Games:

As stated previously, students may not play Internet computer games on school computers. Students may not load personal game software onto any of the school's computers. **Students should leave hand-held computer games at home.** The school and/or District can not be responsible for lost

or stolen game software, games or chips.

BUILDING USE

The School Board advocates the use of District facilities by non-profit organizations within the Yellow Springs Community. Organizations wishing to use the Mills Lawn building or grounds need to come to the school office and fill out an “Application for Use Form”. After the principal has granted approval for use of the facility, the organization can then schedule its meeting or event. **Use of facility charges are as follows:** Conference room - \$10.00 per hour; Classroom - \$10.00 per hour; Library - \$20.00 per hour; Gymnasium - \$30.00 per hour. Organizations using the building are responsible for clean up and will be charged for custodial fees (\$25.00 per hour) if facilities (restrooms, hallways, rooms, etc.) are not left clean. Additionally, organizations using the facility on weekends or when school is not in session will need to pay for the cost of a custodian. Contact the school office for more details.

Use of the District’s conference room, which is attached to Mills Lawn, is handled through the School Board Office. To use the conference room, contact the Board Office at (937) 767-7381.

Parent Communication & Connections

PLEASE! CHECK YOUR CHILD’S BACKPACK EVERYDAY!

NEWSLETTERS

The Mills Lawn School Newsletter:

We compose a school newsletter that is sent out periodically during the school year. It is sent to parents who have signed up to receive notifications. It includes information for parents regarding school-related events and activities. Each issue includes a calendar of school happenings and a focus on what’s been happening at Mills Lawn.

Classroom and Team Newsletters:

Handled and published at different times for each teacher or team, these newsletters contain past, present and current events that affect your child at school.

PARENT / TEACHER / STUDENT CONFERENCES

Parent/Teacher/Student conferences are scheduled two times a year, in the fall and in the spring. We believe these conferences to be an important link between school and home and often they make all the difference in your child’s success with school. Your child’s teacher will contact you near the end of 1st quarter and the end of 3rd quarter to schedule a time to meet with you concerning your child’s life in school. We want to meet with you regardless of how your child is doing in school.

Of course, you never have to wait until conferences to speak with your child’s teacher. Please reach out to your child’s teacher to schedule a time to connect.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The staff at Mills Lawn is very grateful to our PTO. This organization makes possible a variety of activities in which the whole family is invited to participate. Over its long history, the Mills Lawn PTO has bought a variety of school equipment, been instrumental in developing the playground and sponsored wonderful school assemblies for our children. PTO sponsors periodic parent programs that are concerned with school issues, learning and parenting. Every year the PTO sponsors several fundraisers that include the Bulldog Jog, and parking cars on the lawn during the YS Street Fair. The money from these fundraisers has enabled the Mills Lawn PTO to show its appreciation to teachers and establish scholarship funds for those who can not afford field trips, school supplies, or school pictures. Every year the PTO pays for field trips, classroom supplies, and funding for PBL projects.

PTO's purpose is to facilitate continuous positive home-school communications, provide information regarding school procedures, programs, selection of texts, assist with the development and implementation of school goals, and encourage feedback from the community to the school.

Every parent is urged to become an active part of the PTO. The President of the 2021-2022 Mills Lawn PTO is Kelly Lewis, kellieoffman@gmail.com. Please email if you are willing to help with a fundraiser or volunteer in a classroom or if you have a suggestion for a PTO sponsored event.

VISITORS

For our children's safety and comfort, all visitors need to sign-in and out in the office. All visitors need to wear a visitor's pass! Please go to the office, sign in and get a visitor's badge to wear while in the building or on school grounds during school hours. The visitor's badge tells everyone who sees you that the office knows who you are and that you are in the building.

VOLUNTEERS

We are very thankful to all and for all of our volunteers. Volunteers have made possible the expansion of educational experiences and opportunities for our children. We welcome anyone interested in volunteering. Please call the office if you would like to volunteer to read with a student, help a struggling math student, work with a particular teacher, help in the cafeteria, on the playground, in the library or in the art or music room. Volunteers are an integral part of the Mills Lawn school experience and we are ever grateful!

CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL AND DELAY OF THE START TIME

School Cancellations are also posted on the District Web Page

The cancellation or delay of school occurs when there is an extreme weather condition or equipment failure, or a public crisis occurs. The Superintendent of Schools has the sole authority to cancel or delay the start of school. Email and/or text message alerts are sent out to families in case of a closure or delay. Announcements concerning adjustments in the school schedule are made between 5:30 and 7:00 A.M. over the following radio and television stations:

WDTN	TV – CH 2
WHIO	TV-7 and
WHIO	RADIO K99.1 FM/WZLR 95.3/1290 AM WHIO
WKEF/WRGT	TV – CH 22 and CH 45
WYSO	FM 91.3

THANK YOU FOR READING OUR HANDBOOK!

