



Ruth Murdoch Elementary School

An Andrews University School

Bulletin & Handbook

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Handbook Information

Ruth Murdoch Elementary School [RMES] is designed to provide children and youth a learning environment alive with Christian love and reflective of Seventh-day Adventist standards. It is our intent to create a quality academic environment with the greatest sensitivity to the holistic development of the individual; the physical, mental, social and spiritual. It is our hope that the contents of this handbook will assist parents, students and teachers to understand and appreciate the framework that will inform the direction the school has chosen to take. We trust that the guidelines and procedures outlined in this book will help home and school to function in a harmonious manner.

Changing circumstance sometimes necessitates amending policies and/or procedures during the school year. Actions voted at any time by the RMES Governing Board, the University Board of Trustees, or duly authorized administrative officers and faculty shall have equal weight to, or at times, supersede statements published in the handbook, appendix, or supplements. These changes will be communicated with students and parents in the form of verbal announcements.

Mission Statement



Ruth Murdoch Elementary School is a school where parents, teachers, church, and community unite to bring children closer to God. Striving toward excellence, this diverse family of learners works with heads, hearts, and hands to nurture Christ-like character. In preparation for heaven, we will show Christ's love through service.

Dear Student,

Welcome to an exciting experience in learning and fellowship with like-minded students at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School! RMES is so unique you will simply have to experience it to understand what it is all about!

There are several things you will notice immediately about our school. We are a virtual Global Village. Your schoolmates represent over 50 countries and cultures. Although not every student at our school speaks English as their first language, every student appreciates the joy of learning in a warm, caring and accepting environment as you do.

Ruth Murdoch Elementary School is a laboratory school operated under the guidance of the Department of Education of Andrews University. As a student at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School, you are considered a part of the Andrews University academic family. As a member of the Andrews family, you have access to some of the services open to students in the undergraduate and graduate schools! Your student ID card opens for you the services of the James White (University) Library and the use of the university swimming pool for a reduced fee. Because we are part of the Andrews University family, our procedures and policies also fall under the umbrella of the working policies of the University.

Ruth Murdoch Elementary School has brought together a carefully selected team of professional administrative and teaching staff. Only teachers with state and SDA denominational certification are considered for faculty positions. Contract teachers who are brought in to teach select subjects are also carefully chosen. The RMES selection process considers a candidate's love for children, love for the profession and love for God as important as their professional training and experience. Administrators, faculty and staff at RMES are deliberate about their desire to provide you with a quality academic program in a safe and nurturing environment. They are dedicated to the proposition that you deserve the best opportunity to be prepared for service to God here on earth and be prepared for citizenship in His Kingdom to come.

This Bulletin & Handbook has been prepared to make your experience here at RMES informed and productive. Some things are included for your parents' information, so feel free to share this with them. Although rules and policies don't always make for interesting reading, they are important as we work and play together at school. If you don't understand something, please feel free to ask your teachers for an explanation; they will be only too pleased to help.

We are delighted that you have chosen to be a part of the RMES family!

Dr. Ruth Murdoch

In 1975, the Andrews University Laboratory School was renamed Ruth Murdoch Elementary School after Dr. Ruth Rittenhouse Murdoch, a highly-esteemed Seventh-day Adventist educator. During an era when buildings were renamed posthumously, Dr. Murdoch was given the unique honor of being in attendance at the renaming ceremony. It was highly appropriate that the name of Dr. Ruth Murdoch was chosen, for throughout her fifty-year teaching career, she was a tireless and outspoken advocate for academic excellence coupled with a strong focus on character development.

Ruth Rittenhouse was born in Bozeman, Montana in 1906. In 1937 she married W.G.C. Murdoch. During their life together, they served the church in England, Australia, and the United States. Dr. Murdoch was a devoted mother to her three boys and one girl, often using her experiences as a mother to illustrate the principles of character development in her teaching.

In 1928 she received a Bachelor's degree in Education from Emmanuel Missionary College (now Andrews University). She received a Master's degree in Education from the University of Southern California in 1937, and her Doctorate in Education from American University in 1960. Her specialty was in human growth and development and educational psychology.

Dr. Murdoch was nationally recognized as a stimulating speaker and a challenging and engaging teacher. Her fifty-year teaching career included positions at Adelphian Academy, Lodi Academy, Southern Missionary College, La Sierra College, Columbia Union College, and Andrews University. She was twice honored by the Andrews University Alumni Association as an Honored Alumna of the Year.

Dr. Ruth Murdoch passed away in 1996 but her legacy lives on in the lives of those students who attend the school that bears her name. And from here, students travel to the far corners of the world as ambassadors of those virtues she held dear.



Admission

Admission to Ruth Murdoch Elementary School (also referred to as RMES throughout this document) is a privilege granted students irrespective of their race, color, gender, ethnicity, national origin or religion.

In as much as Andrews University, our parent organization, is sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the majority of our students are members of that confession. However, no particular religious commitment is required for admission. Subject to available space, applicants who meet the academic and character requirements of Ruth Murdoch Elementary School, and who demonstrate a willingness to cooperate with the school's policies and to adjust congenially to its religious, social and cultural atmosphere, may be accepted.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, in all of its church schools, admits students of any race to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at its schools, and makes no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, country of origin, or gender in the administration of education policies, applications of admission, scholarship or loan programs, and extracurricular programs.

Admission Age

Kindergarten: Ruth Murdoch Elementary School does not advocate formal schooling to begin before a child is physically, socially and emotionally ready for the experience. Our kindergarten program is available to families who wish that service.

Applicants need to be at least five years of age by September 1 of the year they enter school. On occasion the Admission Committee might be willing to consider qualities such as, relative closeness of the child's birth date to September 1, obvious, observable size/maturity of the child, formal or informal testing done by the teacher, or other factors that might justify acceptance of a

student.

Michigan law requires the presentation of a birth certificate or passport as verification of the correct date of birth.

First Grade: Applicants to first grade must be six years of age by September 1 of the year they enter school. Any student who successfully completed Kindergarten at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School is eligible for first grade on the recommendation of the kindergarten teacher. New applicants need to furnish the school with a birth certificate or a passport to verify proof of the date of birth.

All Other Grades: All students entering a Michigan school for the first time must submit official evidence of a physical examination by a licensed physician or a duly authorized health care professional, and furnish the school with necessary immunization records and documentation to verify the student's date of birth.

Submission of request for all previous elementary school records is required by RMES.

Acceleration/Retention

RMES considers acceleration or retention of a student on an individual basis according to the Lake Union Conference and Michigan Conference Education Policies and our own policies.

Acceleration is made on the basis of administration/teacher recommendation and not on parent request alone. The final decision for grade placement will be made cooperatively by the school, the parents, and when appropriate, the Michigan Conference Office of Education.

Age, emotional and social maturity of a student demonstrated by behavior and interpersonal relationships, study and work habits, conduct and citizenship, standardized test [ITBS/CogAt], and class grades are factors that will determine acceleration. Students will not be accelerated with significant gaps in current grade level

content/curriculum. The best interest of a student is served when a promotion to a higher level class does not cause that student to miss important content, or miss the opportunity to adequately develop essential skills, including social skills. It is the intent of the school to provide a more challenging and enriching academic program for students in the grade they are in, rather than focusing on moving students to a higher grade prematurely.

The school maintains the right to retain a student due to academic considerations. The potential social and emotional impact of such a move is also considered before a student is retained. The decision to retain a student is made in consultation with all the student's teachers, parents and personnel of the Michigan Conference Office of Education.

RMES is constantly seeking ways to provide intervention for students who are challenged in basic skills, in order to prepare them for the next grade, and thus prevent the need for retaining a student. Retention is a recommendation of last resort, and employed only when the school is convinced that such a move is in the student's best interest.

Asbestos

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires that parents and employees be notified annually when a school building contains asbestos. Per AHERA regulations RMES was inspected and a management plan prepared in July of 1989. This inspection found RMES to have building materials that contain asbestos. These materials are being maintained in compliance with AHERA regulations. The management plan is available for review at the school office.

At-risk Behaviors

Because of the deep concern and love we have for our students, we wish to do everything we can to protect them from potentially life-threatening

behaviors prevalent in today's society. We do this in two ways. First, by educating our students about the perils of certain potentially harmful behaviors, and second, by making certain that our own campus is free from the negative influences of these behaviors.

Many activities sanctioned and promoted by the popular culture do not represent a Christian lifestyle and pose hidden dangers for children and youth. Invariably, what a student does out of school, eventually tends to have an effect on what the student does in school, and the influence he/she might exert on fellow students. Thus the school's role in guiding, intervening and disciplining students in regard to "at-risk" behaviors is not limited solely to school hours, school sponsored activities or school property.

Students who choose to engage in any of the "at-risk" behaviors listed below, **at any time or place**, will be inviting a posture of censure, disapproval and possible disciplinary action from the school. Engaging in these risky behaviors could lead to suspensions or even expulsion from school. "At-risk" behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- possessing, distributing or using tobacco in any form.
- possessing, distributing or drinking any alcoholic beverage.
- possessing, distributing or using any illegal substance.
- abusing any drug, inhalant, or other substance.
- engaging in any illegal activity for which the student could be formally charged by law enforcement authorities. Minor traffic violations are not included in this classification.
- engaging in intimate/sexual behavior

- involvement in printed or on-line pornography of any form

Attendance

Ruth Murdoch Elementary School's commitment to provide students with a quality education must be matched by the student's and parent's commitment to regular and punctual attendance. The value of our program is greatly diminished for the student who is habitually late or absent from school.

Students who live too far to walk to school depend on their parents to get them to school on time. The responsibility of punctuality and attendance is one that is shared by parent and child. Michigan State Law requires the school to maintain accurate attendance records for both excused and unexcused tardies and absences.

Excused Absences

An absence due to personal illness, the death of a relative or family friend, required medical, dental or optometric services that cannot be scheduled around school obligations, or an absence due to a quarantine imposed by the health department are considered excused absences.

Unexcused Absences

If the absence or tardy is due to a pre-planned activity, parents are requested to notify the teacher or the school office in writing prior to the absence. The notice needs to indicate dates your child will be absent from school.

When possible, assignments will be given prior to the departure date. It must be understood that some class activities, by their very nature, cannot be made up when a student is absent. Some of these missed activities may include valuable information that may be needed for a future test or assignment, and some may yield credit and could negatively impact a student's grade.

When an unscheduled absence or delay keeps a student away from school, please call the school office by 8:00 A.M. on the day of the absence or

tardy, and leave a message on the answering device. The message should include the child's name, teacher's name and the reason for the delay or absence. When your child returns to school, please send a written explanation noting the student's full name, date/s of absence or tardy and the reason for absence or tardy. The note must be duly signed by parent or legal guardian.

Students are responsible for making up missed work. Excessive absences (more than 10%) could jeopardize the student's learning and may result in failure for a marking period or the entire year.

Tardies

To ensure that your child receives the best possible advantage at school, it is extremely important that he/she arrives at school on time and ready to learn.

Arriving late distracts other students and compromises the on-going teaching/learning process in the class. Students who come late to school typically disrupt the worship activity in the room, a crucial part of the school day. Some teachers may require the student to remain quietly outside the room until worship is over.

Bibles

Students need to bring their own Bible for Bible class.

Students in grades one (1) through four (4) use the New Century Version of the International Children's Bible since their Bible curriculum materials are based on this version. These versions are available through the school office, and may be purchased at cost.

Students in grades five (5) through eight (8) may choose any version they prefer. Please reference your school supply list and consult your teacher for recommendations.

Bicycles on Campus

Students who ride bicycles to school are to *walk the bicycle on school sidewalks and paved areas immediately around the building and the school drive ways*. Bicycles are to be placed in racks provided for them. Students are not to ride bicycles during the school day. Please be sure to always **lock your bicycle**.

Cell Phone Use

Students may bring cell phones to school if parents feel that a cell phone at school is an absolute necessity. However, cell phones may not be brought into the classrooms during instructional time. They will need to be locked in the student's locker in the case of junior high students, or in their book bags in the case of lower grade students. Cell phones may be only used after the school day, or in special circumstances, with the permission of a faculty or staff member. Cell phones must be turned off before classes begin and remain off for the rest of the school day. The school does not assume any responsibility for cell phones brought to school. Cell phone misuse will result in the cell phone being confiscated, and a parent will need to pick the phone up at the school office. Please reference Electronic Communications.

Chewing Gum and Food

To keep our school clean and attractive we have a "no-chewing-gum" rule in effect in our building, on the playground, and at all scheduled school functions. Appropriate disciplinary actions may be taken with habitual offenders.

Eating must be limited to time and location designated for that purpose. Students may not snack during and between classes.

Children's Protective Services (CPS)

Michigan Child Protection Law requires teachers and school administrators to report their suspicions of child abuse or neglect to Children's Protective Services (CPS) at the Department of Human Services (DHS). The school will cooperate with CPS during any investigation of a report of child abuse or neglect. This may include allowing access to the child without parental consent if access is necessary to complete

an investigation or to prevent abuse or neglect.

Classroom Assignments

Classroom assignments for students are done by the Placement Committee. The committee is open to parent's input as they make their decisions.

When making classroom assignments, careful consideration is given to the individual needs of the child and the collective needs of the classroom. Room assignments are made on the basis of maintaining a diverse gender and ethnic mix in each classroom. Consideration is also given to individual learning styles and abilities.

Parents may request a reconsideration of the Placement Committee's decision by notifying the principal in writing. This letter must list reasons for the request. Parents' requests may be granted when it can be accommodated without jeopardizing the school's stated objectives of the constitution of a room.

Closed Campus

Once students arrive at school, they may not leave the school grounds until school is formally dismissed. After school, students may leave the building in a manner that has been approved by parents or legal guardians.

Students may leave the school campus during school hours **only** when they are accompanied by school personnel, parent or legal guardian. Students must always remain in specifically designated supervised areas where visual supervision is possible and where they can easily hear directions. Students who have written permission from a teacher, the office, or their parents or legal guardians to leave the school building during school hours need to sign the check-out sheet at the office before they leave; should they return prior to dismissal time, they must sign back in on the same form.

In the interest of the safety of students, the school requires a written request, dated and signed by parent or legal guardian to indicate who, if other than a parent or legal guardian, will be picking up a child or

children during school hours. Often situations such as medical appointments make this procedure necessary.

Conflict Resolution

In Matthew 18: 15-17, Jesus proposed a process by which disagreements are to be resolved. This provides the basis for the following grievance procedure which has been adopted by our Governing Board.

Step 1: Consult with the teacher, school employee or board member directly involved. In most cases the problem can be resolved quickly and easily at this stage if the meeting is conducted in good faith and in a Christ-like spirit.

Step 2: If no satisfaction can be obtained at step 1, the matter needs to be discussed by the school employee, the concerned party and the principal.

Step 3: If step 2 does not provide adequate resolution, a meeting may be convened with the chairperson, principal, school employee and the concerned party.

Step 4: The court of final appeal will be the Governing Board. In order for a board hearing to be initiated the concerned party will need to make a formal written request for consideration. The chairperson of the Governing Board may call for a special board meeting or place the request

on the agenda for the next scheduled board meeting, depending on the severity of the concern and/or the date the request for the hearing is received. The Governing Board assumes the final decision in grievance matters.

Copyright Laws/Plagiarism

RMES is deliberate about helping students to understand and appreciate existing copyright laws. Students who engage in plagiarism in any form will be counseled by the teachers about the moral and legal implications of the practice. Students will not be given academic credit for any assignments, if there is reasonable evidence of plagiarism.

Damage to School Property

Normal wear is expected on equipment and

materials such as library books, school textbooks, P. E. equipment, desks and lockers provided for student use. Students will be charged the replacement value or repair cost of books and equipment provided for their learning if carelessness, misuse and/or abuse is the cause for the damage or loss.

Dismissal Procedure

Students in kindergarten through eighth grade awaiting rides after school are to wait in the gym, by classroom, until their ride comes. Students must listen for their traffic numbers to be called. Students who walk or ride bicycles home should leave campus right after dismissal.

There is to be no loitering about the campus or school building after the last school bell for the day. When classes or a school-sponsored activities are over, students are expected to leave the campus and proceed to their homes.

Unless they are involved in a school sponsored activity, all students in the building after 3:30 P.M. Monday through Thursday or after 12:30P.M. on Friday or scheduled half days, must register in the Extend-Ed room. Students will be charged for Extend-Ed from the time they sign in until they leave. Students who remain unsupervised in the building or immediate area are subject to a \$12 fine.

Dress Code

Students should come to Ruth Murdoch Elementary School dressed in clothing that is clean, modest, and appropriate for school activities. We request that parents carefully plan their child's/children's school wardrobe consistent with the following guidelines.

- clothes need to be clean, neat, in good repair and of a modest fit, considering the age and physical build of the student.
- low hanging, oversized jeans/pants are unacceptable as school attire.
- spandex clothing, pajama pants and any type of skin tight pants are inappropriate.

- sleeveless tops, see-through tops, tops displaying the midriff, and low-cut necklines are inappropriate.
- clothes that are associated with gangs or imprinted with symbols, pictures, slogans or words which promote products or lifestyles that are not in harmony with Christian standards and witness are not in harmony with the spirit of the RMES dress code. These would include rock group emblems, advertisements of alcoholic beverages, “put-downs” of any type, and suggestive slogans or slogans with double-meanings.
- shorts of modest length (at or just above the knees) may be worn.. Modesty is the desired goal. Please keep in mind, classrooms are air conditioned and daily outdoor recesses are included in our schedule. The appropriateness of shorts may vary depending on the weather.
- dresses and skirts of modest length (at least mid-knee when the student is standing and sitting) and design are acceptable. Clothes that don’t conform to this pattern are inappropriate.
- it is recommended that students have an alternate pair of shoes and/or boots to wear for outdoor activities when the weather is inclement.
- students may not wear jewelry and/or gaudy, brightly colored make-up to school. Skin tones that match the student’s complexion may be used judiciously.
- wrist bands of any kind are unacceptable, with the exception of legitimate medical alerts.
- caps, hats, bandanas or other head-gear may not be worn in the building.
- for students’ safety, rubber-soled shoes are required for physical education classes. students should wear closed (covers the

whole foot – toes and heels included) footwear. Socks or hose need to be worn at all times. Flip-flops and sandals aren’t appropriate for school.

- hair should be well groomed and neatly styled. Extreme trends in styles and color are unacceptable.

The administration, faculty and staff reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of fashion trends, clothing and hair styles. The child’s physical build, style, fit and manner in which clothes are worn are factors that are considerations to determine acceptability.

Ruth Murdoch Elementary School’s expectations in dress and appearance apply when students are engaged in all on or off-campus events.

RMES does not attempt to place moral judgment on certain types of apparel; however, in order to project our desired school image, the above- outlined dress code will be enforced.

Electronic Communications

This electronic communications policy has been developed through a cooperative effort of the faculty, administration, and school board. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for faculty, staff, and students as they make use of the varied means of electronic communications available to them.

- All electronic communications, including but not limited to electronic messages, documents, and images, sent at any time between RMES students and RMES faculty/staff will be used for educational and/or administrative purposes only.
- Electronic communications between RMES students and RMES faculty/staff are only to be used through RMES provided or approved means. Email transmissions shall not be considered private and may not be kept confidential from RMES students’ parents/guardians. RMES faculty and staff will retain copies of all RMES student/teacher email for a minimum of 2 years.

- Communications between RMES students and RMES faculty/staff through personal social media sources is prohibited.
- Communications between RMES students and RMES faculty/staff through texting outside of the classroom setting is prohibited. Exceptions, with guidelines, will be announced for specific activities.
- The content of electronic messages, documents, and/or images must conform to RMES's ethical and educational standards. The use of profanity, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs, insults, put-downs, sexual innuendo, or other inflammatory language in any communication is prohibited.
- Electronic messages must accurately represent the identity of the sender.

Expo

Students of RMES are entitled to one copy of the *Expo*.

The Expo is a pictorial directory of the faculty, staff and students of Andrews Academy and Ruth Murdoch Elementary School. It is published in the fall by students of Andrews Academy.

Extend-Ed After-School Care

Extend-Ed is an after school program for students who are enrolled at RMES. The program offers students a variety of activities including time and place to do their homework.

Extend-Ed will operate on most days that school is in session. The program is also open on certain half days.

Extend-Ed will not operate on half days just prior to the following scheduled vacations: Thanksgiving, Christmas and spring vacation. Extend-Ed is not available on the last day of school.

Please note that a hot lunch is not served on Friday or on scheduled half days. Children need to bring their own sack lunch on those days.

The Extend-Ed program is subject to several, any and all changes that may be necessary to make it a viable educational experience for the benefit of RMES students.

Parents may access the Extend-Ed room through the Extend-Ed exterior door.

Extend-Ed Hours

Monday through Thursday 3:15 – 5:30 P.M.

Friday 12:15 – 3:30 P.M.

Parent-Teacher-Student Conference Days
12:15 – 5:30 P.M

Extend-Ed Fees

Extend-Ed fees will be published in "Partners in Christian Education" each spring. A student's school account will be debited for the Extend-Ed charges each month. Extend-Ed fees must be current each month in order for a student to continue in that program.

Family Discounts

A family discount of 5% per student is granted if the parents support two dependent students in Ruth Murdoch Elementary School and/or Andrews Academy. A discount of 10% per student is granted for three or more students. Application for discounts must be made at registration. Discounts will be posted monthly.

Field Trips

Off-campus field trips are an exciting and essential part of our school curriculum, and are designed to enrich the total school program. Students must produce written consent from parents or guardians in order to participate in any field trip that takes them off the Andrews University property. All school guidelines pertaining to conduct and attire apply during off campus trips.

Field trips are limited to venues and activities that promote the academic interests of students. Non-educational off-campus activities of a purely recreational nature may be scheduled for no longer than half a school day and no more than twice in the

school year. Such trips will be taken to places and activities that are consistent with the values and principles of a Seventh-day Adventist lifestyle.

Cost for all field trips sponsored and coordinated by the school will be covered by the school.

Financial Assistance

In an attempt to provide the blessings of Christian education for all who desire it, a limited amount of financial assistance is available to families who need it. Assistance may be requested by completing the Application for Financial Assistance available in the school office, or one may be accessed on line. This form, plus a copy of the most recent federal 1040 tax form, and all related schedules and W-2s are to be submitted at the time of application. Funds are generally disbursed on a first-come-first-serve basis until available funds are depleted.

Approved Student Assistance monies will be credited to the student's account twice a year.

Receiving financial assistance is contingent on a family being willing to abide by the following conditions:

- being willing to furnish the school with copies of current federal 1040 tax forms, all related schedules and W-2 forms or other evidence of income, in a timely manner.
- being faithful with monthly payments of the family's contracted portion of tuition.
- fulfilling the family's financial obligations involving optional services that are not covered by the assistance program.
- These obligations include, but may not be limited to music fees, hot lunch charges, Extend-Ed fees and library fines, etc.
- students must demonstrate diligence in all academic pursuits, and continue efforts to maintain a C average, each grading period.
- showing evidence that students maintain satisfactory [less than 5% unexcused absences/marking period] attendance.

- maintaining an exemplary citizenship record. A major discipline infraction notice could seriously jeopardize a student's eligibility for continued assistance.

Assistance may be refused, or forfeited any time during the school year if and when these conditions are not satisfied.

While this is not a requirement, Ruth Murdoch Elementary School would welcome an expression of appreciation for assistance received by a willingness on the part of the recipients to volunteer their services during Home and School Association activities on behalf of the school.

No credit balance in a student's account can be withdrawn by a student, parent or guardian, if that credit represents contributions from any financial assistance.

Fund-raising for Humanitarian Causes

Ruth Murdoch Elementary School is deliberate about helping students experience the satisfaction and joy that comes from supporting humanitarian causes, both with their time and resources. In the interest of keeping humanitarian activities in reasonable balance with the other aspect of the schooling experience, students may be invited to participate in fundraising activities that may include:

- North American Division, Lake Union Conference, and Michigan Conference sponsored humanitarian projects.
- A cause selected by each class or a group of classes in their wing.
- A general mission fund in each room to which students donate periodically, and from which they may support emergency needs either locally or globally.

It is our desire to steer away from fund-raising activities that are motivated by a reward system. Rather, we hope to promote a spirit of personal sacrificial giving.

Grade Placement

The school reserves the right to give entrance and qualifying (grade placement) tests to students. The results of such tests, along with former school records, will help to provide the information needed to place the students in the grades where they will have the greatest success.

Hands-off Policy

Because we want all of our students to feel safe at school, Ruth Murdoch Elementary School subscribes to a strict hands-off policy between students.

Fighting, tussling, kicking, shoving and the like are not acceptable behaviors whether in jest or in anger.

Overt, amorous expressions of endearment through touching, holding hands, kissing or hugging is unacceptable.

Students are expected to treat every member of the school family with respect, dignity and in a morally acceptable manner. The social, interpersonal relationship culture of Ruth Murdoch Elementary School is motivated by Biblical standards and Christ-like love based on purity of thought, intent and motive.

Harassment

Because we should treat others as we ourselves wish to be treated, any type of harassment, based on race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, age, disability or other legally protected characteristic, will be considered entirely out of place at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School. Slurs, jokes, verbal or physical intimidation are inappropriate. Teasing of a demeaning nature, comments that may be interpreted as insults, put-downs or sexually suggestive are unacceptable at any time or place. These behaviors constitute violations of our harassment code.

RMES has no tolerance for harassment in any form, including harassment inflicted verbally, in writing or electronically. Students are encouraged to report any incidents of harassment, directed at them or someone else, to their teacher or to one in

administration. The school will use all legitimate resources available, to protect the dignity and privacy of students, and to protect them from predatory behavior.

Home and School Association

The Home and School Association serves a very important role in the life of Ruth Murdoch Elementary School. Leaders for the association are appointed by Pioneer Memorial Church and serve the school on their behalf. The leadership of the organization is also represented on the Governing Board of RMES.

The purpose of the Home and School Association is to provide activities that bring the school and its families together for social and cultural events, to build a spirit of community, and to promote a harmonious partnership between the school and the home represented in it. The association also coordinates informational meetings for the school family and organizes general forum where topics of common interests may be discussed.

The Home and School Association is also engaged in efforts to raise funds to provide special services and purchase items that enhance the services we offer. The leadership of the association coordinates events and personnel towards this end.

From time to time the school or the Home and School Association will provide information about fund-raising activities. Fund-raising activities will be coordinated by the Home and School Association. There will be no class-based fund raising events in order to protect the integrity of the teaching/learning experience. The Home and School Association may involve school personnel and students in their efforts.

International Students

Guest students from several countries who attend Andrews University and the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, which is also located on the Andrews campus, choose the services of Ruth Murdoch Elementary School for their children. RMES also opens its door to international students whose parents are not attending either of these institutions of higher learning.

International students who come to our school must have proper legal authority to be in the United States. They are also required to make a specified financial deposit in U. S. dollars before they are permitted to register. The amount of the deposit is announced each spring in the financial information page entitled Partners in Christian Education. The deposit does not apply to international students whose parents are enrolled at Andrews University or the Seminary.

Intramural Program

Students in grades five (5) through eight (8) may choose to participate in the after-school intramural program. The intramural program may include flag football, floor hockey, volleyball, basketball, soccer, badminton and softball.

There is a charge for participation in intramurals. Students who receive a grade lower than a C in any class could jeopardize their privilege of participating in intramurals. The administration, in consultation with the appropriate teachers, may consider the merits of special needs and/or individual circumstances when deciding if a student should participate in intramurals.

Students who are on probation for behavior related reasons will not be eligible to participate in intramurals until they are taken off probation.

Personal misconduct, such as fighting, swearing, arguing and lack of sportsmanship will jeopardize a student's privilege to participate in intramurals. Students whose level of cooperation during intramurals is deemed less than acceptable by the coach may be asked to leave a game, or depending on the severity of the offense, could forfeit the privilege of participation. A student who is asked to leave a game twice will be asked to sit out the remaining games for the sport in which the infraction occurred. There will be no refund of fees if a student is asked to drop out of intramurals for discipline reasons.

Late Registration

Students who enroll late, but receive full academic credit, will be charged full tuition. Tuition for students transferring from another school during the school

year will be prorated.

Leaving School Early

The school will not release a student to anyone other than a parent or legal guardian, without specific [preferably written] permission from the parent or legal guardian. Parents wishing to pick up their child early from school should come to the office and sign their child out. Children may not wait, unsupervised, for parents outside the building or in the lobby. They need to remain in the classroom or in the office until the person picking them up comes in for them.

Library Use

RMES provides students a library furnished with a substantial collection of grade and age appropriate reading materials. Students may search the RMES holdings through the James White Library website (www.andrews.edu/library) Students are encouraged, often required, to check books out. Overdue materials checked out of the library will be assessed a late fee. Students will be charged the replacement cost for all damaged or lost books and a non-refundable library processing charge of \$5.00/book. Library fees not paid in cash will be charged to the student's account.

As a student at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School, you are considered a part of the Andrews University academic family. As a member of the Andrews family, your student ID card opens for you the services of the James White (University) Library.

Lost & Found Items

The school cannot assume responsibility for books, clothing, money or other personal property items left in school or on the school premises. Items left unattended will be brought to the office and will be held for a reasonable period of time. Please check in the office for items (particularly clothes) that may be left in school.

Lunch Program

Ruth Murdoch Elementary School, in collaboration with the Andrews University Dining Services offers students the option of purchasing a hot lunch at

school. Hot lunches are served Monday through Thursday. (See Andrews University Dining Services contract for additional information). Students who do not purchase hot lunch from AU Dining Services are asked to bring a brown-bag lunch or a warm meal in a thermos. The lunch period does not provide enough time to warm individual student lunches, therefore, RMES microwaves are not for student use.

Multi-grade Classrooms

Enrollment and staffing sometimes dictates the need for multi-grade classrooms in grades one through six. Multi-grade rooms may offer the opportunity for students to learn under the same teacher for more than one year. Working collaboratively with students in another grade and learning in a classroom with fewer students provides a unique and beneficial learning experience.

Music

Ruth Murdoch Elementary School offers students a variety of opportunities to develop their musical skills through the following organizations:

- Beginning Band
- Concert Band String
- Orchestra Piano
- Lessons
- Private Instrumental
- Lessons
- Classroom Music
- RMES Singers
- Handbells
- Chimes

Students in K-4 have regular classroom music classes. Students in grade 5 are required to take Beginning Band. Instrument rental is available for those who wish to have their own instrument. The school may be able to accommodate those who don't wish to rent or buy. Students in grade 6 are required to take choral music. For more advanced students, Concert Band, String Orchestra, and RMES Singers are an option. In the Jr. High, in addition to Concert Band and RMES Singers, Chimes and Handbells are offered as mini-courses.

Joining Concert Band, String Orchestra, , or handbells is a year-long commitment. RMES Singers and Chimes are a semester-long commitment.

Membership in a performance oriented organization brings with it the obligation to participate in all music performances of that organization. Missing performances will result in a lower grade in that subject.

An absence due to illness or a family emergency is understandably excused. Excessive absence, excused or unexcused, may result in a failing grade as well as the student being asked to drop the class.

The conductor/director will need to be notified in advance when students do not plan to meet their performance obligations for other than an emergency situation.

For performances, students are generally asked to have white shirts/blouses and black dress pants/skirts. Skirts, pants and blouses must conform to school code relative to style, cut and length. Boys may be asked to wear ties. On occasion the director may prefer to have students wear appropriate casual attire, costumes, or ethnic clothing. The option of what performers wear is left to the discretion of the director.

A student's musical abilities are greatly enhanced when parents faithfully oversee instrumental practice times at home.

Private music lessons are strongly recommended for orchestra and band students. Both the musical organizations and students benefit from private music lessons.

Private Music Lessons

Ruth Murdoch Elementary School provides an opportunity for students to receive private instrumental lessons during the school day. This service is offered by qualified music teachers.

Fees for private music lessons are to be paid directly to the music teacher in accordance with the contractual arrangements made with them. All questions pertaining to private music lessons should

be directed to the music teachers.

Every effort will be made to schedule lessons so as to minimize the disruption to the students' classroom program. Teachers are not obligated to re-teach material missed during private music lessons; however, they will make all reasonable accommodations to meet the student's academic needs.

Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences The faculty and administration welcome the opportunity to confer with parents concerning their student's welfare and progress.

At the beginning of the second and third quarters, parents and students are invited to the school for conferences with teachers. These meetings give students, parents and teachers an opportunity to discuss the student's progress and develop strategies to maximize the benefits of the schooling process.

The conferences scheduled for January provide another opportunity for setting individual goals for the second half of the school year. Typically, during this second conference, ITBS/CogAt results are shared with parents and students.

Parents are urged to meet these regularly scheduled appointments. **The value of conferences are increased significantly when the student is an active participant in the process, therefore students are expected to attend.**

On occasion, a home visit may be requested to give teachers, students and parents the opportunity to get to know each other better and build stronger partnerships with the school.

Parents are more than welcome to schedule additional appointments as they see the need for added communication. We ask parents to respect the teaching/learning process, and the needs of other students, and not to expect impromptu consultations with teachers during the school day; from 8:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. Teachers will be able to give parents and students their undivided attention when these special

conferences are scheduled at a mutually acceptable time after school hours.

Playground Rules

The school playground is a very important part of the school. It provides a much needed release from the rigors of the classroom; it also holds potential dangers. The rules governing the use of playground equipment are made with the safety of the student and the schools ethical and legal responsibilities in mind. Playground supervising teachers will be the ultimate arbiters who will determine which behaviors are safe and which are unsafe. It is in the student's best interest and safety to cooperate with ALL teachers and designated playground supervisors.

- Throwing of snowballs, rocks, pebbles, wood chips, acorns or other objects could result in hurting or offending someone, and is therefore not permitted.
- Climb only on areas specifically designed for climbing. Bushes and trees on the school grounds are not for climbing.
- Do not climb/stand/sit on railings, the top of gliders, or roof coverings located on the playground.
- Only one person is to be on the glider at a time; feet are to be kept off the glider bar.
- Playing tag or chasing each other around playground equipment is not permitted.
- Students may not stand on swings.
- Basketballs, softballs, soccer balls, playground balls, footballs, etc. should be used only in areas designated for those games (not in halls/classrooms or areas not designed for such equipment) and preferably only when engaged in playing games for which these balls are designed.

Recruitment Benefits

A family that recruits a new, full-paying student

or encourages a former student [one who has not been in attendance for at least two years] to return to RMES as a full-paying student, will be awarded \$150.00/student recruited. The \$150.00 will be applied to the recruiting family's own tuition only if the incoming student remains enrolled through the end of the school year for which he/she was recruited, and it will be applied to the recruiting family's May tuition bill.

Registration

Families may begin registering students in early May. The registration picnic in May offers a convenient venue for families to register their students for the following year. It also serves as a final social event for the school family and provides an opportunity for classes to demonstrate their handiwork.

Only students whose accounts are current will be able to register. Those who are carrying an unpaid balance will need to pay the balance in full or set up a contract for a viable payment plan with the school's Business Manager before their student is registered.

For all students, whether new or returning, a complete application or re-application is required every year.. Families begin the application process on-line.

The application requires a non-refundable registration fee. RMES offers an early registration discount for returning students and new students who register early. The dates for early registration deadlines will be published in the financial information document each spring. The registration process is not complete until a financial contract is completed and signed at the school office.

Rollerblades/Skateboards/Scooters etc.

Students who rollerblade or ride their scooters or skateboards to and from school, must cease to use them when they arrive on the sidewalks and parking areas immediately around the building. Students are not to use these or shoes fitted with wheels, in the building, paved play area, parking lot or sidewalks around the building.

Scholastic Records

A request for the academic records from all previous elementary schools attended must be signed by the parent/guardian upon initial enrollment at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School. Parents have the right to review, at reasonable intervals, their child's cumulative educational records. Any request to review these records should be made, in writing, to the principal.

School Calendar

In order to keep the students, parents/legal guardians and community informed, we provide an updated calendar of events on our website (www.myRMES.org). Our weekly newsletter, the *RMES Contact*, provides a weekly update of important events. A printed annual school calendar is provided to each family.

School Hours

Kindergarten: Morning kindergarten classes are from 8:15 to 11:15 A.M. Monday through Thursday. Afternoon kindergarten classes are from 12:15 to 3:15 P.M Monday through Thursday. On Fridays, and days when school is dismissed at 12:15, all kindergarten students will attend in the morning, from 8:15 to 12:15.

Grades 1-8: School starts at 8:15 A.M. Students will be dismissed at 3:15 P.M. Monday through Thursday and at 12:15 on Fridays. Students who arrive at school after 8:30 A.M. must check in at the office before going to their classrooms.

Before School Supervision: The gym doors are open from 7:30 A.M. to 8:05 A.M. for the convenience of families that need to drop their children off early. Students may not be in the building before 7:30 A.M. unless scheduled. Early arrivals need to remain in the designated areas in the gym where adult supervision is provided at this time.

At 8:05 A.M. the main entrance to the building and the front entrance to the C-wing end of the building are opened for students to enter. At this time students are to go directly to their rooms.

It is best if students do not arrive before 8:05 A.M.

School Identification Cards

All students enrolled at RMES will be furnished with a student identification number and an ID card. returning students entering the third grade and seventh grade will be issued a new picture ID card. ID cards are the property of Andrews University, and are used to purchase hot lunch for students on lunch contracts. They also offer students access to the Andrews swimming pool at a reduced fee and the option of checking out materials from the James White Library.

There is a fee for replacing lost or damaged ID cards.

School Insurance

Should an injury occur during the school day or at a school-related activity, our school insurance provides **secondary coverage** for students covered by other private or employer group insurance policies. School insurance will provide **primary coverage** for students with no other insurance. For limitations and other information about this policy, please ask for the most current insurance policy brochure at the office.

School-wide Discipline Plan

The school assumes parents' willingness to actively collaborate in our efforts towards corrective discipline. A spirit of mutual respect and cooperation between parents and school personnel is crucial, if the desired goal of proper guidance and correction of a student is to be realized.

Parents are encouraged to speak with their child's teacher regarding situations that may affect the child's behavior in school. Should any misunderstanding or problem arise in regard to discipline, as they sometimes do, we expect that the parents will discuss the matter with the child's teacher.

The appropriate approach to conflict resolution presumes that any conclusions and judgments be made after an open-minded conference process with all concerned. We believe that discipline that flows out of love and respect for a child is the most effective; this approach results in

correction and guidance rather than mere punishment.

"The object of discipline is the training of the child for self-government." *Education*, p. 287

Each teacher has his/her own set of classroom rules under the umbrella of the policies adopted by the Governing Board.

The school-wide system of Discipline Notices is the adopted method of notifying parents when infractions of a more serious nature have occurred. It is possible that a follow-up call by the classroom teacher or one of the school administrators will also be made when a discipline notice is sent home. The requested parent signature is only to verify that the parent has received the notification.

We ask parents to hold their judgment on the fairness of any disciplinary action until they have had a chance to talk with the teacher involved.

Students who habitually disregard the conduct policies of the school, demonstrated by frequent infractions and/or a negative attitude towards guidance and counsel that is provided, may be placed on probation. The time, duration and nature of the probation will be determined collaboratively by the administration and faculty. The terms of a probation will be communicated with the students and family in writing and at a conference in which administration, parents or legal guardians, students and possibly a representative of the Governing Board are participants.

Students may also be placed on a probationary status for academic reasons or when registration policies have not been satisfactorily followed. A decision for such a probation does not involve any disciplinary actions nor does it deprive the student of any privileges at school. The terms, duration and nature of such a probation will be communicated with parents or guardians, in writing, by the administration.

A family may appeal any probation decision to the Governing Board, which reserves the right to make a final decision.

School Pictures

All students at RMES will have their pictures taken in the fall. These pictures are used in the school yearbook and for other school related purposes. Students interested in purchasing these pictures must pre-order and prepay for them. Payments for pictures are made directly to the photographer. One re-take session is scheduled for fall pictures.

In late March or early April, spring portraits will be taken. All students may choose to have pictures taken. Portrait packets will be sent home, and families may choose to purchase them or return the prints. No classroom composites are made at this time.

Candid photos of students are taken throughout the school year during various events and activities. These photos may be used on the school's website and in other promotional materials. Students will not be identified by name. Parents who do not wish their children's pictures to be used in promotional materials should make that request known, in writing, to the school administration at registration time.

School Phones

The school phones are for business and emergency calls only. Students may use school phones only with permission, and only for school related or emergency calls. School personnel will assist in such calls.

Students and teachers will not be called from their classes to answer the telephone. Emergency messages will be conveyed to the student or teacher in the classroom. Messages that are not of an urgent nature may be placed in the teacher's school mailbox or conveyed to the student or teacher after school or between classes.

Snow Days/School Cancellation

RMES follows the lead of Berrien RESA in our decision to cancel school. The announcement to close school will be broadcasted through our *Blackboard Connect* automated system. Because of this, it is important that you keep your contact information current. The

closing will also be broadcast over select T.V. and radio stations as soon as school personnel have decided to close school. You may also call the main school telephone number, 269.471.3225, after 6:30am for a recorded message.

Should school be open on a wintry day, and if road or weather conditions where you live make driving too hazardous, you may keep your child/children at home, or choose to come late to school when driving conditions improve. On such days, please call the school and leave a message on our voice mail, and then send a written note with your child when he/she does return. These absences/tardies will be considered excused absences/tardies.

Special Needs Students

Ruth Murdoch Elementary School welcomes students who earnestly desire a Christian education. However, the school is not equipped or staffed to accommodate students who have severe learning, emotional or behavioral needs.

Ruth Murdoch Elementary School will use resources available to us to assist students who are working below grade level, or students with academic challenges. The school has access to testing services offered by the office of the Berrien Regional Educational Services Agency and the services of the Andrews University Counseling Department.

Student Conduct

Students at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School are expected to show support, in word and deed, for the Christian ideals and morals to which the school, guided by Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy, subscribes. It is our desire to help children and youth develop ethical Christian behaviors, and promote a climate dictated by a Biblical world view.

Often it is easier to identify what is acceptable by contrasting them with what is unacceptable. Unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to the following:

- Using profane, rude or vulgar language or

gestures, or displaying obscene literature or pictures.

- Intentionally damaging property, whether it belongs to the individual or any other member of the school family.
- Being dishonest or willfully deceptive, cheating or stealing.
- Showing disrespect or defiance towards any faculty or staff member either directly or indirectly.
- Bullying and harassing behaviors of any type, inflicting verbally, electronically, or expressed in writing in words, symbols or pictures.
- Causing any type of disruption in the classroom that hinders the teaching/learning process.
- Demonstrating a spirit of willful insubordination or ignoring directions given by faculty and staff.
- Deliberate efforts to undermine the Christian principles that RMES wishes to promote and legitimize.

Supply Lists

All students will receive a supply list for their grade level. The school supply list is also available on our website (www.myRMES.org). It is important that students have their own supplies at school. Please bring these supplies to school on the first day of classes.

Testing

It is understood that parents who have enrolled students at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School give the school the approval for student testing designed to assess students' scholastic growth and academic progress. The following tests are administered to students attending RMES:

ITBS/CogAt Tests: Iowa Tests of Basic Skills and

Cognitive Ability Tests are administered each fall to students in grades three through eight.

New students will be tested to help determine the most appropriate placement and help identify any areas of significant strength or weakness.

In consultation with the administration, additional individualized testing may be requested by parents and/or teachers to develop effective strategies to better meet the needs of the individual student. Written permission must be given by parents for special needs testing. These tests are administered through the services of Andrews University and/or the Regional Educational Services Agency of Berrien County. These tests may include tests to assess a student's academic, emotional, visual, auditory, or health-related needs.

Things Not to Bring to School

Please do not bring laser pointers, playing cards (type commonly associated with gambling), toys, dice, iPods and similar listening devices, electronic games or any item that is not directly related to the learning process. On occasion, special permission may be granted by the administration or by a faculty member if and when the object is considered essential for the day's school work or not necessarily distracting to the student or his/her classmates.

Traffic Flow

Traffic flow in and out of the RMES campus presents a challenge to both safety and efficiency. Please help us by being acquainted with the traffic signs and the direction of those directing traffic. The following guidelines are designed to enhance safety and the smooth flow of traffic:

- Do not exceed 5mph when children are present.
- Do not leave your vehicle unattended in the loading/unloading zone.
- Park in designated parking areas if you must leave your vehicle.
- Pull forward when the car ahead of you leaves.
- Load and unload your student from the

loading/unloading zone only.

- Keep your traffic number visible so the faculty calling numbers can see it easily.
- Yield and pull carefully into the thru traffic lane when you are ready to leave.
- Follow directions of traffic personnel.

Tuition/Student Accounts

RMES is an extension of Pioneer Memorial Church's ministry to its children and youth. Because of this partnership, members of the church make a significant financial contribution to the operation of RMES, through their free-will offering towards church subsidies to the school. Families that maintain an active membership at the Pioneer Memorial Church may enroll their own children at constituent rates.

Annual tuition will be charged in ten equal billings.

There is a \$30.00 fee for each returned check. Permission to attend classes, sit for exams, participate in graduation exercises and receive student transcripts/report cards are contingent upon all financial obligations to the school being met in a timely manner.

RMES reserves the right to withhold student records and grades until all bills are paid in full and other financial obligations are satisfactorily met.

Student account balances are monitored monthly, and are due on the 25th of each month. Students whose monthly bills, and/or monthly payment arrangements with the school are thirty days past due will be asked to withdraw from school until the accounts are brought up to date. A carrying charge of 1% per month is added to all unpaid balances.

All financial information relative to current tuition rates and fees is published in the RMES financial information page entitled *Partners in Christian Education*. This information is published each spring after the Governing Board has decided on the budget for the new school year.

Visitors in School

Adult visitors: In the interest of our students' safety, RMES maintains a policy that requires all visitors to the school, including parents, to sign in at the front office and wear a visitor badge while in the building. The safety of our children is of utmost importance and worth the minor inconvenience. We do appreciate your cooperation.

We welcome visits from parents to their student's classroom. However, in order to make your visit most productive, while maintaining the integrity of the teaching/learning environment, please schedule your visit at least 24 hours in advance with the classroom teacher. In order to minimize distractions, we cannot entertain more than one parent per classroom per day.

Special arrangements must be made with the administration if a parent wishes to visit a classroom when the regular classroom teacher is absent or when an Andrews University pre-service teacher is teaching.

Student Visitors: Students are allowed to bring guests to school only with the approval of the classroom teacher and principal, procured at least 24 hours in advance of the visit. Normally, permission will be granted for half-day visits only. Guest students must have a signed Consent to Treatment Form on file in the office before being allowed to visit a classroom.

Weapons Policy

The use of implements that are designed to, or may be used to, intimidate or cause physical harm are inconsistent with our commitment to serve the Prince of Peace. Weapons of any kind have no place in school.

Any object which includes, but is not limited to knives, tasers, mace, firearms of any type, ammunition and explosive devices may not be brought to school.

Students who bring devices to school that are not directly related to the teaching/learning process, but compromise the safety of the school environment will jeopardize their privilege of attending RMES. The school will bring Andrews University Public Safety and/or local law enforcement agents in to address

behavior that, in the view of the administration, faculty and staff, poses a danger to students and other school personnel.

Withdrawing Students

Tuition for students who withdraw during the school year will be prorated.

Please notify the office several days before the actual withdrawal date. There is a withdrawal form that needs to be completed and the office needs time to adjust the charges and credits on your account. Failure to complete this withdrawal procedure will result in the continuance of tuition charges. It will also cause a delay in the release of transcripts and grades.

A carrying charge of 1% per month is added to all unpaid balances beginning thirty days after the student discontinues school.

Merchant Partnerships

Campbell Labels for Education

Campbell Labels for Education have long provided schools with additional equipment. Please save your labels from Campbell and other qualifying products. More information about Campbell incentives can be found at www.labelsforeducation.com. The RMES account number is 2000-0000-0598-466.

General Mills Box Tops for Education

Box Tops from GM products can be converted in to cash. Please clip and collect GM Box Tops and turn them in at the RMES office. Visit www.boxtops4education.com for more information. The RMES ID number is 162924.

Harding's eScrip

RMES friends and families can pick up their Harding's eScrip Community Card at any Harding's Market or at RMES. Once you receive and activate your card, it must be scanned at checkout. Harding will contribute up to 4% of all monthly purchase amounts to RMES! Visit www.eScrip.com and click on Harding's to activate your card or for more information.

Martin's Advantage for Education

Register your Martin's Advantage Card at www.martins-supermarket.com or at any Martin's Customer Service counter. Once registered, a percentage of your purchases will be credited to RMES! Our school ID number is 4252.

Target Credit Cards

Every time a Target credit card is used to a registered card holder, a percentage of the purchase is credited to RMES! Visit www.Target.com for more information. Our school ID number is 9050.

Jr. High Curriculum

In recognition of the unique developmental needs of students in grades seven and eight, Ruth Murdoch Elementary School has designed a unique curriculum for them. The program includes a wide selection of disciplines in addition to core academic subjects. Junior high students who aspire for roles of leadership are offered opportunities to hone their leadership skills through holding class office, Student Association office, being on the yearbook editorial staff and/or taking mentoring roles in the "buddy" program, where they work with students in the lower grades.

Junior High Mini-courses

RMES offers the core subjects during the morning session, and a variety of mini-courses in the afternoons. These subjects are designed to enrich the school experience for students and also to complement the skills and information they learn in the morning.

Grades earned in the mini-courses become part of the permanent student record. Seventh and eighth graders register each quarter for mini-courses. Most mini-courses come with no additional cost to students; a few, however, may require a materials fee. Some mini-courses, because of the nature of the subject, have space limitations. Students may enroll in them on a first-come-first-serve basis. Some mini-courses are required for graduation. Students may be placed in these classes in order for them to fulfill graduation requirements.

Students will be able to sign up for elective mini-courses of their choice on a first-come-first-serve basis. When the courses with limited space have been filled, or if a student's request comes in too late, he/she will be assigned to another mini-course. The study hall and academic intervention options in the afternoon are provided primarily for the benefit of students who need additional help with their school work.

Graduation Requirements

Students who have successfully completed six grades

of elementary level schooling need to complete the following junior high requirements:

Core Subjects

2 years of junior high religion
 2 years of junior high math
 2 years of junior high science
 2 years of junior high language arts
 2 years of junior high social studies

Mini-courses

8 quarters of junior high physical education
 4 quarters of music
 4 quarters of art
 1 quarter of seventh grade health
 1 quarter of eighth grade health
 2 quarters of English Literature
 3 quarters of Microsoft Office Suite
 2 quarters of current events
 2 quarters of Bible Study
 2 quarters of math
 2 quarters of science
 2 quarters of outreach
 2 quarters of language and culture studies
 2 quarters of work education
 11 quarters of electives *

*Any of the above over the minimum required may be considered electives.

Students who attend seventh and eighth grades at RMES need to complete the full slate of requirements. Those who join the school in eighth grade will need to do the eighth grade core subjects and half of the mini-courses required. Accommodations will be made for students who are unable to complete all required subjects as a result of being placed in academic intervention.

Students must sign up for a minimum of six (6) mini-courses each quarter.

Eighth Grade Class Trip

The eighth grade class trip is an end-of-the-school-year activity that is designed as a fellowship time for the class before they leave elementary school. The trip combines educational, service and recreational

activities. The class trip is centered around Camp AuSable in Grayling, Michigan and includes locations and activities within driving distance from camp.

While the trip is open to all eighth graders enrolled in RMES, the school may withhold the privilege from students who have had significant conduct and cooperation issues throughout the school year, and whose participation, in the opinion of the faculty and administration, has the potential of undermining the overall goals of the trip. In order for the student to participate, the account with RMES must be current or satisfactory arrangements made.

Eighth Grade Graduation

Ruth Murdoch Elementary School issues Michigan Conference Certificates of Graduation to students who have satisfactorily completed the graduation requirements. A Certificate of Completion is given to students whose grades do not warrant a direct promotion or to students who have not completed all graduation requirements.

Eighth grade graduation is held at Pioneer Memorial Church, generally, on the night before the last day of school. There are no additional charges for graduation. Andrews Academy graciously provides the robes.

Graduation day is typically the last day of school for eighth graders.

Eighth grade students must have all their accounts cleared in early May (see calendar) in order to participate in the year-end activities and graduation.

The seventh grade class participates in the formal graduation program and provides a reception with light refreshments for the graduates and their families following the graduation ceremony.

Eighth Graders Taking Academy Classes

Students wanting to take academy credit classes while enrolled at RMES must fill out a request form and meet all of the requirements listed below.

- The student must be recommended by the junior high staff. To be recommended by

the junior high staff, the student must show maturity in behavior and responsibility and be judged by the junior high staff to be capable of handling the added pressure of taking an academy level class during the eighth grade year.

- The student must maintain an A average for each grading period during the seventh grade year in the class she wants to take at the academy.
- The student must maintain grades of B or above in all his classes during the 7th grade year.
- The student must score at least at the 95thile in the desired subject on the most recent ITBS.
- The student must have a composite score on the most recent ITBS of at least the 95thile.
- Students wishing to take algebra at the academy must make a satisfactory score on the placement test administered by the academy.

After the above requirements have been met, the Andrews Academy Academic Affairs Committee will make the final decision regarding allowing an RMES student to take a class at the academy. A tuition scholarship is granted by the academy with a one-time enrollment fee equal to ten percent of the regular tuition rate. To remain in the class at the academy, the student must maintain at least a B average in the academy class. An RMES student taking classes at Andrews Academy must show exemplary behavior. Any disciplinary issues while attending the academy class may result in the student being asked to drop the academy class.

Leadership Opportunities

Junior high students at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School are encouraged to take advantage of the leadership opportunities offered by the school. Some of these opportunities may include leading out in chapels and assemblies, participating in the "buddy" program, LIFT, intramurals, Bible Camp, as well as offices in the Student Association and classes.

Junior High Class Officers

(to be elected by the end of the second week of the second quarter)

Purpose of Class Organization

- To give students leadership opportunities.
- To help students to take ownership of parts of school life.
- To give students a voice in areas of school governance appropriate for them.
- To help students realize the practical applications of the school's Mission Statement in student life.
- To provide opportunities for students to understand and appreciate the unique values that affect the governance of a Seventh-day Adventist school.

The Executive Committee

The class executive committee will be made up of the elected class officers: President, Social Vice-President, Pastor, Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian. The class faculty sponsor will be an ex-officio member of the executive committee.

The executive committee is responsible for all class activities and work within the guidelines provided by the school. All executive committee decisions must be approved by the junior high faculty and school administration before they are announced and implemented. The executive committee coordinates all graduation responsibilities of the class in consultation with class sponsors.

Executive committee members must be present at executive committee meetings and at class meetings, and be actively and productively engaged in all class activities.

Qualifications for class office

- Demonstrate a willingness and ability to promote a consistent Christian environment in student life.
- Maintain a minimum grade of C in all classes.

- Demonstrate a willingness to cooperate with school rules and guidelines.
- Demonstrate a positive attitude.
- Be able to solicit support and respect of a majority of the class.
- Demonstrate a high level of personal responsibility in all areas of school life.
- Demonstrate good organizational skills.

President's Responsibilities

- To coordinate class activities in consultation with the class sponsors.
- To lead the executive committee in a positive and productive manner.
- To call organizational meetings of the class executive committee and general class meetings.
- To serve as chairperson of the executive committee, and general class meetings.
- To generate a formal agenda for executive committee meetings and general class meetings.
- To coordinate plans for graduation [Eighth grade for the graduation service; Seventh grade for the reception after graduation].
- To encourage students to participate in student activities.
- To support the school in reaching its own goals for the students.
- To represent RMES and the values it stands for in a positive manner.

Social Vice President's Responsibilities

- To organize and coordinate social activities during the school day: no more than one per quarter and no more than one hour of the school day.
- To make sure that activities are approved by the junior high staff and the administration.
- To keep all activities consistent with the values and principles of RMES.
- To make sure that all social activities are *inclusive* of all the students in the class.
- To keep all social activities respectful of the needs of other classes meeting in the

building.

expenditures

Pastor's Responsibilities

- To provide the spiritual compass for all class decisions and activities.
- To be responsible for worships and other religious events the class is engaged in.
- To coordinate Bible Lab activities for the class, in consultation with the faculty.
- To coordinate outreach activities such as Bible study groups, prayer bands, worships for lower grades, within the school.
- To coordinate other spiritual activities the class or executive committee decides to engage in.

Secretary's Responsibilities

- To inform class of upcoming class meetings and activities.
- To keep any records that might be helpful to the class.
- To keep minutes of executive committee and class meetings.
- To share minutes with the executive committee and the class, as needed.
- To monitor and ensure that the various tasks that are decided on for graduation are carried out by those appointed.

Treasurer's Responsibilities

- To inform the executive committee and the class of the financial needs of the class.
- To make sure that all class funds are accounted for, receipted, dispensed in a responsible manner.
- To collect money that comes into the class fund and deposit it in the school office, or other officially designated safe place.
- To periodically, provide the executive committee, class and the school office with a detailed statement reflecting the class's financial standing.
- To be responsible for purchasing materials as decided by the executive committee and/or class.
- To keep records [with receipts] of all

Parliamentarian's Responsibilities

- To be responsible that the venue for class meetings is ready.
- To help maintain order during class meetings.

Jr. High Student Association

The Ruth Murdoch Junior High Student Association is an organization that is made up of full time students of the eighth grade class enrolled at RMES.

Goals of the Student Association

- to offer students an opportunity to develop leadership skills
- to give students ownership of aspects of the governance of the junior high that are appropriate for their age and maturity
- to provide students an opportunity for peer mentoring and support
- to give students the opportunity to participate in the process of conflict management in an appropriate arena

Qualifications for holding office in the Student Association

- students need to be *bona fide*, full time students at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School
- students must demonstrate a positive attitude and loyalty towards Ruth Murdoch Elementary School
- students must demonstrate a strong commitment to personal spiritual growth
- students must demonstrate a strong commitment to the spiritual growth of their peers
- students must subscribe to Seventh-day Adventist Christian values and church standards
- students must demonstrate aspects of good citizenship and have a good discipline record with no incidents requiring disciplinary action
- students must have earned the minimum of

a “C” grade in all the subjects they took in grade 7 and maintain that minimum in all their classes in order to hold an office of the Student Association

- students must have earned the respect of their peers for their role as positive role models
- students must be willing to participate in all SA planning meetings and SA sponsored activities even if they infringe of the student’s leisure time

Responsibilities of the Student Association

- a. organize and lead out in social events that involve both the seventh and eighth grades. These will include, but are not limited to:
 - first day welcome to school activities
 - first week of school “junior high mixer”social event
 - junior high picnic
 - junior high fund-raising events consistent with school fund-raising policies
 - tubing event or alternate winter activity

- b. organize and lead out in spiritual activities. These may include, but are not limited to:
 - vesper programs
 - prayer breakfasts
 - coordinate the “buddy” program
 - help organize junior high assemblies
 - organize outreach activities
 - organize and lead out in Agape Feasts
 - assist in organizing Spiritual Emphasis Weeks at school
 - lead out in a Student Week of Prayer
 - organize carol singing at Apple Valley
 - organize Christmas party for a needy family during Christmas

- c. peer support. This may include:
 - serving in a mediatory role, in consultation with the SA sponsor, for conflict resolution among peers
 - assist new students adjusting to their new surroundings
 - be willing to assist students who may need

help with their academics

Organization of the Student Association

Full time seventh graders enrolled Ruth Murdoch Elementary School may run for a Student Association office.

Students who qualify for office must complete the petition to run for office by the second week of May. The petition must be supported by at least two classmates and at least one full time member of junior high staff.

The officers of the Student Association will be elected by the student body during the week before the Eighth Grade class trip.

Students may elect from among the candidates who run for office. Students may vote only for the candidates whose names are on the ballot. No write-in candidates will be considered. Candidates must receive over 50% of the votes cast for that office.

The Student Association will be made up of a President, Vice President for Spiritual Activities, Vice President for Social Activities and a Secretary/Treasurer.

SA officers are not excluded from running for class office. Class officers are elected at the end of the first quarter.

The principal of Ruth Murdoch Elementary School and one other faculty member from the junior high wing will serve as sponsors of the Student Association.

The Student Association will also include students from the lower grades when planning for activities that include their rooms.

Responsibilities of the SA President

- schedule and lead out in bi-weekly SA meetings in consultation with the sponsors.
- coordinate the master plan for the year’s

- activities
- coordinate SA activities with the junior high faculty and school administration
- take responsibility to make sure that SA activities are carried out as planned
- coordinate communication of SA plans with the rest of the student body
- actively encourage students to support and participate in SA activities

Responsibilities of the Vice President for Spiritual Activities

- coordinate the master plan for spiritual activities
- encourage fellow students to participate in the spiritual activities that the SA plans
- communicate plans for spiritual activities with the student body

Spiritual activities will include, but are not limited to:

- prayer breakfasts
- prayer bands
- Agape feast/s
- small group Bible study/prayer times
- assemblies and chapels
- vesper programs
- Student Week of Prayer
- Christmas outreach at Apple Valley and party for needy students
- Bible Lab outreach activities

Responsibilities for the Vice President for Social Activities

- coordinate master plan for social activities
- encourage fellow students to participate in the social activities planned by the SA
- coordinate social activities with the junior high faculty and school administration
- communicate plans for social activities with the student body

Social activities will include, but are not limited to:

- first day of school welcome activities
- first week “junior high mixer” social
- junior high picnic
- tubing event or alternate winter activity

- plan one social activity/quarter [to last no more than 2 hours of school time]

LIFT/Bible Camp

The Michigan Conference Office of Education sponsors a Lifestyle Improvement for Teens three-day workshop during the fall of the year. Students are introduced to a variety of topics that help them see the relevancy of Adventist beliefs in their world. LIFT is held at Camp AuSable, is limited to about twenty students and open to seventh and eighth graders.

The Michigan Conference Youth Ministries Department in collaboration with the Office of Education offers a weekend Junior Academy Bible Camp to which eighth graders are invited. The weekend is designed with the spiritual enrichment of youth in mind. Students are responsible for registration and transportation cost for both LIFT and Bible Camp.

Locker Use

Jr. High students are provided with lockers. It is important for students to abide by the following guidelines in order to maintain the privilege of using a locker. Locks and lock combinations will be handed out on the first day of school.

- Pictures or other objects that are used to decorate the inside of the locker must be in good taste and consistent with the spirit and philosophy of the school.
- No tape or glue may be used to hang anything inside a locker, magnets or easily removable wall putty is acceptable.
- Lockers are to be kept neat and clean at all times. There will be periodic locker checks.
- Lockers are to be used *only* by the individual who that locker is assigned to; students may not share lock combination information with others.
- No personal locks may be used; only locks provided by the school are to be used.
- No pictures or objects are to be displayed

on the outside of lockers [the only exception will be for approved campaign posters during class office or SA elections. Campaign posters may only be displayed with the permission of the locker owner.]

- Lockers are to be used only for materials and personal items that are directly related to school activities
- The locker must be locked at all times that it is not being actively used by the student.

Lockers are the property of the school and are subject to inspection at any time by school personnel, security officers or other persons who are authorized by the school.

There is an annual charge of \$5.00 for the combination locks that will be loaned to students. A \$20.00 replacement fee will be assessed for locks that are lost or damaged. Any needed replacement fee will be charged to the student's account.

The school cannot be responsible for money or valuable articles kept in lockers.

Other Jr. High Activities

Seventh Grade Activities

During the last school days of the year the emphasis is on learning in a non-classroom setting. These days may include field trips to places of historic or environmental interest, outreach activities, exposure to a variety of science disciplines at the Andrews University Science Complex, and service activities. During this time, our seventh grade students participate in graduation activities and plan the graduation reception.

The **eighth grade banquet** is one of the highlights of the students' final year at RMES. It is usually scheduled during the third quarter of the school year.

Other social activities for the year may include the **Junior High Mixer** during the first week of school, **Junior High Fall Picnic**, the fall 7th vs. 8th football game, the parent/student basketball, hockey, football, soccer, and badminton games, a winter activity at a local venue, and the **Talent Night**.

Spiritual and Outreach Activities include a variety of Bible Labs projects, The Children's Christmas Party for underprivileged in the community, the Student Week of Prayer organized by the Student Association, and the Agape Feast that is part of the Week of Prayer.

The School Day

School begins at 8:15 A.M. The building is opened at 7:30 A.M. for students who need to come early. School dismisses at 3:15 P.M. Monday – Thursday and at 12:15 P.M. on Friday.

Morning Classes

All students must take the basic morning core classes which consist of: Bible, math, language arts, science and social studies. Your class schedules will be handed out on the first day of school.

Afternoon Classes

The afternoon schedule will be devoted to mini-courses, *a unique RMES feature*. All students must sign up for 6 mini-courses each quarter.

Jr. High Code of Conduct

1. Show utmost respect for your schoolmates. RMES follows a strict hands-off policy. Students need to refrain from any inappropriate physical contact [with hands, feet, body or any object] with your classmates.
2. Follow the dress code guidelines in the school handbook
3. Unless otherwise directed by a teacher, mobile phones and other personal communication devices must be turned off during school hours, *and left in student's locker*. See Electronic Communications
4. Food and candy may not be consumed in classrooms or halls. All eating must be confined to the designated lunch room and designated times. No gum in the building at anytime, please, including during all school sponsored activities.
5. Coats, jackets and backpacks need to be *neatly* stored in the locker during the school day.
6. Please refrain from running in the hallways and help prevent accidents.
7. Students need to have permission from a faculty member before operating any school equipment.
8. Students are strongly encouraged to use school planners and document assignments daily.
9. Treat teachers, fellow students, visitors, volunteers and yourself with respect and Christian courtesy, at all times.
10. Conduct yourself in a morally upright manner in all circumstances and at all times. Take your responsibility as a representative of Jesus seriously.
11. Give yourself the best advantage at success in school by being focused on studies and paying attention in class.
12. Be punctual to all appointments, and be punctual about turning in assignments. Don't allow the socializing in the locker area between classes to interfere with your school responsibilities.

"Whatever happens, conduct
yourself in a manner worthy of
the gospel of Christ"

This bulletin has been prepared by the Andrews University Governing Board of
Ruth Murdoch Elementary School and the Administration and Faculty of
Ruth Murdoch Elementary School, in harmony with the educational guidelines of the
Office of Education of the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

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The North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists
NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT
For Adventist Schools

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, in all of its church schools, admits students of any race to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at its schools, and makes no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, country of origin, or gender in the administration of education policies, applications for admission, scholarship or loan programs, and extracurricular programs.