



Joliet Public School District 86
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Charles E. Coleman, Ed.D.
Superintendent

2013

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2014

PARENT – STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

Cunningham Elementary School

Cunningham Elementary School
500 Moran Street
Joliet, IL 60435
815-723-0169

Maria Arroyo, Principal

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Message from the Principal

August 2013



Dear Cunningham Families:

Welcome to the 2013-2014 school year! We are all excited to welcome your children to a new school year and building a learning community together.

M. J. Cunningham is known as the “Home of the Comets” and “Home of the Kernel Kids”. We are committed to academic excellence and to serving our diverse population with respect and dignity. At Cunningham, all staff members work hard to create a sense of community and a safe school environment. High academic standards are set in order to challenge every child to learn, grow and reach his/her fullest potential. We believe that it takes a team to educate a child, and that parents play an important role in the education and learning of their children.

The student-parent supplement contains essential information about M. J. Cunningham School. I ask that you read the handbook thoroughly to familiarize yourself with our procedures and policies. Please discuss pertinent information with your children. Feel free to call me or ask any staff member if you have any questions about the content of the supplement.

Welcome to the team!

Sincerely,

Maria Arroyo, Principal

Governor Signs Official Snack Bill

School Project Becomes Law

JOLIET, IL – Second and third graders from Cunningham Elementary, along with their teacher Miss Fran Hollister, witnessed today Governor Rod R. Blagojevich sign Senate Bill 185 that made their class project, to make popcorn the official snack food of the State of Illinois, become law.

“While the students learned a lesson in civics, we hope that the publicity the children received will spur the production, consumption and passion for popcorn in Illinois even more,” said Governor Blagojevich. Popcorn production in Illinois ranks third in the nation according to the Illinois Statistics Services (ISS).

The most recent statistics from ISS also show that in 1997 Illinois harvested 46,970 acres of the movie-time treat and of all Illinois counties Mason County produced the most popcorn.

The assignment, to learn how the students can make a difference, taught them how to write persuasively and how to use technology for research. Results of their research found that an unadorned, natural version of the popped snack is a healthy alternative to junk food. They also conducted a poll where they discovered that of the 311 citizens surveyed an overwhelming majority – 140 – picked popcorn over potato chips and cookies as the official state snack.

The “Cunningham Kernel Kids,” also experienced first-hand the legislative process when bill sponsor State Senator Larry Walsh (D-Joliet) invited them to watch the vote at the State Capitol.

Popcorn joins the company of the Violet, the State Flower; the Fluorite, the State Mineral; the White-tailed Deer, the State Animal; the Bluegill, the State fish and the Tully Monster, the State Fossil.

From the archives of the Office of the Governor



Home of the "Kernel Kids"



Our Vision Statement:

Cunningham students,
with support from the staff, parents, and community,
will be empowered with skills and knowledge
to successfully meet high academic
and self-guided goals
now and in their future endeavors.

Peace Pledge

I am a peace builder I pledge to praise people, to give up putdowns;
I will build peace at home, at school, and in my community everyday.

CUNNINGHAM STAFF

Principal

Ms. Arroyo

Assistant Principal

Mr. Latting

Secretary

Mrs. Gonzales

Office Clerical Aides

Mrs. Scheidt

Mrs. Escamilla

Kindergarten

Ms. Ahern

Ms. Lowry

Mrs. Richards

Mrs. Looock (Bilingual)

Mrs. Borges (Bilingual)

First Grade

Mrs. Weber

Ms. Armstrong

Mrs. Playa

Mrs. Almazan (Bilingual)

Mrs. Lemus (Bilingual)

Second Grade

Ms. Smith

Mrs. Viglielmo

Ms. Martinez (Bilingual)

Mr. Salmeron (Bilingual)

Third Grade

Mrs. Carroll

Ms. Lee

Mr. Borden

Mrs. Almazan (Bilingual)

Fourth Grade

Ms. D'Arcy

Ms. Reyes

Ms. Timms

Mrs. Herrera (Bilingual 4/5)

Fifth Grade

Mrs. Stein

Mrs. Tuhowski

Mrs. Walker

Physical Education

Ms. Ralston

Art

Mrs. Johnson

Library

Mrs. Nelsen

Special Education

Mrs. Decraene

Mrs. Jean-Simon

Para-Professionals

Ms. Muraro

Mrs. Tello

Custodians

Ms. Mackins, Building Engineer

Mr. Martinez

Mrs. Moffet

Cafeteria Staff

Mrs. Vazques

Mrs. Muñiz

Mrs. Schedit

Mrs. Escamilla

Mrs. Weihofen

Ms. Fleming

Ms. Conradi

Nurse

Mrs. Flood

SPED Coordinator

Psychologist

Deb Stickler

Speech

Elizabeth Emph

Liz Braun (Bil)

Orchestra

Clifford Hunt

Band

Laura Jelinek

ABSENCE REPORTING

Please **call 723-0169** between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m. on the first day of the absence. A note should accompany the child upon returning to school.

- If the school receives no call, the automated system or attendance secretary will contact the parent.
- Parents/guardians must provide and maintain at least one valid current telephone number where they or another responsible adult may be reached in the event of an absence. If you change your number, please notify the school office immediately.
- Any student who has an unexcused absence from school shall not participate in any school activity on that day.
- Upon returning, the student is responsible for contacting the teacher(s) to arrange make-up work.

(If the school is unable to make contact, the student will be considered truant and may be reported to the Joliet Public Grade School District 86 Truancy officer. Repeated occurrences could result in truancy proceedings.)

- **Arrival before 10:30 a.m.** will be counted as a full day of attendance. **Arrival any time after 10:30 a.m.** will be counted as a half day of attendance. These guidelines will also be followed in cases where students leave school due to illness or other emergencies.
- **Extended vacations are not excused absences;** furthermore those missed days will count towards truancy (unexcused absences). Please note the school calendar and schedule vacation dates accordingly.
- When there are frequent or excessive absences parents may be requested to produce a note from the doctor when a student is not in school.
- If your child becomes ill or injured during school hours, parents will be contacted before students can be sent home. Parent or an adult relative listed as the contact person will need to pick-up the student.
- Parents are encouraged to make doctor's appointments outside of the scheduled school hours. Students are to leave school early only in the case of an emergency.

ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT PROGRAM – See District Handbook

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

ALL STUDENTS at M.J. Cunningham will be required to meet the majority of the District's grade level outcomes in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Students are expected to have a minimum overall GPA of 2.0 for promotion to the next grade. Students falling below this expectation will be targeted for various interventions and programs. After school, and other programs with additional support such as "Promotion Monitoring Plan", may be offered to a student that has fallen below expectations. Parents will be notified when their child falls below the academic expectations. Parental support is a vital part of the

interventions. In an effort to improve student achievement, Joliet Public Schools District 86 has implemented a promotion and retention policy.

ACCIDENT

The school will make every effort to inform the parents of any accident or illness occurring at school that may need care or observation from home. Every accident that occurs in the school building, on the school grounds, during any event sponsored by the school must be reported immediately to the person in charge of the activity and to the school office.

Students report to the office for an injury. The nurse/office may only apply ice or a bandage to an injury. Parents will be contacted in the event of a serious injury. An accident report will be completed by the supervising adult. It will be sent home with the child and placed on file.

ADMISSION and REGISTRATION for KINDERGARTENERS – See District Handbook

ARRIVAL TIMES/SCHEDULE

Please refrain from dropping off students prior to 8:50 a.m. which is our scheduled supervision time. Students will not be allowed to come into building before the scheduled supervision time of 8:50 a.m. Parents will be responsible for unsupervised children left on school grounds before 8:50 am.

- Arrival Time - 8:50 a.m.
- Start Time - 9:00 a.m.
- Regular Dismissal - 3:10 p.m.
- School Improvement Day Early Dismissal - 12:10 p.m.

Arrival Waiting Areas

Kindergarten – Kindergarten hall by student's classrooms
First and Second Graders – Gym
Third – Multi-Purpose Room (MP Room)
Fourth and Fifth Graders – Hallways

Arriving at School

Please pull up to the sidewalk and let your student out. Kindly do not park and get out of your vehicle. This line needs to keep moving. If you need to park and get out of your vehicle please park your car away from the drop off zone (Moran and Nicholson St).

If your child is tardy, the adult dropping them off must come into the building with the student and sign them in at the office.

Articles Prohibited at School – Personal Property

Certain articles are prohibited at school because of safety factors. These include: knives, league baseballs, slingshots, weapons, look-alike weapons, matches, lighters, pagers, cell phones, and laser pointers.

Possession or use of a weapon or any other object that might be considered a weapon or used as a weapon is prohibited and will result in a suspension and/or expulsion proceeding.

Other items are prohibited on school property because they cause a disruption to the educational process. These include (but are not limited to) collector cards – such as Pokémon, games, video games, walkie-talkies, cell phones, radios, MP3 players, iPods, iPads, cameras, excessive amounts of money, valuable jewelry, etc.

If your child has any of these items during school hours, the item will be held in the office until dismissal. At that time, you may pick it up from the Main Office.

Unless allowed by the classroom teacher as a reward, candy and gum chewing are prohibited in the classroom and on the school grounds. Please assist us by helping your child understand the need for these expectations.

It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that children do not bring prohibited, inappropriate or expensive items to school.

NOTE: We will not be responsible nor conduct any searches/investigations for any lost expensive items brought to school.

ASSESSMENT

Measuring student achievement is one of the most important components of successful schools. At M.J. Cunningham we rely on formative assessments to help us plan future instruction. We utilize summative assessments to help us celebrate the practices that worked, and to rethink the practices that weren't as successful. Students are tested throughout the year with the following assessments:

- RIGBY - assessment to determine student's reading comprehension levels.
- AIMSweb - reading and math benchmark and progress monitoring of essential skills.
- Discovery Education (DEA) - assessment that helps identify mastery/weakness of learning standards.
- ACCESS - assessment for English Language Learners which helps determine acquisition of the English language.
- ISAT - standardized test for grades 3-5 that measures mastery of state standards throughout Illinois.

ATTENDANCE

It is essential that students attend school on a regular and timely basis. The school can request a doctor's excuse or other documentation for excessive absences. See District Guidelines for Truancy.

Being prompt is a valuable lifetime habit and should be encouraged by parents. A student who arrives at school after 9:00 a.m. should report to the office where a late pass will be

issued. Upon receiving the late pass, the student should proceed to class. Students who are tardy three or more times in a grading period will receive a lunch detention.

Leaving School Before Dismissal: Parents wishing to pick up students during the day for medical appointments, etc., must come to the office in order to have them paged. Parents will be asked to “sign out” their child in a notebook kept in the office. Families are urged to make such appointments before or after school to avoid absences or interruptions to instruction whenever possible. In an effort to minimize interruptions to the classrooms at the end of the day, **students cannot be checked out after 2:30 p.m.** This time is reserved for announcements, homework assignments and end-of-the-day instructions. Please keep this in mind when making appointments.

BAND AND ORCHESTRA

Band and Orchestra are available for fourth and fifth grade students. Students meet two times during the week. The students receive a grade on their report card for band or orchestra.

BASKETBALL / CHEERLEADING

M.J. Cunningham in partnership with the YMCA offers a basketball and cheerleading program for fourth and fifth grade students. Students are required to maintain an overall “C” average and have less than 3 absences per quarter in order to be eligible to participate. Athletes are expected to demonstrate proper behavior during practices and games, and follow guidelines established in our handbook. Severe behavioral problems will result in removal from school sports.

BREAKFAST / LUNCH PROGRAMS

M.J. Cunningham serves breakfast daily. Order forms are given to students on Tuesday and must be returned to the office by Friday in order for breakfast to be ordered for the following week.

NOTE: Any student who does not turn the form into the office by Friday may not participate in the breakfast program the following week.

LUNCH

All students may participate in the hot lunch program. Any student who does not participate of the free lunch program offered at or school must bring a sack lunch from home.

Lunch menus are sent home at the beginning of the month. ***Gum, carbonated beverages and energy drinks high in caffeine are not to be brought to school.*** Glass containers are not allowed.

Hot chips such as Takkies, Hot Cheetos, etc are not allowed at school. Please make sure your child does not bring these items to school unless approved by the teacher or they will be confiscated.

LUNCHROOM EXPECTATIONS

Students are encouraged to eat only the food from the lunch provided by the district or the one brought from home. Please ask your child to not share their food with others. ***This is a safety issue due to food allergies and other health issues that make monitoring a child's food intake of dire importance.***

Students are expected to behave in the cafeteria as they would in any dining situation. Lunch time is an opportunity for students to socialize in a courteous and orderly manner. When in the cafeteria, students must observe the following rules:

- Stand quietly when in line, keeping your hands and feet to yourself.
- Take their seat quickly and silently.
- Sit on your bottom at your assigned place.
- Ask permission before leaving their seat.
- Respond to **all** adults in a respectful, orderly manner.
- Refrain from talking when the RED Stop Sign/ Level 0 is turned.
- May talk when GREEN Go Sign/Level 2 is turned (level 1 or 2).

- Food may not be shared.
- Use good manners while eating and talking to your friends.
- Clean your own area when being dismissed.

LUNCH TIMES

Kindergarten & 1 st Grade	11:00 a.m.-11:40 a.m.
2 nd & 3 rd Grade	11:50 p.m.- 12:30 p.m.
4 th & 5 th Grade	12:40 p.m.-1:20 p.m.

The breakfast, lunch and recess programs are supervised. Students are to show respect for all staff, since the responsibility of the lunch/recess supervisors is to provide a safe and orderly environment. A student will be sent to the office during breakfast/lunch and/or recess, for inappropriate behavior. In extreme cases, a referral will be written to document the incident.

Other arrangements for breakfast/lunch and or recess may be made for students who frequently are sent to the office.

BULLYING

Not all meanness and cruelty is bullying. Bullying refers to **repeated** psychological, social and physical aggression propagated by those who are more physically or socially powerful.

Students in classrooms with serious bullying problems create an unsafe environment that affects the social climate and learning environment of the entire classroom. Bullying can create a climate of fear and anxiety in a school, distracting students from their schoolwork and impeding their ability to learn.

It is critical that we all be on the lookout for signs of bullying. Although we might not actually witness a bullying incident (bullies are very adept at tormenting their victims outside the presence of adults), we should see the results of the bullying. A child who is bullied might show any or all of the following characteristics:

- Anxiety in class.
- Frequent visits to the school nurse.
- A decline in academic performance.
- Unusual sadness or withdrawal from peers.
- Unexplained bruises.

At the classroom level we will:

- Promote kindness, communication, cooperation, and friendship and includes lessons and activities stressing empathy, anger management, and conflict resolution skills throughout the school year.

- Address bullying issues immediately and apply consequences for aggressive behavior and immediate rewards for inclusive behavior.

Possible sanctions include but are not limited to having the bully:

- Apologize.
- Discuss the incident with the teacher, principal, and/or parents.
- Spend time in the office or another classroom.
- Suspension / expulsion.
- Weekly meetings to communicate to students clear and consistently enforced expectations and to engage them as resources in preventing bullying behavior.
- Ongoing communication with parents.

At Cunningham, bullying or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES/TOYS

We ask that parents turn off or silence cell phones when visiting or volunteering in classrooms, the library or in other work areas. Unanswered rings or even quiet phone conversations are distracting to students and staff.

The use of cell phones by students is strictly prohibited during the instructional day. Students **DO NOT** need their cell phones during learning time or while at school. Students that bring cell phones to school can turn them in to the office when arriving at school and pick up their cell phones from the office at the end of the day.

Students may keep their cell phones but those will need to be OFF and put away at all times while in school or school property. If a student needs to call home, they will need to use the office phone. Any student who uses their cell phone during school hours is in violation of our school policy and may be subject to being discipline as outlined in the section Levels Acts of Misconduct.

Battery operated games/toys or other electronic equipment should not be brought for use on the bus, during recess or at other school activities. These items are not permitted during the school day.

Any unauthorized electronic items brought to school will be confiscated until a parent is able to pick up the item. We are not responsible for any lost/stolen cell phones, electronic devices or toys.

CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS

Children enjoy celebrating their birthdays. However, in an effort to minimize interruptions during instructional time, we will not be celebrating students' birthdays at school. We will acknowledge a student's birthday with a message over the intercom system, a pencil and a

certificate. Birthday celebrations, balloons, flowers, cupcakes etc., are not permitted at Cunningham.

Room parents chosen by the teacher will help or organize other celebrations at various times of the year which includes fall, winter or fall holidays.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum at M.J. Cunningham is aligned to the new Common Core Standards. These newly adopted standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn in K-12 math and language arts. Our state adopted the Common Core Standards to raise the bar in all grades and to ensure that our students are receiving a relevant and rigorous education. The adoption of the CCSS means that your child will be better prepared to meet the demands of college and/or the work place in the 21st century. Today's global economy means that our students need to possess academic standards by the completion of twelfth grade to ensure their success in college and/or workforce. Through integration of Common Core Standards in our curriculum, students will learn to apply prior knowledge to new learning experiences.

DISASTER DRILLS

During the course of the year, disaster drills are conducted for fire and tornado. Information is posted in each classroom and the students are instructed as to procedures.

During ***Fire Prevention Week***, the Joliet Fire Department conducts a fire drill and presents a program of fire safety to the students.

Cunningham School is equipped with a special emergency receiver to receive direct communication from the State Police Headquarters in the event of tornado, heavy windstorm or other natural emergencies.

FIRE DRILLS

Frequently during the school year, we will have fire drills to practice evacuating the building as quickly as possible. Students must follow these regulations:

- Leave by the exit the teacher indicates to use.
- Maintain an orderly line and exit as quickly as possible.
- Walk quietly; there should be no talking during the drill.
- Move at least 500 feet away from the building.
- Remain with your class outside so attendance may be taken.
- Wait until you have been instructed to reenter the building.
- If you are not with your class at the time of the fire drill, leave by the closest exit and notify the teacher of the nearest group.

All adults, including parent volunteers, in the building at the time of the fire drill are expected to exit.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Good discipline is necessary in order for learning to take place. It is important that all students abide by school policies in order to maintain the caring, educational and safe atmosphere at M.J. Cunningham.

Students are expected to demonstrate good behavior on a consistent basis. They are to show respectful and cooperative behavior toward adults and fellow students, and they are always expected to respect the rights of others.

Students who knowingly and willfully disrupt the educational process, break established school or teacher rules, fail to do schoolwork and/or violate the rights of others will be subject to disciplinary action based upon the severity of the infraction. Possible consequences are as follows:

Loss of privileges

May include but are not limited to failure to participate in school events, assemblies, field trips, etc. as determined by the classroom teacher or administrator.

5th Graders Privileges

During the 3rd quarter the fifth grade students will be looking forward to many different events prior to promotion. Fifth grade promotion is a time of celebration and joy for all. There are many special activities that will take place to celebrate the culmination of their elementary school experience. This is both an honor and a privilege to participate in any end of the year events such as field trips, fun activities, etc.

In order to participate students are required to meet the following expectations both academically and behaviorally:

- Minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0
- Demonstrate acceptable school behavior
- Paid all school fees and outstanding obligations
- No referrals for the last two quarters of the year

It is our expectation that all fifth graders participate in the promotion ceremony.

Detention

Students may be detained after school for disciplinary and counseling purposes. When this is necessary, at least one-day (or more) notice will be given in order for parents may make arrangements for the student's transportation.

Students who are continually tardy to school in the morning may receive a lunch detention. This detention will be served during lunch on the day that the student is tardy.

In-School Suspension

Student is placed in a designated classroom for the day. The student's teacher will provide the student with the classroom assignment for the day.

Suspension/Expulsion

Serious offenses may result in immediate suspension. Gross disrespect, serious misconduct, fighting, vandalism, contraband, gang-related activities, and dangerous possession of objects are grounds for suspension items (**see District Handbook**).

Saturday School

Students will be assigned Saturday School if misbehavior escalates after a conference with parents and three classroom detentions.

Classroom Discipline

Teachers will make every attempt to contact you to discuss inappropriate behavior and a plan for improvement when a student's behavior does not improve after classroom procedures have been put into place. For instance, teachers may elect to withhold privileges (e.g. recess, parties, programs, field trips, etc.) or assign a detention as a disciplinary technique. Parents will be notified prior to the detention date, and must arrange for transportation following the detention.

Grade level/teachers reserve the right to inform parents of changes in discipline procedures throughout the school year as the need arises.

DISMISSAL

This is a very busy time of day, especially in the beginning of the year. Here are a few hints that will help us and your child:

- If you are calling the office to let us know there has been a change in dismissal plans for that day, **please do so before 2:30**.
- In an effort to minimize interruptions to the classrooms at the end of the day, **students cannot be checked out after 2:30 p.m.** This time is reserved for announcements, homework assignments and end-of-the-day instructions.
- If you need your child off of the bus and it is after 3:00, you must call or go to the front office first. Most buses leave by 3:15.
- If you have any permanent changes to dismissal plans, please let your classroom teacher and the front office know ahead of time.

DRESS CODE

Appropriately dressed, well-groomed students promote pride, respect, and positive attitudes. Such qualities are the basis for creating and maintaining an effective learning

environment. The primary responsibility for appropriate dress and grooming rests with students and their parents. Clothing should be clean, neat, the appropriate size, and appropriate in nature.

Please note the following stipulations:

- Attire must comply with health and safety regulations.
- Shorts may be worn; the length of the shorts must reach the fingertips with arms extended downward while in a standing position.
- No clothing with abusive, vulgar language printed on the clothing is allowed.
- Students may not wear clothing that exposes their midriff halter tops with spaghetti straps and tank tops may not be worn.
- Excessive hair coloring such as: blue, purple, green, pink, and red will not be permitted.
- No one is allowed to wear scarves that do not pertain to their religious beliefs or hats in the building.
- Students may NOT wear gloves, hats, doo-rags, bandanas, visors, outside coats/jackets, windbreakers, hoodies, or insulated vests in school during the school day.
- Students may NOT wear gang-related attire and styles connected to gang behaviors such as solid color combinations of blue/black, red/black, gold/black, belt hanging down the leg, one pant leg or arm sleeve raised higher than the other, inside out or backwards clothing, one arm in sleeve and one arm not in sleeve. If the above color combinations are predominant, students will be asked to change. Repeated disregard of this dress code may result in school consequences.
- Pants must be worn at the waist area with belt if needed to keep pants at the waist. **Sagging pants or shorts will not be allowed.**
- Underwear may not be displayed. Girls may not wear mini skirts/ tutus or shorts with leggings.
- Students may NOT wear pajama bottoms or tops or lounge pants to school unless related to a school spirit event.
- Students may not have slashed eyebrows. Both eyebrows must match.
- Students are **strongly advised** not to wear shoes such as flip-flops, which may cause a safety hazard, especially during recess.
- A student's appearance must not be disruptive to the learning environment. Students in violation of dress requirements will be referred to the principal who will require the student to change clothing.

NOTE: District 86 policies related to clothing, jewelry or accessories state; any clothing, jewelry or accessories that may be considered dangerous to student welfare or interpreted to be gang related may not be worn. ***Therefore, boys may not wear earring/earrings to school. The dress code for M.J. Cunningham School is in effect every day of the school year and it includes all school related events.***

Expected Behaviors at MJ Cunningham Elementary School

Respect For:	Classroom	Hallways and Stairwells	Cafeteria	Restrooms	School Bus	Recess	All Settings
Self	I will be prepared for the day.	I will greet others with a smile.	I will eat my food only.	I will use good hygiene by washing my hands.	I will sit in my assigned seat.	I will use self control.	I will show pride in my appearance.
	I will listen to the teacher.	I will walk in a single file line.	I will use good table manners.	I will keep private business private.	I will speak softly.	I will use appropriate language.	I will control myself.
	I will try to do my best at all times.	I will remain silent in the hallways and stairwells.		I will take care of my business and leave.	I will follow the driver's instructions.	I will be a Peace Builder.	I will always use appropriate language.
Others	I will do my own work.	I will not touch items that belong to others.	I will not touch the food of others.	I will respect others' privacy.	I will keep hands and feet to myself.	I will share equipment.	I will respond appropriately.
	I will be a Peace Builder.	I will keep my hands and my feet to myself.	I will talk quietly to those near me.		I will talk quietly to those near me.	I will play safe and fair.	I will keep my hands and feet to myself.
	I will listen to others.	I will compliment others' work	I will follow directions the first time they are given.		I will treat people the way I want to be treated and the way they want to be treated.	I will treat people the way I want to be treated and the way they want to be treated.	I will listen and follow the directions that all adults give me.
Property	I will keep my area neat and clean.	I will walk to the right.	I will leave no trace in my space.	I will not write on the walls or other surfaces.	I will leave the bus as I found it.	I will take care of the equipment.	I will touch only those items that belong to me.
	I will take care of books and other materials.	I will keep my hands and feet off of school property.		I will keep the restroom neat and clean.	I will follow the bus driver's expectations.	I will leave the playground as I found it.	I will not write on items that belong to others.
	I will leave the classroom workstation as I found it.	I will move silently with a purpose.		I will keep the restroom neat and clean.	I will follow the bus driver's expectations.	I will leave the playground as I found it.	I will not write on items that belong to others.

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAMS

M.J. Cunningham School offers a variety of intervention programs designed to offer additional instructional support to students. Based on learning needs, the following programs may be offered: After-School /Saturday School Tutoring Programs, and After-School Literacy Events. After-School and/ or Saturday school programs provide students in need of additional academic assistance with reading and/or math instruction. Students are encouraged to attend the “After-School and/or Saturday School Tutoring program during the 2nd and 3rd quarters of the school year whenever it is offered. When a student is enrolled in the extended day programs transportation may be provided. Information regarding the programs will be sent to the parents and parents may enroll their students in the program of their choice.

FIELD TRIPS

All student field trips are pre-approved by the principal and the District’s Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. Transportation is arranged by an approved bus company. Field trips are intended to enhance the district curriculum and offer students unique learning opportunities. Clearly defined expectations will be communicated to students and parents. If needed, parents may be asked to chaperone.

Please note: Students who frequently demonstrate inappropriate behavior at school will not be allowed to attend field trips – at the teacher’s and/or administrator’s discretion and all monies paid will NOT be refunded.

FGH Club – (Fifth Grade Helpers Club) – Student Council

Fifth graders are encouraged to fill-out an application to become a member of the “FGH Club”, (Fifth Grade Helper Club) or the Student Council. These fifth graders will become the leaders of the school body by serving in the areas of patrol, safety, mentors, technology aides and lunch helpers for the kindergarten students. Students who follow the behavior expectations of the school and classroom and who are being successful in the classroom are invited to apply.

HEALTH SERVICES

A nurse is on-site daily at M.J. Cunningham School. She may speak with students, teachers and parents regarding health and/or hygiene issues. Students requiring health or first aid services should report to the Main Office for assistance. In the unlikely event that a nurse is not on the premises, a District nurse is always on call for an emergency.

It is the parents’ responsibility to inform the school of any medical condition and to provide the appropriate documentation. All parents can assure their child’s success at school by providing good nutrition, adequate rest, and cleanliness, medical and dental care.

Please be sure the school registration sheet for your child contains a current emergency phone number.

HOMEWORK

Homework is any assigned work or activity to be completed outside of class. Homework will generally be assigned daily and will vary depending on the grade level and the individual teacher's objectives for the assignment.

Homework will supplement and reinforce what has been taught in the classroom. Some students may need additional practice in some skills taught. For others, homework is a means of completing school activities started in class. Students who have fallen behind because of extended absences will also need to complete missed assignments to catch up with the class.

Requests for homework may be made prior to 9:00 a.m. on the **second** day of absence. Homework can be picked up or sent with another child at the end of the day.

M.J. Cunningham students receive homework that is appropriate to their age level. Please monitor your child's homework and check to see that assignments are completed and turned in when due. If a student has several missed assignments, the teacher will contact parents to develop a plan designed to promote good study skills and work ethic. Consequences for not completing homework will be to complete the homework not done.

HONOR ROLL

An honor roll is posted after each grading period. A student who achieves a grade point average between 3.50 and 4.00 will be placed on the High Honor Roll. Students achieving a GPA of 3.00-3.49 will be placed on the Merit Honor Roll.

Teachers will notify and invite parents for award assemblies after each quarter as a reward for students.

ILLNESS

Parents may have trouble making a judgment call about whether to keep a child at home. Parents are generally the best judge of their child and whether he/she is different from normal but sometimes it is hard to decide what a real illness is.

In general, these symptoms warrant keeping a child home from school for the day:

- Fever
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Sore Throat
- Runny nose, cold and cough
- Earaches
- Impetigo or other skin rash
- "Pinkeye" or conjunctivitis

When your child is ill, staying home from school not only will help him/her recover, but will help all of us by preventing the spread of diseases.

Students who become ill at school will be sent home only after a parent or someone at the emergency number on the registration card is contacted.

Therefore, it is very important that the school has valid emergency phone numbers on file.

INTERRUPTIONS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Parental interruptions are NOT permitted during school hours. Instructional time is very valuable and disruptions must be kept to a minimum. Please let your child know before school how they will be going home. Students will not be called to the office to answer parent phone calls. Parents will have to leave a message with our school secretary.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES – See District Handbook

FOUR WAY LEARNING AGREEMENT

A Learning Agreement has been developed and implemented throughout District 86. The Learning Agreement highlights the responsibilities of teachers, parents, students and administrators for academic success and a positive learning environment. All stakeholders will be expected to demonstrate their commitment to academic excellence by signing the Learning Agreement. The Learning Agreement will be collected from each student in the fall.

LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found service is located in the Multipurpose Room. Articles such as gym clothing, sweaters, hats, gloves, etc., are to be turned in when they are found. Students who lose their belongings should check before and after school or during the lunch period. The school cannot accept responsibility for lost or stolen articles. The lost and found articles are donated to charity at the end of each semester.

It is helpful if articles such as hats, coats and gloves, etc. are marked in such a way that they could readily be identified.

*Eyeglasses that are lost are turned into the Main Office for safe keeping.

MEDICATION- See District Handbook

OFFICE TELEPHONE

Students may use the office telephone for **emergency** calls only. Forgotten homework, band instruments, money or permission slips for field trips, or after school arrangements are not considered emergencies. Please communicate with your child regarding sports schedules and after-school programs prior to the date of the event. This will help us keep the telephone lines open. We appreciate your cooperation

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

M.J. Cunningham is dedicated to maintaining open communication with parents, and community members. The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) assists the school in several areas. This organization helps with school events such as, Open House, Halloween Parade, and winter and spring celebrations, teacher/staff recognition and social events.

The Parent Teacher Organization welcomes all parent volunteers and community members to join and become involved in working together. Parents interested in joining this organization must fill out the form and return it to the Main Office.

PARENT PORTAL

A student's progress and assignments may be monitored by parents/ guardians through the **District 86 SISK 12 Parent Portal**. Parents must enroll in order to have access to Parent Portal. Please see the school secretary to fill out the necessary form.

To access the parent portal, parents should log on to the district website at www.joliet86.org and go to the **Parent Info** tab. From there scroll down to Parent Portal and click. Instructions for logging in and how to use the portal are provided.

PARENTING SESSIONS

M.J. Cunningham School offers quality parenting sessions, which address topics of concern for parents of children in the elementary grades. Parents will receive notice of the sessions and are encouraged to attend.

PROGRESS REPORTS, REPORT CARDS AND CONFERENCES – See District Handbook

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students in grades K-5 attend PE class twice a week for 30 minutes. Physical Education requires that students wear sneakers. Any student who is not able to participate in PE class any given day due to illness or injury will need to bring a doctor's note to the nurse and/or Ms. Ralston.

PICTURES

Student pictures will be taken early in the fall and spring. The students may purchase these pictures on the day they are taken. All students will have his/her picture taken whether or not pictures are purchased.

RECESS

Children will have outdoor recess on most days. Students will not go out for recess when the temperature or wind chill factor is below 32°. We ask that families plan appropriate clothing for each day's weather conditions.

If your child cannot go out because of recent illness, we must have a note stating why he or she cannot participate in outdoor recess activities. If a note is not received, the student is

expected to participate in outdoor recess. Students are expected to interact in a way that is safe and socially positive. Students, who demonstrate inappropriate behavior during recess, will be placed in an alternative recess setting at the discretion of the administrator.

General Rules

1. Follow directions.
2. Be respectful to supervising staff.
3. Wear proper clothing for outdoors.
4. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
5. Use good language.
6. Play on designated areas only (playground, black top, or field).
7. Take turns and share the playground equipment.
8. Follow game rules.
9. Keep stones and branches on the ground at all times.
10. Slides: 1 at a time, feet first.
11. Swings: Seated and one student at a time.
12. Keep a safe distance from equipment when it is being used.
13. Line up as soon as the whistle blows.

Playground

Children may not cross the street to chase a ball or other object, or to play, without the permission of the adult supervisor. Playground equipment is available for their enjoyment but must be properly utilized. Caution should be exercised when using balls, ropes and other playground equipment. Students are not to bring balls or equipment to school.

In general, all students must be in supervised areas at all times. No student is permitted to do anything that is harmful to them, to others, or to school property at any time. We are concerned about the safety of children and need the support of all parents in teaching safety habits.

RELIGIOUS OBJECTIONS

Particular religious beliefs sometimes conflict with state or school policies and procedures. In order for a child to be excused from such policies, a written note stating the religious objection must be on file in the Principal's Office and a copy will be given to the classroom teacher.

At Cunningham, students stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of our country in addition to the Peace Pledge. Various holidays such as Halloween, and Valentine's Day among others are celebrated with small room parties. In order to be excused from these types of social activities, a note must be sent to notify the teacher and administrators.

REQUESTING TEACHERS

As professional educators, we carefully develop class rosters. We take into account the needs of individual children, gender balance, academic balance, required special services, student relationships, and other factors as we compile class lists. This procedure is used so that classrooms of the same grade are heterogeneous and balanced academically and socially. Dividing the current students in one classroom between the available classrooms next year helps the children establish new friends and, therefore, to develop socially.

Each class is balanced as much as possible with an equal number of boys and girls, with a range of high to lower ability levels, and we are careful not to place too many students with behavioral challenges in a single classroom.

However, our efforts are inefficient when classes are filled by requests based upon vague reasons. "Her friend is in that class," and "My son begged me to request this teacher" are not valid reasons for a request, and in fact undermine school attempts to provide the best situation for all children.

Remember, you or your child may not necessarily relate to a given teacher the same as another person might. Your child is different and special.

Requests based on sound, educational factors unique to the child's needs, will be considered as we make our final decisions. However, there is no assurance that requests will be honored.

RTI

Response to Intervention, RtI, is a multi-tiered model of prevention and intervention which assesses each student to determine if additional support is needed to help the student master grade level skills. Students requiring additional support receive extra time in small group instruction learning strategies to overcome areas of weakness. These learning strategies also become a part of large group instruction.

Each grade level team is comprised of teachers, administrators, and support staff will meet regularly to discuss student progress and tailor instruction. Frequent parent communication will reinforce the importance of active student participation in the learning process. Interventions will be monitored and modified if the student does not experience success additional services will be looked at if needed.

SAFETY

*Children **are not** be on school grounds until the entry time of **8:50 a.m.***

*Students enrolled in the breakfast program may arrive at **8:30 a.m.***

Walkers to and from School – Parents are encouraged to review common safety rules for their children who walk to and from school. Children should use the sidewalks whenever

possible, cross at corners only using the cross walks, walk facing the oncoming traffic, obey school staff members and go straight to their destination without stopping to play.

Students that do not participate in the breakfast program should not arrive at school before 8:50 a.m.

When students enter the school, they are to proceed immediately to their designated areas where they will read a book until 9:00 a.m. All waiting areas are supervised by staff members from 8:50 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. This provides for a safe and orderly start of the school day. Any student who arrives at school after 9:00 a.m. will be required to report to the office.

Transported Children – Parents can help children grow in good safety habits by dropping off and picking up children on the designated areas only. Children should exit and enter cars curb side. Please respect students who are walking and crossing the street. ***Please note: Drivers are NOT to pull around stopped cars or busses when dropping off or picking up children. Drivers are NOT to use a hand-held cell phone on streets surrounding the school building.***

Students that are not transported by bus or do not walk should be picked up at dismissal time, 3:10 p.m. If for any reason a student's transportation will be late, the parent should call the office staff ***prior to dismissal. Parents MUST pick-up their children on time.***

However, if a student remains at the school after dismissal and the office has not been notified of a late pick-up, the student will be allowed to use the phone or ask office staff to contact someone on the emergency contact form. If a parent fails to pick-up his/her child on a timely basis, the proper authorities will be notified.

For safety and security reasons, prior written or verbal consent from the custodial parent/guardian is required before a student is released from school at anytime other than the regular dismissal times.

SIGN IN/SIGN OUT

To maintain a safe environment, we have established the following procedures.

Bringing students after the day has started:

- Go to the office to sign your child in.
- Student will be sent to his/her classroom with a late pass.

Picking up students before the end of the day:

- Go to the office to sign your child out.
- Office staff will call the classroom to have your child released.
- Wait in the office area for your child to arrive from the classroom.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

The Joliet Public Schools District 86 will launch an automated phone message informing parents of any school closing due to severe weather. Parents must keep updated contact information with the school. When weather conditions are such of a severe nature that schools must be closed, local radio stations will carry the announcements to inform parents, teachers, and students. Listen to WJOL, (1340 AM), WLLI (96.7 FM), or WCCQ (98 FM).

Please do not call the school for this information; listen to your local radio station.

SCHOOL FEES

Textbooks are furnished by the school district. Students are expected to purchase all other supplies needed such as: paper, pencils, pens, erasers, rulers, crayons, and scissors. All students will be given a supply list at the beginning of the school year.

School Information and Procedures

COMMUNICATION

Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers before and/or after the school day – preferably by appointment. For additional information, parents are encouraged to visit the District’s website at www.joliet86.org, or the District’s parent portal. Other methods of communications with parents are:

- Phone call
- Email
- Newsletter
- Conferences
- Informational Material
- Automated Message System

Please check you child’s backpack daily.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

Student insurance is made available through a group insurance plan and is optional to all students. If you want the accident insurance, please fill out the form that is sent home. Make checks payable to the name indicated in the instructions.

SCHOOL SPIRIT DAYS

Throughout the year, students and staff will enjoy a number of spirit days to celebrate special occasions, sports events and character education. Hats, favorite sportswear, and occasionally costumes are permitted.

SCHOOL VISITATION

We welcome visitors to our school. All visitors must report to the Main Office upon arrival. For the safety of all our children and staff, we ask that you call or visit the office in advance in order to set up a date for the visit. To protect the safety of students, all visitors to our school must report to the office to sign in and pick up a visitor's badge before entering the campus. All visitors will be escorted by an office staff.

SOLICITATION BY STUDENTS

Students are not to buy or sell items from other students or staff during the school day or on the school grounds. Again, students are discouraged from carrying large amounts of money to school. This helps to keep the children focused on their learning and helps to prevent the possession of contraband (items not permitted at school).

STUDENT ID'S

- All students will be issued a picture ID card when school pictures are taken. These are to be left at school and not to be taken home. Students are to have these ID cards when they go to lunch.
- Lost, damaged, or defaced ID cards may be replaced for a cost of \$5.00

STUDENT PLANNERS

All students are issued a M.J. Cunningham Planner at the beginning of the school year to help organize assignments and send communication to parents. There is no charge for the student planner however replacement of the student planner will cost \$5.00.

STUDENT RECORDS – See District Handbook

TARDINESS

Any student to report to school after 9:05 a.m. is considered late. Any student late to school must report directly to the office. Parents should accompany the student or send a note explaining the tardiness. Tardiness will make a student ineligible for perfect attendance. A child is tardy if he/she leaves school early.

One Tardy Student:

1. Disrupts the learning environment.
2. Requires more clerical work.
3. Costs teaching time for everyone.

LUNCH: We do not prepare school lunches at Cunningham. School lunches are ordered every morning at **9:20 a.m.**

It is the parent's responsibility to call the school before 9:20 a.m. if a child is going to be late to school in order for a school lunch to be ordered. Students will need to bring a sack lunch if a phone call is not made to the school by 9:20 a.m.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology is integrated into the curriculum. Students and teachers use technology on a daily basis for instructional purposes. Students are expected to use the technology available to them appropriately.

TEXTBOOKS

The school furnishes books and supplementary materials for instructional purposes to all students. This is done with the hope that this major investment will be properly safeguarded. Teachers only issue textbooks that meet the guidelines of "acceptable condition" as set forth by the teacher and the administration.

Students are responsible for their books. If a book is damaged or lost, students will need to pay the amount necessary to replace the book. Reasonable damage is expected as a result of daily use; however, unreasonable damage to textbooks must be paid for immediately. The fines must be paid in the Main Office.

TRANSITIONAL BILINGUAL EDUCATION (TBE)

M.J. Cunningham offers a bilingual education program for grades K-5. The objective of this program is to prepare and transition our students to the general education program. Guideline and procedures are prepared by our District Coordinator. Our instruction is based on our state standards, district guidelines and curriculum, and our school improvement plan. Students receive instruction in all core subjects in English and in Spanish.

TRANSPORTATION /SCHOOL BUS

In cases of gross disobedience or misconduct by a student who rides the school bus, privileges to continue to ride the bus may be suspended. Parents of bus students must read, sign, and return the behavior contract for bus students located in the back of the handbook.

During the period of suspension, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to transport the student to school. Just cause for denial of bus riding privileges include:

- 1. Repeated/willful disobedience of directives by the bus driver.**
- 2. Such behavior as the administration deems to threaten the safe operation of the bus and/or its occupants.**
- 3. Willful and/or repeated defacement of the bus.**
- 4. Repeated use of profanity in the presence of the bus driver or other riders.**
- 5. Possession of a dangerous or potentially dangerous weapon.**
- 6. All other behavior which distracts the bus driver and/or the bus dismissal team from their duties.**
- 7.**

Appropriate bus conduct is required. If student's behavior is not appropriate or presents a threat to safely transporting children to and from school they will receive a bus referral, which is processed by the school. (Please see a copy of this referral in Appendix A.)

Repeated bus referrals may result in the total loss of transportation privileges.

VANDALISM

Any pupil who shall willfully or negligently damage or destroy any school property, or the property of any other pupil shall be liable for damages and subject to disciplinary action according to the nature of the offense. The principal may suspend a pupil for such offense, and/or report the offense to the legal authorities for prosecution. Parents will be held financially responsible for the damage that their children have caused. This destruction of property includes but is not limited to, textbooks, classroom resources and PE equipment. Parents are required to make restitution for all damages.

VISITORS

To insure a safe learning environment for all students, please be reminded that all visitors must sign in at the main office upon arrival to school and receive a Visitor's Pass. Any school work treats or other items for students should be left in the office for pick up by the teacher or student.

Parents and other visitors should not go directly to a classroom to make deliveries or to pick up a child. Teachers cannot be interrupted during instructional time but also, it is an unsafe practice for visitors to be in all parts of the building throughout the day.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION - PTO

Do you enjoy seeing the children? Do you like when the joys of holidays are near? Does a child's happy face bring you cheer? Would you like to take a trip to the zoo, a pumpkin patch, a nearby play, or share a story or two in the classroom? Maybe your talent is technology, or you would like to help the teacher in the classroom. If you answered yes to any of these questions, we extend an invitation to you to join the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO).

In our meetings we announce upcoming events, plan to raise funds, celebrate the holidays, and brainstorm new ideas. We also work with the school staff to provide for the well-being of the children of our community. We would enjoy having you work with us for this upcoming school year.

We'll see you soon!

Parent Volunteer Form

Student's Name: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

_____ Yes, I would like to be a member of the PTO of M.J. Cunningham School

_____ No, I cannot be a member of the PTO; however I would like to volunteer to work and help with the following activities:

_____ Special Events _____ Fundraising _____ Holiday Activities

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Best times to reach you:	
Weekdays	
Weekends	
Mornings	
Afternoons	
Evenings	

Please return this form to your child's teacher.

2013-2014 HANDBOOK and SUPPLEMENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have read and discussed the student handbook and supplement with my parents.

I agree to cooperate fully with the administration, teachers, supervisors, and all adults working for our school.

I will strive to conduct myself in an appropriate manner reflecting credit to my parents, my school, and myself.

I realize the sacrifice that my parents are making to give me an education and will strive to do my best this coming year.

I further realize that the consequence for any continuous violation of any of the school rules will result in a conference between parents, teachers, administrators, and me.

I fully understand the rules for behavior on the bus. I realize bus privileges may be revoked due to my failure to comply with the regulations for bus behavior.

I and my parents are aware of the bus behavior expected of me and we acknowledge that failure to comply will result in my parents having to make alternate transportation decisions.

Student's Signature

Grade

PARENTS: We have discussed this handbook and supplement with our children and have made them aware of their responsibilities and privileges while attending M.J. Cunningham Elementary School.

Parents' Signatures

(Please remove this page from the handbook and return it to the homeroom teacher)

M.J. CUNNINGHAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

No Bullying Contract

2013-2014

“Everyone has the right to feel safe and respected at M.J. Cunningham”

At Cunningham, we expect students to:

“Treat all staff and fellow students with respect”

Bullying breaks this rule, because if you hurt, threaten or frighten someone you are not treating them with respect.

Bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

Students must not:

- Hit, kick, push, throw things at someone or isolate others.
- Be part of on-going mental bullying (psychological).
- Jeer peers or their families.
- Steal or damage other people's property.
- Threaten peers in any way.
- Name call or tease others.
- Leaving someone out on purpose and without good reason.
- Spreading rumors about someone.

This applies in class, on corridors, restrooms, at recess, school grounds, and on the way to and from school.

In the case of students.

1. If you are involved you will be warned to stop.
2. If you do not stop your parents will be informed.
3. District policy will be enforced as appropriate.

If you are bullied or if you know someone else who is being bullied you must tell someone, a teacher or your parents, and you will be helped.

Student Promise

I, _____, understand that there is a zero tolerance policy against bullying. I have read and understand that there will be consequences for bullying others as well as not reporting bullying incidences. Therefore I promise that I will make every effort to keep our school a safe and caring place by stopping my bullying behaviors and following these simple rules.

1. Treat ALL students with kindness and respect. I will not bully or join in when others do.
2. Resolve disagreements with others peacefully.
3. Ask for help from an adult if I am bullied or see someone else being bullied.

Student Signature

Parent Promise

I commit to encouraging my child to always respect others. I have instructed my child not to bully and understand it would result in an office referral. I have advised my child to report any bullying to an adult at school.

Parent Signature

***Please discuss this policy with your child, sign it and return it to your child's teacher.