McNeil Canyon Elementary School
52188 East End Road
Homer, Alaska 99603
(907) 235-8181, fax 235-8183

Parent/Student Handbook

Supplement 2026/2027

Vision Statement

McNeil Canyon Elementary embraces the partnership between students, parents, staff and community to prepare for our children's future. We value a safe, nurturing environment where learners create, work together and play. We strive to achieve high standards by integrating core academic rigor with technology and the arts. We seek to inspire individuals to their fullest potential.

The goal of this handbook is to assist students and parents in understanding and benefiting from the educational opportunities available at McNeil Canyon Elementary School.

The contents of the handbook are revised annually. Changes may occur during the school year if the administration feels the changes are necessary and in the best interest of the students. Please check the copy posted on our website for the most current information. This document is reviewed annually by the Site Council.

Site Council Members

Andrew Peter, Parent Representative (2 yr. term)
Kobi Lyon, Parent Representative (position opens FY27 – 1 yr. term)
Brad Conley, Parent Representative (position opens FY27 – 2 yr. term)
TBD, Community Representative (position open -1yr term)
Anne Love, Certified Staff
Lenore Swanson, Certified Staff
Joy Overson, Classified Staff
Pete Swanson, Principal

McNeil Canyon Elementary School 2026/2027 Staff

Pete Swanson	Principal
Joy Overson	Head Secretary
Corise Story	Teacher/Kindergarten
Anne Love	Teacher/Grade 1
Lenore Swanson	Teacher/Grade 2
Ashley Hanson	Teacher/Grade 3
Kendall Dellasperanza	Teacher/Grade 4
Madison Story	Teacher/Grade 5
Brandon Young	Teacher/Grade 6
Colette Choate	Teacher/ PE/ Intervention
Deanna Lockwood	Speech/Special Services
Amy Budge	Resource/Special Services
Anna Sawyer	Psychologist/Special Services
Lynette Lowe	Nurse
Alexandra Basargin	Sp. Services/Library Aide
Veronica Jones	Title 1 Tutor
TBD	Food Service
Josh Lockwood	Head Custodian
Shelby Cook	Swing Shift Custodian

Expectations

Policies, regulations, and rules are developed to enhance the educational environment in our school. Research and common sense indicate that effective schools are happy, exciting, motivating, and orderly. Rules and regulations are implemented to ensure an orderly and safe atmosphere for students.

The staff at McNeil Canyon Elementary School expects students to respond to directions, assignments, and school rules. Our goal is to establish an atmosphere that is pleasant for children and teachers, and beneficial to learning.

Student Responsibilities

1. Along with rights and respect come**s** responsibility. That responsibility includes students speaking up for themselves and others when they think their rights have been disrespected. We want McNeil Canyon Elementary School to be a safe and happy place where all teachers have the right to teach, and all students have the right to learn.

2. Students can ensure a safe learning environment by respecting the rights of other students to learn. This is achieved when students are calm and keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.

3. Students can respect the teachers' right to teach by being in their assigned space, ready to work on time, and by listening to and following directions.

4. Students have a right to expect a safe and supportive learning environment at school, and the school has a responsibility to maintain a positive and safe place for all students. Items that detract from the learning environment such as gum, candy, electronic devices (phones, iPod, handheld video games, etc.), skateboards, and other items that are not necessary at school should be left home. Items judged to be dangerous or distracting will be confiscated and returned to parents.

Students shall not possess or use weapons, dangerous instruments, or replicas in school buildings, on school grounds or district-provided transportation, or at any school-related or school-sponsored activity away from school.

5. Everyone is expected to respect the reasonable exercise of authority by school administrators and teachers in maintaining discipline in the school and during school-sponsored activities.

6. Parents and school staff have the added responsibility of making certain that all students understand what is expected of them and of taking reasonable measures to ensure that students understand their roles. The following condensed list of general rules is posted throughout the school. It is simplified to assist students in remembering their specific responsibilities.

7. McNeil Canyon Elementary School Rules-(these are general rules for students to remember)

1) Be safe for yourself and others.
2) Follow directions given by the adult in charge.
3) Be productive. Complete assignments on time and to the best of your ability.
4) Be cooperative. Ask for and give help when there is an opportunity.
5) Be kind. Respect other people's rights to learn, have fun and be a unique part of our school.

Behavior Management

The school establishes rules of conduct for students throughout the school- in the classroom, on the playground, while riding school buses, and at bus stops. The behavior management program is designed so that each student may maximize their learning potential while ensuring that other students may do the same.

A school-wide program of responsibility training will be used to promote outstanding student behavior. Staff members help students understand how they can control their behaviors. Through discussion and planning students learn to control their behaviors and accept responsibility for their actions.

When students choose to violate school rules and are referred to the office, they will be required to complete a Student Interaction Reply form. Depending upon the degree of misbehavior and the outcome of the conversation with the Principal or Designee, the student will be given a consequence which could include the completion of a Student Behavioral Referral form and a phone call to the student's parent/guardian. A variety of consequences will be implemented for students that violate school rules. The consequences may include but are not limited to recess or after school detention, contacting parents, and ineligibility for extra-curricular activities. Continuing or serious offenses may involve in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion. Parents are encouraged to contact appropriate school personnel if they have questions or concerns about their child's behavior and consequences.

School Day

Our school day is from 8:20am-2:50pm. Students who are driven to school are asked to arrive between 8:05 and 8:15am to allow time to take off their boots and outdoor wear and be ready for class by 8:20am. The staff will not be available to supervise students before 8:05am.

Clothing

Children should come to school dressed appropriately for the weather. In the winter and during rainy periods, students should wear boots, warm coats, gloves, hats and/or rain gear. In addition to outside footwear, everyone is expected to keep a pair of shoes to wear inside the building. A pair of non-marking tennis shoes is suggested because they can also be used on the gym floor. Only those with sneakers or athletic shoes approved by the teacher in charge will be allowed on the gym floor for physical education or after-school activities.

Lunch Program

The school district provides hot meals which are available to all students.

Costs are given at the beginning of the year and menus are sent home at the beginning of each month via our school newsletter.

McNeil Canyon Food Service

Student Breakfast	$2.50 per day
Student Hot Lunch	$4.00 per day
Adult Hot Lunch	$8.00 per day

All meals must be paid for in advance. Students may purchase meals daily or pay in advance and use the school credit card system. Parents are welcome to join their students for lunch. Please call the school in advance so we can inform the food service manager of additional meals. We also offer free or reduced cost lunches to those who apply and qualify. Applications are available at the office. All information is kept confidential.

School Registration

Kindergarten: Your child must be five years old by September 1 to enroll. They must bring a birth certificate, shot records, social security number and a physical exam to register.

New Students: Parent or legal guardians must accompany new students at registration. The following forms must be completed: district enrollment form, health card, authorization for mutual exchange of information. Students are asked to attend classes one day after enrolling so that we can arrange for a desk, chair and other considerations to make the new student's first day a positive experience.

Attendance

Alaska State School Law, Section 14.30.045, requires compulsory school attendance for those students under the age of 16. Students are expected to attend all class periods of the school day unless other arrangements have been made. Regular attendance is essential to a student's success in school. Most subjects are taught in sequence, requiring the understanding of each concept in the order of its presentation. Continued absences create a genuine hardship for a student.

Please call or e-mail the school (joverson@kpbsd.k12.ak.us) as soon as possible if your son or daughter is sick or is going to be absent or tardy from school. If it is impossible to inform us before the absence, please give us the information when the child returns.

McNeil Canyon Elementary School is a closed campus. Students are not permitted to leave school during the school day without a parent or guardian. **Since we are responsible for knowing where students are while in our care, parents must stop at the front office and sign out the student before leaving the building.**

Excused Absence and Tardy

1) Illness, doctor or dentist appointment
2) Family emergencies
3) Religious holiday
4) Prearranged absence/tardy for which administrative approval has been granted

Unexcused Absence or Tardy

1) Parent failure to notify the office
2) Excessive absences/tardies or other circumstances which cause the principal to deny a request. Reasons will be provided by the principal.

Policy on Pre-Arranged Absences and Extended Time Away from School

McNeil Canyon Elementary School recognizes that families may occasionally request pre-arranged absences for travel or family commitments. However, regular attendance is essential to student learning, continuity of instruction, and overall academic success. To balance these considerations, the following procedures apply to all pre-arranged absences.

The school will **no longer prepare or distribute instructional materials in advance** of a student's pre-arranged absence. Preparing work ahead of time places an unreasonable burden on teachers, and in many cases the work is not completed or utilized. Much of the learning that occurs in school—such as art instruction, group discussions, hands-on science activities, computer-based research, read-alouds, collaborative projects, and guest presentations—cannot be replicated outside the classroom. Additionally, extended absences negatively impact classroom instruction due to the time required to reteach missed content.

For **all student absences**, including illness and family travel, teachers will maintain a file of missed work. Parents and guardians are expected to support their child in completing this work upon return to school, in accordance with the Student/Parent Handbook, which allows **one (1) day of make-up time for each day of absence**.

When a pre-arranged absence exceeds **five (5) consecutive school days**, parents or guardians are required to meet with the principal prior to the absence to discuss the educational impact of the missed instruction and expectations for student learning.

When a pre-arranged or unexcused absence reaches **ten (10) or more consecutive school days**, the student will be **withdrawn from enrollment** in accordance with school, district, and state attendance requirements. Students who are withdrawn will be required to make up missed work upon re-enrollment, as applicable.

For students attending under **out-of-area attendance status** who are withdrawn due to an extended absence, re-enrollment will be contingent upon available space and class size limits as outlined in **KPBSD out-of-area attendance policies**. Re-enrollment in the student's previous classroom or school placement cannot be guaranteed.

This policy is intended to support equitable instructional practices, protect teacher workload, and reinforce the importance of consistent school attendance.

Make-up work

If a student is absent, regardless of the reason, parents need to contact the office and teachers. They also need to make sure the work provided by the teachers is completed and returned to school. The time limit to do make-up work is the number of days missed, plus one extra day. Parents are responsible for teaching missed material. In this way, parents and educators are working together to minimize the impact of absences and maximize learning opportunities for students.

Homework

The type and amount of homework assignments will be given at the discretion of the staff members at each grade level. Parents are encouraged to communicate with the teachers about any questions or problems concerning homework.

Testing

Students arrive at our school with a variety of educational experiences. We reserve the right to test students for proper placement into grades or classes.

School Supplies

A list of specific supplies is posted on our school website. Each student should bring a water container (water bottle, cup, glass, etc.) to leave at school to drink water. School supplies, backpacks, coats, shoes, etc. should be clearly marked with your child's name.

Communication

A monthly newsletter and calendar will be sent home at the beginning of every month, detailing events and activities for that month. In addition, a weekly notice will be sent out with current information or changes regarding activities, meetings, special events, etc. Teachers may also send newsletters home describing classroom activities and upcoming projects.

Field Trips

Field trips are scheduled by teachers throughout the year. These trips are designed to supplement different aspects of the classroom curriculum. Parents will receive notices of field trips well in advance of the scheduled trip date and will be asked to sign a field trip permission form. Sometimes a small fee may be requested from each student to help defray costs.

Weather Guidelines for Outside Activities

The following guidelines are used for outdoor activities and apply to students who are properly dressed for outdoor recreation. If the conditions are extremely wet or exceed the guidelines listed, recess and other school activities will take place inside.

Wind Chill Factor:	+5 F and above----Normal outside activities
	+5 F to -10 F -----Outside for maximum of 15 min.
	Below -10 F ------No outside activities

Illness at School

We will call parents (or emergency contact selected by you) to pick up sick children. Due to limited space, we cannot provide a place for children to recuperate for extended periods of time.

To send children or keep them home when they are not feeling well…

Regular attendance is promoted at school for a variety of reasons. However, students who have a bad cold, flu, etc. should not be in school. Since it can be a difficult decision whether to send them to school or not, these guidelines will help.

- Students should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. It is usually a good idea to keep a child home if he/she has a fever in the night. If sent to school, many students end up going home sometime during the day.
- Keep children home if they have been vomiting in the night.
- When making the decision on whether to send your child, please keep in mind the welfare of other students in the school.

Lost and Found

Lost and found items that are turned into the school are held for several weeks before being given to groups for the use of the needy. We will announce the lost and found "Display Days" prior to giving the items away. Lost watches, jewelry, etc. are kept in the office and clothing is placed in a large container outside the gym marked "LOST AND FOUND."

Student Use of the Telephone

A telephone is available in the office for parent and student use when necessary, however, we ask that calls be kept to a minimum. Arrangements for after-school social activities must be made before students leave home in the morning. Parents who need to leave a message for a student should call before 1:00 p.m. whenever possible**.**

Teacher Appraisal

The teacher evaluation process at McNeil Canyon Elementary is required under Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board Policy and is further defined in our Evaluation Handbook. The spirit of this process, however, extends far beyond the legal and contractual requirements. The major by-product of the evaluation process is the dialogue that it stimulates between teachers and principal about the most essential element in any school, classroom instruction. Hopefully this discussion creates an atmosphere which values and promotes the improvement process.

Parents may have input into the evaluation process by completing a Teacher Performance Survey. The Teacher Performance Survey has been developed to provide an opportunity for parents to comment regarding the performance of individual teachers. We hope to receive positive comments along with suggestions for change. This form is available on the district web page and may be submitted at any time.

There is also a Principal Performance Survey and a School Survey available on the district website. We invite you to complete any of these surveys at any time.

Playground Rules

General Rules:

- NO throwing snow
- Touch football only
- Back side of sledding hill is off limits
- NO sticks allowed
- 8 kids maximum on merry-go-round
- 1 on slide at a time, sitting down only (no headfirst)
- No sitting on top of monkey bars
- Snow caves & tunnels have a maximum of 1 ft. archway overhead

Sledding Rules:

- Plastic roll-up sleds only
- Can't slide down without a sled
- Students must get OK from duty teacher each recess
- 2 lines waiting to sled
- When kids get to the bottom, they need to move to side and walk up
- Must wear full winter clothing
- 2 maximum per sled

Lunchroom Rules

General Rules:

- Students must ask permission to leave seats.
- Excuse by table, not individually, when table is cleaned up
- Students will be seated by class
- Hold up students who run in with untied shoes, etc. and make them wait until last
- Outdoor clothing should be piled up past outlets in the gym
- Students MUST have a pass from the duty teacher to leave the lunchroom

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