**The One Room School House Philosophy**

***The Parent Is Always Right:***

At *The One Room School House* we assume that the parents of our students are smart and will make great decisions for their children. They have, after all, made a first great decision: to attend our school. We hope that they have read the Registration Agreement carefully and fully understand the important role they play in their child’s education. We believe that, as parents, they know and understand their own children better than we can possibly hope to. We know from experience that, working together with parents, there is no educational problem that we cannot solve when it comes to their children. We also know that there is little hope of resolving educational issues when parents and school staff are not on the same page. Since we have hundreds of students and hundreds of parents, we know that people of diverse backgrounds and philosophies will disagree on approaches to educational issues. However, there are some basic principles on which this school was founded that we all must agree on to make the school work for its children and families.

This manual sets forth the basic principles and how they are applied at *One Room*. Make sure you understand them and are comfortable with them as they must apply to all our diverse students and families for the school to work. As you know from studying our Registration Agreement, it is ultimately you, the parent who is responsible for your student’s success at *One Room*.

***Work Ethic:***

We believe that all students, whether gifted, challenged, or entirely average, need a strong work ethic to succeed in school and life. We believe that the simplest and purest expression of this ethic is that every student will finish all their work. We believe that your experience here at *One Room* will be miserable and frustrating if you do not share this value. And we believe that students will develop to their full potential if you do. Please take the time to enroll in a different school if you think we are wrong about this, because developing a strong work ethic is the driving force behind our entire program. When students fail to do their work, a chain of events begins that has all bad consequences. They do poorly in school. They miss out on the most fun and interesting parts of being at our school. They do poorly on testing which makes the school look incompetent and which costs a great deal of funding. We care so much about work ethic because it determines the quality of our school life. Parents are crucial to this approach because they are ultimately responsible for their students’ attitudes about work.

***The True Meaning of Discipline and Freedom to Learn:***

Discipline is not something that happens to you when you break a rule. Discipline is learning that there is a need for logic and persistence in every endeavor. Discipline is making a habit out of thinking and hard work.

We believe that the school’s most important work is creating an environment where diverse students feel free and encouraged to learn the essential skills of modern life. This environment must be conducive to attention and effort. We believe that your student should not have to work in an environment that is disturbed and disrupted by the undisciplined actions of another student. Therefore, we believe that when a student is interfering with your student’s education, that student should be removed from the classroom and delivered into the hands of parents who know best how to make their child understand appropriate school behavior. This applies as well to your student’s safety and feeling of wellbeing in school. As per our Registration Agreement, when a student is interfering with education in the classroom or creating an unsafe or disruptive environment at the school, that student will be sent home immediately.

***Attendance:***

Part of getting all the work done is being here to do it. For some reason, getting to school regularly and on time is not a habit with some families. Because getting work done is so essential to success at *One Room*, tardiness and lack of attendance have severe consequences. Grades are negatively affected by missed time at school. Participation in extracurricular activities is ONLY available to students who have all their work done and satisfactory attendance. We believe that the most basic requirement of parenting is to get your student to school on time, all the time, and ready to learn.

***Evaluation:***

We believe that evaluation should be precise, oriented towards the goals of the school, be timely enough to serve as useful feedback, contain all necessary information, and serve the purpose of planning for a student’s future educational needs. Unfortunately, much of the mandatory testing required in public schools is none of that. We will endeavor to accomplish this type of evaluation on a school wide basis. Report Cards will indicate your student’s effort as well as achievement. When achievement is insufficient, parents will be notified more often about student progress. Parents are encouraged to contact the school as often as necessary to make sure they understand their student’s academic progress and strategies they can participate in to improve it.

***Communication:***

We believe that you cannot help your student towards the goal of a strong work ethic and success in school and life without knowing fully and in detail how they are functioning at school. We have found that parents can have very different preferences about communications with the school. Some find that we do not write and call home nearly enough while others complain that the school is always bothering them. Our goal is that you have enough information to fulfill the extremely important role you have taken on by sending your student to *One Room.* We will communicate as often as we feel necessary to accomplish this goal for your particular student. General information will be available on the website and sometimes through e-mails. Please make a habit of checking both regularly.