

Elim Christian School  
2025-2026  
New Teacher Manual  
&  
Training

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## **Chain of Command**

\*There are more people “on the chain” but these are the ones you’ll need to know:

**Bill Lodewyk (President):** Bill’s office is across the bridge in the Executive Learning Center building.

**Dr. Vanessa Scott-Thompson/“Dr. V” (Vice President of Programming):** Dr. V’s office is also across the bridge in the Executive Learning Center building. She often walks the halls of the school just to connect with people and keep a pulse on what’s happening.

**Mrs. Dorothy Bowman (Director of Children’s Services/Principal):** Mrs. Bowman’s office is in the front of the school near the fish tank (Room 340). Her office hours are Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 8:00-8:30 am. You will receive a newsletter from her every week with updates, information, words of encouragement, et.

**Irene Yuska (Assistant Director of School):** Irene’s office is in the front of the school directly across from the school receptionist, Room 335. Irene can answer just about any question you might have and is a valuable resource for all of us!

### **Departmental Assistant Principals:**

**Kari Miller (Bridges)** Kari’s office is in the front of the school behind the fish tank, Room 332.

**Ellen Krcik (Bridges)** Ellen’s office is in the hallway that leads to the Bridges High school, Room 219.

**Monica Miller and Lauren Richmond (Pathways):** Monica and Lauren’s office is in the Pathways main office.

**Tim Griffin (Crossroads):** Tim’s office is the first one you see inside Building B.

## **Purpose of this manual**

The purpose of this New Teacher Manual is to provide a quick overview of information specifically for new teachers. This is not a replacement for the School Procedure Manual.

## **Program Overview**

Elim serves approximately 260 students, ages 3 to 22. Most of our students receive services at Elim because their home school districts were unable to meet their unique learning needs. On any given year, we serve students from more than sixty different school districts. We do have a few families who pay privately to send their children to us because they desire a Christian education for them. All of our students have an IEP and have access to curriculum aligned with the DLM Essential Elements and programmatic outcomes. Students attend the regular school year and have the option of attending extended school year (ESY). Extended School Year (ESY) is a summer session that is four full days of school per week for six weeks. We offer art, physical education, therapy (speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, social work services), library (Literacy Center), nursing, and community outings or field trips to all of our students. Many of our students need extensive communicative support, including visuals and technology-based tools. Our students all receive behavior support as needed. Elim is unique in that we are a special education school with a distinctly Christian worldview. We see our students and staff as uniquely created in the image of God. Every person on this campus has value and purpose, not because of what they can do or offer, but because of their connection to the Creator.

## **Admissions**

Sheila Romain is our Admission's Coordinator. Sheila works with families and with school districts who wish to have Elim provide services for their student. When Sheila receives a referral for a student, and she feels that we can serve the student, she works with the program administrators and a team of staff to determine if we have the resources and the space to allow us to admit the student.

## **Bridges**

The Bridges educational program includes preschool, elementary, middle, and high school classrooms. Students are grouped by age and ability. A typical classroom has:

- approximately eight students
- a special education teacher
- 1 assistant teacher
- 1 Classroom assistant- In Bridges classrooms with less than 5 or fewer students, the classroom assistant serves as a 1:1 paraprofessional. Should a new student be added to that classroom (now totaling 6 students), that classroom assistant transitions away from the 1:1 position and begins supporting the whole classroom.
- 1:1 paraprofessionals as mandated in each student's IEP

Kari Miller ([kari.miller@elimcs.org](mailto:kari.miller@elimcs.org) ext. 383) is one of the Assistant Principals for Bridges. Kori Watanabe ([kori.watabe@elimcs.org](mailto:kori.watabe@elimcs.org) ext. 302) is the administrative assistant supporting Kari.

Ellen Krick ([ellen.krick@elimcs.org](mailto:ellen.krick@elimcs.org) ext. 440) is one of the Assistant Principals for Bridges. Douglas Cordero-Riccio ([douglas.cordero-riccio@elimcs.org](mailto:douglas.cordero-riccio@elimcs.org) ext.306) is the administrative assistant supporting Ellen.

## **Crossroads**

The Crossroads program is for students ages 18-21 (the day before their 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday) and is designed to prepare students for life after school. A special education teacher leads each course with support from paraprofessionals. The Crossroads program has:

- identified courses
- block scheduling
- an individualized schedule for each student

Tim Griffin ([timothy.griffin@elimcs.org](mailto:timothy.griffin@elimcs.org) ext. 316) is the Assistant Principal for the Crossroads program. Elizabeth Raga ([Elizabeth.raga@elimcs.org](mailto:Elizabeth.raga@elimcs.org)) is administrative assistant supporting this part of the program.

## **Bridges Related Services**

Irene Yuska ([irene.yuska@elimcs.org](mailto:irene.yuska@elimcs.org) ext.) is the Assistant Director of the School and is the supervisor of the Bridges Related Services Staff. This includes the speech language pathologists, speech assistants, occupational therapists, certified occupational therapy assistants, physical therapists, physical therapy assistants, social workers, physical education teacher, and art teacher. Irene also serves as the supervisor of the Curriculum and Instruction team, and Admissions.

## **Pathways**

The Pathways education program includes elementary, middle school, high school, and transition classrooms. Students in the Pathways program are eligible for services based on a primary eligibility of Autism. The program is specifically designed for students with Autism who need a highly structured learning environment. A typical classroom has:

- a special education teacher
- an assistant teacher
- up to seven students
- up to four paraprofessional staff

Monica Miller ([Monica.Miller@elimcs.org](mailto:Monica.Miller@elimcs.org), ext. 346) is the Assistant Principals for Pathways.

### **People you should know**

Adanary Saenz ([adanary.saenz@elimcs.org](mailto:adanary.saenz@elimcs.org) ext. 368) is the School Office Manager. She is in the main office in Building A. She supports the Director of Children's Services (Mrs. Dorothy Bowman), Assistant Director of School (Irene Yuska) & Admissions (Sheila Romain).

Pastor Jewel Thomas ([jewel.thomas@elimcs.org](mailto:jewel.thomas@elimcs.org)) is our campus chaplain. She leads a prayer group every other Tuesday morning and is available for private meetings on Tuesdays.

### **Devotions**

Teachers, assistant teachers, therapists & administrators are expected to attend devotions when they are scheduled. Devotions take place on alternating Monday mornings, starting at 8:00 am. On the weeks when we do not have Devotions on Monday, staff can attend an optional open prayer session. These sessions will be led by our chaplain Miss Jewel and will take place on Tuesday mornings at 8:00 in the Bridges Cafeteria. To ensure you are aware of the schedule, staff are strongly encouraged to read the weekly staff calendar.

Currently we are doing our Devotions virtually. There will be a Zoom link provided via an Outlook invite. Zoom should be shown on your classroom Smartboard to allow all members of your classroom team to participate. Please note on the days that Devotions are scheduled, teachers, assistant teachers, therapists & administrators are required to be in the building and logged in by 8:00 a.m. Hourly staff members are welcome to attend but should not clock in until their normal start time.

### **Building Access Card**

To gain entrance to the building, you will need to use your electronic building access card. This card should have been given to you during new-hire training. If you were not given this, please contact your program secretary. If you misplace your badge or if it is not working, contact IT([computersupport@elimcs.org](mailto:computersupport@elimcs.org) ). This building access card also serves a secondary purpose. This badge is used at all our printer/copiers. This badge is your "key" that will allow you to print documents. Your Office 365 login is linked to your building access card. IT will also provide you with a PIN code for printing purposes to allow you or your staff to print/copy without taking your building access card.

### **Getting a Classroom Key**

Either your Assistant Principal or your program administrative assistant will give you your classroom key. If you lose your key, notify your AP.

### **Telephones**

You should have received a welcome e-mail from 3CX Communication System. If you have not received this information, please submit an e-mail to [computersupport@elimcs.org](mailto:computersupport@elimcs.org). This e-mail identified your phone extension and your assigned PIN#. This PIN# can be changed. The user manual for the phone system can be found here: <https://www.3cx.com/user-manual/>. **Please watch the following brief video to learn basic functions.** <https://youtu.be/8oZlVALBP1o>

### **Logins & Password**

Throughout the course of any given day, you will be required to use a significant number of passwords. Some of these passwords are for staff and some are passwords that relate individually to students. While Elim can assist with some passwords, there are some applications managed by individual school districts (specifically Easy IEP). Each of you will

need to determine how best to manage all your passwords. Passwords should be stored in a safe, secure space. You should make sure that while you are keeping passwords secure, that you have a trusted staff member who can access the necessary passwords that will allow your classroom to function in the event of any absence. (Hint: using post-it notes all over your computer screen is not the most secure option. Second hint – do not use the same passwords you would use for applications outside of school, for example, please do not use the same password that you use for your bank...)

#### **Who to contact for help with passwords:**

- **E-mail/general computer access/Office 365/OneDrive/Printing** – contact IT: Computer Support [Computer.Support@elimcs.org](mailto:Computer.Support@elimcs.org), ext. 555
- **Power School** – Contact Tony Stafford (Educational Technology Coordinator) ([Anthony.stafford@elimcs.org](mailto:Anthony.stafford@elimcs.org)) ext. 506
- **Embrace IEP** – Contact Tony Stafford (Educational Technology Coordinator) ([Anthony.stafford@elimcs.org](mailto:Anthony.stafford@elimcs.org)) ext. 506
- **Zoom/Boom/Seesaw/Planbook/Boardmaker** – Contact Tony Stafford (Educational Technology Coordinator) ([Anthony.stafford@elimcs.org](mailto:Anthony.stafford@elimcs.org)) ext. 506
- **Ultipro (UKG Pro Time Management)** Contact Stephanie Struttman ([Stephanie.struttman@elimcs.org](mailto:Stephanie.struttman@elimcs.org)) ext. 229
- **Talent LMS** – Contact Mark Ifill ([mark.ifill@elimcs.org](mailto:mark.ifill@elimcs.org)) ext. 499

#### **Student Information**

Student information must be kept in a safe, secure space. This includes copies of student IEPs, assessment data, progress monitoring data, and personal student information. If you do not have a safe, secure spot to store your student information in the classroom, speak to your AP. Student information is kept in a variety of places; this can be confusing. Elim is in the process of consolidating data to make this easier, but until this has been completed, it can cause confusion for a new staff member. Hard copies of student IEP's can be found in the main office for your program. Digital copies can be found on SharePoint. For assistance accessing SharePoint, please contact your A.P., your mentor, IT, or your instructional coach.

#### **Red Medical Binder**

The red medical binder contains current medical information for all your students. It has information related to seizures, feeding, allergies, and other important medical information. **As a teacher, you are required to print out the information for your students at the beginning of each school year.** This information is in the student Information folder on SharePoint. For assistance accessing SharePoint, please contact your A.P., your mentor, IT, or your instructional coach. As nursing receives updated information for student (which happens throughout the year) you will be provided with the new information, and you must place the information into your binder and discard the outdated information. You are required to keep this information current. Should you need to reach nursing they are at ext. 305. Should you need to e-mail the nursing department, use [nurse@elimcs.org](mailto:nurse@elimcs.org). Using this e-mail ensures that all our nurses receive the same information which is particularly relevant when dealing with medical issues. Teachers are responsible for being familiar with any special dietary requirements, especially related to school lunches. While nursing notifies the kitchen staff of special diet orders, it is important that staff verify that the correct type of lunch is given to each student.

## **Black and Yellow Behavior Binder**

The behavior binder is an all-black binder with a yellow cover. It contains behavioral information about the students in your classroom. This binder also contains the specific behavioral strategies and behavior intervention plans that have been designed/approved for use. Please note that not every student has a behavior intervention plan nor a list of specifically designated strategies.

## **Student Attendance**

Student attendance is to be reported daily by 9:15. Parents/guardians are required to contact the student attendance line (708-293-3626 or via e-mail at [studentattendance@elimcs.org](mailto:studentattendance@elimcs.org)).

Teachers take attendance via our student database called Power School <https://elim.powerschool.com/admin/pw.html>. If a student is **physically present by 9:30 a.m.** - you will utilize the code **IP** (which stands for In-Person). If the student is **not physically present by 9:30 a.m.** - you will utilize the code **AU** (Absent Unexcused). Teachers **should not** enter AE (Absent Excused). Only absences reported directly to the attendance line are utilized for determining the excusal of an absence. A video tutorial on completing attendance can be found here: [https://youtu.be/6vm\\_gwdmGGo](https://youtu.be/6vm_gwdmGGo).

## **Additional Information:**

Remote learning may only be provided in *very* limited circumstances, i.e., for students that are excluded due to illness or close contact to an ill individual.

The **only** students who can be coded as participating remotely are:

- Those students whose districts have agreed to write a remote IEP or who have agreed to amend the current IEP to reflect that remote learning constitutes FAPE.
- Those students who are at home due to quarantine requirements (i.e., is a confirmed or probable case, is a close contact to a confirmed or probable case, has symptoms of Covid-19)

Students who **do not meet one of the two categories above MUST be marked Absent - Unexcused**. This does not mean that they cannot receive/complete work Seesaw activities/join zooms or participate in therapy groups remotely – it just means that the work they complete “counts” towards goals, but it does not meet ISBE’s threshold for remote attendance.

If a student is home due to illness, due to possible Covid symptoms – teacher will still code students as **Absent - Unexcused**. At this point staff are *required* to provide work (either via Seesaw/Zoom and/or sending home actual materials), because at this point they are home *due to quarantine requirements*. Teachers are then to follow the same guidance regarding attendance that we would follow for a student who currently has a remote IEP. Should you have any questions on how to address student attendance during this time, please contact Irene Yuska.

## **Materials and Supplies**

If you need general office supplies, you can check your program’s main office. If what you need is not there, please work with your program administrative assistant and they will assist you. If you need curricular materials, you should collaborate with a member of the curriculum department as listed below.



## **Curriculum Team Members**

Irene Yuska – Assistant Director of School [Irene.yuska@elimcs.org](mailto:Irene.yuska@elimcs.org) ext. 210 Room 219

Sherry Riemersma-Luke – Instructional Coach [Sheryl.Riemersma-luke@elimcs.org](mailto:Sheryl.Riemersma-luke@elimcs.org) ext. 519 Room 215

Melanie Arnold- Instructional Coach [Melanie.Arnold@elimcs.org](mailto:Melanie.Arnold@elimcs.org)

Anthony (Tony) Stafford – Instructional Technology Coordinator ([Anthony.stafford@elimcs.org](mailto:Anthony.stafford@elimcs.org)) ext. 506 Room 215

Tania Hernandez- Materials Tech ([Tania.hernandez@elimcs.org](mailto:Tania.hernandez@elimcs.org)) ext. 276 Room 215

Sinead Forde – Mentor Coordinator ([Sinead.Forde@elimcs.org](mailto:Sinead.Forde@elimcs.org)) ext. 352

## **Instructional coaches and mentors**

Each first- and second-year teacher will be assigned a mentor.

**Mentoring** is a long- term process based upon mutual trust and respect. **Coaching**, on the other hand, while also based upon mutual trust and respect, is topic/task specific.

<b>Coaching</b>	<b>Mentoring</b>
Has a set duration	Ongoing relationship
Task oriented	Relationship Oriented
Short Term	Long-Term
Focused on achieving goals	Focused on support and guidance
Focused on specific development areas	Focused on professional and personal success
Focused on instructing	Focused on listening
Established with rapport and trust	Established with rapport and trust

## **Instructional Technology Coordinator**

Tony Stafford, our Instructional Technology Coordinator, is responsible for managing your *instructional* technology accounts. Things such as Seesaw/Zoom/Boardmaker 7/Boom/Planbook etc. He is also available to meet with you to answer any questions you have about using technology in your classrooms. (Should you have questions regarding student's communication device you would contact their Speech Language Pathologist directly.)

Elim has a limited number of iPads that are available for classroom use. These iPads are in the Curriculum Center (Room 215). We also have a few iPads that have Touch Chat installed that teachers can use to help model while teaching. These iPads are also located in the Curriculum Center. The Literacy Center has 6 iPads available for use in the Literacy Center.

For those students who can use a computer there are student laptops available for check-out. For assistance in checking these out for use and/or to discuss how your students can use them, please contact Tony.

To schedule a time to meet with any member of the Curriculum Department, use the "Let's Collaborate" button located on the [Curriculum Center Hub](#).

## **Exit Skills**

Exit Skills define the “what we expect students to learn.” The Exit Skills Rating Scale was developed to determine if the programming we are providing students is in fact accomplishing our goal of helping students reach their God-given potential.

Since standardized assessments do not yield the type of information necessary to determine programmatic strengths and areas in need of further development, it was determined that Elim needed to develop its own measurement tool to determine the effectiveness of our programming. The identified “Exit Skills” are the “What we expect our students to learn” over the course of the time that they are enrolled.

The Exit Skills Rating Scale is based upon the premise that every student, no matter how severe his or her disabilities, is capable of living, working, and having fun in the community. Therefore, the Exit Skills were designed with the following principles in mind:

- Schooling should include direct instruction and preparation for those activities that are necessary in everyday life.
- Social skill development is an essential element of an appropriate education.
- Structured learning can occur in a variety of settings. Meaningful instruction is not limited to a traditional classroom setting; it can take place throughout the building, in therapy sessions and/or in the surrounding community where students can learn and practice skills in real-life settings.

We assess these skills two times per year. The Exit Skills Rating scale has been administered since 2017. During the 2020-2021 school year, the Exit Skills rating scale was revised to make it more quantitative and less qualitative. You will receive training on this along with the entire school early in the school year. In 2024-2025 it will be administered on September 26, 2025.

## **Tiers**

Within the Bridges program, it became necessary to place students into groupings where their needs were similar. Our vocabulary for this is “Tiers.” The equivalent of this in the public schools may be called “learning tracks.” Our staff consider the student’s communication needs, their academic functioning, and their social skills. Tier 1 students require the greatest level of support in these areas, Tier 2 students require less support to communicate/access academics, Tier 3 students can communicate independently, can gain meaning from text, and interact with peers/staff. ***Please note that conversations related to “Tiers” are for internal use only and should not be shared with those not on our staff.***

## **Styer-Fitzgerald Program for Functional Academics (Tiers 2 and 3)**

This program is specifically designed to meet the academic needs of students with a wide variety of developmental disabilities. The skills targeted throughout this program have been chosen for the purpose of empowering students to reach their greatest level of independence, access their communities, and live fulfilled lives as contributing, responsible, and equal members of society. You will receive further training on this program as it is required for teachers who teach in Bridges & Pathways grade K-12 and who serve in either Tier 2 or Tier 3 classrooms.

## **Exit Skill Components (Tier 1)**

Elim’s Tier 1 students do not participate in the Styer-Fitzgerald Program. The focus of these classrooms are the component skills that will most directly impact student progress with the Exit Skills. If you have been assigned to a Tier 1 classroom, your instructional coach will train you on the

Component Skills.

### **Seesaw**

Elim uses Seesaw as our online learning platform. Seesaw can be accessed: <https://web.seesaw.me/>  
You should have received an e-mail directly from Seesaw asking you to activate your account. Should you have any students who need to participate remotely, you will deliver your content via Seesaw. Seesaw also has many activities that have been created by our staff and by other teachers around the world. You can easily browse the library and customize activities to meet your individual student needs.

### **Curriculum Resources**

Elim has a large library of physical and digital resources. The physical resources are kept in the Curriculum Center (Room 215 – Building A). The Curriculum Department also maintains a digital folder housed in OneDrive. This folder contains thousands of resources that have either been purchased or developed by our staff over the course of time. To access this folder, utilize the following link: [https://elimcs-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/curriculum\\_elimcs\\_org1/Eh2LObHEjdNEqE\\_HSEMfX2QBtXHj7wOB\\_sPR6MyaEues6w?e=s0LryV](https://elimcs-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/curriculum_elimcs_org1/Eh2LObHEjdNEqE_HSEMfX2QBtXHj7wOB_sPR6MyaEues6w?e=s0LryV). If you find that you are unable to access this folder, please contact Tony Stafford.

If you are willing to share any of the materials that you create, please just e-mail them to any member of the Curriculum Department and we will add them to our ever-growing collection. You can also share lessons that you made within Seesaw. Tony or your Instructional Coach will teach you how to do this.

The Curriculum Center offers iPads for *short-term* checkout, as well as a laptop cart that can be reserved for classroom use. The Center also houses a variety of general-purpose assistive technology devices such as wired and wireless switches, adapted scissors, and various adapted toys. Items are available for short-term or long-term checkout depending on student needs. Please contact the student's respective speech, physical, or occupational therapist for more specialized assistive technology (e.g., communication devices, mobility equipment, feeding devices, etc.).

### **Curriculum Center Hub**

The [Curriculum Center Hub](#) is a website created by the Curriculum Department to provide a location that allows us to:

- Distribute new materials
- Link staff to useful resources
- House the websites that we have available for students to use
- Make it easy to schedule collaboration time with any member of the Curriculum Department
- Eventually it will provide staff with the ability to check-out or reserve materials and technology
- Share video tutorials for staff use

### **Teachers Pay Teachers**

Elim maintains a school Teachers Pay Teachers account. In the event that we do not currently own a resource that you require to teach a skill, you may use the school account to make this request. To “join” our school, please register using your Elim e-mail: <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/School/Teacher-Welcome/v2/5b23dabb-8730-49c4-b64a-42bfac1000c4>. Should you have any questions regarding our Teachers Pay Teachers account, please contact Irene Yuska.

## Lesson Planning

Teachers are required to use Planbook (<https://planbook.com/#home>) for lesson planning purposes. You should have received an e-mail directly from Planbook asking you to activate your account. If you have not, please contact Tony Stafford. As you begin scheduling your classes in Planbook, you'll see that templates have been developed for each class that outline the expectations for your lessons. You should fill in the templates with the links and details of your lessons. Here is a quick tutorial, but you will receive more training from your coach and the Curriculum Department: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iRRCaZAMkUo>

## Courses

ISBE and special education rules require us to “expose” students to the same content as their non-disabled general education peers. To meet this requirement, but keep our content functional, we have created Curriculum Maps. These maps outline (by week) the topic for each of the required subjects. Some departments/programs have chosen to utilize co-planning to reduce the amount of material that each teacher is required to prepare. Your AP will let you know what course(s) you are required to prepare materials for and what the expectations relative to your course preparation are. These maps are kept in the “Curriculum Maps and support materials” folder in the Curriculum Resources in OneDrive. For your convenience, you can access them here: [https://elimcs-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/curriculum\\_elimcs\\_org1/Eibb1doGKVFFrbXRFksmRacBs5hWoQOstvR064yYYqHkDQ?e=Um1dM0](https://elimcs-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/curriculum_elimcs_org1/Eibb1doGKVFFrbXRFksmRacBs5hWoQOstvR064yYYqHkDQ?e=Um1dM0)

Elim serves students from more than sixty districts. Some of these districts choose to award their students “diplomas,” while other districts choose to award “certificates of completion” or “certificates of attendance.” To meet the requirements of the districts that we serve, we have developed a four-year rotation of courses that will allow our students to earn the necessary academic credits required by their school district.

## Course Rotations

As we discussed previously – our students are entitled to receive exposure to the same concepts as their general education peers. Virtually all of our classes contain students from different “grade levels.” Rather than having you prepare lessons for four different courses each year (e.g., teaching Earth Science, Biology, Physical Science and Health at the same time), we have created a 4-year course rotation. This means that our science, social studies, and Bible classes rotate each year. Therefore, you will note that there are different classes taught this year than there were last year.

## Literacy Center

The Literacy Center provides opportunities for our students to access a variety of books and materials that are different from what our classrooms may hold. This includes children’s literature for all age and ability levels, adapted books, a SMART Board, iPads, books with manipulatives, three computers, and environmental print activities. There are also a variety of seating options for our students. Each class visits the Literacy Center according to a schedule 1-2x weekly. Should you need any assistance determining how best to use the Literacy Center, please contact Sherry Riemersma-Luke.

## IEP Scheduling

Program Administrative Assistants schedule all Domain/Re-evaluation and IEP meetings. **It is required that you keep your Outlook calendar updated** as they use this information to schedule meetings at times that will work. You will receive Outlook invitations for all meetings that you are to attend. This means that should you have days off, Dr. Appointments etc., they should be entered into your computer to help administrative assistants with the scheduling of IEP meetings. Make sure to “accept” the meeting notifications so they populate in your calendar.

Should you have a conflict immediately contact the administrative assistant/your Assistant Principal.

### **IEP's**

Elim utilizes two different IEP programs. The two IEP programs are Embrace IEP and Easy IEP. Both IEP systems contain the same information, but both are accessed differently.

- Embrace IEP is managed by Tony Stafford. He will assist you with accessing.
- Easy IEP access is managed by each individual school district. Gaining access to this requires a lengthier process. You will work with Tony to gain access to your students whose districts utilize this system.

### **IEP Writing**

All new teachers and therapists are expected to meet with Irene Yuska (Assistant Director of School) for assistance writing IEP's. Whenever possible, please try to schedule a meeting four to six weeks prior to the date of the IEP meeting in order to allow adequate time to complete any transition assessments, goal probing and/or IEP team collaborations to take place. Should you need assistance you may also use the digital notebook that has been created for this purpose. This digital notebook can be accessed via this web location, (if you are unable to access, please contact Irene Yuska):

[https://elimcs-my.sharepoint.com/:o:/g/personal/irene\\_yuska\\_elimcs\\_org/EjcJ49PxnWIKodKDUAqE6SABMUCjGFSbxwAv\\_97bhS9SGA?e=P6PM0T](https://elimcs-my.sharepoint.com/:o:/g/personal/irene_yuska_elimcs_org/EjcJ49PxnWIKodKDUAqE6SABMUCjGFSbxwAv_97bhS9SGA?e=P6PM0T)

### **Transition Plans**

ISBE rules require that a transition plan be written into ALL IEP's that will be in effect by the time a student turns 14½. However, knowing the importance of planning for student life after school, Elim has decided that **we will write Transition Plans for ALL IEP's once the student is in sixth grade**. Writing transition plans do require additional planning on your part. When you are working with Irene Yuska to write your IEP's you will also be trained in how to use transition assessments to drive your IEP writing.

### **Standardized Assessment**

ISBE has expectations related to student participation and standardized assessment. Most of our students use DLM (Dynamic Learning Maps) which requires the classroom teacher to complete specific training modules. Irene Yuska will send out information throughout the year that pertains to assessments. Your coach will work with you to ensure that you and your students are well-prepared for all required assessments.

### **Transportation**

Cynthia DeYoung (Cindy) [cynthia.deyoung@elimcs.org](mailto:cynthia.deyoung@elimcs.org) ext. 212  
Barbara Moffit (Barb) [Barbara.moffit@elimcs.org](mailto:Barbara.moffit@elimcs.org) ext. 394

Many of our paraprofessional are also bus drivers and/or bus aides. We also have staff who help direct traffic in the bus lanes. This means that they will arrive late to your class, and they *may* need to leave a few minutes early. You can find out which of your paras this impacts by looking at the current class list.

### **Mail Room**

Bonnie Harper [bonnie.harper@elimcs.org](mailto:bonnie.harper@elimcs.org) ext. 218 manages our mailroom. In each of the program offices and in the main office there are places for staff to place outgoing and inner office mail.

### **Printing & Copying**

We have printers/copiers located throughout campus. These printer/copiers are accessed by using your building access card and/or by accessing your printer code. It is important to note, staff should avoid using these printer/copiers for large jobs. Large jobs should be either e-mailed or sent (via inner office mail) to Bonnie Harper [bonnie.harper@elimcs.org](mailto:bonnie.harper@elimcs.org) along with instructions and your name. Bonnie will complete your job and ensure that your

print request is delivered to you as soon as possible. It is also important that you convey any “time constraints” regarding your request.

### **Laminating**

Currently, Bonnie Harper in the mail room does big laminating jobs for all teachers. A laminator can be found in the Curriculum Center and in Pathways for small-medium laminating jobs. Please only laminate those materials that are going to be used multiple times. Single use items do not need to be laminated.

### **Contacting parents during the school day**

If you need to contact a parent during the school day, **please make sure you leave a message**. When parents see a call from Elim with no message, they frequently presume there is an emergency. It is acceptable to not leave a detailed message; however, you need to state your name and tell the parent/guardian that there is no emergency and ask them to call you. It is also extremely helpful if you leave them your extension as well to make it easier for them to reach you.

## **Where/how do I even start?**

1. Start with your schedule. Plug in your “biggies” first:

- Bridges: Therapies, Gym, Art, Literacy Center, Lunch, Recess/HSA
- Pathways: Speech, Rec, Community, Literacy Center, Lunch, Recess
- Crossroads: Therapies, Lunch
- Then (PW and BR) move on to your content areas: ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, Bible, Personal Health and Safety
- For Crossroads, Tim Goudzwaard handles the schedules for all of the courses in your program. They are based on demand (number of kids seeking/assigned to that course).

Scheduling supports: Your best option when scheduling your day is via Planbook. It will allow you, your staff, and your students to see the day’s events, what to do in each class, how long each class will last, and special events. Should you desire to set up individual schedules for your students or staff, check these out:

[Editable Schedule Templates.pptx](#)

<https://www.simplyspecialed.com/special-education-sample-schedules/>

2. Data Supports: Data is what drives your instruction for your class, and is critical for updating IEP and Styer goals. Read your students’ IEPs, Behavior Plans, and Styer goals. These materials will help you understand the “WHY” of your students’ goals. There are specific data sheets already in place for your use with IEP goals and Styer goals. If you would like to look at additional formats, check these out:

[Simple Data Editable.pptx](#)

3. Determine the climate of your classroom by setting up expectations for your student and your team. Your paraprofessionals can be your strongest allies if you set up clear expectations for everyone. Here are some resources to help you with that:

<https://www.brighthubeducation.com/special-ed-behavioral-disorders/119848-basic-special-education-classroom-rules-that-lead-to-positive-outcomes/>

[Classroom Rules and Norms samples](#)

4. Your students and their families will want to know you. Begin creating some kind of letter to tell them a little bit about yourself. Here’s a template if you want one:

[Meet the teacher.pptx](#)

5. Here are a few additional helpful resources/links:

<https://www.simplyspecialed.com/how-to-start-a-task-box-system/>

<https://www.simplyspecialed.com/10-prep-tips-for-back-to-school/>

Supports for working with the other adults in your classroom:

[https://elimcs-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/curriculum\\_elimcs\\_org1/Et\\_rT3qLR\\_NCjoch0yobcmoBZxlRjFNAobl7DDZzVdno5g?e=WzsJz7](https://elimcs-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/curriculum_elimcs_org1/Et_rT3qLR_NCjoch0yobcmoBZxlRjFNAobl7DDZzVdno5g?e=WzsJz7)

The Special Educator Academy is an online platform created by Dr. Christine Reeves. Christine is a long-time special education teacher and offers a variety of trainings and tips that are very helpful. Here's the link:

<https://academy.autismclassroomresources.com/resources/free-resource-library/>

Orientation Presentation link: [https://www.canva.com/design/DAGF-r2E9j8/3-znusHulIv2yu6BoJ-07Q/edit?utm\\_content=DAGF-r2E9j8&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=sharebutton](https://www.canva.com/design/DAGF-r2E9j8/3-znusHulIv2yu6BoJ-07Q/edit?utm_content=DAGF-r2E9j8&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton)



