



# Prairie Ridge Student & Family Handbook

## **Prairie Ridge Elementary**

6632 St. Vrain Ranch Blvd

Firestone, CO 80504

Phone: 720-494-3641

Fax: 720-494-3642

Carole Oliphant

Principal

[oliphant\\_carole@svvsd.org](mailto:oliphant_carole@svvsd.org)

Melissa Lettis

Assistant Principal

[lettis\\_melissa@svvsd.org](mailto:lettis_melissa@svvsd.org)

Follow us to get the latest news!

Our website: [pres.svvsd.org](http://pres.svvsd.org)

Our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/PrairieRidgeES/>

Our X account: <https://x.com/PrairieRidgeES>

# Welcome & School Information

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to Prairie Ridge Elementary, an exemplary neighborhood school in the St.Vrain Valley School District that specializes in knowing each and every student by name. We are a community of dedicated professionals, teachers, parents, community leaders, and administrators all committed to providing the best educational opportunities for our students and a positive, caring, and respectful climate for all.

As we begin the new school year, we ask that you review this Student & Family Handbook to familiarize yourself with our protocols and thoughtful implementation of procedures in order to optimize every child's educational experience at Prairie Ridge Elementary. Together, we can achieve great things for our students and the larger community.

Please contact us with any questions or concerns as we move through the school year.

## ***Prairie Ridge Elementary Administration***

### Our Vision:

We, as Prairie Ridge learners, believe in our ability to grow academically, emotionally, and socially, while contributing to our changing world.

### Our Mission:

The Prairie Ridge Community commits to providing a safe, nurturing environment that prepares well-rounded, global citizens. All students will achieve their highest potential by engaging in meaningful learning experiences.

## School Hours & Instruction Information

Prairie Ridge strives to create a balanced schedule for students creating an optimal learning environment. Our school day is 400 minutes with the start and end times as follows:

School Start: 9:00am (Tardy Bell--9:05)

School End: 3:40pm

\*\*Teacher work day is generally from 8:20am to 3:50pm.

**Since there is no before school recess, students should plan to arrive at school no more than 10 minutes before the first bell at 9:00 AM.** Students should be in their classrooms by the time the tardy bell rings at 9:05 AM.

Your child's teacher will provide a specific classroom schedule, however, the general daily guidelines for student learning is as follows:

- Reading & Writing- 135 min.
- Foundational Skills- 35 min
- Math- 75 min.
- Social Studies & Science- 30 min.
- Specials- 45 min.

## Office Hours

The office is open from 8:00 AM- 4:00 PM. The principal is often available to meet. Please call the office for an appointment to ensure availability, as the principal may have other appointments or commitments.

## Teacher Hours

The normal work day for the teachers is 8:20 AM to 3:50 PM. If you need to communicate with a teacher many times it is easiest to call them in the morning before school or contact them by email **last name\_first name@svvsd.org**. **Please allow 24 hours for staff to reply.** Please also note that teachers will not be available during instructional time.

## Attendance

It is important for students to attend school every day that they are healthy. Our goal is for students to "Strive for Five" or fewer absences. Parents are encouraged to schedule appointments and trips outside of school time.

It is necessary to call the school office at: 720 494 3641 or email [chavez\\_sarah@svvsd.org](mailto:chavez_sarah@svvsd.org) to report an absence. It is a courtesy to inform your child's teacher. Should you need to pick-up or drop off your child during the school day, please sign the student sign-in/sign-out sheet on the office counter.

If your student is tardy, you are required to sign them in or phone the office for the tardy to be excused. Due to the disruptive nature of tardies, the District has established the

following policy: Students who accumulate three unexcused tardies shall be issued a one half day unexcused absence.

Ten absences may be excused during the school year when a parent/guardian calls the office and provides a reason for the absence. After ten absences, a doctor's note will be required for an absence to be considered excused.

The St Vrain Valley School District has explicit policies for unexcused absences and tardies. The full policy can be found on the [SVVSD Attendance and Engagement](#) page or you may contact the office for a copy.

## Specials

Specials programs are provided to students daily which include Art, Music, and Physical Education. We also have a Library Media Specialist who provides a library class once each week. These classes teach students how to use the library for learning purposes. Students learn information for doing research using both print and electronic sources, check out books, and have regular opportunities to engage in learning in our Maker Space.

## Gifted and Talented (G/T)

Identified students in grades K-5 will receive appropriate programming/ differentiated instruction to enrich classroom instruction. Students are identified by a nomination process that occurs the first month of each school year. Students can be nominated by either staff or parents. More information for gifted and talented programming can be found on our district website:

<https://www.svvsd.org/departments/student-services/gifted-and-talented/>

## Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS)

MTSS is a whole-school, data-driven, prevention-based framework for improving learning outcomes for EVERY student through a layered continuum of evidence-based practices and systems.

### **Interventions**

An intervention is an instructional strategy or curricular component or program used to enhance student learning. Interventions are systematic and targeted in an area of identified need and designed to improve student performance toward a measurable goal.

**Tier 1**

Provides high quality instructional and behavioral support for all students in general education.

**Tier 2**

Provides targeted, specific prevention, remediation or enrichment interventions for students whose academic performance or behavior demonstrate performance outside of what is considered to be typical for their grade level and educational setting.

**Tier 3**

Provides intensive, individualized interventions for students who have an insufficient response to evidence based interventions in the first two tiers.

**MTSS process at Prairie Ridge**

- Identify the problem
- Gather data
- Develop and implement plan
- Monitor and evaluate plan
- Determine next steps

A multi-disciplinary team of teachers collaborates to design effective intervention and progress monitoring for students in need. Parents are an integral part of this process. Student progress is monitored using a variety of quick evidence-based assessments to track progress toward learning targets. If we are seeing improvements in the data, this will tell us that the interventions that we are implementing are working. We will continue to provide support until your student's performance demonstrates s/he no longer needs additional support. If progress monitoring scores are not improving, then the team will discuss adjusting the Tier 3 intervention.

Some other possible outcomes of the MTSS process include: a special education referral, a 504 plan, or an EL referral. More information for MTSS can be found on our district website:

<https://www.svvsd.org/departments/student-services/multi-tiered-systems-of-support/>

**Special Education Services**

The St. Vrain Valley School District offers individualized programs for students with learning, speech/language, emotional and physical disabilities. If you believe your child needs the services of these programs, please contact your child's teacher for more information. More information on Special Education can be found on our district website:

<https://www.svvsd.org/departments/special-education/>

## English Language Development (EL)

St. Vrain Valley School District offers programs for students requiring additional instruction relating to English proficiency. If you believe your child needs the services of these programs, please contact your child's teacher for more information. More information on EL can be found on our district website:

<https://www.svvsd.org/departments/priority-programs/english-language-acquisition/>

## Community Schools / Enrichment Classes

Prairie Ridge Elementary has a Community Schools Program which provides before and after school care for students in Kindergarten through fifth grade.

Monday through Friday

7:00 - 9:00 A.M.

3:40 - 6:00 P.M.

In addition, many after school enrichment classes will be available for your child.

Announcements about classes and activities will be sent home and/or published in the monthly newsletter and on the school website. Please monitor the school website for cost and availability. More information on Community Schools can be found on our district website: <https://www.svvsd.org/departments/communityschools/>

## Parent Involvement

### Parent Communication

The primary mode of communication will be the Prairie Ridge Elementary website for timely information about school activities and events:

Our website: [pres.svvsd.org](https://www.svvsd.org/pres.svvsd.org)

A school newsletter will be emailed to families on Fridays twice a month with reminders of important events and information. This information will be sent to all households listed in Infinite Campus. Individual classroom teachers will send out regular updates in their class correspondence. Information is also shared via:

Our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/PrairieRidgeES/>

Our Twitter account: <https://x.com/PrairieRidgeES>

Much of the school-to-home communication relies on accurate family information. Please check periodically that the contact information is correct and make adjustments accordingly.

## Checking Student Progress

Parents are partners with us in their child's education. Teachers will communicate your child's progress with you and welcome your involvement in this process. There are several ways for parents to check student progress including formative assessments sent home, conferences, and report cards. Additionally, parents may call individual teachers to schedule a time to speak about their student. Parents may also contact the counselor or an administrator to schedule a meeting to discuss any school concerns.

## Parent Teacher Conferences

We will have parent/ teacher conferences once in the fall and once in the spring. During conferences students are involved in reviewing goals, progress and expectations with parents and teachers. Sign up times for conferences will be sent during the year via the newsletter and email.

## Visiting School

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit and/or volunteer at school, however, we ask that you pre-arrange times with your child's teacher. Our goal is to have your visit not be a disruption to your child's learning so we ask that *non school age children not be brought into the classroom.*

For safety reasons **ALL VISITORS must check in at the front office** and wear a visitor sticker when they are in the building or on the school grounds. If you would like to join your child for lunch, please contact the school office the morning of your planned visit. Thank you for your cooperation.

*STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BRING OTHER SCHOOL AGED VISITORS TO SCHOOL UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.*

## Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The mission of the Prairie Ridge Elementary PTO is to promote and support the educational community and social activities of our school and the St. Vrain Valley School District. As a team of parents, staff members, and community members, we are committed to investing our time, energy, and resources toward enabling all students to reach their full potential academically and otherwise. Through volunteering and fundraising, we support efforts to create the best possible learning environment at our school with an emphasis on making the school experience enjoyable, meaningful, and memorable for everyone connected to Prairie Ridge Elementary.

Please join us for our meetings. You can find more information at the [Prairie Ridge PTO site](#) or by emailing [prel.pto@gmail.com](mailto:prel.pto@gmail.com)

#### Meet the Board:

President: Josh Deakins

Vice Pres: Janelle Rumley

Treasurers:

Secretary:

Principal: Carole Oliphant

The PTO works to provide support for students & teachers and host community events to benefit the school.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/prel.pto>

## Arrival/ Dismissal

We encourage walking, biking, or taking the bus to school when possible:

- Students will enter and exit through exterior classroom doors.
- Supervision begins at 8:50am
- The bell rings at 9:00 a.m. to go inside
- Students arriving after the 9:05 a.m. tardy bell need to go to the office to check in
- Dismissal is at 3:40 p.m.

The playground is closed during arrival and dismissal times. Dogs are not allowed on school property, unless they are designated service dogs.

## Kindergarten

Kindergarten students will wait for the bell in the fenced kindergarten playground.

**Kindergarten parents will need to sign-in at the front office if they wish to visit their child's classroom.** Kindergarten students riding the bus will meet a staff member in the bus loop. This staff member will then walk students to their classroom. At the end of the day, parents can meet their children in the kinder playground or at a designated spot by your child's teacher. Teachers will release kinder students directly to families to ensure no one gets lost.

## Drop off Zone / Hug-n-Go Lane

Please make sure to get in line and continue to move forward as far as possible to allow the maximum number of cars into the drop-off zone. Make sure to have students exit on the curb side only. Please use the designated crosswalk. **Parking and unattended cars are not allowed in the drop off lane or in the fire lane.**



## Traffic and Pedestrian Safety

Please exercise extreme caution in and around the school campus. Small children can dart out into the street very quickly, in spite of everyone's best efforts. Please drive slowly and stay alert for adult directions and all pedestrians. A crossing guard will be provided to assist with crossing St.Vrain Ranch Blvd before the school day begins and after the school day ends.

Please use extra caution while driving in our school zone. Pull all the way forward when using the drop off/pick up lane & continue to pull forward as traffic moves.

A few things to keep in mind so that everyone arrives/ departs safely:

- Use crosswalks.
- Refrain from cell phone use in the school zone.
- Do not leave your car unattended in the fire lane.
- Park in designated areas.
- Smoking or vaping is not allowed on school property (this includes the drop off and pick up lane)

## Bikes, Rollerblades, Skateboards, Scooters

Students may use their bikes, rollerblades, skateboards, scooters to get to school but must walk on pedestrian sidewalks where other students will be accessing the school building/grounds. Bicycle racks are located in several locations around the school.

## Bus Transportation

All students living more than 1.5 miles from school are eligible for bus service. Students must have prior approval from the St. Vrain Valley Transportation Department to ride a different bus home. Forms are available at the school office or on the St. Vrain Valley District website and must be submitted at least 24 hours before each occurrence. Requests can be denied if space is not available. Transportation requests can be made by visiting the Transportation department at our [district transportation website](#)

Behavior issues on the bus may result in consequences including in-school discipline, suspension, or denial of bus service.

## Inclement Weather

On cold days where temperature is below 20 degrees Fahrenheit or in the event of inclement weather, students will go directly into their classrooms upon arrival.

## Student Dismissal Precautions – Picking up Children

We believe every minute counts and teachers are instructing in every classroom up until the bell rings. If you must sign your child out early, parents/designees are to sign students out at the office and not the classroom. The office will then call the classroom to request that the teacher send the child to the office. Parents/guardians must enter the building through the main front entrance to check a child out of school. If a student is returned before the end of the day, we request that the parent/guardian accompany the student to the office to sign back in. A signed note from the parent/guardian will be required if a third party is to check a student out of the school during the school day.

## School Procedures & Policies

### Behavioral Expectations, Interventions, and Support

At Prairie Ridge Elementary School we believe that behavior is communication. Our focus is on consistently teaching behavior expectations so that all of our students may experience high levels of success in school. We accomplish this by:

- Explicitly teaching and practicing appropriate behavior.
- Reinforcing positive behavior through a variety of means such as SOAR for individual students and Soaring Stars for classes who model expectations.
- Empowering children to develop critical social skills through our 'In Focus' curriculum, restorative practices, and support from our school counselor.
- Helping students take ownership for their actions and find acceptable ways to "make it right" when they have made a poor choice, by using Restorative Practices and traditional consequences.

We are part of the Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) system and we implement processes that guide students to becoming productive citizens.

Our school-wide values are represented by the acronym:

**S**afety

**O**wnership

**A**ttitude

**R**espect

These values are taught in all school contexts.

If you have questions or would like more information about our behavioral expectations and systems, we encourage you to talk with your child's teacher.

Behaviors that disrupt the academic environment can be handled in a variety of ways, depending on the seriousness of the situation: teacher redirection, conflict mediation

with counselor guidance, restorative practice protocol, counseling intervention, administrative intervention, development of action plan with parents, counselor, and administration. All interventions are implemented in an effort to redirect behavior in a positive manner and provide students tools in dealing with life situations in an appropriate and constructive way.

More information about district behavior policies can be found here: [Student Conduct – St. Vrain Valley Schools](#)

**Each year parents and students are required to acknowledge the SVVSD Code of Conduct documenting that they have read and understand our district wide expectations.** This can be done by signing into the parent [Infinite Campus Portal](#) and clicking on SV Permissions.

## Lost and Found

Please help us by clearly labeling all items of clothing such as mittens, caps, coats, jackets, sweaters, boots, and umbrellas with your child's name. Unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity. Help us avoid this necessity by encouraging your child to be responsible for keeping track of his or her belongings. Lost and found is located by the east door (bus entrance).

## Recess

Our normal school day can be affected by weather. School closures and delays are made with student safety foremost in mind. Recess is an integral part of the school day, and all students are expected to participate. During periods of inclement weather, please be sure your child comes to school prepared with appropriate clothing, including boots, hats, gloves, socks, coats etc. Children will go outside unless there is excessive precipitation, lightning, or the temperature (with wind chill considered) is too low.

Generally, if a child is too ill to participate in recess, he/she should be kept at home. Only a child with a doctor's note specifying the number of days he/she is to stay inside will be permitted to stay in from recess.

## Field Trips

Field trips are designed to enrich the academic learning of the classroom. Every effort will be made to provide interdisciplinary learning on field trips to provide a depth of academic experience. Permission slips will be required to participate. Any fee associated with the field trip will be paid through the school fee payment system.

Parent volunteers may be invited to attend and sign up. Teachers will communicate field trip information in their classroom correspondence.

## Late Start Days

For the purposes of staff professional development, all schools have designated one day a month as a Late Start Day. Community Schools offer activities for students during this time. See the [2025-26 Academic Calendar](#) for exact dates.

## Yearbook

Purchase information will be sent out each year and will require a pre-purchase.

## Telephone

Students will NOT be allowed to make phone calls during the school day unless it is an emergency.

## Electronic Devices

Cell phones are not permitted to be on during the school day. If students bring phones, personal tablets, or portable gaming devices they should be turned off and left in the student's backpack.

## Games and Toys

Games and toys, including trading cards and fidgets, are not permitted at school. Fidget spinners may be allowed when included as a required accommodation in a 504, ELL, IEP, or specialized student plan. Individual teachers may allow for balls to be brought for recess and must be clearly marked with the student's name.

*Students are responsible for the safety of their own personal property. The school cannot guarantee the personal property of students. Students bring valuable items to school at their own risk.*

## Student Dress Code

District-wide standards on student attire are intended to help students concentrate on schoolwork, reduce discipline problems, and improve school order and safety. The Board recognizes that students have a right to express themselves through dress and personal appearance; however, students shall not wear apparel that is deemed disruptive or potentially disruptive to the classroom environment or to the maintenance of a safe and orderly school.

The following items are deemed disruptive to the classroom environment or to the maintenance of a safe and orderly school and are not acceptable in school buildings, on school grounds, or at school activities:

- Any clothing or accessory that presents a reasonable threat or hazard to the safety of others in a school environment, e.g., sharp jewelry, some chains, etc.
- Sunglasses and/or hats worn over the eyes inside the building.
- Clothing that bares or exposes traditionally private parts of the body including, but not limited to, the stomach, buttocks, back and breasts.
- Any clothing, paraphernalia, grooming, jewelry, accessories, or body adornments that are or contain any advertisement, symbols, words, slogans, patches, or pictures that:
  - Refer to drugs or controlled substances, tobacco, alcohol, or weapons
  - Are of sexual nature
  - By virtue of color, arrangement, trademark, or other attribute denote affiliation with gangs or which advocate drug use, violence, illegal activity, or disruptive behavior which is detrimental to the safety and welfare of other students
  - Are obscene, profane, vulgar, lewd, or legally libelous
  - Threaten the safety or welfare of any person
  - Otherwise disrupt the teaching-learning process

Students are required to wear appropriate footwear to ensure the safety and health of the student and others while on district property. More information on our dress policy can be found at our district website:

<https://www.svvsd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/JICA.pdf>

## Illness

School attendance is a vital component for your child's academic success. However, if your child is not feeling well or complains of illness before he/she leaves for school, it is important to keep him/her home. This helps protect healthy students and also prevents a sick student from contracting further illness. Any student with a fever needs to remain home during the fever and for 24 hours after it breaks. **Children who come to the health office having vomited or with a fever will be sent home.** Other conditions will be reviewed on an individual basis. In extreme emergencies, arrangements may be made for a student's immediate transportation to a hospital, whether or not the parent or guardian can be reached.

## Medication Policy

Any medication, prescription or over-the-counter medication, to be administered to a student by delegated staff during the school day or during school related activities, must include a doctor's order (MD, DO, DDS, NP, or PA) and parent's permission on the **Permission to Medicate form**. Forms are available at the school health office. Only a delegated staff member, or the District RN, may administer the above medications.

Exceptions to the policy are:

- Sunscreen
- Cough Drops
- Lotion
- Lip Balm
- Contact Wetting Solution

*These items must be provided by the parent or guardian.*

## Immunization Requirements

The State of Colorado requires that all children in school have an immunization record on file. If your child's immunization records are not up to date, you will be contacted by the health office to provide the school with the necessary documentation right away.

If your child cannot receive immunizations because of medical reasons or because you have a religious or personal reason to exempt your child, the exemption line on the Certificate of Immunization must be signed and exempted vaccines must be listed. This certificate is available at the school health clerk office.

Kindergarten students entering school for the first time must submit proof of full immunizations by their first day of school. No student shall be permitted to attend or continue to attend any school in this district without meeting the legal requirements for immunizations against disease unless the student has a valid exemption for health, religious, personal, or other reasons as provided by law.

Students who do not submit a certificate of immunization or present a valid exemption can be denied admission or suspended from school until requirements are met. Below you will find the State of Colorado requirements. If you have any questions, please contact our Health Office @ 720-494-3641 extension 23612.

### **Requirements for K-5th**

5 DTaP

4 Polio

3 Hepatitis B  
2 MMR  
2 Varicella

More information about our district health policies and protocols can be found on our district website:

<https://www.svvsd.org/departments/student-services/health-services/health-policies-protocols/>

## Safety Policies

### Standard Response Protocol

We use a Standard Response Protocol in emergency situations. We practice fire drills monthly, along with two Lockdown, Secure, and Shelter in Place drills every school year. Please visit the Safety & Security page of our district website to learn more about our safety procedures: [Safety & Security – St. Vrain Valley Schools](#)

### Emergency School Closing Procedures

Every effort will be made to follow the school calendar. However, weather and other emergency conditions can create a need to close the school temporarily. Parents should listen to radio and television stations for information regarding emergency school closings. Our superintendent or designated representative will contact the stations as soon as possible after a decision to close the school is made.

In the event of a delayed start due to inclement weather, we will start school 2.5 hours later than regularly scheduled start times. Bus schedules will also start 2.5 hours later.

On rare occasions, our district or individual schools have found it necessary to close schools before the normal dismissal time. Deteriorating weather, road conditions, or other emergency situations often have accompanying loss of electricity, water or phone services. These conditions are considered very carefully and the final decision rests with the Superintendent.

It is imperative that we know where each child would go, especially if the parent will not be home prior to normal dismissal time, or in occasional situations when parents are temporarily away from the home and not aware of the early emergency dismissal. Parents should complete a yellow **Emergency Dismissal form** with their child's

teacher. Yellow Emergency dismissal forms need to be filled out completely and returned to the teacher as soon as possible.

It is IMPERATIVE that we have the names and numbers of authorized individuals who are authorized by you to pick up your child in the event that you are delayed in picking them up after school, or if we encounter a weather situation or an emergency. Remember to update us throughout the school year if phone numbers change. We want to keep our information current to ensure the continued safety of your child.

## Safe to Tell

Safe to Tell is a reporting system students and parents may use to anonymously report any threatening behavior that endangers the student, friends, family, or the school community. Upon initial report, law enforcement and school administration will receive notification which will prompt an immediate response and investigation. Students must use the system responsibly so as to maintain the original intent of protecting others or themselves from harm. We ask that parents partner with us to make sure the system is used for the purpose intended if a student makes a report from home. For events that occur during the school day, we encourage students to utilize the faculty and resources immediately available at the school to help address the issue.

To make a report call the number below or go to the website.

1-877-542-7233

<https://safe2tell.org/make-report>

## Child Abuse Policy

If child abuse is suspected, it must be reported to the Department of Human Services. Weld County Social Services child abuse phone number is 970-352-1923

<https://safe2tell.org/make-report>

## PETS

To protect students from inadvertent accidents and/or injury, we do not allow pets or animals on school grounds. Please leave your furry friends at home.