



# FAMILY HANDBOOK

2025-2026

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## Communication

In order to capture as many families as possible in our communication we utilize the following methods of communication:

- School Website  
You can find our calendars, staff contact information, events and more on our website: <http://inspire.dpsk12.org/>
- School Newsletter  
Our What Does The Fox Say (WDTFS) newsletter is the best place to learn what is happening school-wide each week. It is sent to the parent/guardian designated in Infinite Campus. If you would like additional people to receive the newsletter, email the Principal. Newsletters will be archived on the school [Weekly Newsletter webpage](#).
- Teacher Newsletter  
Each teacher will send home a bi-weekly newsletter with specific updates. Newsletters will be linked to the [Weekly Newsletter webpage](#).
- Rooms  
Parents/guardians will receive important messages from Inspire via the Rooms app. Teachers and Administration use Rooms to regularly communicate with families. The app can be accessed [here](#).

## Communication Pathway

If you have concerns about your child at school, do not hesitate to contact the school and make an appointment to speak with relevant staff members. It is important that parents/guardians support the school in its constant drive to raise standards and we would much rather discuss any concern or grievance with you than it being discussed in other forums.

- Teacher  
For academic, social emotional concerns and general concerns, we encourage parents/guardians contact their child's teacher first. It is important that the child, parent, and teacher have an opportunity to openly discuss any concerns before pursuing other avenues of resolution.
- School Counselor/Social Worker  
For significant social emotional concerns, parents/guardians can reach out to the homeroom teacher and the School Counselor or the School Social Worker.
- Discipline  
For disciplinary questions or concerns, please contact the homeroom teacher and the AP

of Culture. Please be aware that we use restorative practices. As a SEL (social emotional learning) school, we strive to help students learn from mistakes. We follow the DPS Board Policy and discipline matrix as needed.

- Principal

For all of the above communication, staff will collaborate with other team members, including the Principal as needed. Feel free to directly contact the Principal if you do not feel that your concern has been resolved after contacting the respective staff member(s).

## **School Supplies**

School supplies are essential tools that help students engage in their learning process. Some supplies are individual, meaning each student will use them for personal work, while others are communal, meant to be shared and used as a class.

- [ECE School Supply List](#)
- [Kinder School Supply List](#)
- [1st Grade School Supply List](#)
- [2nd Grade School Supply List](#)
- [3rd Grade School Supply List](#)
- [4th Grade School Supply List](#)
- [5th Grade School Supply List](#)
- Do not write student names on any supplies (whether individual or communal). This ensures that items remain available for everyone to use throughout the year.
- Please bring your supplies to the Meet & Greet on 8/15/25.
- If you're unable to attend the Meet & Greet, please send your child with their supplies on the first day of school.

## Other Fees

Other fees that may be charged to parents/guardians via MSB are field trips, late pick up fee, donations, etc.

## **Class Lists**

Staff spend considerable time creating recommendations for class lists. Factors that are considered are personality, group dynamics, academic needs, balanced class numbers, etc. Our Whole Child (Counselor, Social Worker, AP of Culture), SpEd teams may also review the suggestions before class lists are sent for final review by Administration.

We recognize how important it is for parents/guardians to share their thoughts about the needs of their children. Although we will NOT take requests for a specific teacher, we encourage parents to highlight what's important for their child. This information will be shared with the respective

grade level ahead of creating recommendations for class lists. A google form will be shared with families in the spring to share student highlights.

As a matter of best practice, twins (triplets, etc.) and family members will be placed into different classrooms. This allows students to independently learn and supports social development.

Class lists will be finalized the week before school begins. Please keep in mind that School Choice programming allows students to withdraw and enroll throughout the summer, which affects our ability to finalize class lists until the end of summer.

### **Social Media**

Please refrain from posting pictures of students other than your own on social media without permission from the other child's parent/guardian.

### **Medical Information**

If your child has a life threatening allergy or health condition, please let the school nurse know. If the child requires an EpiPen or any other medications that might need to be administered at school, you will need to have the medical form completed by your child's doctor.

We can accept your child's medicine once we have received the completed forms **that include a doctor's signature**. All medicines must have a clear expiration date and be placed in a Ziploc bag with your child's name. If your child might need an inhaler, please include a spacer.

### **Student Drop-Off and Pick-up**

We will continue to monitor our total time and efficiency and make adjustments as needed. Please note that weather affects how long drop-off and pick-up takes. [Click on our Arrival & Dismissal Procedures](#) for grade level instructions.

### **Late Arrival/Tardy**

Drop-off will have a five (5) minute grace period. Thereafter, parents/guardians will need to sign in their child at the main office. Children should never be left outside of the building unattended and should be escorted into school to ensure safe arrival in the building.

### Late Pick-up (K-5)

We understand that there are sometimes emergencies, and it may be unavoidable for a child to be picked up on time. Please call the main line, 720-424-4850 before dismissal, and make sure we are aware of what arrangements have been for your child, and so we can ensure that the person that will be picking up the child is listed in Infinite Campus as an approved emergency contact. Do NOT message teachers with this information during the school day as they are actively teaching students and are not monitoring messages.

Dismissal is at 2:40 p.m. At 2:50 p.m., students are brought to the main office to wait for a parent/guardian. At this time parents/guardians will need to come into the school to pick up and sign out their child.

If your child has been registered for Discovery Link, and there is a miscommunication regarding whether a student is registered on a given date, parents will be contacted by a Discovery Link staff member. Discovery Link can be contacted via phone at 303-968-9583.

Families will be charged \$1 per minute after 2:50 p.m. This will compensate the staff member who must stay beyond work hours to supervise children who have not been picked up on time.

If your child has not been picked up and a staff member is not available to supervise them, DPS practice is that we notify DPS Climate and Safety for support.

Per DPS practice, frequent late pick up will result in a formal warning from Administration and chronic late pick up will require assistance from DPS Climate and Safety and the Department of Human Services.

### Early Dismissal (K-5)

Parents/guardians picking up students early from school should do so before 2:10 p.m.. The last 30 minutes of the day is a particularly active transition for students as they wrap up the school day and prepare to go home, and it is disruptive to the class and teacher to have students leaving shortly before the end of school.

During other school times, parents/guardians will pick up their child(ren) by coming to the main office to sign out their child(ren). A valid photo ID is required. Children will not be released to

anyone who is not listed as an emergency contact on our student information system.

Upon arrival, this process can take up to ten (10) minutes as students need to pack up and head to the main office. Be aware, we cannot accommodate parents/guardians requesting students sit in the main office while waiting for parent/guardian arrival. This results in lost instructional time and creates congestion in the main office.

If early dismissal is necessary because of an illness or accident in school, we will contact you with information and instructions for picking up your child.

### **Arrival/Dismissal Procedures (ECE)**

- Due to compliance requirements, ECE students must go to the external ECE classroom door to sign students in and out. The parking lot is reserved for parent parking.
- ECE students must be signed in and out each day at the ECE door by a verified adult.
- If the parent has a K-5 student, the parent may drop off both students at the ECE exterior door between 7:25 a.m. - 7:40 a.m.
- If an ECE student is dropped off late (after 8:15 a.m.), they must be dropped off at the external ECE classroom door and not the main office.
  - If the parent also has a K-5 student, the older sibling must be dropped off at the main office.
  - Late arrival is not available between 10:20 a.m. - 10:50 a.m. as students will be at lunch (and therefore, not in the classroom).
- Regular ECE dismissal is between 2:40 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.
- If a parent is picking up an ECE student AND a K-5 student early, the parent will need to pick up students from two locations (the main office and ECE exterior classroom door).

### **School Closures and Weather Delays**

If schools are to be closed or there is a delayed start time due to weather conditions, the district is committed to making a decision as early as possible. The decision to close schools or delay the start time is made by the Superintendent based on information provided by representatives from transportation agencies, the weather bureau, city and county law enforcement and DPS Transportation. If school is canceled or there is a weather delay, information will be communicated in the following ways:

- The Communications Office will immediately notify local television and radio stations, which will broadcast regular announcements of school closures or delayed start.



- Emergency school closures and delayed starts are posted on [dpsk12.org](https://dpsk12.org) immediately.
- Announcements to close or delay school will also be posted to the district's Facebook and Twitter pages.
- You will also receive a communication from the school via email or Rooms with a confirmation.

### Weather Dismissal

At times there may be weather related events during dismissal. Please check weather to ensure your child dresses appropriately and is prepared with items such as snow boots, jackets, umbrella, etc. You will be notified via Blooms for any alternative dismissal procedures. Please see below for various scenarios:

- Lightning
  - Students will be dismissed once the lightning has passed.
- Torrential Downpours
  - ECE students will be dismissed as usual.
  - K-5 parents will come into the school and pick up students directly from the classroom:
    - The following doors will be available for parents to enter: Door 2, 3, 4, 22.
- Tornado Warning
  - Students will remain inside until the warning has passed.

### Delayed Start Schedule

If there is a delayed start, we will begin the school day at 9:40am. Students will miss their regularly scheduled class/content from 7:40 a.m. - 9:40 a.m.

- Buses will also be on a 2 hour delay.
- Carline drop off and entry into the building begins at 9:25 a.m.
- School begins at 9:40 a.m.
- Late entry begins at 9:45 a.m. All students must check in at the main office.
- All students report directly to their classroom teacher for attendance.
- Dismissal will be at the regularly scheduled time of 2:40 p.m.
- Afternoon bus routes will run in the same order as normally followed in the afternoon.
- After-school activities (athletic events, enrichment programs, etc.) may be modified or canceled as a result of the weather conditions. Please keep an eye out for email and Rooms communications.

## **Bus Transportation**

Students will be dropped off in the bus lane by door #4. Be aware that bus transportation may drop off students before adult supervision begins at 7:25 a.m. We strongly remind parents/guardians to discuss safety procedures with their children. Specifically, students should head to the front of the building and wait at door #24.

Students residing in the Central Park Enrollment Zone, and more than 1 mile from the school qualify for bus transportation. Details regarding your child's bus stop location and bus number can be found in the [parent portal](#). Students that live outside of the enrollment zone, or less than a mile from the school may apply for an exception to ride the bus from an existing bus stop through the transportation department.

Routes and eligibility are determined by the district, therefore any questions concerning buses should be directed to the transportation office. You can contact them directly at 720-423-4699 or by visiting their website <http://transportation.dpsk12.org/> for more information.

## **Attendance**

Please notify the school if your child will be absent or tardy by e-mailing [Inspire.attendance@dpsk12.org](mailto:Inspire.attendance@dpsk12.org) or calling the school attendance line at 720-424-4851. This should be done each day your child is absent or tardy so that we can account for your child. Automated calls will be made at 8:30 a.m. if the attendance line has not been called. Please be sure to let us know why your child is absent or tardy so that we can utilize the correct code (car troubles, illness, medical appointment, etc.).

## **Absences**

### **Excused Absences**

Per the District policy JHB-R, the following are considered excused absences:

1. temporary illness or injury
2. physical, mental, or emotional disability or condition
3. religious observances
4. death in the immediate family
5. school service absences (absences that occur as a result of participation in school activities that are authorized and pre-approved by the school leader).

### Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence is any absence not described above. If we do not receive a call letting us know why your student is absent, the absence defaults as unexcused.

Documentation (a doctor's note) is required for illnesses of more than 2 days.

### Illness

Please email [Inspire.attendance@dpsk12.org](mailto:Inspire.attendance@dpsk12.org) or call the attendance line at 720-424-4851 and let us know if your child is sick before 7:40 a.m.

Children with the following symptoms should not be sent to school: fever over 100.4, diarrhea, flu symptoms, severe coughing accompanied by difficulty breathing, or vomiting.

Although the Safe Access Survey will not be used, we ask that staff and families remain vigilant. Students who are sick and/or exhibiting infectious disease symptoms should stay home using these guidelines:

- [When to Keep Sick Children Home \(English\)](#)
- [When to Keep Sick Children Home \(Español\)](#)

Children with mild cold symptoms (stuffy nose with clear drainage, sneezing, mild cough) related to allergies are allowed to attend school as long as they are feeling well enough to participate in school activities.

Children should not return to school until 24 hours after treatment has started if they have pink eye, strep throat, or impetigo. Students must stay home for 24 hours after having a temperature over 100.4, or vomiting 2 or more times and must be medicine free.

If a student is not feeling well during the school day, the student will be sent to the school nurse. Per the nurse's protocols, students may be sent home.

### Extended Absences

Contact time is important for student learning. Families should schedule all vacations during school breaks. Please refer to the school calendar for non-contact days such as district

professional development days, Inspire Days, vacation days, and holidays to schedule family vacations.

If there is an extenuating circumstance that requires multiple days of absences email the Principal with the respective dates and the reason for absence. Families will receive a written response clarifying whether the extended absence is excused.

### Make-up Work for Student Absences

Teachers are **NOT** responsible for preparing work ahead of extended absences. Teachers will do their best to provide work and/or assist students with making up work upon their return.

### Truancy

Per Colorado Department of Education Policy, any student missing more than 4 days of school unexcused in a month, or 10 days unexcused over the course of the school year are considered truant. Students with 10 or more unexcused absences may have a truancy filing.

### **Meals & Snacks**

Denver Public Schools provides breakfast and lunch programs. Per the Healthy School Meal Act, breakfast and lunch for the 24-25 school year will be free. In addition:

- Students are welcome to bring lunch from home
- We do not have microwaves for student use
- Additional information regarding individual food purchase during lunch:
  - If a student brings their lunch from home and would like to purchase milk, the charge is \$0.75
  - If a student would like to add to their home lunch, they are welcome to the Fruit & Vegetable bar for \$1.00
  - If a student would like to purchase seconds of the main entree they may do so for \$3.00
  - The cafeteria will also be providing a la carte items for students to purchase in the fall that are Smart Snack approved. Pricing information coming soon.

The lunch menu for each day is available on the [Nutrition Services](#) webpage.

Students who need financial assistance may fill out an application for free or reduced meals at [MySchoolApps - Select District](#). A new application must be submitted yearly at the beginning of

the school year.

### Lunch with Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians may have lunch with their child(ren) for special occasions. Parents/Guardians may take their child outside, to the playground, lobby tables, etc. to eat. If a parent/guardian leaves the building with their child, the child must be signed out (at the front office).

### Delivery of Food During Lunch

Please do not deliver or drop off lunch from outside vendors, fast food, or restaurants. This inundates the front office and is a significant distraction to other students eating packed lunch or school lunch.

### Snack

Snacks should be in a container the child can open without assistance, and something that can be consumed with minimal mess (i.e. goldfish cracker, pretzels). Items that require utensils (Nutella, fruit cups) or can spill are not appropriate snacks. Teachers welcome donations of healthy snacks for students who forget their snack.

Teachers will plan for allergies and sensitivities. Allergy information will be shared for each class to facilitate safe snacks for everyone. Inspire is an allergy aware school.

### **Recess**

We believe that recess is a critical part of your child's day for optimal development. Students will go outside for 25 minutes per day, regardless of academic or behavior performance. Please note that if students need to complete work or re-focus because of a behavior this may be done during a "brain break". The exception to this standard is if there is a safety concern and a student needs an alternate setting to maintain their and/or other students' safety.

On occasion, if the precipitation makes outdoor play potentially unsafe or the "feels like" temperature is approximately 25 degrees or below, children will have indoor recess in the gym or classrooms. The final decision regarding indoor recess is made by the front office, with safety in mind.

## **Small Groups**

School Success and Social Skills groups will be offered to students by teacher recommendation. Small Groups are an extension of the Social Emotional Learning that Denver Public Schools and Inspire provides to all students. It is not a therapeutic counseling group. Being part of a small group allows for more practice at skills and positive connection to peers and an additional adult. Groups will meet weekly for about 6-8 weeks, and will work on The Inspire Way, Zones of Regulation, The Inspire Monthly Themes, Random Acts of Kindness, DPS SEAL (Social Emotional & Academic Learning) Competencies and/or themes within the American School Counseling Association School Counselor Resource Series Group Counseling with Elementary Students (ie: grief and loss, social skills or parental separation). Parents will be notified by their student's teacher and/or by the school counselor if their student is recommended for small group work.

## **Dress Code**

We value students' ability to express themselves through what they wear. We ask that students dress appropriately (positive expression, etc.) for school. Administration will notify parents/guardians if there is an issue with dress.

Students should dress for weather – weather in Colorado changes quickly so please ensure students have layers. Please label all outer garments and your child's backpack with their full name. Children should be able to get themselves into and out of their clothing without assistance, including buttons, snaps, and ties.

Please be sure that your child has a full change of clothing, appropriate for the weather, in his or her cubby at all times. Even for children that are fully potty trained, accidents happen. In addition, sometimes children get wet on the playground, get sick, spill food or drink on their clothing etc. If they do not have a change of clothing, someone will need to bring a change of clothes, and in the case of bathroom accidents\*, they will not be allowed to return to class until they have changed their clothing.

### **\*Protocol for Bathroom Accidents**

For K-5 students, staff will talk students through cleaning themselves up. Staff are not permitted to physically assist students. If a student cannot clean themselves up with verbal assistance, a parent/guardian will be called.

## **Toys and Electronics From Home**

To prevent distractions from learning, toys (including stuffed animals), electronics/devices are not permitted in school. In special cases, the teacher may designate a toy party as a class reward or inform you of a learning purpose for bringing a personal belonging from home. Inspire was designed to offer access to a variety of interactive learning materials throughout each day. We are confident your children will have opportunities to play, move and be creative each day.

### **Exceptions**

- ECE students are encouraged to bring a stuffed animal for naptime.
- Students with IEPs or special needs may have permission to use a fidget, etc.
- Students may bring a cell phone (cellular devices) to school. It must be on silent mode and remain in their backpack all day - students may not use cell phones (cellular devices) during the day. We are not responsible for lost or stolen property.
- Students may wear a smart watch. Students may not use smart watches during school hours. The school reserves the right to confiscate smart watches if it becomes a distraction to the student and/or the learning environment.

## **Celebrations**

- **Classroom Parties**

All food brought to school must be store bought. All food must have nutritional information listed so that we can verify if items are safe for students with food allergies. As a general practice, we do not distribute homemade gift/goodie bags. Teachers will plan for allergies and sensitivities. Allergy information will be shared for each class to facilitate safe snacks for everyone. Inspire is an allergy aware school.

The last day before an extended break (i.e. Fall Break, Winter Break), classrooms may hold parties during the last hour of the day. Facilitation of activities and inviting classroom helpers during class parties is at the discretion of the teacher.

- **Birthdays**

To ensure equity for students, classrooms do not host birthday parties or celebrations for students. In accordance with our philosophy about whole child development we will focus on recognizing our students' character strengths, foxtail celebrations, etc.

- Weekly School Wide Assemblies

On Fridays, we will host a 15 minute assembly in the morning. This time is intended to engage students, build community, showcase talent or a theme. All parents/guardians are welcome to attend each week. If your child is specifically performing you will receive a notification from the AP of Culture.

### **Friday Folders**

At the end of each week parents/guardians can expect a Friday Folder to come home. This is an opportunity for the school and teachers to share information and return student work. Families should expect 2 graded assignments coming home per content each week.

### **Family Conferences**

Two formal Family Conferences are scheduled during the school year. Family Conferences provide an opportunity for families to meet with the classroom teacher to discuss their child's progress. At the Parent/Teacher Conference, specific student data and observations about daily work habits will be shared with the parents/guardians. If parents/guardians wish to have additional conferences to discuss student progress, feel free to make an appointment with the teacher. If necessary, other staff such as the psychologist, social worker, counselor, SpEd teacher, AP, or principal may be present.

### **Homework/Continued Learning**

Inspire does not assign homework after school. We believe in student and family well being. We also believe different types of learning or extension of learning can happen at home. Families can decide what is the best fit for their child. On occasion or if requested, Inspire staff may assign relevant, challenging, meaningful, and purposeful assignments that reinforce classroom learning objectives as an "option" to meet the differentiated needs of a student.

### **Grading**



The standards-based grading scale should not be compared to a letter grade scale. Our goal is for each student to reach their full potential. A grade of **3-Meets Expectations** is most common and means your child has met grade-level standards. It should be celebrated! A grade of **4-Exceeds Expectations** is achievable but less common and is only given when students apply knowledge above and beyond grade-level expectations independently and consistently. \*If your student has an IEP, please communicate directly with their teacher. Click on the [Grading Scale for Families](#) for the standards-based grading scale.

## **ECE Policies & Procedures**

ECE classrooms will have additional policies and procedures. Teachers will share a welcome packet with families and discuss specifics during Meet & Greet.

## **Discovery Link**

Discovery Link is DPS' official before/after school care program. [Discovery Link](#) provides licensed child care for Inspire students.

Discovery Link will also provide care during professional development days. You may sign up for care on professional development days even if your student is not enrolled in the early risers or after school programs, if there is space. Students enrolled in the early riser or after school program will be given priority enrollment on these days.

## **Collaborative School Committee (CSC)**

The Collaborative School Committee brings together families, staff and community members to create and implement a plan to promote high achievement within a school. The committee meets on the second Tuesday of every month at 4:00 p.m. and is an opportunity for key stakeholders to have a voice in their school. Colorado law requires all schools to have a CSC to increase the amount of accountability and family involvement in our schools. The group works with school leaders to provide feedback on important school decisions. These decisions may include ways to improve academic performance, budgets, and the school's program. To contact the CSC, email [InspireElementaryCSC@gmail.com](mailto:InspireElementaryCSC@gmail.com).

## **Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)**

Membership is free for all Inspire PTO families, but you must enroll annually. Your membership

in the PTO helps support the many valuable programs and activities that occur throughout the year at Inspire Elementary School. Please join us today! Please check the [PTO link](#) on our website for more information.

## **Volunteers**

Parents, family, and community members who have a desire to volunteer in their child's classroom or in the school on a regular basis, must complete a background check. This DPS policy ensures a measure of safety for children as they interact on a regular basis with an adult in a position of trust in the school setting. Anyone that will be volunteering with children beyond his/her student needs to complete a volunteer application. Teens 17 and younger do not need background checks, nor do occasional volunteers who will not be working directly with children (individuals speaking to the class, one time story readers, etc.).

- Complete the [application](#) for a background check
- Review [Volunteer Handbook](#)

## **Lost and Found**

The lost and found is located in the main vestibule (in front of the main office). Please label items likely to be lost (lunch boxes, backpacks, coats, etc.) with your child's first and last name, and we will try to return them to your child's classroom. Items not retrieved from the lost and found will be donated **each month** on the professional development days.

## **Pets**

For safety and health reasons, animals are NOT to be brought onto school grounds. This includes pets on a leash. Denver City Ordinances prohibit having dogs or other animals on the playground or school grounds. Please respect this ordinance even after school hours and on weekends. Only service animals are exempt from the above policy.