



# 2026-2027

## Freedom Elementary School



### Parent & Student Handbook

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Colorado Springs, CO 80923  
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### Identity Statement

In partnership with our community, Freedom Elementary is a **Quality Neighborhood School** in District 11, characterized by a close-knit culture that is anchored in **authentic learning experiences** through **exploration, collaboration, and the integration** of content areas. Our students are empowered to take **initiative and ownership** of their learning.

At Freedom Elementary, we **honor and celebrate** the diversity of our students, families, and staff. We are committed to fostering an **equitable and inclusive learning environment** where every child feels **valued, respected, and empowered** to thrive **academically, socially, and emotionally**.

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### Focus Areas

- Freedom learners demonstrate that **knowledge across content areas** builds **global understanding**.
- We thrive as a **supportive and engaged community**.
- Freedom learners make personal connections to their **interests**, understand their **strengths and areas for growth**, and know their “**why**.”

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### Our Beliefs

At Freedom Elementary, we believe in:

- Building **positive relationships**.
- Valuing each individual's **unique qualities**.

- Challenging ourselves to **learn and grow**.

- Pursuing **equity relentlessly** in all we do.

## Arrival, Dismissal, and Parking Lot Procedures

### School Hours

- **Doors Open:** 7:45 a.m. (*no supervision prior to this time*)
  - **School Hours:** 7:50 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.
  - **Tardy:** Students are considered tardy after **7:55 a.m.**
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### Parking, Drop-Off, Pick-Up, and Dismissal Procedures

#### Building Entry & Exit Locations

- **Bus Riders:** Buses will pick up and drop off students in the **loop directly in front of the school**. Enter and exit through the **main front double doors**.
  - **Walkers:** Enter and exit through the **double doors near the upper playground blacktop**.
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#### Preschool & Kindergarten Drop-off and Pick-up

- Enter the Freedom parking lot from **Butterfield Drive**.
- Stay in the **LEFT lane**.
- Turn left into the **Family Parking Lot**.

- The staff parking lot is located near the **preschool and kindergarten playground**.
  - Park your vehicle.
  - **Escort your student(s)** to the crosswalk and their designated **preschool or kindergarten door**.
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**To park and walk your child to the front entrance:**

**Family Parking (Grades 1–5)**

- Enter the Freedom parking lot from **Butterfield Drive**.
  - Stay in the **LEFT lane**.
  - Turn left into the **Family Parking Lot**.
  - The staff parking lot is located near the **preschool and kindergarten playground**.
  - Park your vehicle.
  - **Escort your student** to the crosswalk and front entrance.
  - Students will enter through the **front double doors**.
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**Kiss-N-Go Location**

The Kiss-N-Go drop-off and pick-up zone is located in the **street cut-out on Butterfield Drive**. See page 5 for additional information.

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**Parent pick-up in the gym:**

- Parents will meet their child in the gym just before dismissal.
  - Parents must hand the dismissal card to a staff member before leaving with their child.
  - Please ensure that young children remain with an adult inside the building at all times.
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### **Additional Dismissal Reminders**

To ensure student safety, each student is assigned a color-coded dismissal card indicating their designated way home. Students must hand this card to the appropriate staff member before exiting the building.

- Please inform your child's teacher of your regular after-school pick-up plan.
  - If your child's dismissal plan changes, please call the front office by 2:30 p.m. so we can ensure a smooth transition.
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### **Arrival & Dismissal Traffic Safety**

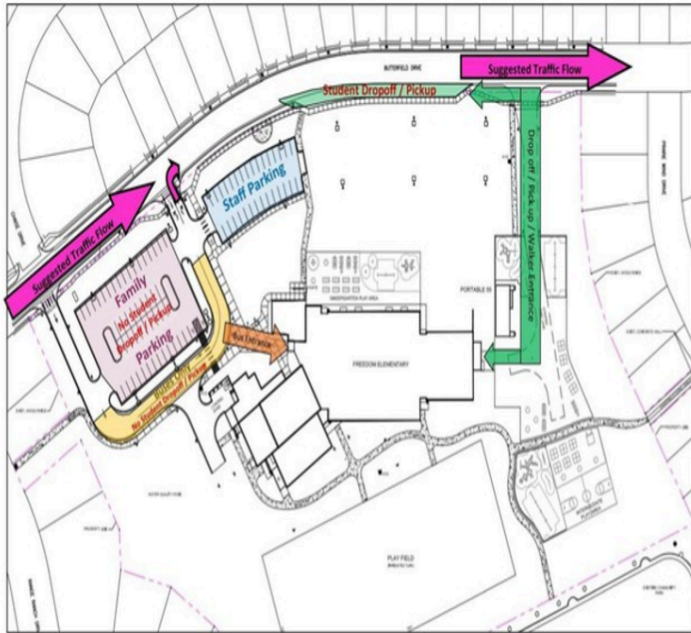
Traffic is often heavy before and after school. To help keep everyone safe:

- Teach your child to always use the crosswalk and remain alert for traffic.
- Our parking lot has limited capacity. Reserved parking spaces are designated for Daycare vehicles and District 11 transportation during drop-off and pick-up times.
- All buses pick up and drop off students in the Freedom Elementary parking lot.

We are a community working together to ensure the safety of all students. We ask for your patience, kindness, and courtesy when entering, exiting, or waiting in the parking lot.

PLEASE DRIVE SLOWLY in and around the school at all times.

## Parking Lot /Traffic Flow/Kiss & Go/Bus/Drop Off Information



## Kiss-N-Go Lane & Traffic Flow Procedures

### Kiss-N-Go Lane Guidelines

The **Kiss-N-Go** lane is designed for **quick drop-off and pick-up only**.

⊘ **Do not park or leave your vehicle unattended** in this lane at any time.

Use the lane to safely and efficiently drop students off and keep traffic moving for all families.

All students are dismissed at **2:50 p.m.** — parents are encouraged to pre-plan their pick-up location.

Thank you for helping us maintain a **safe and respectful environment** during arrival and dismissal.

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### **Kiss-N-Go Location**

The Kiss-N-Go drop-off and pick-up zone is located in the **street cut-out on Butterfield Drive**.

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### **Traffic Flow Guidelines for Kiss-N-Go**

- Enter Butterfield Drive from **Range Ranch**, heading east toward the street cut-out.
  - Pull all the way forward to the end of the cut-out before stopping to drop off or pick up your child.
  - To support smooth traffic flow, access Range Ranch from **westbound Bridle Pass** whenever possible.
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### **Important Reminders**

- Do not block the entrance or exit to the school parking lot.
  - In the Kiss-N-Go lane, **students must exit the vehicle from the right side only** (sidewalk side) for safety.
  - Do not park or leave your vehicle unattended in the Kiss-N-Go lane.
  - **Kiss-N-Go students** should enter and exit the building through the **double doors by the upper playground blacktop**.
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### **Pick-Up Expectations**

**What if I can't pick up my child on time?**

If you are unable to pick up your child within **10 minutes of dismissal**, please arrange for a **family member, friend, or daycare provider** to do so.

We understand that occasional delays or emergencies may occur, and we will always strive to be supportive and understanding. However, **repeated late pick-ups** impact staff availability and school operations.

**Important Notes:**

- Freedom staff **cannot supervise siblings** of students in after-school activities (tutoring, athletics, clubs).
- Families are responsible for ensuring that students not in after-school programs are picked up **promptly, within 10 minutes of dismissal**.

Thank you for helping us maintain a **safe and structured end-of-day routine**.

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**Dismissal Overview**

- **All students must have a dismissal card** to track their dismissal.
- **Teachers will not release students without a dismissal card.**

**Changes to Dismissal**

- Parents must call the front office by **2:30 p.m.** for any dismissal changes.
- Office staff will announce changes over the intercom at 2:30 p.m.
- Teachers must note the change on a **sticky note** attached to the student's dismissal card.

**Inclement Weather / Late Bus**

- An email will be sent, and staff will be notified via the **PA system** to check their email for updates.

### Late Pick-Up

- Students remaining **after 10 minutes** will be brought to the office.
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## Dismissal by Grade Level

### Pre-K

- Dismissal is directly from **Pre-K classrooms**.

### Kindergarten (no dismissal cards required)

- Parents pick up students **directly from Kindergarten classrooms**.

### 1st–5th Grade Dismissal (Color-Coded Cards)

Teachers will collect dismissal cards and return them to the office after dismissal.

### Dismissal Groups:

- **Kiss-N-Go** (*Blue Card*)
  - Teachers will escort students to the **Kiss-N-Go lane** where parents remain in their vehicles.
  - Teachers collect dismissal cards as students enter their cars.
- **Walkers & Adventure Club** (*Green Card*)
  - One teacher per grade will escort **walkers** and **Adventure Club students** to the blacktop.
  - Walkers will be dismissed first; teachers collect dismissal cards as walkers exit.
  - Adventure Club: Mr. Chris will meet students by the back door. Teachers collect dismissal cards at this handoff.

- **Bus (Yellow Card)**  
One teacher per grade will escort **bus riders** to the front of the school.
  - Teachers collect dismissal cards as students board the bus.
- **Parent Pick-Up (Gym) (Red Card)**  
One teacher per grade will escort **parent-pick-up students** to the gym.
  - Students will exit through the **side gym doors** once they see their parent/guardian.
  - Teachers collect dismissal cards as students are released to parents.

### Siblings

- Siblings will meet at the **assigned dismissal location** of their youngest sibling.

<b>Attendance &amp; Tardiness Expectations</b>
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*Aligned with Colorado State Law & District 11 Board Policy JH*

At Freedom Elementary, we believe that regular and punctual attendance is critical to academic success. Frequent absences—whether excused or unexcused—can disrupt learning and lead to poor academic progress, lack of social development, and possible academic failure.

Students who maintain good attendance achieve higher grades, enjoy school more, and develop positive lifelong habits of responsibility and punctuality.

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### Absences

#### Reporting Absences

Parents/guardians must notify the school by **9:00 a.m.** on any day a student will be absent by calling the school office at (719) 228-0800, the attendance line (719) 228-0813 or by submitting a Falcon Absence Form found on our website.

If the school does not receive notification, the absence will be marked as unexcused, and parents/guardians will be notified via the district's automated dialer.

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### **Excused Absences**

Absences will be excused under the following conditions:

- Student illness or injury
- Medical or dental appointments (preferably scheduled outside of school hours)
- Family emergency or hardship
- Death or serious illness in the family
- Religious observances
- Legal obligations
- Pre-approved family vacation (up to 5 days per year; vacation requests may be denied for poor attendance or academic performance)
- School-sponsored activities
- Military family deployment/redeployment (up to 5 pre-approved days if in good standing and not during standardized testing)
- Suspension or expulsion
- Court appointments for students in out-of-home placement

Notes from a healthcare provider may be required to excuse absences in certain cases. If a student is on an attendance plan, only doctor-verified absences or administrator-approved absences will be excused.

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## Unexcused Absences

An absence is considered unexcused if it does not fall within the excused absence criteria listed above or if appropriate documentation has not been provided.

- Unexcused absences will be documented in PowerSchool.
  - Parents/guardians will be notified of unexcused absences via the district's automated dialer.
  - If a student reaches **4 unexcused absences in any month** or **10 unexcused absences in a school year**, a review process will be initiated and may include home visits and referrals to Student Support and Engagement.
  - Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing **10% or more** of enrolled school days (excused or unexcused), which will trigger the development of an attendance improvement plan.
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## Tardiness

Tardiness disrupts learning for both the student and their classmates.

- Students are considered tardy if they arrive after **7:55 a.m.** Parents/guardians must **sign students in** at the office if arriving late.
  - Students arriving after the tardy bell must report to the front lobby desk and receive a tardy pass.
  - If a student is tardy **for 50% or more of the AM or PM session**, it will be recorded as a half-day absence.
  - Excessive tardiness will result in parent notification and possible attendance interventions.
  - Attendance is taken promptly at **8:05 a.m.** each morning. If your student is not present at that time and you have not yet notified the front office of their absence, you may receive an automated text message and email from the district indicating that your student is absent. Once your student arrives, their attendance record will be updated accordingly.
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## **Early Dismissal / Student Pick-Up Procedures**

- Parents/guardians must sign students out when picking them up early. A valid photo ID is required at the time of check-out.
  - Please allow up to 10 minutes for your student to be called from class and brought to the front office. Plan your arrival accordingly.
  - Early release pick-ups must occur no later than **2:35 p.m.** After 2:35 p.m., students will no longer be released through the office. Parents/guardians will be directed to pick up their student at their regular dismissal location.
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## **Attendance Requirement for School Events**

- Students must be present for the full school day to participate in after-school and evening activities.
  - Students who are absent for any portion of the school day or arrive more than 30 minutes late are not eligible to participate in after-school or evening school-sponsored events on that day.
  - Exceptions may be considered by school administration when the absence or tardiness is due to a verified medical or dental appointment and appropriate documentation is provided by the parent/guardian.
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## **Parent/Guardian Commitment**

We ask all families to support student attendance by:

- Ensuring your child arrives on time each day and is promptly picked up after school.
  - Scheduling medical/dental appointments and family vacations outside of school days, when possible.
  - Communicating promptly with the school about any absences.
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## **Make-Up Work**

### Make-Up Work for Absences

For **prearranged absences**, teachers will make every effort to collect and provide as much make-up work as possible in advance.

Upon returning to school, it is the **student's responsibility** to check with their teacher to ensure that all required work is completed.

Please remember: consistent attendance is key to your child's success. Missing school not only means missed instruction, but also the challenge of making up work while keeping pace with new material.

**Colorado state law requires school attendance**, and students may not miss more than **10%** of the school year.

### Bell Schedule

AM		PM
7:50 AM	Doors will open at 7:45 AM.	2:50 PM (end of day)

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### Collective Commitments to Excellence

At Freedom Elementary, we believe that **shared responsibility for learning** ensures that all children can be **successful learners and valued members of our school community**.

We pledge to **work together with our families** in support of the school's mission.

### Family Commitment

We ask families to support their child's education by:

- Ensuring their child arrives at school every day by **7:50 AM** (not earlier than **7:40 AM**).

- Making sure their child is in school daily unless ill or for legitimate reasons, and scheduling appointments outside of school hours whenever possible. Notify the office by **9:00 AM** if your child will be absent.
- Reading all communications sent home by the school.
- Supporting their child's success by helping with time management and encouraging good study habits.
- Maintaining open communication with their child and with the school, and addressing concerns promptly.
- Ensuring their child participates fully in **State Assessment tests** and puts forth their best effort.
- Ensuring their child follows **District 11's dress code**.
- Helping their child understand that they must follow **Freedom's Social Contracts** and school expectations to maintain a safe and respectful learning environment.
- Understanding that **parents are ultimately responsible** for their child's behavior and actions.

### **Student Commitment**

As a Freedom Falcon, I understand that to be a successful learner, I will:

- Arrive at Freedom **every day by 7:50 AM**.
- Work, think, and behave in ways that reflect my best effort and respect the rights of others.
- Follow **District 11's dress code**.
- Take responsibility for my behavior and follow the teacher's directions and **school SOAR expectations**.
- Use school technology in a **respectful and responsible way**.

## Internet Access & Acceptable Use Policy

### Overview

Freedom Elementary provides student access to the Internet to **enhance learning** and support the Core Knowledge curriculum. The Internet offers access to **current research, information, and resources** that enrich instruction.

To access the Internet at school, students and parents/guardians must review and sign the **Acceptable Use Policy** annually.

### Safety & Supervision

- Freedom uses **Internet filtering** to block inappropriate content.
- The computer lab is configured so instructors can monitor all student activity.
- Students are not allowed to access the Internet **without adult supervision**.
- Families are encouraged to maintain ongoing discussions about **safe and appropriate Internet use** both at home and at school.

### Privileges

- Use of the Internet is a **privilege, not a right**.
- Students will receive training on proper Internet use.
- Inappropriate use will result in **loss of privileges** and may result in further disciplinary action.

### Specific Guidelines

- Student Internet use requires **written parental permission** and adult supervision.

- **Social media and streaming services** (Facebook, Google+, Pandora, iHeart Radio, YouTube, Instagram, etc.) are not permitted.
- No student should be identified online by **full name or photo** without written parental consent.
- Use of the Internet to **defame, harass, or demean** any individual is prohibited.
- Students must follow standards of **network etiquette**:
  - Be polite; use appropriate language.
  - Do not swear, use vulgarities, or share personal information.
  - Illegal activity is strictly prohibited.
- Downloading files that may harm the network (such as viruses) is not allowed.
- Students may not engage in **financial transactions** or enter areas of service that incur a fee.
- Sending **hate mail**, engaging in harassment, or participating in antisocial behavior is prohibited.
- Installing **unauthorized software** on district devices is prohibited.
- Accessing or processing **pornographic or otherwise inappropriate material** is prohibited.
- Students may not attempt to access, modify, or misrepresent **another user's files or data**.

## **Enforcement**

The **Colorado Springs School District 11** is the final authority regarding network use.

**Appropriate disciplinary action** will be taken against any student who willfully violates the Acceptable Use Policy.

If you have any concerns about your child's use of online services, please contact your child's teacher or **technology instructor** immediately.

## **Technology User Policy**

Freedom Elementary is committed to teaching students the skills of responsible digital citizenship. We believe that technology should be used to enhance learning, foster creativity, and promote collaboration, while ensuring that students develop the awareness and habits needed to navigate the digital world safely and ethically.

Each kindergarten and 1st grade student is issued an iPad, and each student in grades 2–5 is issued a laptop. These devices provide students with modern learning opportunities that go beyond what desktop computers alone can offer.

**Students will use their iPad or laptop for a variety of learning activities, including:**

- Keyboarding and digital literacy skills
- Research projects
- Note-taking
- Lesson activities and interactive learning
- Homework assignments

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## **Device Use Guidelines**

**To promote responsible use of technology, the following policies are in place:**

- Devices will remain at school unless authorized for home use by a teacher or administrator.
- No food or drink is permitted while using an iPad or laptop.

- If a device is damaged due to carelessness (as determined by the teacher or administrator), the student and family will be responsible for repair or replacement costs.
  - All terms outlined in the Internet Acceptable Use Policy apply to iPad and laptop use.
  - If a student violates the Acceptable Use Policy, they may lose device privileges, and school work will be completed using alternative methods during the suspension of their technology access.
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## **Safeguards & Monitoring**

**Freedom Elementary implements multiple safeguards to protect students while using technology:**

- The school's technology management system allows administrators to monitor all websites visited, emails sent, and documents created.
  - Email access is restricted so that students may only send/receive emails from classmates and teachers.
  - Internet safety and responsible use lessons are taught to all students to ensure they understand appropriate online behavior.
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## **Student Data Privacy**

Freedom Elementary follows the Colorado Student Data Transparency and Security Act (C.R.S. 22-16-101) to ensure the protection of all student data and digital privacy.

<b>Conduct and Discipline</b>
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We are committed to creating a safe and respectful environment in all areas of our school. The following expectations apply throughout the building.

**At Freedom Elementary, we are committed to providing a well-rounded education for every student.**

- Every student has the right to learn.
- Every teacher has the right to teach.

To support an excellent learning environment, we expect all students to follow school-wide and classroom rules that foster respect, responsibility, and safety.

Our approach to discipline is grounded in a belief that the dignity of each student must be maintained at all times. We utilize a discipline model that is flexible, supportive, and rooted in current best practices in education.

A key component of our behavior approach is to recognize and reinforce positive behaviors through proactive and intentional acknowledgment.

**During the school year, we will utilize a variety of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) tools to support positive behavior and build a strong school community, including:**

- Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)
- Random Acts of Kindness (RAK)

**Through these tools and our shared expectations, we encourage students to:**

- Develop positive social skills
- Learn to be a cooperative and respectful community member
- Practice empathy, effective problem-solving, and anger management skills

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## **Playground Expectations**

**To maintain a safe and enjoyable recess experience:**

- The playground is not supervised before 7:45 AM or after 2:50 PM. Students should not be on the playground outside of these times.
- Students are expected to follow game rules and display good sportsmanship at all times.
- Students must line up immediately when the bell rings or the whistle blows.

**The following behaviors are not permitted on the playground:**

- ⊘ Pushing, shoving, wrestling, fighting, or pulling others' clothing
- ⊘ Throwing rocks, dirt, snowballs, or woodchips
- ⊘ Standing on slides, climbing improperly on equipment, or misusing playground structures
- ⊘ Bouncing balls against the building

**Hall, Restroom, and Assembly Expectations**

At Freedom Elementary, we expect all students to demonstrate **respectful and responsible behavior** in all areas of the school building.

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**Hallway Expectations**

- Hallway conduct should be **quiet and orderly**.
  - Students should walk on the **right side** of the hallway without talking, and must **keep their hands and feet to themselves**.
  - **Running in the hallways is not permitted.**
  - Teachers will accompany their classes when traveling through hallways.
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**Restroom Expectations**

- Students must request **permission** from the teacher and take a **bathroom pass** before leaving the classroom.

- Restroom behavior should be **quiet and respectful**.
  - Restrooms must be kept **clean and in good condition**:
    - **Toilets, sinks, and urinals must be used only for their intended purpose.**
    - **Flush toilets** after each use.
    - **Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water** before leaving the restroom.
    - Place **trash and paper towels** in designated containers.
    - Respect the **privacy and personal space** of others.
    - Leave **restroom facilities ready** for the next person.
    - **Vandalism or misuse of restroom facilities is prohibited.**
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### **Assembly Expectations**

- Student behavior at assemblies should be **courteous and respectful**.
- Students are expected to **enter, sit, and exit quietly**.
- The following behaviors are **not acceptable** during assemblies:
  - Boisterousness
  - Booing
  - Whistling
  - Talking during the program

We expect assemblies to be a time for students to demonstrate **positive school citizenship**.

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## Supervision and Behavior Monitoring

- Every staff member at Freedom is responsible for helping monitor student behavior **throughout the building**, including hallways, cafeteria, playground, restrooms, and assemblies.

Behavior that requires an **immediate office referral** will be treated as a "**material and substantial**" discipline infraction and addressed by the administration.

## Material and Substantial Infractions

Freedom Elementary is committed to maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment. Any behavior that significantly disrupts instruction, threatens the safety of students or staff, or infringes on the rights of others will be treated as a "**material and substantial**" discipline infraction.

These behaviors require an **immediate office referral** and will be addressed directly by the administration.

### Examples of material and substantial infractions include, but are not limited to:

- Physical aggression or fighting
- Threats, intimidation, or harassment (verbal, physical, or digital)
- Possession or use of weapons or illegal substances
- Extreme defiance of authority
- Significant disruption of instruction or school operations
- Any behavior that endangers the well-being of oneself or others

Consequences for these infractions will align with district policy and may include parent meetings, suspension, behavior contracts, or additional supports/interventions based on the severity of the incident.

Other behavior concerns should first be addressed through **classroom management** and the school-wide system of support (Capturing Kids' Hearts).

- A formal **discipline referral** may be appropriate if classroom-managed behaviors become **chronic or escalate**.

### **Possible Consequences**

Consequences for discipline referrals will be determined on an **individual basis** by a school administrator. Possible responses may include, but are not limited to:

- Completing a refocus form (Think Sheet)
- Loss of privileges
- Time in the office
- Replacement assignment
- Student conference
- Parent contact or conference
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Bus suspension
- Detention
- Other appropriate consequences based on the situation

Our goal is always to help students learn from their actions and support them in making **positive behavior choices moving forward**.

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### **Student Discipline Regulations Definitions**

At Freedom Elementary, we maintain clear expectations for student behavior to support a **safe, respectful, and productive learning environment**.

Behavior concerns are addressed through a combination of **prevention, intervention, and appropriate disciplinary responses**, always with the goal of helping students learn from their mistakes and make positive behavior choices.

Below are definitions of discipline levels used to guide our responses:

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#### **1 Classroom Behavior Infractions**

"Classroom behavior infractions" refer to behaviors that are **inappropriate for the school setting** and are addressed by classroom teachers.

- Teachers will implement **prevention and intervention strategies** to address behaviors at the classroom level.
  - If behaviors are **repeated or escalate**, they may be referred to the Principal (or designee) for additional support or disciplinary action.
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## 2 Minor Discipline Infractions

"Minor discipline infractions" are behaviors that **disrupt the learning environment** but do not cause a material and substantial disruption or immediate safety concern.

- These infractions are typically addressed by the Principal (or designee).
  - Responses may include **prevention and intervention strategies, detention, or school-based alternatives**.
  - If minor infractions become **chronic or escalate**, suspension may be considered at the Principal's discretion.
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## 3 Material and Substantial Discipline Infractions

"Material and substantial" infractions are behaviors that:

- **Substantially disrupt the school day**, and/or
- **Threaten the safety or welfare** of students or staff.

These behaviors are typically:

- **Initiated, willful, and overt** on the part of the student.
- Grounds for **immediate suspension** by the Principal (or designee) in accordance with Colorado law (C.R.S. 22-33-106).

- In certain cases, it may result in further disciplinary action, including **expulsion** by the Superintendent (or designee), at the district's discretion.
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#### **4** Habitually Disruptive Students

A "habitually disruptive student" is defined by Colorado state law as a student who has been suspended **three times during the school year** for causing a **material and substantial disruption**:

- In the classroom
- On school grounds
- On school vehicles
- At school activities or events

Students identified as habitually disruptive may be subject to **more serious interventions** in collaboration with district leadership and support services.

<b>Dress Code</b>
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Freedom Elementary is committed to maintaining an environment that supports learning and positive student conduct.

- Hats and sunglasses may only be worn outdoors.
- Clothing should be appropriate for outdoor play. Closed-toe shoes are required; heelies and unsafe sandals are not permitted.
- Shorts and skirts must be mid-thigh or longer.

- Shirts must have straps at least two adult fingers wide.
- Clothing must be free of obscene, profane, hateful, or disruptive content.

Freedom Elementary’s dress code aligns with District 11 Board Policy. Parents and students should consult the district website for any updates.

## Get Involved

Freedom Elementary strongly values **family and community involvement**. We believe that when families engage with the school, students thrive. There are many ways for parents and guardians to get involved and contribute to the success of our students:

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### **Parent Teacher Association (PTA)**

Freedom Elementary has a very **active and dedicated PTA**. If you are interested in supporting students and teachers through PTA-sponsored activities and events, please contact the PTA **Membership or Volunteer Coordinator**.

The PTA meets **monthly** to plan how to best support our school community and welcomes new members and volunteers throughout the year.

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### **School Accountability Committee (SAC)**

The **Freedom Elementary School Accountability Committee (SAC)** meets monthly to review the school’s progress toward achieving building goals and objectives.

The committee plays an active role in:

- Reviewing and updating the **school improvement plan** (posted annually on the Colorado Department of Education website)
- Providing input on school-wide programs and initiatives

- Supporting efforts to improve student achievement

The SAC is composed of parents, administrators, community members, and staff representatives.

**Mission:**

At Freedom Elementary, we are committed to ensuring that every student has access to the tools and support they need to succeed in school and in life. The SAC provides a valuable forum for **family voice, feedback, and collaboration**.

Joining SAC is a great way to stay informed about school initiatives and to share your ideas and concerns. Please contact the school office if you are interested in participating.

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### **Additional Parent Involvement Opportunities**

Freedom Elementary will:

- **Involve parents** in the planning, review, and improvement of the school’s parental involvement policy in an organized and ongoing way. Notifications of events and meetings will be communicated via **automated phone calls** and the school’s **marquee sign**.
- **Involve parents** in the joint development of school-wide program plans.
- Hold **monthly Coffee & Conversations** with school leadership to review the school-wide improvement plan, upcoming events, fundraisers, and school expectations.
- Provide opportunities for parents to request **regular meetings** to offer suggestions and participate, as appropriate, in decisions about their child’s education. The school will respond to all such requests.
- Provide each parent with an **individual student report** on their child’s performance on state assessments in at least math, language arts, and reading.
- Provide families with information and individual access to **District 11 ParentConnect**, which allows parents to monitor their child’s grades and attendance online.

### Grading & Reporting

Teachers are required by law to follow District 11 Grading and Reporting policies and procedures to ensure consistent and transparent communication about student learning.

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### Elementary Report Cards

**Elementary report cards in District 11 are aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards, which are published on the District's website.**

**Our report card is designed to:**

- Comply with state mandates
- Improve student achievement by focusing instruction on clearly defined standards
- Provide parents with clear, actionable information about their child's learning

Our grading practices are intended to communicate how a student is performing relative to content standards, rather than simply summarizing work completion or effort.

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### Why Do We Use Grades?

**Grades are used to:**

- Gather evidence of student achievement to inform instructional decisions

- Provide students with feedback on their progress
  - Communicate with parents about their child’s learning
  - Monitor growth over the quarter, semester, and school year
- 

### **How Will We Communicate Progress?**

While traditional percentage grades are familiar to many families, they often provide little meaningful information about student progress on content standards.

#### **To ensure more accurate reporting:**

- Teachers will not average scores (assignments, homework, tests) to produce a final grade.
  - Percentages may be used on individual assignments, but final grades will be determined by evidence of learning related to standards.
  - Grades will be based on a body of evidence, including unit assessments, short-cycle assessments, and classroom assignments, and evaluated using standards-based performance rubrics.
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### **Letter Grades (Grades 3–5)**

In grades 3–5, report cards will include letter grades, informed by a wide range of performance indicators and aligned with grade-level standards:

<b>Performance Level</b>	<b>Report Card Score</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Description</b>
Advanced	Adv	A	Performing beyond expected level

High Performance	4 / P+	A	High level of performance
Expected	3 / P	B	Expected level of performance
Progressing	2 / PP	C	Progress approaching expected level
Marginal Progress	1 / M	D	Marginal progress toward level
Lacking Progress	0 / U	F	Lacking adequate progress toward level
Not Assessed	N/A	N/A	Not assessed or taught that quarter
Not Enough Evidence	N/E	N/E	Not enough evidence of learning

Note: An Advanced score indicates that a student is consistently performing beyond current grade level expectations, supported by a body of evidence and documentation. This is rare; parents will be notified if their child is performing at this level.

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## Homework

**Homework provides students with an opportunity to:**

- Practice and apply skills independently
  - Learn from mistakes in a low-stakes environment
  - Provide teachers with additional evidence of skill mastery
- 

## How Will Final Grades Be Determined?

**At the end of each quarter:**

- Teachers will compile a body of evidence that demonstrates student learning relative to the Colorado Academic Standards.
- Evidence may include unit assessments, short-cycle assessments, classroom assignments, student portfolios, or data folders.
- Using specific criteria aligned to standards, teachers will assign grades that best represent each student’s current level of proficiency.

Best practice indicates that a body of evidence is the strongest indicator of student proficiency and provides the most accurate basis for grading decisions.

## Health Clinic

### Illness

Please keep your child home if they are unable to participate comfortably in normal school activities or require care beyond what school staff can reasonably provide.

Students should also remain home if they have any of the following symptoms or conditions:

- Fever of 100.3°F or higher
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- An unexplained or contagious rash
- Extreme fatigue, unexplained irritability, or persistent crying
- Any illness that may pose a risk to the health of other students or staff

The chart below provides further guidance on common illnesses and symptoms, including when students should stay home from school.

SYMPTOMS	Child Must Be at Home?
DIARRHEA - frequent, loose, or watery stools compared to child's normal pattern; not caused by diet or medication	Yes - if a child looks or acts ill; if the child has diarrhea with fever and behavior change; if the child has diarrhea with vomiting; if the child has diarrhea that is not contained in the diaper or the toilet
FEVER - with behavior changes or illness <u>Note:</u> An unexplained temperature of 100°F or above is significant in infants 4 months of age or younger and requires immediate medical attention	Yes - when fever is accompanied by behavior changes or other symptoms of illness, such as rash, sore throat, vomiting, etc.
FLU SYMPTOMS - Fever over 100°F with a cough or sore throat. Other flu symptoms can include fatigue, body aches, vomiting, and diarrhea	Yes - for at least 24 hours after there is no longer a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicine
COUGHING - severe, uncontrolled coughing or wheezing, rapid or difficulty <u>breathing</u> <u>Note:</u> Children with asthma may be cared for in school with a written health care plan and authorization for medication/treatment	Yes - medical attention is necessary
Mild RESPIRATORY OR COLD SYMPTOMS - stuffy nose with clear drainage, sneezing, mild cough	No – may attend if able to participate in school activities
RASH <u>with</u> fever - <u>Note:</u> Body rash without fever or behavior changes usually does not require exclusion from school, seek medical advice	Yes - seek medical advice. Any rash that spreads quickly, has open, weeping wounds, and/or is not healing should be evaluated
VOMITING - two or more episodes of vomiting in the past 24 hrs.	Yes – until the vomiting resolves or a health care provider decides it is not contagious. Observe for other signs of illness and for dehydration

**The illness is on the list of symptoms or illnesses for which exclusion is recommended:**

ILLNESS	Child Must Be at Home?
CHICKEN POX	Yes - until blisters have dried and crusted (usually 6 days) If blister occurs after vaccination, refer to Health Dept. Guidelines
CONJUNCTIVITIS (PINK EYE) OR pink color of the eye <i>and</i> thick yellow/green discharge	Yes - until 24 hours after treatment If your health provider decides not to treat your child, a note is needed.
CROUP (SEE COUGHING) <u>Note:</u> May not need to be excluded unless child is not well enough to participate in usual activities	Seek medical advice
FIFTH'S DISEASE	No - child is no longer contagious once rash appears
HAND, FOOT, AND MOUTH DISEASE (Coxsackie virus)	No - may attend if able to participate in usual activities, unless the child has mouth sores and is drooling
HEADLICE OR SCABIES	May return after treatment starts
HEPATITIS A	Yes – until 1 week after onset of illness or jaundice and when able to participate in usual activities
HERPES	Yes – if area is oozing and cannot be covered, such as mouth sores
IMPETIGO	Yes – for 24 hours after treatment starts
RINGWORM	May return after treatment <u>starts</u> Keep area covered for the first 48 hrs of treatment
ROSEOLA - <u>Note:</u> A child with rash and no fever may return to school	Yes – seek medical advice
RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) <u>Note:</u> A child does not always need to be excluded unless he/she is not well enough to participate in usual activities	Seek medical advice. Once a child in the group has been infected, the spread of illness is rapid
STREP THROAT	Yes - for 24 hours after treatment and the child can participate in usual activities
VACCINE PREVENTABLE DISEASES Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German Measles), Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	Yes – until determined not infectious by the health care provider
YEAST INFECTIONS including thrush or candida diaper rash	No – may attend if able to participate in school activities. Follow good hand washing and hygiene practices.

## Medication Guidelines

To ensure the safety and well-being of all students, the following guidelines must be followed when a child requires medication during the school day:

- A doctor's note and a completed Medication Authorization Form are required. The form is available in the school office.
  - The child's name must appear on the current prescription bottle.
  - All prescribed medications must be kept in the school office and will be administered by a medically trained staff member.
  - Students are not allowed to carry any medications, including over-the-counter medications, in their pockets, backpacks, lunchboxes, or elsewhere.
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## Health Clinic Procedures

- Students must request **permission** from their teacher and obtain a **nurse pass** before leaving the classroom to visit the health clinic.
- Upon arrival, a trained staff member will assess the student based on the student's reported symptoms and observed condition.
- Parents/guardians will be contacted if a student has a fever of 100.3°F or higher, is vomiting, or is experiencing diarrhea.
- Students exhibiting these symptoms must be **picked up and remain home** until symptoms have resolved in accordance with school health guidelines.
- Students who do not meet the criteria for dismissal may be allowed to rest in the health clinic for up to 10 minutes before returning to class.
- Minor injuries, such as small cuts and scrapes, will be treated with basic first aid, including bandages and/or ice packs as appropriate.
- Students who experience a bump to the head will be evaluated by clinic staff. Parents/guardians will be notified as a courtesy of any head injury.

- If a student exhibits signs or symptoms consistent with a concussion or other serious head injury, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately and the student will be required to go home for further evaluation.

## Inclement Weather

### Announcements & Inclement Weather

#### Weather Announcements

**In the event of bad weather, parents and staff should check:**

- Communication via email, text and phone calls through our school messenger app
- Local radio and television stations
- Freedom Elementary and D11 Facebook
- The District 11 website: [www.d11.org](http://www.d11.org)

**Announcements will include information about delayed starts, school closures, or early dismissals due to weather.**

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#### Recess

Students should come to school with appropriate clothing for Colorado's often changing weather.

- Students will go outdoors for recess daily, unless the "Feels Like" temperature is 16°F or below, or in the event of severe weather.
  - We encourage students to enjoy fresh air and physical activity whenever it is safe to do so.
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## **Snow Day Policy**

District 11 uses all available resources when deciding whether to cancel school due to inclement weather or unsafe road conditions.

### **Parent Judgment:**

Parents are encouraged to use their own best judgment regarding their child's safety in inclement weather.

- If you determine it is unsafe for your child to attend school, please keep them home.
  - Per District 11 policy, weather-related absences are not excused but students will have the opportunity to make up any missed assignments.
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## **Two-Hour Delayed Start**

### **If a two-hour delayed start is called:**

- Students should arrive at school at 9:50 a.m.
  - Classes will be shortened accordingly.
  - Lunch will be served at its regular time.
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## **Inclement Weather Dismissal**

### **In the event of inclement weather, including:**

- Lightning danger
- Extreme winds
- Extreme cold
- Heavy precipitation

**The following adjusted dismissal procedures will be used:**

**Adventure Club:**

Students will be dismissed to the portables.

**Bus Riders:**

Students will board their buses as usual.

**Kindergarten–5th Grade (Walkers, Kiss-N-Go, Parent Pick-Up):**

- Students will be dismissed from the gym.
- Parents should enter through the front doors.
- Staff will escort parents to the gym.
- Parents and their child(ren) will exit together through the side gym doors.
- Walkers will be dismissed 30 minutes after the last lightning detection for safety.

<b>Miscellaneous Items</b>
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**Movies in Class**

All movies shown in class must be aligned to rigorous state standards and instructional objectives. Teachers will preview and select films that support academic content.

**Drug-Free Schools**

Freedom Elementary maintains a drug-free campus. The illegal and inappropriate use of alcohol or drugs is strictly prohibited in District 11.

**Field Trips**

Field trips serve as valuable extensions of classroom learning.

- Trips are standards-based and include pre- and post-learning activities.
- If you choose not to allow your child to attend, your child must remain at home during the field trip.
- Please observe deadlines for submitting permission slips.
- For the safety of all students, Freedom Elementary reserves the right to require parent/guardian attendance or to deny participation in a field trip based on a student's behavioral history, safety concerns, or inability to follow school expectations. Administration will review situations on a case-by-case basis and communicate with families regarding any participation restrictions or requirements prior to the field trip.

### **School Property**

#### **Bicycles:**

- A bike rack is available. Students must walk their bikes on school grounds and secure them at the rack.
- The school is not responsible for lost or damaged bikes.

#### **Dogs:**

- Dogs are not allowed on school grounds during the school day, including playgrounds and sports fields (with the exception of service animals).
- After hours, dogs may be walked on leashes along property borders (sidewalks/school roads). Please clean up after your pet.

### **Motorized Vehicles**

In accordance with District 11 policy, motorized vehicles are prohibited on school property at all times. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Motorbikes
- Dirt bikes
- E-bikes
- Motorized scooters
- Go-karts and similar motorized devices

- School grounds are District 11 property and are not open for recreational use, regardless of whether students or staff are present. Therefore, motorized vehicles may not be operated on campus during school hours, after school hours, weekends, holidays, or during school-sponsored events.
- This policy is intended to protect school property, promote safety, and ensure compliance with district regulations. Violations may result in involvement from District 11 Security or local law enforcement.

Families and community members are encouraged to help maintain a safe school environment by respecting these expectations.

### **Child Abuse / Neglect / DHS Reporting**

All school staff are mandated reporters under Colorado law. Staff are required to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities.

Failure to report may result in criminal misdemeanor charges. Freedom Elementary takes this responsibility seriously to ensure the safety and well-being of all students.

<b>School Safety</b>
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Freedom Elementary is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all students and staff. We follow the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) and regularly practice safety drills throughout the school year.

### **Emergency Response Procedures**

#### **Evacuate:**

- Lead students to the designated evacuation location.
- Account for all students and adults.
- Use the red/green card system to notify administrators of missing, extra, or injured individuals.

#### **Secure:**

- Bring everyone indoors and lock the outside doors.
- Increase situational awareness and account for all students and adults.
- Continue business as usual inside the building.

**Lockdown:**

- Remove students from the hallway if possible.
- Lock the classroom door, turn off the lights, move away from sight, and maintain silence.
- Do not open the door. Prepare to evade or defend if necessary.
- An “All Clear” will only be given when emergency personnel or a badged staff member unlocks the door and verbally identifies themselves.

**Hold:**

- Clear hallways and lock doors.
- Remain in your room or area until an “All Clear” is announced.
- Continue business as usual inside the room.

**Off-Site Evacuation:**

- In the event of an off-site evacuation, staff and students will evacuate to Jenkins Middle School.

**Shelter:**

- Used for hazards such as extreme weather.

- Students will line up on the first floor, against the wall in a duck and cover position.
- Account for all students and adults.
- Use the red/green card system to report status to administrators.

### **Set Your Student Up for Success**

**Please help your child start each day prepared and ready to learn. Before leaving home, ensure they have everything they need for the day, including:**

- Lunch (if bringing from home)
- Homework
- Jacket or appropriate clothing
- Water bottle

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#### **Lunch & Food Deliveries**

**If a student forgets their lunch, they will be required to eat the school-provided lunch that day.**

- Food deliveries (including fast food and restaurant orders) are not permitted except in emergency situations. In approved cases, students must eat in the office to help prevent food sharing and reduce potential health and safety concerns related to food allergies, sensitivities, and dietary restrictions.
- Parents may bring outside food (e.g., McDonald's, Chick-fil-A, Subway) for their student; however, the parent must sign-in at the front office, remain on campus for the entirety of the lunch period and eat with their child in the cafeteria. Students are not permitted to pick up or consume delivered or brought-in meals independently during the school day.

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#### **Item Drop-Off Procedures**

**If you need to drop off an item (lunch, snack, jacket, homework, etc.):**

- All items must be left in the front office.
- Parents are not permitted to visit classrooms to drop off items, as instructional time is protected from interruptions.

Our goal is to maintain a focused learning environment and to minimize disruptions during the school day. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us achieve this.

## Social Media & Communication

Freedom Elementary maintains a **Facebook**, **Instagram**, **S'more**, and **PowerSchool Messenger (@Freedom D11)** page to promote communication and engagement with our school community. Families are encouraged to join the conversation!

District 11 also posts **weather updates** and important announcements at [www.d11.org](http://www.d11.org).

Freedom Elementary will use **Facebook**, **Instagram**, and **SchoolMessenger** to provide updates about school events and news.

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## Communication

At Freedom Elementary, we value **open, clear, and timely communication** between families and staff. Strong school-family partnerships help ensure the success of every student.

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## Weekly Communication

- Classroom teachers will provide **weekly communication** to keep families informed about classroom activities and important updates.
  - The **Freedom Falcon Parent Newsletter** is emailed weekly (typically on weekends) with key announcements, date changes, and other school-wide information — please be sure to read this newsletter regularly.
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## Response Expectations

- Staff will return **parent phone calls, emails, or notes within 24 business hours**.
  - Please note: Teachers are not required to respond during **instructional time**. If a teacher is unable to respond within the school day, they will do so within 24 business hours.
  - Teachers check messages daily, but if you do not receive a response within a reasonable time, please contact the **school office** and leave a message.
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## Preferred Communication Method

While email is a valuable tool for sharing **basic information**, we encourage **phone calls** as the primary method for addressing questions, concerns, or more nuanced topics.

Phone calls allow for:

- **Immediate clarification** and two-way conversation
  - The ability to address **complex or sensitive issues** more effectively
  - **Individualized communication** that can be tailored to your specific situation
  - A more secure and confidential platform for certain discussions
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## Social Media

Families can follow **Freedom Elementary on Facebook** for the latest news and celebrations. District announcements, including **weather updates**, can also be found at [www.d11.org](http://www.d11.org).

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## Escalation Process

If you have a concern related to your child’s experience in the classroom, we ask that you **begin by contacting your child’s teacher first**. Many concerns can be resolved at the classroom level through open dialogue.

If your concern remains unresolved after speaking with the teacher, please contact the **Principal** or **Assistant Principal** for additional support. In some cases, it may be appropriate for the school administration to assist in resolving the issue.

## STUDENT TECHNOLOGY

Freedom Elementary is committed to helping students use technology as a powerful learning tool while ensuring safe, responsible, and ethical use.

### Student Cell Phones

#### Student Cell Phones & Smartwatches

In alignment with **Colorado House Bill 23-1131** and **District 11 Board Policy**, Freedom Elementary has established the following expectations for student use of personal electronic devices during the school day:

- **K–5 students must keep cell phones and smartwatches stored in their backpacks** during the entire school day.
- If a student needs to contact a parent/guardian during school hours, they must use the **main office phone**.
- Personal devices may not be used for communication, photography, recording, or entertainment during instructional time or while on campus during school hours.

Our goal is to **minimize distractions and promote a positive learning environment** for all students. We appreciate your partnership in supporting this policy.

- **1st Offense** – Student phone stays in office. The student can pick up their phone in the office after school.
- **2nd Offense** - Student phone stays in office. Student can pick up their phone in the office after school, and parent notification is made.
- **3rd Offense** - Student phone stays in office. Parent must pick up the phone in the office.
- **4th Offense** - In school suspension (1 day) for repeated disobedience. Parent must pick up the phone in the office.
- **5th Offense** - In school suspension (2 days) for repeated disobedience. Parent must pick up the phone in the office.
- **6th Offense** - Out of school suspension (2-day minimum) for repeated policy infractions. Parent must pick up the phone in the office.

### **Textbooks, iPads, and Laptops**

All electronic equipment and basic textbooks are **loaned to students** for use during the school year. These items should be kept **clean, cared for, and handled responsibly**.

Students and parents/guardians sign the **District 11 Student Technology Agreement**, acknowledging responsibility for any **damage or loss** of district-issued devices.

Students are expected to follow all guidelines for **responsible technology use**. If a student does not follow proper procedures, a **paper/pencil alternative assignment** may be provided.

## Visitors and Volunteers

**Freedom prioritizes the safety and security of all students and staff. We ask all parents, guardians, and visitors to follow the procedures below:**

- All visitors must check in at the front office and wear an official Visitor/Volunteer badge while in the building.
- Freedom appreciates your patience as we implement these procedures to ensure the safety of our community.

### **D11 Engage - Volunteer Registration**

**Want to volunteer at Freedom? Fantastic!**

- Register online at: <https://www.d11.org/engagement/partnerships/volunteers>
- Create a username and password to track your hours and access volunteer opportunities at all D11 schools.

**Already a registered volunteer?**

- No need to re-register annually. The system will notify you if updates are needed.
- Request your badge to save time when you arrive. Scan in and out during each visit to track your hours.

### **Volunteer Expectations**

**Volunteers are essential to supporting our students and teachers. Please review these expectations:**

- Complete a background check prior to volunteering.
- Demonstrate a genuine interest in students and a commitment to your volunteer activity.

- Maintain regular attendance and notify the school if you are unable to attend.
- Follow the direction of the teacher while volunteering and discuss any suggestions privately with the teacher (before or after school, not during volunteer time).
- Wear appropriate attire and model positive behavior.
- Do not bring young children with you during your volunteer time.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding any student information you encounter while volunteering. All volunteers must comply with District 11 Volunteer Guidelines and FERPA.

#### **Identification & Instruction**

- Always sign in and out at the front office and wear your Volunteer Name Badge while on campus.
  - Please avoid interrupting instructional time while volunteering.
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