



Hello Cottonwood Parents,

We are so excited about the upcoming school year! We would like to welcome our new families and look forward to reconnecting with those returning. To help with a smooth transition we have prepared this document that has some of our school policies and procedures that will help everyone get back into the routine.

SCHOOL HOURS:

- All students should arrive at school with time to put their belongings away and **be in the classroom by the 8:00am bell**. Students enter the building through their grade-level playground door which will open at 7:50am.
 - PreSchool: Door #2
 - Kindergarten: Door #8
 - 1st: Door #7
 - 2nd: Door #6
 - 3rd: Door #5
 - 4th: Door #4
 - 5th: Door #3
- **Students should not enter through the school's main entrance** unless 1) they are attending a before-school activity or meeting, 2) are going to breakfast in the cafeteria, or 3) are arriving late to school.
- Kindergarten - 5th grade students are **dismissed** M, T, TH, and F at 2:45pm and at 1:45pm every Wednesday. Students exit through the same grade-level playground door through which they entered.
- PreK students who are not enrolled in afternoon enrichment are dismissed M - TH at 10:55 AM. Afternoon enrichment dismisses M-TH at 2:45pm. There is no school for PreK or enrichment on Fridays.
- **Students are expected to be picked up on-time everyday**. If work or other situations prevent you from picking up your student(s) on time, we ask that you make arrangements for friends/sitters/older siblings to pick them up or that you enroll them in Kids Club or another after-school care program.



LATE ARRIVALS/EARLY PICK-UP:

- Grade-level playground doors close at 8:00am. Once the door has closed, students must enter through the school's main entrance. For security purposes, parents and students should **never** knock on the playground door requesting to be let in.
- Students leaving school early must be checked out through the main office. The individual checking the student out must come to the front office and sign the student out. Only a parent/guardian or an authorized pick-up person on the student's PowerSchool account can sign a student out. Authorized pick-up persons can be added through the Guardian Update tile accessible through the CCSD Parent Portal.

ATTENDANCE:

Regular school attendance is of utmost importance for school interest, social adjustment, and scholastic achievement. No single factor may interfere with a student's progress more quickly than frequent tardiness or absence; therefore, regular and punctual patterns of attendance are expected of each student.

The following guidelines apply to students grades K - 5:

- If your student is going to be late or absent from school, a parent/guardian must leave a message on the **attendance line (720-554-3295) before the start of the school day**. You will need to provide:
 - the student's name,
 - your name and contact number,
 - the date(s) of absence and
 - the reason for the absence or late arrival.
- Absences without an attendance line message or valid reason for the absence will be marked as unexcused.
- Parents are discouraged from keeping/taking their student(s) out of school for reasons other than illness, grievance or emergency. Extracurricular activities are not an allowable reason for school absences or tardiness.
- For safety reasons, attendance calls are generated to parents/guardians of students who are identified as unexcused at 8:30am. If you believe you received a call in error, please contact the front office immediately.



- A **medical excuse** must be provided for students who miss a full or partial day of school due to a medical appointment **or** who miss more than 3 days of school within a week period due to a medical reason. The medical excuse must specify the date(s) of absence.
- Absences (excused and unexcused) are limited to **10 days for the school year**. To have absences in excess of 10 days excused, an acceptable medical excuse must be provided.
- Travel up to 5 days per school year may be excused if 1) a message is left on the attendance line in advance, and 2) it will not result in the student missing more than 15 days in the school year.
- If your student will miss school due to an unusual or unforeseen circumstance, please contact the front office.

PERSONAL ITEMS:

- In an effort to minimize classroom disruption, delivery of personal items dropped off at the front office will be provided to your student at a time when class is not in session.
- All medication should be dropped off directly to the Clinic.

BREAKFAST/LUNCH:

- Breakfast and the daily plate lunch served by our school's cafeteria are **free** for all students. However, if students want to purchase a snack or a la carte item, there will be a charge. Lunch accounts are automatically set up for all students, but parents have to pre-load money to them.
- Students are welcome to bring lunch from home. Staff is not able to reheat food for students. Please plan accordingly.
- **School breakfast is served starting at 7:40am - 7:55am.** Students who are going to breakfast should come through the main entrance no earlier than 7:40am and proceed directly to the cafeteria. Please talk to your student about making it to their classroom by the 8:00am bell. Students who are late will be marked tardy.
- For more information please visit our district Food & Nutrition site: [CCSD Nutrition](#)

SAFETY & SECURITY:

- All **building visitors**, including those on the playground during school hours, are required to check-in at the front office with a government issued photo ID. If you have not had your ID scanned into our security system, you must have your physical ID with you.
- All building visitors must wear a security badge or sticker while on school property during regular school hours.



- If you are planning to volunteer at Cottonwood Creek or any of the Cherry Creek schools, you will need to complete the [Volunteer Application](#) prior to your scheduled shift. This application must be filled out annually.
- We have a number of **safety and security drills** throughout the school year, including; Evacuation, Hold, Shelter, Secure Perimeter and Lockdown. A lockdown drill occurs 2X throughout the school year and will be announced ahead of time to parents via email. The other drills are held more frequently and are not announced, they typically only last for 10 or 15 minutes. Please note, during most drills the front doors remain locked and there is no admittance in/out of the building.
- If you and/or your student cross Orchard Road at drop-off or dismissal, be sure to use one of the **two designated crosswalks** with crossing guards.
- Please clearly communicate with your child(ren) before school every day the **plan for dismissal**. Do they have an after-school club? Should they walk or take the bus? Will you pick them up on the playground or the pick-up lane? If your typical plan for pick-up changes, please email your student's teacher so that they are aware.
- Please reiterate with your student(s) that they should always come to the front office if they expect to be picked up after school but are not. They should not play on the playground, go home with a friend, and should never walk home alone.
- **Students going home with other students:** We understand and support students going home with friends after school for playdates. For safety purposes, we require parental permission.
 - If your child is going home with a friend after dismissal and is walking or being picked up, please let your child's teacher know prior to the start of school that day.
 - If your child is going home with a friend after dismissal on the bus, please send your child to school with a written/signed permission note stating the student with whom they are going home, and that they have your permission to ride the bus. The note must be signed by a front office staff member and given to the bus driver to show parental permission. Students will not be able to ride the bus without a signed note.
 - If your student is being picked up prior to dismissal by the friend's parent, the parent must be an authorized pickup person on your child's PowerSchool account. The parent will have to check your student out for an early dismissal



with the front office. You can add emergency contacts and authorized pick-up persons through the Guardian Update tile on your CCSD parent portal.

- We understand that students like to play on school grounds after dismissal and on the weekends. However, we want to remind parents that there is no school supervision during this time and that after dismissal building admittance is limited to school district personnel, parents attending a scheduled meeting and students who are signed up for an in progress club/activity.

DOGS ON CAMPUS:

- The official CCSD policy prohibits dogs on school grounds during school hours, including pick-up and drop-off times. However, I am a personal dog lover and my experience so far is that our community is diligent and keeps their dogs leashed and under control while visiting campus. In addition to keeping your dog leashed and under control, I would ask that if you choose to bring your dog(s) to campus, you stay at the edges of our property and not integrate into any crowds. This will allow students and families with allergies or fears of dogs to comfortably come and go to school and not have any interactions with dogs. Thank you for understanding.

CLUBS & ACTIVITIES:

- Cottonwood has a number of after-school clubs and activities available. The school keeps an up-to-date list of the available clubs on our website.
- Cottonwood has a Before and After Care Program (Kid's Club) available through Extended Child Services. Please visit our website for more information.

DIGITAL DEVICES:

- It is an ongoing expectation at COT and all Cherry Creek Elementary Schools that any student **personal devices and/or cell phones** are to be kept in backpacks during the day. Unless SmartWatches are disabled and NOT a distraction as determined by the teacher, the same expectation is true for these devices. The ability to take pictures and text during the day on any device is a safety concern and a major distraction for elementary students. Cell Phones and Smart Watches fall under Policy JICJ. Possession of a cellular telephone or other ECD by a student is considered to be a privilege, which may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of this policy, or otherwise engages in misuse of the device so as to violate school rules, board policy or law.



STUDENT BIRTHDAYS AND OTHER CELEBRATIONS:

- If you would like to send a small treat to school for your student's classmates, you are welcome to do so. Please contact your child's teacher prior to the treats being brought in. Do not send items that require cutting or refrigeration and be sure to provide napkins, plates, utensils if your treat requires those items. Treats should be labeled with your student's name and teacher and placed on the table in the front entrance.
- Teachers are also open to offering an extra recess in lieu of a sweet treat, please work directly with him/her if this is your preference.
- Parents cannot be in the classroom for birthday celebrations. However, if you wish to spend time with your student on their birthday you are welcome to check them out for lunch or have lunch with them in the front conference room or other available space. With the exception of lunch volunteers, parents can not be in the lunchroom.
- Please note that invitations for birthday parties and other celebrations cannot be distributed in school. We understand that the school setting is a convenient place to distribute these items, and it can unintentionally result in bad feelings for some students. Instead, please utilize the parent contact information in our Cottonwood Caller, which can be accessed by logging into our [PTO website](#).

COTTONWOOD PTO:

- To receive **PTO** communication and information you need to register on the [PTO Website](#). The school does not send out information on PTO events throughout the year. We HIGHLY recommend you stay connected through this PTO communication .