

September, 2009

Here we are, back for another exciting year at Cooper. I trust that your summer was filled with fun and relaxation with family and friends. We are happy to see our returning Cooper students and families and we welcome our new students and their families.

At Cooper we believe that every child can be successful and our desire is to partner with families in support of that belief. Teachers, support staff, and I are dedicated to nurturing the whole child. In addition to their academic growth, all children are maturing socially, emotionally, and physically. Together we can provide the structure and support your child needs for a successful school year. Please let us know if you have concerns or questions about your child's experience at Cooper.

This Student/Parent Handbook provides information that is specific to Cooper as well and general district wide policies and procedures. Please take some time to become familiar with the contents of this Handbook. If you have additional questions about Cooper or District policies, please feel free to contact me by phone or email.

I look forward to sharing the year with you and your child.

Sincerely,

Brett Brodeen, Principal  
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COOPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
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## HOURS/ATTENDANCE

### School Hours:

The school day begins at 8:45 AM and students are dismissed at 3:15 PM.  
Lunch and recess are from 11:35 to 12:25 daily.  
The office is open from 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM daily.

### Absences:

Please call the school office in the morning if your child will be absent or late for any reason. Excessive absences or tardies will be referred to the Student Support Team for possible action. Students who are ill for more than five consecutive days will be asked to provide the school with a doctor's verification of illness prior to readmission. Students may be excused for family vacations with prior approval from the teacher and the principal. Parents are asked to notify the school in advance of such absences.

*Please pay careful attention to Section III of the District Handbook regarding attendance and truancy. Parents may excuse their child for five days per semester or a total of ten days for the school year. Absences beyond those limits may be considered unexcused and may result in referral to Douglas County Human Services for truancy.*

## HEALTH INFORMATION

### Immunizations:

All students must provide the school with documentation of current immunizations. This must be in accord with state regulations. The school nurse conducts an audit in the fall to determine if all students are in compliance with this law. If you have any questions, contact the school nurse. Free immunizations are available at the Douglas County Health Department. **All students must have completed immunization records on file at school.**

### Medication in School:

Consent for Tylenol, Ibuprofen and Tums must be given by parent by marking designated area on emergency card. No prescription medication will be given to a child by school personnel without written directions from your physician and a written request by a parent/legal guardian. Children should not bring any medications (prescription or non-prescription) to school for self-administration.

### Students Who Remain Inside at Noon Hour:

If your child is too ill to go outside for a 20 minute recess period, he/she may be too ill to be at school. However, in certain instances it may be necessary for your child to stay inside at noon. In these cases, *please send a note to your child's teacher on a daily basis.* Your child will then stay in the office or library during the recess period, since there is no supervision in classrooms at that time. *No child will be allowed to stay indoors for recess without a note from home.*

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### Emergency Cards:

At the beginning of the school year, students are asked to bring to school two emergency cards that parents have filled out. One card is kept in the office and the other is kept in the classroom. In emergencies, school personnel are guided by the information on the card. Therefore, it is very important that the information on these emergency cards be current and accurate. If you move or have a change of phone number, for example, please notify the school immediately so we can adjust our records.

In an emergency, every possible attempt will be made to contact the parent. If a parent is unavailable, the individual(s) designated on the emergency card will be notified. If a medical emergency arises and the child must be transported to a hospital, the emergency card, signed by the parent, will act as authorization to provide immediate medical treatment.

### Use of Office Phone:

In general, students have access to school phones for emergency situations only. We ask that children make after-school social arrangements outside of school time so that the telephone is available for teachers' use after school.

### School Safety:

Students who ride their bikes to school are strongly encouraged to wear a helmet and lock their bike on the bike rack. The school is not responsible for bikes left in the rack.

Roller blades are not allowed in the building. Students who use roller blades to get to school are strongly encouraged to wear protective gear and helmets. Roller blades must be removed before entering the building. Skateboards are not allowed at school due to lack of safe storage space for them during the school day.

City crossing guards are stationed at 21<sup>st</sup> and Missouri and at 18<sup>th</sup> and Wyoming before and after school. Student crossing guards may also be stationed at various corners near the school. All students are expected to cross with the crossing guards and to comply with their directions.

The first bell rings at 8:40 AM, and students are allowed into the building at that time, unless poor weather requires earlier entrance. Breakfast is available from 8:00 to 8:35 daily. Students who wish to eat breakfast should enter the lunchroom door and return to the playground when they are finished. For safety, we ask that students time their departure from home so as to arrive as close to 8:40 as possible. Limited playground supervision is available before and after school near the school bus drop off/pick up area. Other parts of the school grounds are not supervised.

We encourage students NOT to bring valuable/expensive items with them to school. The school does not assume responsibility for items brought from home.

Please respect the "one-way", "no parking", and "staff parking" areas posted. Please avoid parking on the south side of 19<sup>th</sup> Street as this poses a significant safety hazard for our children.

### Birthday Celebrations:

Students are usually eager to share their birthdays with their friends. When a birthday treat is sent to school, health requirements dictate that the treat should be commercially prepared, individually wrapped and healthy.

To avoid hurt feelings, invitations to birthday parties should not be sent to school for distribution unless the child's whole class will be invited to the party. Please distribute them outside of school or through the mail.

### Early Dismissal/Late Arrival:

If your child needs to be dismissed early for any reason, please send a note indicating the time of departure and the adult who is authorized to pick up your child. Be sure to make contact with your child's teacher if you are picking your child up early for any reason. An adult must sign a child out on the clipboard in the main office prior to leaving the building.

When a child arrives late to school after an appointment, we ask that a parent or guardian accompany the child to the office to sign them in.

### Home-to-School Communication:

We encourage parents to contact their child's teacher if there is a question or concern. Teachers are eager to address concerns early, before a problem gets out of hand.

Conferences are scheduled twice per year (fall and spring) with the intention of sharing student progress information with parents and answering questions.

A school newsletter is distributed regularly. Parents are encouraged to watch for it and read it carefully for upcoming events and important information.

All teachers and staff members have email accounts and voice mail at school. Your child's teacher will share his/her email and voice mail information with you, and parents are encouraged to use these tools to keep in contact with the school.

### Transportation:

The Transportation Department handles scheduling of buses and determining bus routes. All students who ride the bus are expected to follow bus rules. Repeated disciplinary incidents on the bus may result in the loss of bus privileges.

Students who do not ride the bus are not allowed to ride on an occasional basis - for example, going home with a friend to play after school. Likewise, if a student rides a particular bus, he/she cannot be allowed to ride on a different bus to go home with a friend.

Occasionally, a change of transportation arrangements is necessary for a short period of time. The school secretary can provide the transportation forms for you to fill out. Please plan ahead for such an event; changes usually need two or three days for full approval.

### Breakfast and Lunch:

Breakfast is available from 8:00 to 8:35 daily. Students who wish to eat breakfast should enter the lunchroom door and return to the playground when they are finished.

Lunch is served in two shifts - 11:35 and 12:05. Students are expected to use good manners in the lunchroom, entering and leaving in an orderly fashion and cleaning up after themselves when they are finished.

Carbonated beverages are not allowed at lunch. They may be permitted during a classroom celebration with the permission of the teacher.

Each family is mailed information regarding free/reduced price meal qualification early in the school year. If you have questions about this process, contact the school secretary.

### Dress Code:

The school is a child's "place of business". School clothing should be modest and suitable for the season and the daily activity. Clothing should not include advertisements for tobacco or alcohol products, nor should it portray violence in any form. Students who wear inappropriate clothing to school will be asked to turn it inside-out for the remainder of the day.

Hats are not allowed in the building. Both girls and boys should plan on not wearing anything on their heads during the school day, including caps and scarves.

We encourage sturdy footwear (not flimsy sandals or "flip-flops").

Please clearly label all clothing items, including outerwear and backpacks, with the child's name.

### School Visits:

Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time. Please check in at the office when you arrive. Teachers will appreciate a call ahead of time if you would like to visit. If you have a specific concern and would like a conference with a teacher, please make an appointment so you are sure that the teacher can spend the time necessary to address your concern.

### Discipline:

At Cooper we expect students to be safe, respectful, responsible, and prepared for daily class work and events. Students who do not adhere to these expectations will be given opportunities in a non-punitive manner to change their behavior.

At the beginning of the school year, each class will develop their own list of class rules and expectations. The entire student body also will participate in the development of our expectations of one another as we live together in a community. Those beliefs and expectations will form the basis of our conversations for the entire school year.

Please see Section III of the District Handbook (page 19) for specific information about school discipline.