

Prairie Hills ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Student and Parent Handbook 2025-2026

Prairie Hills Elementary School

13801 Garfield Place

Office phone # 720-972-8780

Attendance Line: Phone # 720-972-8833

Visit our website: [PHE](#)

Meadowlark Community,

Welcome to the 2025-26 school year at Prairie Hills Elementary—where **The Power of Possibility Takes Flight!** We are excited to begin this new journey with you and your children, filled with opportunities to nurture growth, spark curiosity, and elevate learning to new heights.

As we launch into the school year, we invite you to explore our updated **School Handbook**—a vital resource for our entire community. This guide outlines important school policies, procedures, expectations, and support systems that help ensure a safe, inclusive, and thriving environment for every learner.

This year, our academic focus is centered on **Depth and Complexity**—strategies designed to increase differentiation and promote critical thinking for all learners. Through this lens, we aim to provide enriching learning experiences that challenge students, deepen understanding, and foster innovation in every classroom.

Equally important is our continued dedication to strong **partnerships with families**. We know that when families and schools work together, student success soars. Throughout the year, we invite you to:

- Stop by and say hello
- Volunteer in our Classrooms, Library, Playground or Workroom
- Join in on our many community events hosted by our amazing PTA
- Support or lead a co-curricular opportunity for our students

You can also stay connected through our **monthly newsletter**, the *Meadowlark Messenger*, as well as classroom updates and timely school-wide messages delivered through our new district wide communication system Aptegey. Please see the **Communication** section in the handbook for more details.

Our vision—"**Prairie Hills Elementary: Together Building Bright Futures: Nurturing, Innovating, Thriving!**"—guides all we do. With your partnership, we are confident this year will be filled with growth, connection, and endless possibilities.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education. We are honored to be on this flight together, and we look forward to a fantastic year ahead!

With appreciation,

Stephanie Auday
Principal

Jennifer Hetrick
Assistant Principal

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Important Phone Numbers

Main Office (Hours 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.): 720-972-8780

Fax Line: 720-972-8800

Attendance Line (available 24 hours a day): 720-972-8833

*Please call before 7:10 a.m. if your student will be absent or tardy.

BASE Program: 720-972-8791

Cafeteria: 720-972-8793

Library: 720-972-8794

School Hours

Kindergarten – Grade 5

Breakfast is served in our cafeteria daily from 7:35 a.m. to 7:50 a.m. Breakfast students can enter the doors on the north (main entrance) side of the school at 7:35 a.m.(if you arrive prior to 7:35 students must be supervised by a guardian at all times, as there are not staff on duty at this time)

First Bell 7:50 a.m. Tardy Bell 7:55 a.m.

Monday - Friday: 7:50 a.m. – 2:35 p.m.

Delayed Start 8:50 a.m. (end time remains the same)

If you arrive after 7:55 a.m., you are considered tardy.

Staff is present to assist with the supervision of our students starting at 7:40 a.m.

Please ensure that your child knows the daily plan for pick up. If someone is responsible for meeting them, please remind them to be on school grounds no later than 2:35 p.m. at the designated pick up location. Staff will be available to assist with dismissal procedures at the end of each day for a period of 5 – 10 minutes. **FOR THE SAFETY OF STUDENTS, ITS IS IMPORTANT THAT STUDENTS ARE PICKED UP FROM SCHOOL ON TIME DAILY.**

- If pick-up is prior to the end of the school day, please make sure to bring your driver's license to pick up your child. Anyone other than the designated parent/guardian must be listed on a Student Authorization Pick Up Form and bring their driver's license to pick up your child.
- If you are delayed, please call the office and let us know so we can have your child wait in the office.
- If you are delayed more than 15 minutes, you will need to make alternative arrangements (we encourage families to make connections with classmates and neighbors to support one another with daily travel to and from school).
- Besides our exceptional BASE program, there are also many day care providers in the area that support before and after school care.
- If the issue continues after communication with the office team, a referral to the appropriate authorities will be made.

B.A.S.E. HOURS

Before School 6:30 a.m. – 7:50 a.m.

After School 2:35 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Delayed Start 7:30 a.m.

Attendance - Reporting Absences

Attendance Line: 720-972-8833

In support of [District Policy 5020: Student Attendance](#)

Absences must be reported on the school's attendance line, even if the teacher has been informed of the absence. The school's attendance line may be called at any time to report an absence or tardy. Regular and punctual daily attendance is a critical factor in a student's ability to attain the maximum benefit from the educational process. According to state law, every child who has attained the age of six (6) years by August 1 of each year and is under the age of 17 years, except as otherwise allowed by state law, shall attend school. 2.1 The law states that when a student has four (4) unexcused absences in one calendar month or ten (10) unexcused absences in a school year, the student is considered habitually truant. 2.2 Parents, guardians and students are all responsible for making sure students are at school daily, on time and ready to learn.

**Vacations or non-emergency activities should be scheduled for days or times when students are not in school. Opportunities for vacations are built into our district calendar (example: Oct. 14th to the 18th fall break). Reasonable requests for absences to be excused due to vacation or for other non-emergency reasons will be approved if the student has a 95% or higher attendance rate over the prior two (2) grading periods, and if the student is otherwise meeting academic performance expectations as determined by school administration.

Before and After School Enrichment (BASE)

The **Before, After School and School Enrichment (BASE)** Program is designed to provide safe, quality, affordable group care in the school setting; whereby each individual child is enriched with various experiences conducive to their academic, social, and physical development.

The BASE Program serves elementary students beginning at 5 years of age. Students in the BASE Program engage in a wide variety of activities and choices, providing students with opportunities to create, learn and grow through arts, physical activity and academic enrichment activities during out of school time. BASE activities allow students opportunities critical to their social-emotional development.

Space is limited and the BASE Program frequently has a list of families waiting for an opportunity to enroll in BASE. For more information about our school's BASE program, contact the BASE Site Director at 720-972-8791 or [PHE BASE](#). For more information about the District's BASE Programs, please visit the following [link](#).

Bicycles and Scooters

Students riding a bike or scooter to school must take it directly to the specified bike rack area and leave it there until the student is ready to return home. For safety reasons, students are not permitted to ride their bike/scooter on school grounds. They must walk their bike/scooter to the designated bike rack area once they arrive at school. A **lock is required to be used to secure bikes** and scooters to the bike rack. Bicycles and scooters will not be guarded by the school at any time, so it is the student's responsibility to lock the bike/scooter up safely.

Dropping Off Lunches, Forgotten Items

From time to time, a student may forget an important item needed for the school day. Please be aware that you may drop off the item in the vestibule, labeling it with your child's name and teacher and it will be delivered, as staff are available. Please know, this can result in items not always being delivered in a timely manner and prioritize a morning check-off list at home to prevent any problems. We do not have the staffing for a daily routine of deliveries for lunches or missed items.

Daily Snacks, Birthdays and Celebrations

In support of the District's Policy on School Wellness, we strive to help our students make healthy lifestyle choices. Simple habits can help children continue making healthier choices as adults. If your child brings a daily snack, please consider healthy options that will fuel them for the day and water only in water bottles.

PHEs serve healthy lunch choices daily and prioritizes physical activity during our school day. With allergies and students' health in mind, we have implemented a "Non-food birthday treats" policy. To help support health, safety, and inclusivity for all students, we encourage families to celebrate birthdays with **non-food treats**. Here are some fun and meaningful alternatives:

Small Tokens or Trinkets

- Stickers or temporary tattoos
- Pencils, fun erasers, or mini notepads
- Bookmarks or colorful gel pens
- Glow sticks or bubbles
- Mini playdough containers
- Puzzle toys or fidget spinners

Classroom-Based Fun

- Donate a book to the class library with your child's name inside
- Provide a birthday-themed activity or coloring page

Creative and Keepsake Ideas

- Create a birthday photo poster with photos or drawings to share with the class
- Share a short video message from family to the class (with teacher approval)
- Contribute a class puzzle, craft, or group project in honor of the day in partnership with the classroom teacher

Birthday Invitations/Other

We understand that school is the easiest place to distribute birthday invitations or celebrate with balloons or flowers; however, doing so can cause many hurt feelings and disruptions in the learning environment. Please give these items after school is dismissed.

Cell Phones/Personal Technology Devices (SMART WATCHES)

Effective for the 2025-2026 school year, the District's policy on student cell phones and other personal technology devices (PTDs)* is as follows:

- PTDs must be in the "off" or "silent" position and stored out of sight at all times (in student backpack) during the school day, including lunch and recess.
- In non-academic settings outside the school day, including before or after school activities or on school transportation, PTDs may be used in "silent mode" provided the use of the PTD, as determined by the supervising staff member or bus driver, in no way disrupts, poses a safety concern or otherwise violates the District's Student Code of Conduct.
- Students with an IEP/504 plan/health care plan are permitted to have access to their cell phone or other PTD in accordance with their plan.

*District Policy defines the term "Personal Technology Devices" to include any privately-owned portable technology device, including but not limited to cell phones and wearable technology such as smart watches, smart glasses, wireless earbuds, and wireless headphones.

The school is not responsible for any lost, stolen or destroyed PTDs on school property or at a school-sponsored activity away from campus. School administration, teachers, or staff will not investigate incidents.

Students who violate the District's policy on student use of cell phones and other personal technology devices may be disciplined in accordance with District Policy.

View the District Policy on Student Use of Cell Phones and Other Personal Technology Devices [here](#).

Communication

Monthly Meadowlark Messenger- school update via email messenger/Apple and also on the PHE webpage [link](#)

We try to send all communication home in Friday Folders each week, but on occasion, it may be necessary to send home other notes and memos. Please check with your child each day to see if there are any additional notes that came home that day.

Infinite Campus Parent Portal is our tool for parents and students to access instant, online, timely and secure student information: attendance, discipline, and report cards.

Students will not be allowed to use the office phone to make after school social arrangements.

Students will be allowed to use the phone only in the following situations:

- When requested by their teacher
- When requested by an administrator
- When requested by the health aide, nurse or office staff

School office staff will only deliver emergency messages to students. Please assist us by making arrangements for after school pick-up and daycare prior to your child leaving for school in the morning. Response to parent phone calls/emails will be made within one business day.

Communication with your student's teacher

Although teachers have telephones located in their classrooms, they have been directed to keep their ringers turned off during instructional time. If you want to reach your child's teacher, you may do the following:

- Call the classroom teacher and leave a voicemail. Teachers have been asked to check voicemail before and after school, and over their lunch break.
- You may call the office, and they will deliver messages to your student's teacher at the end of the day.
- You may call the classroom teacher before or after school.

You may also reach your student's teacher via AppTegy or email. Your student's teacher will provide you with the teacher's email address, and you may email them at your convenience. You may expect to hear back from them within one business day.

Early Departure/Late Arrival

Students who must leave school during regular school hours must be signed out through the office by a parent or legal guardian. A student may not be dismissed from their classroom until someone has signed the student out. Students cannot be released to leave school alone. Students are involved in instruction until the end of the school day.

We request that you do not pick your students up early unless it is extremely necessary. Students who arrive late to school must check in at the office. If the student arrives after 7:55 a.m., a parent/guardian must sign them in at the front desk.

Field Trips

Field trips to nearby points of interest may be scheduled by various classroom teachers throughout the school year. These trips are designed to supplement different aspects of the classroom curriculum and to introduce students to resources within the community. Parents will receive notice of scheduled field trips well in advance.

Parents must sign a permission form for all field trips. Students without a permission slip will not be allowed to accompany their class on the field trip.

Inclement Weather/School Closure

Information on emergency school closures due to severe overnight storms or other emergency situations is available on local television stations. Please listen for announcements concerning Adams 12 Five Star Schools. Information on closures may also be obtained by calling the District information number at 720-972-4000, then press 7 for school closure information or check the District website: www.adams12.org. Please note that school is rarely canceled.

Indoor Recess will be called if:

- snow, rain or sleet is falling
- temperature with the wind chill is 20 degrees or less
- playground conditions are poor (mud, snow or standing water)

Students must be prepared for all types of weather. They should bring warm coats, gloves or mittens, hats, weatherproof footwear and an extra pair of shoes for PE.

Lost and Found/Valuables at School

If your child misplaces an item, we encourage you to look in the lost and found by the main office. Often it is difficult to identify what they have lost. Please label coats, jackets, mittens, etc. Remaining articles are donated to a local charity several times a year.

We highly discourage students from bringing valuables and toys to school. Items having value for one individual usually have an attractive appeal for others and unfortunately sometimes disappear. The school cannot be responsible for these items. Teachers may have a special celebration which allows students to bring in a favorite game, stuffed animal, etc. but please remember, at no time is it appropriate for students to bring toy guns, toy knives, or toy weapons of any kind.

Pets on School Property

In an effort to keep our school feeling safe for all students and families and in accordance with District Policy, only service animals and therapy dogs are permitted on school property. District Policy requires prior authorization from the principal to have a therapy dog on school property. We ask that all other pets remain off school grounds during school hours. If you would like to walk your pet during pick-up or drop-off, we ask that you meet your child outside of the school boundaries. We appreciate your cooperation with this request.

Physical Education and Recess

Students will be provided opportunities to engage in physical education (P.E.) classes and daily recess. If a student is unable to participate in P.E or recess., the parent must present to the principal or principal's designee a statement from a licensed health care practitioner stating the reason for the student's inability to participate. A licensed health care practitioner means a physician (MD, DO), nurse practitioner or physician assistant who has prescriptive authority and is licensed to practice in Colorado. Students participate in outdoor play and line-up when the "real feel" temperature is 20 degrees or higher.

Reporting Student Progress

Your student's progress will formally be reported at individual parent conferences at least twice a year. Report cards are sent home at the end of each grading period. Academic progress can also be found via the Infinite Campus Parent Portal.

Safety Information

Your child's safety is of utmost importance to us. It is imperative that students are dropped off **no earlier than 7:40 a.m. and picked up at 2:35 p.m.** Adult supervision is only available 10 minutes before and after these times.

Student Safety- Please help us keep students safe: Our Hug and Go Lane is the best option for a safe drop-off and pick-up each day, away from the street traffic and speed.

Please remember:

- There is no parking in the Hug and Go Lane at any time. If your child hasn't arrived, we ask that you circle around and re-enter to allow a smooth traffic flow.
- Please be patient, it is ONE LANE to support the crosswalk safety within the parking lot.
- Students may only enter and exit on the passenger side of the vehicle.
- Remind your child to use sidewalks and crosswalks and be knowledgeable about bicycle safety when riding to and from school.
- Drop off and pick up of students is along the curb only, so they don't have to cross traffic other than at the crosswalk. Hug and Go lanes are located on the north side of the school.
- Students are expected to go directly to and from school and not stay on the school grounds or playgrounds unless supervised by their guardian.
- Students are to respect the rights and property of all people in the neighborhood.

Parking:

- We have a large number of spaces and a simple enter and exit for all parents that would like to park, a great option away from the street traffic.
- If you utilize the PHE Parking Lot, please use the crosswalk at the top of the lot (south, closest to building entrance) to ensure safety and a smoother flow in our Hug and Go Lane.
- Students are not permitted to cross through the crosswalk in the parking lot on their own, they must be with an adult and utilize the crosswalk. To support safety and a clear line of sight, the streets closest to the school are designated as no parking. There is also NO PARKING within 15 feet of all crosswalks
- With the adjusted flow of traffic, we would like to increase the number of adults to support our crosswalks. If you would be interested in volunteering 1 or more times per week (morning or afternoon) or have any questions about this volunteer opportunity, please call the office 720-972-8780. All volunteers will be provided district training. Thank you for considering!

School Security System

In our ongoing efforts to provide the safest and most secure environment for our students, an additional security measure has been installed, which requires the following safety measures.

- ALL exterior doors will be locked at all times.
- Please do not open the door or hold the door open for others.
- In order to enter the building, you will need to press the button located inside the vestibule at the main entrance.
- An office member will release the doors, allowing access to the building.
- Once entering the building or participating on school grounds, ALL visitors must check in at the office, show ID, and obtain a visitor pass.
- If you would like to wait with your child before school or wait for your child after school, you will need to wait outside.

Visitor/Parent Check-In

District Policy requires that all parents and visitors must present a drivers license/I.D. at the front desk and sign in at the office upon entering the building. Your license will be scanned through our Raptor system and a visitor's badge/sticker will be provided. You will be asked to wear a visitor's badge/sticker at all times.

If you would like to spend time with a teacher, please call and make arrangements prior to visiting. Also, if anyone other than a parent or legal guardian will be visiting the school (such as a grandparent coming for lunch) you must call the office ahead of time to let us know.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The District is committed to nondiscrimination in relation to race, color, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions), age, religion, creed, national origin (including ethnicity), ancestry, genetic information (including family medical history), marital status, family composition, sexual orientation, transgender identity, gender identity, gender expression, or disability (“Protected Classes”), in its educational programs or activities, operations, and employment applications and decisions. Harassment, if it rises to the level described in state law, is a prohibited form of discrimination.

A report of discrimination or harassment may be made to any District employee, including the District’s Title IX/Nondiscrimination Coordinator or designated assistant principal in each school building. Reports may be made in person, in writing, over the phone, by email or via the District’s website. The District’s nondiscrimination policies, grievance procedures, and online complaint form are available on the District’s Nondiscrimination and Title IX web pages on the District’s website, <https://www.adams12.org/>.

The District’s Title IX/Non-Discrimination Coordinator is responsible for coordinating, monitoring, and documenting District compliance with District Policies 4140 (Equal Employment Opportunity), 8400 (Nondiscrimination), and 8410 (Sex-Based Discrimination and Harassment). Inquiries about these policies may be referred to the District’s Title IX/Nondiscrimination Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights, or both.

The District’s interim Title IX Coordinator is:

A’ndra Warren
Interim Title IX Coordinator
Adams 12 Five Star Schools
1500 E 128th Ave, Thornton, CO 80241
TitleIX-Nondiscrimination-Coordinator@adams12.org
(720) 972-4179

The District’s interim Nondiscrimination Coordinator is:

Marie McKenzie
Interim Nondiscrimination Coordinator
Adams 12 Five Star Schools
1500 E 128th Ave, Thornton, CO 80241
Marie.McKenzie@adams12.org
(720) 972-4010

INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON DISTRICT WEBSITE

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

A summary of the Student Code of Conduct for Adams 12 Five Star Schools (the District) is available on the District's [website](#). For complete information, please refer to the latest version of each District policy on the District's [website](#).

This summary includes information such as:

- student conduct
- student attendance
- cell phones and personal technology devices
- District technology and Internet usage
- student dress code
- bullying and harassment

COMMONLY REQUESTED INFORMATION

A summary of commonly requested information is available on the District's [website](#). For the most complete information, please refer to the latest version of each District policy (if applicable), available [here](#).

“Commonly requested” information includes topics such as:

- complaints or grievances
- consolidated billing
- service animals on District property
- student transportation
- video and audio monitoring
- visitors to schools

STUDENT HEALTH INFORMATION

Information about student health and wellness, including immunizations, health screenings, and when to keep your child home from school, is available on the District's [website](#).

LEGAL NOTIFICATIONS

The District's legal notifications/annual notices are available on the District's [website](#).

These notices include information concerning:

- nondiscrimination (including Title IX)
- rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- directory information under FERPA
- rights under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)
- other opt-out provisions