USD 480 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024 - 2025



USD 480 Mission Statement

USD 480 provides a safe, quality, and caring learning experience for every learner, every day.

USD480 District Office
7 Parkway
Liberal, KS 67901
Phone: 620-604-1000
Fax: 620-604-1001
www.usd480.net

Note: All school board policies can be reviewed in their entirety at www.usd480.net, District Office, or at each individual school building.

Bright Start Early Learning Center
Principal: Mrs. Jamie Downs
AM Start Time: 8:00 End Time: 11:00
PM Start Time: 12:00 End Time: 3:00
836 South Jordan
Liberal, KS 67901
Phone: 620-604-2000
Fax: 620-604-2001

Sunflower Elementary School
Principal: Mrs. Ashley Lehnert
Asst. Principal: Mr. Nathan Smith
Start Time: 8:00 End Time: 3:20
310 W. Pine St.
Liberal, KS 67901
Phone: 620-604-2800
Fax: 620-604-2801

Cottonwood Elementary School
Principal: Mrs. Traci Mettlen
Asst. Principal: Mrs. Kelsi Robinson
Start Time: 8:00 End Time: 3:20
1100 W. 11th St.
Liberal, KS 67901
Phone: 620-604-2700
Fax: 620-604-2701

MacArthur Elementary School
Principal: Dr. Maureen Richard
Asst. Principal: Mrs. Paula Figgs
Start Time: 8:00 End Time: 3:20
925 S. Holly
Liberal, KS 67901
Phone: 620-604-1700
Fax: 620-604-1701

Meadowlark Elementary School
Principal: Mrs. Shawna Evans
Asst. Principal:
Start Time: 8:00 End Time: 3:20
1200 N. Calvert
Liberal, KS 67901
Phone: 620-604-2100
Fax: 620-604-2101

Prairie View Elementary School
Principal: Mrs. Kendra Haskell
Asst. Principal: Mr. Larry Moore
Start Time: 8:00 End Time: 3:20
615 Warren Ave.
Liberal, KS 67901
Phone: 620-604-1800
Fax: 620-604-1801

This handbook is to provide students with the guidelines that are followed at Liberal's Elementary Schools.
Read this handbook carefully.

OFFICE HOURS

The elementary schools' office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. every school day. If you need to contact the school, please do so between those hours. Please check page two for phone and fax numbers.

TEACHER WORK HOURS

Teachers are at school thirty minutes before and ten minutes after school. If you need to talk to your child's teacher, please call or meet with the teacher during those times or during the teacher's plan time. You may leave a message for the teacher at any time. Conferences with a teacher may be scheduled by calling the office to set up an appointment.

VISITORS

For the safety and protection of your children, all doors will remain locked except for the main entrance. ALL visitors must enter at the front doors and sign in at the office to receive a visitors' identification badge before proceeding to other parts of the building. We encourage parents to visit their child's classroom. However, to reduce classroom disruptions, we ask that you make arrangements with the teacher before doing so. Any classroom visitation/observation must have prior approval from building principals.

FEES

Fees are due at the time of enrollment. If full payment cannot be made during enrollment, a payment arrangement must be made with the office. If fees are not paid in full after 30 days of enrollment, the matter may be turned over to a collection agency.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance is expected of all students. Parents or guardians should call the school between 7:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. every day a student is absent or tardy. If no phone is available, the parent should send a note to school upon the student's return. The school will make an attempt to contact the parents or guardian if the school does not know the student's whereabouts.

Students may not attend school activities on days that they are not in attendance unless prior permission has been secured.

Any student who misses 10 consecutive days from school will be dropped from the school roster and an EXIT record will be submitted to KIDS, the state database system for all students. These absences may be excused or unexcused. Students who return to school after missing 10 or more consecutive school days will be required to enroll, per board policy, at the Newcomer's Center. The student will be assigned to the school which the student attended prior to the student's absence; PROVIDED HOWEVER, if that school is full, the student will be assigned to another school in which there are classroom openings, with preference given to the school closest to the student's residence.

A. Excused Absences (Policy JBD)

All excused absences will fall within the following categories:

- Personal Illness.
- Death or serious illness in the immediate family.
- Professional Appointment
- Religious Observances
- School Activity
- Deployment/Active Duty Personnel
- Prearranged and approved by the Principal.

It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with the teacher to make up any missed work the day he or she returns to school. Students will have one-day make-up time for each day of work missed.

In cases where absences due to illness are deemed excessive, a physician's verification may be required.

B. Unexcused Absences

Any absence for reasons not mentioned above or any absence without parental verification will be considered unexcused. Examples of unexcused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Truancy or skipping school.
- Missing the school bus or over-sleeping.
- Shopping, hair appointments, employment, translating, or babysitting.
- Extended vacations during the school year.

The student is expected to make-up the work missed during the absence. Full credit may not be given.

C. Late Arrival/Early Pickup

Students arriving after 8:30 am will be marked a half day absent. Students leaving prior to 3:00 pm will be marked a half day absent.

D. Advanced-notice Absences

If a family knows in advance that a student will be absent, they must inform the office and the teacher of the reason and length of absence. These absences *may* be considered unexcused. Students are expected to make-up the missed work.

E. Appointments During the School Day

Occasionally, a student must leave during the school day to attend a medical, dental or legal appointment. The parent or guardian must come into the office to sign the student out. The student must sign back in to the office upon their return.

F. Tardies

Students arriving at school after the tardy bell rings must obtain an Admit Slip from the office before going to class. In order to determine whether or not the tardy is excused, the parent should report the delay to the office. After three unexcused tardies, disciplinary action may occur.

G. Truancy

Any student who has three consecutive unexcused absences, a total of five unexcused absences during a school semester, or a total of seven unexcused absences in a year, will be reported to the Department of Children and Families (D.C.F.) or the truant officer.

****The principal will make the final determination of whether an absence is excused or unexcused.****

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Parents, teachers, and administrators have a responsibility to protect the rights of students, while maintaining an educational atmosphere conducive to the teaching and learning process. We expect all students to behave appropriately at school. We will not tolerate a student preventing the teacher from teaching or other students from learning, or engaging in an activity that is not in his/her best interest. In order to guarantee all students the learning climate they deserve, we are utilizing the following discipline program.

A. Rules/Regulations

1. Respect the rights of other people and their property at all times.
2. Keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
3. Report to class on time, with all materials necessary for class participation.
4. Walk quietly while in the halls.
5. Follow the instructions of all adults in the building.
6. Students are not allowed to show any public display of affection.
7. **Use of foul, obscene or unacceptable language is not acceptable.
8. **Physical violence will not be tolerated.
9. **Stealing is prohibited.

10. **Disrespect, insubordination, or disobedience for teachers, school officials or other employees will not be tolerated.
11. **Vandalism and/or destruction of school property will not be tolerated. Students who willfully destroy school property will be required to pay for damages. The police will be called as necessary.

12. **Any gang or gang-like activity in school or on school grounds is not allowed. (Policy JHCAA)
13. ** Bullying (harassing, threatening, intimidating) on USD 480 property, in a USD 480 vehicle, or at any USD 480 sponsored activity or event is prohibited. (Policy JDDC)
14. **Possession of tobacco, alcohol or a controlled substance, or being under the influence of the same on USD 480 property or at a USD 480 function is forbidden. (Policy JCDAD)
15. ** A student shall not possess, handle or transmit any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon at school, on school property, or at a school-sponsored event. This shall include any weapon, any item being used as a weapon or destructive device, or any facsimile of a weapon. (Policy JCDBB)

The actions that are starred (**) above, may result in automatic suspension (see section C).

Any student who has been a victim and/or witness to any violation of the above rules should notify the teacher or building principal immediately.

B. Consequences
The classroom teacher will address the consequences of not following the rules of the classroom. Repeated failure to follow the classroom rules will result in a referral to the office. Parents will be notified to discuss repeated or disruptive behaviors.

C. Suspension
School suspension (whether in-school or out-of-school) may run from a minimum of one day to a maximum of ninety days. The student may be suspended by the principal, assistant principal, superintendent or assistant superintendent for breaches of school policy.

D. Searches (Policy JCAB & JCABB)
Principals are authorized to search property if there is reasonable suspicion that district policies, rules or directives are being violated. In addition all lockers shall be subject to random searches without prior notice or reasonable suspicion. All searches by the principal shall be carried out in the presence of another adult witness.**(JCABB)**

E. Dress Expectations
The purpose of a dress code is not to inhibit any person's taste in attire, but rather to better facilitate the process of education through reasonable guidelines of "dress." Students are asked to be responsible and use good judgment concerning appearance and should dress appropriately for the season and for indoor heating and air conditioning.

- Pants, jeans, shorts, etc. are to be worn at waist level
- Shirts that have vulgar, obscene, suggestive, gang-related, or racist meanings or advertise tobacco, alcohol, or drugs are not permitted.
- Immodest dress is not permitted. Tank tops, spaghetti straps, muscle shirts, bare mid-drift shirts, tube tops, and net shirts are not considered appropriate.
- Shorts or skirts must be a minimum of fingertip length.
- Shirts must be no longer than the wrist when arms are at ones' sides. If longer than this, shirts must be tucked in.
- At the discretion of the Administration, ***any*** item that interferes with the educational process of the students will not be allowed.

F. Toileting

Children enrolled in USD 480 must be toilet trained before attending. Children must be wearing underwear with very few accidents. A child having multiple accidents a week is not considered toilet trained. Please note that wearing pull-ups isn't considered being toilet trained.

Why do children have to be toilet trained before they begin school? There are strict standards for changing and disposing of wet or soiled diapers. The regular education classrooms are not equipped for diaper changing. When an adult is busy changing a child's diaper or soiled clothing, it is taking away from learning time for all students and it removes one adult from the direct supervision of and interaction with the rest of the class.

We do understand that even toilet-trained children will occasionally have toileting accidents. By definition, "accidents" are unusual isolated incidents and should happen infrequently. In these instances, staff will instruct children to change their clothes, encouraging independence.

A toilet-trained child is a child who can do the following:

1. Communicate to the teachers that he/she needs to go to the restroom before they need to go.
2. Alert him/herself to stop what he/she is doing to go and use the bathroom.
3. Pull down his/her clothes and get them back up without assistance.
4. Wipe him/herself after using the toilet.
5. Get on/off the toilet by him/herself.
6. Wash and dry hands.
7. Postpone going if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom or if we are away from the classroom.

We certainly will ask your child many times throughout the day and always before recess if they need to use the bathroom. We can ask them to go, but cannot force them. A staff member will offer minimal assistance in the restroom as children should be able to complete toileting activities independently. This is an issue that protects all concerned.

It is not uncommon for a child who is fully toilet trained to have a setback when he/she is in a new environment. The staff is aware of this and will assist the children when necessary. Please dress your child in clothing that can be undone and changed easily. For students in PreK - 1st grade, please put a complete change of clothes appropriate for the season in a gallon-size bag (be sure to include socks) in your child's backpack. These will be left in the backpack to be used as needed. Parents will be notified if a child has a toileting accident.

A child will not be considered toilet trained if the child continues to consistently have toileting accidents and is unable to complete toileting activities independently after the first 2 weeks of school.

These policies will be in effect for all USD 480 students. Exceptions to this policy will be made for students with a diagnosed medical condition, and students on an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

MEDICAL PROCEDURES

A. Illness or Injuries

Parents should not send their child to school if he/she has an untreated condition or possible communicable disease. **Students who have a temperature of 100.0F or greater, whether identified at home or at school, may not attend school until they have been fever free (temps below 100.0F) for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.** Parents will be notified if their child becomes ill or appears to have sustained a significant injury during the school day. The student will report to the office and must be signed out and receive a pass to go home. Parents should pick the student up from the office as soon as possible. **Please be sure the office has current home, work and emergency telephone numbers.**

B. Immunization

Every student entering school in the district for the first time shall be required prior to admission to and attendance in school, to present to the appropriate school authorities certification from a licensed physician or health department that he has received immunization against communicable disease as required by Kansas law KAR 28-1-20. (Policy JGCB). If the record of immunizations is incomplete, the needed immunizations must be obtained and a completed record presented to the school. The student, without completed records, will be excluded from school and all school activities. After five (5) days, truancy proceedings will be initiated.

The legal alternatives to immunization are:

1. Certification from a licensed physician stating the physical condition of the student to be such that immunization would seriously endanger his life, or health; (Kansas Certificate of Immunization Form B medical exemptions)
2. A written statement signed by one parent or guardian that the student is an adherent of a religious denomination whose religious teachings are opposed to immunization.

C. Medication/Self Medication

If medication is needed during school hours, the student's parent or guardian may come to school and administer, or school personnel may administer medications only after an approved Medication Permission Form has been completed by physician and parent. This applies to over the counter and prescription medications. If the parent or guardian requests that school personnel administer the medication, the medication policy (JGFGB) shall be followed. If your child is in need of medication at school, please speak with the school nurse.

Under certain very specific circumstances, a student may be allowed to self medicate in accordance with the procedure established on the medication policy (JGFGB).

D. Liability

"Students, parents and guardians of students are hereby notified that USD 480 and its officers, employees and agents are not liable for any damage, injury or death resulting, directly or indirectly, from the self administration of medication. The parent or guardian of each student shall be required to sign a statement acknowledging that USD 480 and its officers, employees and agents incur no liability for damage, injury or death resulting, directly or indirectly, from the self administration of medication and further agreeing to indemnify and hold USD 480 and its officers, employees and agents harmless from and against any claims relating to the self administration of such medication."

E. Exclusion

Failure to complete required immunizations or physical assessments will result in exclusion from school per K.A.R. 72-5111a.

F. Insurance

USD 480 does not provide insurance for accidents or injuries to students. (Policy JGA)

G. Physical Assessments

All students 8 years old and under, when entering a Kansas school for the first time must have a physical assessment completed. Families are allowed 90 days after admission to school to comply with this requirement in accordance with K.A.R 72-5214 and district policy JGC.

SAFETY CONCERNS

A. Crisis Procedure Manual

A crisis procedure manual has been developed for our school. Crisis drills are practiced throughout the school year to prepare students for what to do in case one should occur. Fire, tornado, and crisis drills will be practiced, so children are prepared for an emergency. The manual is available in the office for you to view.

B. Entering and Leaving School Grounds

Students and parents are expected to cross the streets at the intersection using crosswalks. Please do not ask your child to run through the middle of the street to meet you or to walk through the parking lot. Use the school's designated procedures to drop off or pick up students.

K-1 students are not allowed to walk to and from school alone. Parents must obtain prior principal approval for a K-1 student to walk home with an older sibling or other student. 2-5 students are allowed to walk alone.

C. Bus Safety

Only students who have filled out the proper forms are allowed to ride USD 480 buses. Students are to follow all bus rules, as stated in the rule packet handed out at enrollment. Failure to follow the directions of the bus driver or aide will be reported to the office. Multiple bus reports may result in suspension of bus riding privileges.

D. Fund Raising

Any class, school-sponsored organization or club desiring to run a fund-raising event must first clear the project through their sponsor and the principal. Class time may not be used to earn money.

School policy **strictly prohibits the door-to-door selling of merchandise by students.**

WEATHER WARNINGS or SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Parents are encouraged to utilize the USD 480 app to receive notifications. Any announcements concerning school closings or activity cancellations will also be posted on local radio and television stations. If the school is dismissed during the day, please be sure that children know where they are to go in the event that the parents are not at home. If children are to walk home, be sure that they are properly dressed for the weather.

SCHOOL RECORDS

A. Legal Name

All school records, by law, must be kept in the student's legal name.

B. Grade Cards/ Academic Growth Report

Grade cards/Academic Growth Report are issued at the earliest appropriate day as determined by the Superintendent. A non-custodial parent may receive a copy of the report card by providing the office with a written request.

C. Custodial Parent Concerns

The school must have the appropriate legal court documents to restrict non-custodial parent access to their child or school records. If no such paperwork is given to the school, the child or the records will be released to either parent.

D. Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences are held three times during the school year. These conferences are an important time for parents and teachers to share information regarding a student's academic progress. Parents are expected to attend. If at any time you would like to have a conference, please call the school and make arrangements.

E. Retention

Students may be promoted when they have demonstrated mastery of the board approved learning objectives. The final decision to promote or retain a student shall rest with the principal after receiving information from parents, guardians, teachers, and other appropriate school personnel. (Policy JFB)

MISCELLANEOUS

A. Breakfast/Lunch

- Before your child comes to school each day, please make sure he/she knows what to do about breakfast and lunch.
- Breakfast will be served.
- Please make sure your child has money or a sack lunch.
- Sack lunches may not require refrigeration or heating. Microwaves will not be available for student lunches.
- Carbonated beverages, coffee, energy drinks or candy items are not allowed in the cafeteria.
- Carry out food from restaurants is not allowed in the cafeteria.

B. Telephone

The telephones in the school are to be used for school business or emergencies only. Students will not be called from classes to the telephone unless it is an emergency call.

C. Student Communication Device (Cell Phone) Policy

A communication device is defined to include all portable devices that send or receive calls or text messages, allow the retrieval of e-mail or provide access to the Internet. Communication devices shall include, but are not to be limited to cell phones, smart phones, I-pads. tablets, smart watches, and any other device that can make a phone call or send a text message.

If a student must bring a cell phone to school for after school safety reasons, the cell phone must be turned into the school's designated area at the beginning of each day.

Violation Consequences:
At the time of violation of this policy, the communication device shall be taken from the student and the following consequences shall apply:

- First Offense: The student will be given a warning. The communication device will be returned at the end of the day.
- Second Offense: The communication device will be returned to the parent or guardian at the end of the day.
- Subsequent Offenses: There will be a meeting with the parent and the communication device will be returned to the parents at the meeting.

D. Personal Items and Jewelry

Unless specifically requested by the teacher, students should not bring personal items, jewelry, toys, games, radios, skates, skateboards, card collections, gum, candy or other such items to school. They have no legitimate purpose in school and will be taken to the office. Upon the offense, the parent/guardian may pick the item up from the office. **The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.**

E. Library
The student is responsible for returning the materials before the due date. Students will be charged for lost or damaged books.

F. Use of Technology and Electronic Resources
The district's computer network is for educational use only. Students are expected to follow the guidelines and principles as outlined in board policy IIBG. Before any student can use the district's network, the student must have on file a copy of the acceptable use agreement signed by both the student and his/her parent or guardian.
Users are required to report to the teacher or building administrator any abnormalities or inappropriate material. Any misuse of the network will result in the student's privileges being revoked and they will not be able to use the network. (Policy IIBG)

G. Physical Education
The physical education program is fitness-centered, therefore it requires non-marking gym shoes.

H. Gifts and Flowers for Students/Birthdays
Do not have gifts, flowers, or other such non-school items delivered to school. They are a disruption to the educational process and will not be distributed.

If you would like to send birthday treats, please visit with your child's teacher in advance. We ask that birthday celebrations with friends be done outside of the school setting. This includes sending invitations.

I. Money
Students should not bring large amounts of personal money to school at any time. Money for breakfast or lunch, fundraising purposes, school parties or school pictures should be in a sealed envelope with the student's name and teacher's name clearly written on the outside. **The school is not responsible for lost or stolen money.**

J. Lost and Found
Lost articles will be turned in to the school office and held until the end of each month. At the end of the month, unclaimed articles may be disposed of.

K. Wellness
In order to promote a healthy lifestyle, USD 480 has developed a wellness policy. ALL snacks that are shared with other students must be pre-packaged and store bought. Homemade snacks may not be shared with other students.

STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS

Child Abuse
School employees are considered mandated reporters of child abuse. Any suspected physical or mental abuse or neglect will result in an immediate call to S.R.S.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
Section 504, which prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in any program receiving federal financial assistance, assures that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students. The Act defines a person with a disability as anyone who has a mental or physical impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities; has a record of such impairment; or is regarded as having such impairment.

FERPA
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) specifies rights related to educational records. This Act gives the parent or guardian the right to: inspect and review
his/her child's educational records; make copies of these records; receive a list of all individuals having access to those records; ask for an explanation of any item in the records; ask for an amendment to any report on the grounds that it is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the child's rights; and a hearing on the issue if the school refuses to make the amendment.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

Unified School District #480 does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, or handicap in the educational programs or activities, which it operates. Anyone who believes that he/she has been discriminated against should contact the district compliance officer at the Administrative Office.

USD 480 POLICIES: Policies can be found on USD480 website

- GAAF District Emergency Safety Intervention Policy Including dispute resolution process
- GAAF Emergency Safety Interventions (See GAO, JRB, JQ, and KN)
- JGEC 2 & 3 Sexual Harassment (See GAAC, GAAD, GAF, JDDC and KN)
- JGECA 2, 3, & 4 Racial Harassment (See GAACA, GAAB, GAF, JDDC and KN)
- JDDC Bullying (See EBC, GAAB, GAAE, JCE, JDD, JGEC and JGECA)
- JCAB Searches of Property (See JCABB)