Steele Elementary

Parent/Student Handbook

2026-2027

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D11 student and family resources:
Student Policies

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SCHOOL HOURS

7:50 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.

All classes at Steele Elementary begin at **7:50 a.m.** and are dismissed at **2:50 p.m.** To ensure student safety, students should not arrive at school before **7:35 a.m.**

For students who wish to eat breakfast at school, breakfast is served in the cafeteria/gymnasium beginning at **7:35 a.m.**

Steele Elementary is a full-day kindergarten through fifth-grade school. All kindergarten students attend a full-day program.

VISITING THE SCHOOL

We welcome and encourage families to be actively involved in their child's education. Steele Elementary values strong partnerships between home and school and maintains an open-door philosophy.

In accordance with district policy, all visitors must present a valid Colorado driver's license or government-issued photo identification upon arrival, regardless of the purpose of the visit. Visitors will be issued a visitor badge, which must be worn at all times while on campus. New badges are issued daily and should be returned to the office before leaving. Please know that if you are unable to present your ID, you won't be able to enter the building.

To visit a classroom, please arrange a mutually convenient time with your child's teacher in advance.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Steele Elementary School is strengthened by the involvement of our families. We encourage parents and guardians to participate in the many activities and opportunities available throughout the school year.

Volunteers are needed in classrooms, during special events, and in support of various school programs. Anyone wishing to volunteer must complete a Volunteer Registration Form. This requirement applies to all volunteer activities, including classroom observations, classroom celebrations/events, and field trips.

Completed forms must be submitted at least **seven (7) days prior** to the planned volunteer activity. Failure to submit the required paperwork in advance may result in the inability to participate.

Volunteer registration may be completed electronically through the district website:

https://www.d11.org/engagement/partnerships/volunteers

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Students should arrive at school no earlier than **7:35 a.m.** Playground supervision begins at **7:35 a.m.** each morning.

The first bell rings at **7:48 a.m.**, at which time students should report to their designated line-up areas. School supervision is not available before **7:35 a.m.**

Students who remain on campus after **3:00 p.m.** without a parent, guardian, or authorized adult present will be escorted to the office to await pickup.

STUDENT PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF TRAFFIC

Because Steele Elementary does not have a designated pick-up and drop-off zone, we ask all families to follow city traffic laws and exercise courtesy during arrival and dismissal times.

Please help us maintain a safe environment by following these guidelines:

- Do not park in designated handicap parking spaces without a valid placard or license plate, even for a quick couple of minutes.
- Do not block residential driveways in the surrounding neighborhood.
- Do not pick up or drop off students in the alley or staff parking lot located behind the school.
- Please help keep students safe by not dropping off on the northside of Espanola.
- Please refrain from double parking on Espanola and blocking staff in.
- Follow all posted traffic signs and directions from school personnel.
- Lastly, always use the designated crosswalks when crossing streets.

Your cooperation helps ensure the safety of students, families, staff, and our neighbors.

HOMEWORK

Steele Elementary School is committed to academic excellence. We believe that reasonable homework assignments can reinforce classroom learning and help students develop strong study habits and personal responsibility.

The effectiveness of homework depends on a partnership among students, families, and staff. While homework is an important part of the learning process, it will **not be included in report card grades**.

Parents and guardians can support student success by encouraging completion of assignments and ensuring they are returned by the assigned due date.

If you have questions regarding homework expectations, please contact your child's teacher directly.

ATTENDANCE: YOU MISS A DAY, YOU MISS A LOT!

Regular attendance is essential to student success and academic growth. School begins promptly at **7:50 a.m.** and ends at **2:50 p.m.** Our expectation is that students attend school every day, arrive on time, and remain for the full instructional day whenever possible.

Students arriving after the start of the school day must be signed in through the office by a parent or guardian.

Attendance guidelines include:

- Please note that there are two attendance marking periods each day. One in the morning and one in the afternoon.
- Students arriving at school between **7:51 a.m. - 9:21 a.m.** will be marked tardy.
- Students arriving after **9:21 a.m.** will be considered absent for the morning session in accordance with district policy.
- Students leaving school before **1:20 p.m.** will be considered absent for the afternoon session in accordance with district policy. Students that leave school between **1:21 p.m. - 2:50 p.m.** will be marked as early release.
- Students who arrive late must check in through the office before reporting to class.
- You can always check your student's attendance (absences & tardiness via PowerSchool.
- Lastly, when dropping off, please do not go into the building with your student(s). You will need to officially sign in with the front office to enter the building at 7:50.

If your child will be absent due to illness or family circumstances, please notify the school as soon as possible by calling the attendance line at **719-328-4703**.

If your child receives medical care during an illness-related absence, please obtain a note from the healthcare provider to ensure the absence is recorded as excused.

Absences that are not verified by a parent, guardian, or healthcare provider will be considered unexcused. Families will receive automated notifications regarding unexcused absences and tardies.

Colorado law requires regular school attendance. Repeated, extended, or excessive absences and tardiness may result in retention concerns and, in cases where absences exceed ten (10) days per year, possible legal action.

The elementary school day is divided into two half-day attendance periods. These half-day periods are combined when calculating a student's total absences.

CLASSROOM CHANGES

Steele Elementary School follows a thoughtful student placement process that involves careful consideration by teachers and school staff. Classroom assignments are based on multiple factors, including student needs, learning styles, academic considerations, and information provided by the previous year's teacher.

Because significant time and planning go into creating balanced classrooms, requests for classroom changes will not be considered without a thorough discussion involving the parent or guardian, the classroom teacher, and school administration.

The principal has final authority regarding all classroom placement decisions and requests.

Our goal is to create heterogeneous classrooms that provide a balanced learning environment and support the success of all students.

BICYCLES

Students who ride bicycles to school must park them in the designated bicycle area located at the front of the school.

For the safety of all students and staff, bicycles must be walked—not ridden—once students enter school grounds.

Please note that Steele Elementary School is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged bicycles, and it is highly recommended to lock your bicycle.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS

All students are taught school and classroom expectations and are expected to follow them consistently. Classroom teachers will address most behavioral concerns; however, serious or repeated incidents may be referred to the principal or other school administrators.

Possible consequences for inappropriate behavior may include classroom interventions, restorative practices, recovery time in another classroom, suspension, expulsion, or other disciplinary measures as appropriate.

Examples of behaviors that may result in disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:

- Fighting or physical aggression
- Disrespect toward staff or other students
- Destruction of school property
- Behavior that disrupts the learning environment
- Possession of drugs, weapons, or prohibited items
- Harassment, bullying, or intimidation

Participation in classroom parties, team activities, field trips, assemblies, clubs, and other school-sponsored events is considered a privilege. Students who do not meet behavioral expectations may lose the opportunity to participate in some or all extracurricular activities.

The use of racial or ethnic slurs, discriminatory language, or other behavior that creates a hostile learning environment is unacceptable and may result in disciplinary action, including suspension.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Students who engage in inappropriate behavior should expect appropriate disciplinary consequences. Positive behavior includes meeting responsibilities in both academic and social settings.

Depending on the nature and severity of the behavior, disciplinary action may be taken by teachers, administrators, or other school personnel. Serious infractions, including physical aggression, chronic disruption, or insubordination, may be referred directly to the principal.

Parents or guardians will be notified whenever a student is referred to an administrator for disciplinary action.

Possible consequences may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Informal Discussion: A staff member will discuss the behavior with the student and review expected school conduct.

Conference: A formal conference may be held between the student and school staff. Parents or guardians may be contacted as needed.

Detention: Detention may be assigned at the discretion of the administrator.

Parent/Guardian Conference: Parents or guardians may be contacted by phone, email, or written notice. A conference may be held involving the student, parent or guardian, school personnel, and other appropriate individuals.

In-School Suspension: A student may be temporarily removed from the classroom while remaining under school supervision during the school day.

Out-of-School Suspension: Students may be suspended from school for up to five (5) days, in accordance with district policy.

Temporary Loss of Privileges: Students may temporarily lose privileges such as participation in recess activities, field trips, assemblies, clubs, or extracurricular activities.

Parent or Guardian Classroom Attendance: Parents or guardians may be asked to attend class with their child for a brief period of time.

Behavior Hearing: A formal behavior hearing may be conducted through the District's Student Support and Engagement Department.

PHONES AND PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Colorado Springs School District 11 Policy JICJ requires that personal technology devices—including cell phones, smart watches, earbuds, and similar devices—remain stored in student backpacks throughout the school day.

If a parent or guardian needs to contact a student during school hours, please call the school office at **719-328-4700**.

District 11 is not responsible for personal electronic devices that are lost, stolen, or damaged while on school property. Parents or guardians who experience theft of a personal device are encouraged to file a report with the local law enforcement agency.

FIREARMS AND DEADLY WEAPONS

Students, parents, guardians, and visitors may not bring weapons onto school property or possess weapons while attending or participating in any school-sponsored activity, including transportation to and from such activities.

For purposes of this handbook, a weapon includes any firearm, knife, explosive device, or other object that could reasonably be used to cause harm. This definition also includes look-alike weapons or objects that resemble weapons.

In compliance with the federal Gun-Free Schools Act and district policy, any student who brings a firearm or weapon to school or a school-sponsored activity will be subject to disciplinary consequences and may be referred to law enforcement authorities.

Students are prohibited from bringing weapons, toy weapons, or any item that could reasonably be perceived as a weapon to school. Violations may result in immediate suspension and referral to district officials.

Parents, guardians, and visitors must also comply with all applicable laws regarding firearms and weapons on school property.

VAPE PENS, E-CIGARETTES, AND TOBACCO PRODUCTS

To promote the health, safety, and well-being of students, staff, and visitors, the use of tobacco products is prohibited on all school property.

This prohibition includes, but is not limited to:

- Cigarettes
- Cigars
- Smokeless tobacco products
- Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes)
- Vape pens and vaping devices
- Nicotine delivery products

Student possession or use of vape pens, e-cigarettes, tobacco products, or related devices on school property is prohibited and may result in suspension and additional disciplinary consequences.

TOYS AND OTHER PLAY ITEMS

Students are asked to refrain from bringing toys or other play items to school unless specifically requested by a teacher for an instructional purpose.

Items that may be confiscated include, but are not limited to:

- Toys
- Trading or collector cards
- Sports equipment brought from home
- Items that create distractions or safety concerns

Confiscated items may or may not be returned, at the discretion of school administration.

Exceptions may be made for approved after-school clubs or activities. In these cases, items must be used only for their intended club or activity.

The school provides playground equipment for student use during recess. Students should leave personal footballs, basketballs, soccer balls, and similar equipment at home.

DRESS CODE

Colorado Springs School District 11 is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is safe, respectful, and conducive to student achievement. School dress expectations are designed to support a positive educational environment while promoting student safety.

Steele Elementary follows District 11 Board Policy JICA. The principal may approve exemptions for special events, school activities, or individual circumstances.

Students are expected to wear clothing that:

- Covers all private body areas, including the midriff and back.
- Fits appropriately and does not expose undergarments.
- Is of an appropriate length, with shorts and skirts extending at least to mid-thigh.
- Is free of excessive holes, rips, or tears that expose undergarments or private body areas.
- Supports participation in school activities and maintains a safe learning environment.
- Includes footwear that adequately protects the feet.

The following are not permitted:

- Hats, hoods, or hoodies worn over the head inside the building unless specifically approved by school administration.
- Clothing, accessories, or jewelry displaying references to:
    - Drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
    - Gang affiliation
    - Violence or weapons
    - Sexually explicit or suggestive content
    - Profanity or obscene language
    - Hate speech or discriminatory messages
- Slippers (unless approved for reward/party) and bare feet. Shoes must be worn while outside at all times.

Equity and Enforcement

Dress code expectations will be enforced consistently, respectfully, and in a manner that preserves student dignity.

When concerns arise:

- Staff will avoid publicly correcting or embarrassing students.
- School personnel will work with students and families to resolve concerns in a supportive manner.
- Parents or guardians will be contacted when appropriate.
- Alternative clothing options may be provided when available to help students remain in class and continue learning.

SCHOOL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAMS

Breakfast is available to all students each school day and is served in the cafeteria/gymnasium beginning at **7:35 a.m.**

Please note that breakfast will **not** be served on days when the district operates on a two-hour delayed start schedule.

Students are provided **20 minutes for lunch** each day. Lunch is typically served in the cafeteria/gymnasium. During appropriate weather conditions, students may have the opportunity to eat outdoors in the pocket park/gazebo area.

Students are expected to demonstrate respectful behavior during mealtimes by:

- Using good manners
- Engaging in appropriate social conversation
- Treating others with respect
- Cleaning up after themselves

Please notify the school office of any food allergies or dietary concerns that may affect your child's safety and well-being.

MEDICATION

School personnel may administer prescribed medication only when a completed Student Medication Form is on file.

Medication forms are available in the school office and require a physician's signature. Families may wish to obtain the form before a medical appointment to allow the physician to complete the required documentation.

All medication must be provided to the school in its original labeled container.

The school will not administer over-the-counter medications without a doctor signed Student Medication Form, including but not limited to:

- Aspirin
- Cough medicine
- Cough drops
- Pain relievers
- Topical creams or salves

Students may not bring medication to school for self-administration unless authorized through district procedures and documented medical accommodations.

Please contact the school office if you have questions regarding medication procedures. Please note that all medications should be picked up by a parent or guardian at the end of the year.

SCHOOL RECORDS

The school office maintains current records for each student. It is important that families notify the office promptly whenever information changes.

Please inform the office of any updates to:

- Home address
- Phone numbers
- Email addresses
- Emergency contacts
- Immunization records
- Custody or guardianship information, when applicable

Maintaining accurate information allows the school to communicate effectively and respond appropriately in emergencies.

If your family is planning to move or transfer schools, please notify the office at least one week before your child's last day of attendance whenever possible. This allows sufficient time to complete the necessary paperwork and transfer records.

SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS, LIBRARY BOOKS, AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES

District 11 and Steele Elementary provide textbooks for student use at no cost.

Normal wear and tear is expected; however, families may be responsible for the replacement cost of books that are lost, damaged beyond normal use, or not returned.

Students are encouraged to use and enjoy materials available through the Steele Media Center. We ask families to help students develop responsibility for library materials and return them promptly.

Replacement costs may be assessed for lost or damaged library materials.

School supplies are an important part of student success. District 11 provides many required classroom supplies, significantly reducing the supply lists for grades K–5.

Current school supply lists are available on the Steele Elementary website.

SCHOOL DEVICES

Every Steele Elementary student has access to a district-issued device to support learning.

A signed technology agreement is required before a device can be issued to a student.

Devices are primarily used at school; however, they may occasionally be sent home to support learning activities. Students are expected to use devices responsibly and in accordance with all district and school technology policies.

Appropriate use includes educational and school-related activities only.

While normal wear and tear is expected, families may be responsible for repair or replacement costs associated with:

- Broken screens
- Damaged keyboards
- Water damage
- Lost devices
- Other avoidable damage

Violations of the technology user agreement may result in disciplinary action and/or loss of device privileges.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Information regarding school delays, closures, or early dismissals may be communicated through:

- Local radio stations
- Television news broadcasts
- The district website
- ClassDojo communications

In the event of a **two-hour delayed start**, school will begin at **9:50 a.m.**

On delayed-start days:

- Breakfast will not be served.
- Students should not be dropped off before **9:40 a.m.**
- Supervision will begin at **9:40 a.m**.

In the rare event of an early dismissal, families will be contacted using the information on file. Please ensure that your contact information remains current throughout the school year.

Green Flag Days

When temperatures fall below **20°F**, students will enter the building immediately upon arrival rather than remaining outside before school.

These days are designated as **Green Flag Days**. Green flags will be displayed outside the school to indicate that students should proceed directly into the building through their classroom entrance or the main entrance.

CLASS PARTIES

Class parties may be held periodically throughout the school year at the discretion of classroom teachers.

If you have questions regarding class celebrations, including birthday treats or other items you would like to provide, please contact your child's teacher directly.

Teachers will communicate classroom-specific expectations and procedures for celebrations. Please note that parents should be registered in Visitor Aware for class celebrations/events/presentations.

COMMUNICATION

Steele Elementary uses ClassDojo as a primary communication tool between home and school.

Through ClassDojo, families can:

- Receive updates from teachers and school administration
- Learn about upcoming events and activities
- View important school announcements
- Communicate privately with teachers and administration

ClassDojo is a free application that is available on mobile devices and computers.

In addition to ClassDojo, Steele Elementary distributes **Steele Notes**, a weekly communication typically sent by email each Thursday.

Steele Notes provides information regarding:

- Upcoming events
- Schedule changes
- School programs and activities
- Important school announcements

Families are encouraged to read and save Steele Notes for future reference.

To receive school communications, please ensure that a current email address is on file with the school office.

For questions, please contact the office at **719-328-4700**.

Additional information is available on the Steele Elementary website.

CONFERENCES AND GRADE REPORTING

Standards-Based Report Cards are issued at the end of each nine-week grading period for students in grades K–5.

Progress reports are provided at mid-quarter for students who are experiencing academic difficulty, including:

- Grades of U (Unsatisfactory) or M (Minimally Proficient) in kindergarten through second grade
- Grades of D or F in third through fifth grade

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of the first quarter each October.

Additional conferences may be offered during the spring for selected students based on academic or instructional needs.

Families are encouraged to contact their child's teacher at any time during the school year to discuss academic progress, behavior, or other concerns.

TAKING STUDENTS OUT OF SCHOOL DURING THE DAY

If it is necessary to pick up your child during the school day, a parent, guardian, or authorized emergency contact must sign the student out through the school office. You, or your authorized emergency contact must provide a valid ID for student checkout.

For instructional and safety reasons:

- Students will remain in class until the authorized adult arrives.
- Students will be brought to the office after the sign-out process begins.
- Students may not wait outside the building for pickup.

Only parents, guardians, or individuals listed as authorized contacts may pick up students during the school day.

PTA AND SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE (SAC)

Steele Elementary is fortunate to have an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) that supports students, staff, and school programs throughout the year.

Families are encouraged to join the PTA and participate in its activities and events.

PTA meetings are typically held at **8:00 a.m. on the second Wednesday of each month** at the school. Meeting dates and times are subject to change.

School Accountability Committee (SAC)

Steele's School Accountability Committee (SAC) meets monthly to discuss school improvement efforts, student achievement, and issues affecting the school community.

SAC meetings are typically held at **5:00 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month** in the Media Center.

Families are encouraged to attend PTA and SAC meetings and become active partners in supporting student success.

For additional information about the PTA, please contact the school office at **719-328-4700**.

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

After reviewing the **2026–2027 Steele Elementary Parent/Student Handbook**, please sign below and return this page to your student's teacher.

I acknowledge that I have reviewed the Steele Elementary Parent/Student Handbook with my student and understand that the handbook contains important information regarding school expectations, policies, and procedures.

Student Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Thank you for partnering with Steele Elementary to support a safe, respectful, and successful learning environment for all students.