



Starside Elementary School Family Handbook

2026-2027



Mission:

Through a collaborative learning community, we will build a foundation upon which all students can develop essential academic and life skills.

Colors and Mascot:

Royal Blue and Yellow/Cosmo the Comet

Arrival/Dismissal Procedures: The arrival time for students is **after 8:30 AM**. Supervision is not available for children prior to 8:30 AM, unless eating breakfast in the Starside Café. The building will be open for breakfast from 8:20 through 8:40 AM. Safety and supervision are critical in following these recommended times.

Morning Hallway Expectations

Students should report directly to their classrooms upon entering the building. Quick greetings or hugs with former teachers are welcome, but staff should promptly encourage students to continue to their assigned classrooms to ensure a timely start to the day.

Attendance: Regular attendance and a prompt arrival to school are essential to academic and social-emotional success and required by Kansas law. District procedures are followed regarding excessive absences and/or tardies. Parents should call the school by **9:00 AM** or leave a message on the attendance line voicemail **each** day a child is absent. Any student arriving after 8:45 AM is considered tardy. **After 8:45 AM, Starside staff are no longer outside for supervision and parents must accompany their student(s) into the office to sign them in.** This is a requirement for student safety.

Excused Absences: The following are reasons for excusable absences.

Personal illness.

Serious illness or death of a member of the family or close friend.

Obligatory religious observance of the student's own faith.

Participation in a school approved student activity.

Verified physician or dentist appointments.

Court appearance.

Emergency situations requiring immediate action.

An absence which has been requested in writing and approved in advance by the building administration.

Unexcused Absences: A student is inexcusably absent if:

Such absence is not excusable under the policy of the Board of Education.

He or she leaves during school hours without permission.

He or she does not attend class.

He or she fails to comply with building and/or district attendance procedures

**If we are not notified, the absence is considered unexcused. Please call 913-667-6279 to report an absence.*

Early Checkouts: Every minute of instructional time is important. Early checkout is comparative to late arrival. Please do not ask to check out your child early except in cases of necessity such as illness, family emergency, or other extreme circumstances. If you need to take your child out during the school day, please come to the school office and sign the student out. **Parents are strongly encouraged to notify the classroom teacher via email of an absence or early check-out well in advance, so that he or she may have your child ready to leave with assignments or work the child will miss while absent.**

Student Release from School: Due to safety reasons, no child may be released from school without consent from a parent, guardian, or designee. Students will not be released to any person other than a parent or legal guardian unless the parent authorizes this action.

No student is to be released to walk home during school hours without written or verbal permission of the parent/guardian.

Approval must be obtained from building principal or principal designee.

Principals may give permission for a student to be sent home for a variety of reasons, but predominantly illness.

Records of release are maintained at the building site, usually on the check-in/check-out form in the office. For the situation where a parent/guardian has requested a child be sent home, the sheet indicates the date, student name, the reason for the request, and parent/guardian signature. When picking a student up early from school, parents/guardians must enter the front office and sign the student out for the day on the check-out form.

Tardies: If you drop your child off at or after 8:45 AM, he or she will be counted as tardy. **As a safety precaution, an adult must escort the student into the office and check-in with our attendance secretary.** Students are also tardy if they are picked up early from school, after 2:50 PM. Students picked up early from school before 2:50 PM are coded as .5 absent.

Travel Changes: If you need to alter your child's travel arrangements for the day, it is imperative you call the front office to communicate the travel change **prior to 3:00 PM**. The front office will notify your child's teacher.

Truancy: Truancy is the unexcused or unverified absence from school or class without the proper consent of the school principal or personnel. Pursuant to the Kansas State Law, all children age 7-18 are to attend school every day. The Kansas State law specifically says that a student is truant if they have missed 3 unexcused/unverified days in a row, 5 unexcused/unverified days in a semester, or 7 unexcused/unverified days in a school year.

Birthdays: Please contact your child's teacher in advance if you would like to send treats to school. Due to many food allergies within the school, we ask that all refreshments be individually wrapped and peanut-free. Celebrations will usually be kept to the last 10 minutes of the day. Birthday party invites may not be handed out during the school day unless every child in the classroom is to receive an invitation.

Bus Riders: Transportation is provided by First Student, under contract with the school district. All inquiries or

concerns about your child's transportation should be directed to First Student by calling 913-422-8501. Incidents and misconduct occurring on the bus will be communicated by First Student to Starside administration. Student misbehavior on the bus, which impacts the academic day, will be managed on a case-by-case basis by Starside administration.

CARDS: Careful and Rapid Dismissal System: Our families appreciate the dismissal process for the following reasons:

When the weather is bad, it is nice to be able to stay in your car and have all your children together for pick-up. The students stay in the warm/cool/dry and safe environment until you get up to the building to pick them up. The traffic moves along quickly and safely for pedestrians and drivers. Familiar staff supervise the car loop system and can better identify an unsafe or unwanted pick-up situation. 4th and 5th-grade COMET Guard students engage in civic duty and leadership skills as they open doors for riders!

**In order to ensure a safe and quick car loop line, please do your best to practice and help your child memorize his or her Rider Number. When students know their Rider Number it helps our car loop line to be faster and more efficient.*

Summary of Starside's CARDS System:

Every car rider is assigned a "Release Rider Number." These numbers are assigned by the school. Siblings who have the same primary address (as listed on the enrollment form) will have the same number. Siblings that have different primary addresses will have different numbers.

Parents receive Release Rider Cards with their child's number on them. These numbers should be shown to the staff as they enter the school driveway in the West parking lot pick-up line.

We recommend placing the number on your rear-view mirror. This makes it easier for our staff to recognize the number and prepare your students.

All car riders are dismissed from their classroom to go to the assigned location where they will meet with their siblings. Students line up in the cafeteria and will be escorted out to one of six lanes to load their vehicle.

For student and parent safety, all students must enter vehicles in the car loop from the passenger side.

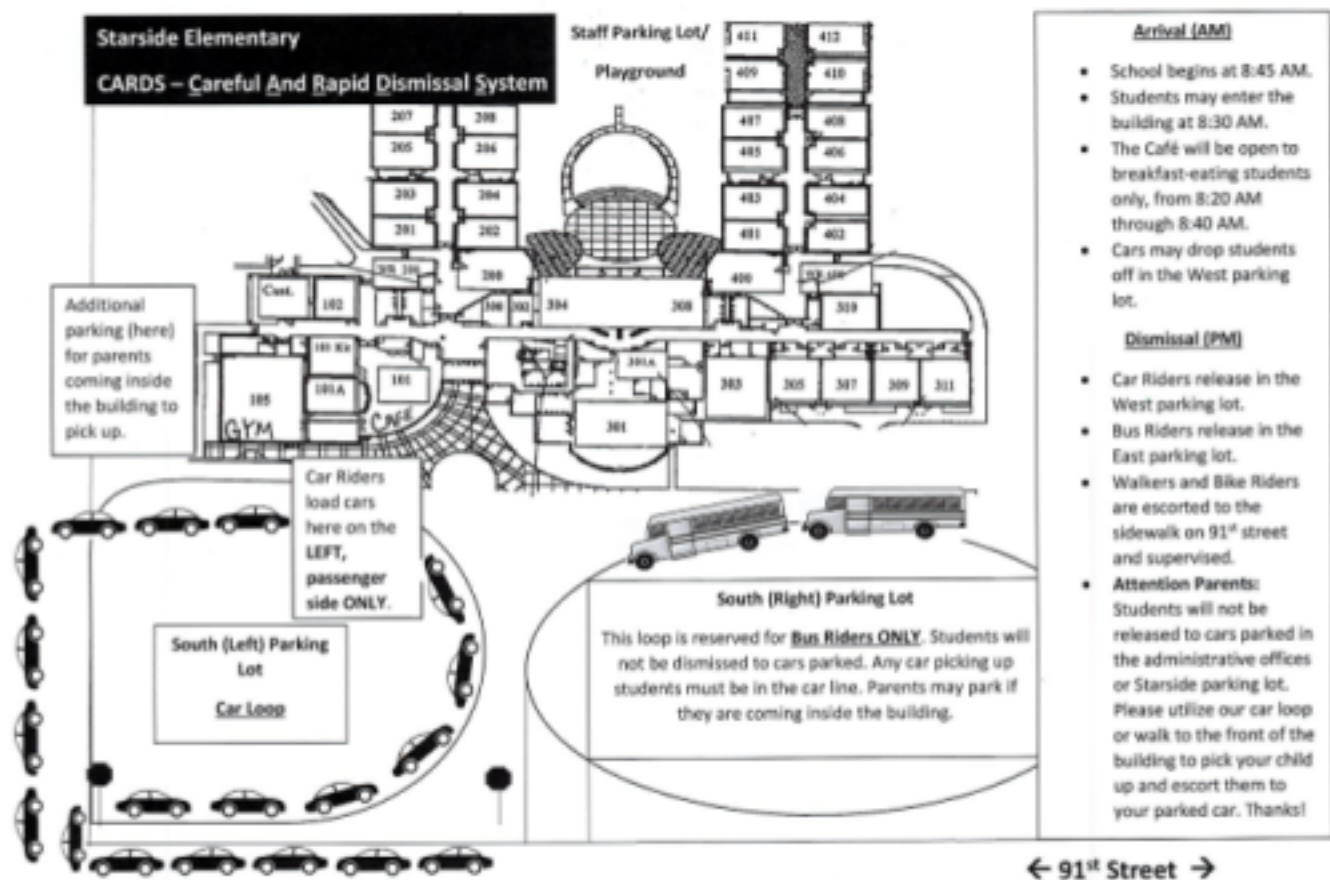
We ask that parents pull forward to the front of the car stalls to place seatbelts on students. We strongly encourage all students to learn how to fasten and unfasten their own seatbelt.

The line of cars moves steadily once the 3:50 PM bell rings and the entire line is often complete in 10 minutes.

If your child has an appointment immediately following school, we advise you come to the office and check your child out at 3:40 PM before the dismissal process begins.

Bus riders will be dismissed through the front doors, by assigned staff, and out to the bus loop. Students will not be dismissed to vehicles parked on 91st Street or in the administrative offices parking lot. Walkers will be escorted by school staff to the sidewalk on 91st street, only after the buses leave our lot.

It is strongly recommended that you select one method to dismiss for your children. If your plans for dismissal change during the day, please contact the Starside office before 3:00 PM, so that we may inform staff of the change.



Cell Phones/& Wi-Fi-enabled Devices: Messages for students may be taken by the office when it is essential for a student to receive information during the school day. Students should not be called from class to visit on the telephone unless it is an emergency. Student after-school arrangements need to be made at home before the school day. Students are now prohibited from using or accessing personal electronic communication devices (cell phones, tablets, smartwatches, wireless earbuds, smart glasses, etc.) during the school day while on district property. Devices must be powered off and inaccessible from the start of school until dismissal. USD 232 is not liable for lost or stolen devices students choose to bring to school. We do not want to see personal electronic devices during the school day. Principals will address violations, with consequences increasing for repeat offenses.

**** Limited Exceptions **** A device may only be used during the school day if it is truly a last resort with no other reasonable option available, and only when:

- Required to implement a student's IEP or 504 plan, or
- Approved in writing by a licensed physician as a medical necessity for the student's health or well-being.

If your student has an IEP, 504 plan, or a documented medical need, please contact the school regarding accommodations.

Civility Policy: Unified School District #232 believes interactions among individuals should be of a positive and productive nature. In accordance with this belief, it is the policy of the school district to treat everyone – fellow employees, students, parents, patrons, visitors, anyone having business with the district – with fairness and respect. The district also expects anyone having interaction(s) with employees of the district treat the employees with professionalism, courtesy, dignity, and respect.

COMET Schedule: In order to ensure students' equal participation of all specials classes (PE, music, library/counselor, art, and computers), a C-O-M-E-T schedule is observed for the school year. For example, students may have PE on Monday one week, but due to a scheduled holiday, PE will be on Wednesday the following week. The COMET Schedule is determined before school starts and communicated to teachers and parents at the start of school. If you are not sure what your student's C-O-M-E-T schedule is, please contact his or her teacher.

Communication:

Email/Phone Calls: It is our goal to return messages within 24 hours. School staff members are not expected to return emails or phone calls after their contract day ends at 4:15 PM and until the following school day. School staff members are not expected to return emails or phone calls on weekends and non-school days.

Starside's Comet Newsletter: Our newsletter is delivered through email, via Skyward Family Access. Any patron who desires additional email addresses to receive the communication should contact our office. The newsletter will include PTA information, upcoming events, and important building/district information. In addition, teachers will send home a newsletter with specific classroom information.

Starside's Website: se.usd232.org

Text blasts: Parents may sign up to receive important information via text message by visiting the USD 232 district website. Receive emergency information, school closings, early dismissals, and administrative reminders on your mobile device.

Conferences: USD 232 observes parent-teacher conferences in the fall and spring. At Starside, we encourage parents/ guardians to attend conferences in the fall, and students are encouraged to attend with their parent/guardian conferences in the spring.

Crisis Plan: In the event of inclement weather or a crisis during the school day which interfere with the normal conduct of school affairs, school may be dismissed only upon the action of the superintendent or designated representative. Procedures regarding emergency school dismissal will be communicated to all students and their parents. In the event of a crisis, procedures outlined in our Crisis Management Plan will be followed.

Dress Code: Clothing worn to school should be appropriate for school and school activities and should not interfere with the learning process. The following identifies articles of clothing which are disruptive and, therefore, inappropriate for the school setting:

- Clothing promoting drugs, smoking, or alcohol.
- Clothing displaying obscene, sexually explicit, suggestive, or ethnically derogatory phrases or pictures.
- Bare midriffs, clothing that exposes undergarments, halter tops, spaghetti straps, short shorts or skirts, excessively cut or torn clothing or muscle shirts (shirts with long armholes).
- Headgear of any kind (hats, bandanas, visors, sunglasses and hoods), except for specially announced school events.

E-Bikes and Electronic Scooters: To help ensure the safety of all students and staff:

- E-bikes and electronic scooters may not be ridden on school grounds. Riders must dismount and walk them on sidewalks until they have exited school property.
- Electronic scooters may not be brought inside the school building.
- Bicycles and scooters should be secured with a personal lock and stored at the designated bike racks.
- Starside Elementary is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged bicycles or scooters.
- The school will not provide charging for electronic scooters or store them indoors during inclement weather.

***E-bikes, recreational scooters, motorized vehicles, and golf carts are prohibited from school playgrounds and athletic fields. This is to protect the safety of all individuals as well as to protect school property from damages that are expensive and time-consuming to address.**

Health/Wellness: Students with the following health condition(s) shall be excluded from school:

**Students will be re-admitted after being fever-free or symptom-free for 24 hours. Call the school nurse for specific readmission guidelines.*

- Oral temperature of 100 degrees F or higher
- Red, watery, and draining eye(s)
- Skin lesions (i.e. impetigo, ringworm, and scabies) until under treatment
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea (i.e. two or more loose stools per day for two days)
- Communicable disease
- Live lice

Medication:

All medications will be kept in the health office in a locked cabinet.

A limited supply of basic OTC medications are available for symptoms that arise at school.

The student shall meet all requirements of this policy. Parents/guardians shall submit a written statement from the student's health care provider with a required signature stating:

- The name and purpose of the medication
- The prescribed dosage and administration directions (i.e. time, route, frequency)
- The length of time for which the medication is prescribed

Self-Administered Medication: An additional form must be completed – see school nurse for form.

The statement shall also show the student has been instructed on self-administration of the medication and is authorized to do so in school.

Students should carry only a day's supply of medication in the original container.

A student should not give medication to another student.

An annual review of parental authorization for the self-administration of medication may be required.

USD 232 and its employees and agents, which authorize the self-administration of medication in compliance with the provisions of this policy, shall not be liable in any action for any injury resulting from the self administration of medication, and written notification in this regard is provided to the parents/guardians.

Allergies: If your student has an allergy that requires an Epi-pen, it is recommended that one be kept at school. All teachers are trained to administer an Epi-pen. Parents in your student's grade level will be informed of the allergy for snack/party purposes.

Immunizations: Immunization records or written validation of medical or religious exemption must be submitted to our school nurse, prior to the first day of school, and are kept on file in the nurse's office.

Non-Immunized Student Exclusion Policy: Non-immunized students, including those with a religious, medical, or other statutory exemption, will be excluded from attending school during an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease in their attendance building. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis by a licensed employee. Recommendations from a licensed physician and/or local health department official shall determine

the duration of exclusion from school.

Lunchroom Visitors: Parents and guardians are welcome to join their student for lunch. Visitors who want to order a school lunch must call the school before 9:00 AM to ensure a lunch is ordered. Students must sit with their visitor in the overflow section and may invite one friend to join them. We kindly ask visitors not to approach teachers with questions or concerns during lunch, to keep lunchroom traffic flowing and allow teachers enough time to eat.

Parent-Teacher Association (PTA): Our primary objective as a PTA is to provide our schools with funds, programs, resources, and services that will enrich and maximize the education of every child. To meet this important objective and afford services that are not covered by our school budgets, we must fundraise.

Some of the PTA Sponsored Events and Fundraisers are below:

General PTA Meetings: PTA hosts four General PTA Meetings per school year, one per quarter. Parent/guardian attendance is encouraged!

Walk-A-Thon (WAT): Our primary fundraiser for the year. The WAT takes place at the beginning of the year and during the school day. Parents/guardians/family members are encouraged to attend/participate by walking laps with their student(s).

Skate Parties: Usually two per year. Dates vary each year.

Spirit Wear Orders: Will be announced and promoted each year.

Restaurant Fundraiser Nights: Multiple per year. Dates vary each year.

Glow Dance Party: Kids learn dances prior to the event and dance with their glow attire on party day. This takes place during the regular school day during specials class times. No OUTSIDE Glow Items

Fine Arts Fair- A family fun event which takes place in the spring during the evening. Families are encouraged to attend. Lots of activities such as bingo, photo booths and more.

Room Parties: The Fall and Valentine's Parties are planned by room parents and donations for parties are provided by classroom parents. PTA room parents attend and help facilitate the parties along with classroom teachers. Ask your room parent for how to get involved.

Fall Party

Time and day to be determined each year- Parade

Time and day to be determined each year- Parties

**Costumes may not depict blood, gore, weapons, or violence. Masks may accompany costumes but no face paint, please.*

Winter Movie Event

Times vary based on length of school day and classroom preference.

**Starside's Winter Movie Event takes place in classrooms and does not require parents or PTA room parent attendance. If you would like to send refreshments, please contact your Room Party Facilitator.*

Valentine's Party

Time and day to be determined each year - Parties

Parking: Parking is available to visitors in our front parking lots and our West lot during the school day. When both parking lots are full, visitors are encouraged to park on the North side of 91st street, as well as within the Administrative Offices parking lot to the East of our building. For student safety, parking and driving in our back parking lot/playground area are strictly prohibited during the school day.

Personal Belongings/Lost and Found: Students are responsible for personal belongings. Parents and students are encouraged to check the lost and found at any time. **Unclaimed items will be donated to a charitable organization at the end of each semester.** We ask that students not bring valuables, toys, electronic games, collector cards, or other such items to school unless given permission by the teacher for a specified purpose.

Safe Schools: Providing a positive and safe learning environment for all is important in USD 232. This requires teamwork from school staff, parents/guardians, students, and the Board of Education. The Board expects school staff to maintain a suitable learning environment. Developmentally appropriate procedures and programs help to foster a positive and safe learning environment.

Student and Family Handbook: With an emphasis on providing a safe and orderly learning environment in our schools, the Board of Education has adopted a Student and Family Handbook, including a Student Code of Conduct. These guidelines are designed to encourage student responsibility, respect for the rights of others, and to ensure the safe and orderly operation of all District schools. A copy of the Student and Family Handbook is located on the USD 232 website. Copies are also available in the school office.

Cyber Safety: USD 232 has developed guidelines for cyber safety and acceptable use of technology (AUP). Students and parents must sign a new AUP each year during enrollment in order to use district-approved technology. Signed copies are kept on file in the school office. You may request a copy from the school office or you may access the AUP from the district website.

Weapons Policy: With an emphasis on a safe school environment for all students, USD 232 officials report all crimes committed on school property to appropriate local law enforcement agencies. Specific examples of reportable incidents include but shall not be limited to possession of weapons, controlled substances (drug/alcohol), destruction of property, theft, fighting, intimidation and/or harassment, and other such matters involving criminal activity. Collaborative and cooperative procedures have been developed with the Johnson County Sheriff's Department and other law enforcement agencies to support safe schools in USD 232.

Snack/Drinks: Unless a medical need requires and is on file with our health office, snacks are permitted on a teacher-by teacher basis. Snacks must be healthy in nature and must follow classroom allergy requirements. For example, if a student has a nut allergy, all students in the classroom must not bring snacks which contain nuts. Snacks must not be a distraction to the academic day, thus please only send snacks your student can open individually and snacks that do not require utensils. Here are some recommended healthy snack options:

Fruits: grapes, apple slices, dried fruit

Granola Bars: cereal bars, Lara Bars, Cliff Bars, Luna Bars

Vegetables: carrots, celery, cucumbers, green peppers

Cheese: string cheese, Babybell Cheese

Cereal (no sugar added): Cheerios, Honey Nut Cheerios

Other snacks: pretzels, Goldfish, crackers

Drinks at School: Students are encouraged to bring clear, water-based beverages, such as water, to school to support hydration throughout the day. Energy drinks and caffeinated beverages are not permitted at school.

Social Media:

A new Kansas law (House Bill 2299) now requires school districts to use only Board-of-Education-approved Social Media accounts for school-related communication, and to keep that communication one-way with news, event reminders, and celebrating achievements. School employees are prohibited by law from sending students private or direct messages through social media.

This is to protect both students and staff.

- Official school and district social media accounts will continue sharing one-way only news, photos, and updates about programs and events. We are currently conducting a review of all school social media accounts.

- Staff are prohibited by law from privately messaging students through social media. All social media will be one-way communication (no replying to comments).

- Staff are prohibited from using personal phones or personal accounts to text or message students directly.

- Employees can only use board-approved platforms for communication, like district email, Canvas, Bound, and Hudl (list is not exhaustive). Consumer apps like GroupMe, Remind, TeamSnap, etc., are not compliant with Kansas law.

Weather/Recess: In accordance with our commitment to student safety, and recognizing the impact extreme temperature can have on student health and wellness, USD 232 has established the following temperature guidelines for outdoor recess/activities:

Heat Index Considerations:

Full recess (and other outdoor activities) permitted when heat index temperature is at (or below) 94 degrees Fahrenheit and when water is available for students on the playground, or a process is in place by which students (upon request) may enter the building for water breaks.

Fresh air breaks, of not more than 10 minutes, are permissible (according to individual teacher discretion and administrative consultation) when the heat index temperature is between 95 and 99 degrees Fahrenheit and when water is available for students on the playground, or a process is in place by which students (upon request) may enter the building for water breaks.

Wind Chill Considerations:

Full recess (and other outdoor activities) permitted when wind chill temperature is at (or above) 21 degrees Fahrenheit and participating students are considered by the individual teacher to be appropriately dressed.

Fresh air breaks, of no more than 10 minutes, are permissible (according to individual teacher discretion and administrative consultation) when wind chill temperature is between 11 and 20 degrees Fahrenheit and

participating students are considered by the individual teacher to be appropriately dressed.

Appropriate Dress for Recess:

Students should wear comfortable, school-appropriate clothing and shoes that allow them to safely participate in outdoor activities. On cold, rainy, or hot days, please send students prepared for the weather, including coats, jackets, hats, or other appropriate items as needed.

Individual classroom teachers may deem what is appropriate dress for outdoor recess. When the weather becomes cold, typically between 40 and 50 degrees Fahrenheit or below, students should have a warm jacket or winter coat to wear to recess. Additionally, students should be wearing pants and not shorts in order to participate during outdoor recess. Students who do not have the appropriate dress for outdoor recess may be asked to remain inside and supervised by another certified staff member, or in the front office.

Gloves, hats, and scarves are permitted and suggested for students to wear during outdoor recess when the weather is cold. If your student is in need of a winter coat or gloves, please let his or her teacher know. Starside has a supply of gently used winter coats and gloves to give to students in need.

Students who sporadically forget their winter coat may visit the nurse's office to borrow a "community coat." To encourage responsibility, students who habitually forget their winter coats may be asked by the individual classroom teacher to remain indoors during outdoor recess.

Other Recess Expectations:

It is understood students may need to miss out on recess, on occasion, in order to complete classroom assignments. This may occur if sufficient time was given but wasted, refused by the student, or as a consequence of student behavior.

Playground rules will be reviewed with students and revised, when necessary, by those who supervise the playground. The acceptable rules will be taught to the students at the beginning of the school year and as needed, so that expectations are clear.