

Zach Elementary



Parent Handbook

Zach Elementary School
3715 Kechter Road
Fort Collins, CO 80528
Main Phone Number: (970) 488-5100
Attendance Line: (970) 488-5105
Fax Number: (970) 488-5106

Introduction

Our school motto, "Reaching high...reaching out!" underscores our belief that we (parents, staff, and students) will work together to provide the highest quality school and will strive to help all students be successful.

Zach Elementary Namesakes

Mascot: Zephyrosaurus Dinosaur

Colors: Green/Gold

School Hours:

9:00 a.m. – 3:38 p.m. – All Day Kindergarten, First through Fifth Grade

9:00 a.m. – 12:05 p.m. – A.M. Kindergarten

12:30 – 3:38 p.m. – P.M. Kindergarten

There will be no supervision on the playground prior to 8:45 a.m.

School will begin promptly at 9:00 a.m. In order to have students prepared and ready for instruction, the first bell will ring at 8:55 a.m. to bring students into the school and allow them the time needed to get organized to begin instruction. Students who are not in their classroom and ready for instruction by 9:00 a.m. will be counted as tardy.

Zach Elementary Namesakes

Grace and Robert Zach began English teaching careers the fall of 1950 in Fort Collins. As classroom teachers and as department chairs, they were

curriculum builders, dedicated to implementing courses that value both innovative creativity and strong course content—creative writing, paperback books as classroom libraries, humanities classes, filmmaker in the schools—a lengthening list. It was their privilege to help an enviable number of students discover or expand diverse inter-disciplinary talents. Grace coached FCHS speech and debate winners in state and national competition and helped PHS students excel in critical analysis and writing skills needed to earn inter-disciplinary Advanced Placement college and university credits. During his 20 years at FCHS Bob's creative writing classes and student publications inspired award-winning young journalists, poets, writers, and filmmakers who continued to expand that talent with excellence in their adult careers. As Poudre School District Language Arts Coordinator, Bob encouraged and mentored innovative excellence in teaching K-12. Composition Aids were hired to strengthen and expand student writing skills district-wide; outreach and cooperation with CSU faculty members brought classes and enrichment workshops for teachers; similar involvement with the Colorado Council on the Arts and Humanities brought poets, artists, and musicians into classrooms and district-wide presentations. With special funding grants, a RMHS Humanities and Technology program added a science teacher to the humanities team; a mentoring program name "Compose" linked student writers with public school teachers, university faculty, and community members. Bob added imaginative innovative approaches to solid academic excellence. And both Grace and Bob experienced the delight of finding second-generation students sitting in their classrooms—a rewarding capstone to rewarding careers.

Core Knowledge Curriculum

Knowledge builds on knowledge. Children learn new knowledge by building on what they already know. Only a school system that clearly defines the knowledge and skills required to participate in each successive grade can be excellent and fair for all students. For this reason, the Core Knowledge Sequence provides a clear outline of content to be learned grade by grade.

Attendance Policy and Procedures

Zach Elementary's State Accountability goal is to have a yearly average attendance rate of 95% or better. **In order to achieve the 95% attendance rate, students should not miss more than eight days per school.** We certainly would like students to strive for the best possible attendance rate. (Based on 184 school days in the 2008-2009 school year.) At the end of the school year, student's who have achieved this goal will receive an attendance certificate. Students with perfect attendance will receive a perfect attendance certificate.

Parents need to call each morning when their child is absent or tardy. This can be done by leaving a message on the 24 hours attendance line or by sending a note with another student. If you don't contact Zach Elementary concerning an absent or tardy, the office clerk will contact you! This is for the safety of the child.

The school principal will monitor absences throughout the school year. A letter of concern will be sent to the parents of the student who has a pattern of frequent absences or tardiness. If absenteeism or tardiness continues following two letters of concern, the district attendance officer will be contacted for assistance in the matter. The maximum number of absences a student may incur before judicial proceedings are initiated to enforce compulsory attendance is 15 days in a school year.

If a student is absent more than ten consecutive days due to travel, the student will be dropped from the school's enrollment. It will be the responsibility of the parent to provide instruction during the absence. Parents may check out materials from Zach Elementary by leaving a deposit to cover the costs of the books if they are not returned or damaged.

Dress Code

Students are expected to dress appropriately for all school activities. The following standards are in effect at Zach Elementary:

- A reasonable cleanliness of person and wearing apparel is expected as a matter of health and aesthetics.
- It is a state law that shoes, sandals, or boots must be worn in all public buildings.
- Any clothing advertising or promoting the use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, obscenity, violence, and/or disrespect will not be worn.
- Girls or boys in the building, except for religious purposes, going to recess, and/or going to lunch, will wear no hats.
- All shorts, shirts, pants and skirts must be of reasonable length, size, and appearance.
- Sagging of pants and/or wearing of chains on pants will not be allowed.
- All shirts must connect with skirts, pants, and shorts. Tummies may not be exposed through midriffs, open-mesh, or see through clothing.
- Any dress that is disruptive to the educational process will not be allowed.

Communications

- School newsletters and other important school information will be sent home on Fridays through a Friday folder.
- Only non-profit and school sponsored extracurricular or fundraising information will be sent home with students.
- All stranger danger notes to parents must be sent home the day in which the teacher receives them.
- Students in third through sixth grade will learn organizational skills and responsibility through the use of daily planners.
- If you need to communicate with a teacher, it may be necessary to leave a phone message. Many conferences, staff meetings, and committee meetings are held before and after school. The time before school is busy with preparation for the day, so please be patient if a staff member does not return your phone call immediately.

School Discipline Plan

Effective schools have a safe and orderly environment. Our environment at Zach Elementary will support teaching and learning.

The classroom teachers will develop their own management system that fits the needs of their students and their teaching style. This information will be shared with parents at the beginning of the school year. Parents should be aware of these expectations and expect to become involved when a pattern of inappropriate behavior exists.

- Violations that would constitute an office referral:
 1. Weapons (Carrying, intent to cause injury, or intimidation with weapon. Firearm, knife, or other object, which is capable of producing death or serious bodily harm.)
 2. Assault (Fighting...may or may not result in physical injury.)
 3. Assault to an adult.
 4. Possession, use or sale of drugs.
 5. Severely disruptive and dangerous behavior that infringes on the educational rights of others.
 6. Overt gang activity – Wearing, making gestures that symbolize gang membership or engaging in any gang related activities.
 7. Improper behavior at extra-curricular events such as school sponsored evening events, before and after school enrichment activities, etc.
 8. Throwing objects in or out of school that can cause bodily injury or damage to property including snowballs.
 9. Stealing or Vandalism (Includes attempting to steal private or

school property, causing damage to such property.)

10. Defiance of School Authority (Open, willful or continued disobedience; use of profanity, vulgarity, obscenities, rudeness or insults toward staff members.)

11. Harassment/Discrimination (Engaging in verbal abuse, i.e. name calling, threatening to harm on the basis of ethnicity, religion, culture, national origin, gender, or handicapping disability.)

Consequences:

When an office referral has been made and consequences are initiated, parents will be contacted. Consequences will be based on the seriousness of the behavior.

- Warning
- Loss of Recesses
- School Service (Picking up trash on school property, washing tables during lunch, etc.)
- In School Suspension
- Out of School Suspension

School Lunches

Students can purchase a school lunch or bring a lunch from home. The menu for school lunches will be sent home monthly. School lunches can be purchased by the day or the week. Students who bring their lunches may purchase milk or juice. Parents/guardians are encouraged to have lunch with their child at school. If they would like to purchase a school lunch, they must order lunch through the school office by 9:00 a.m.

Free/reduced lunch applications will be sent home with each student the first day of school and will be available upon request. Families with children attending more than one school in Poudre School District must fill out separate application forms. The forms must be filled out every year.

Homework

Homework provides extra practice of skills and reinforcement of what has been taught at school. Parents are encouraged to work with their children at home to practice skills taught at school.

Teachers at each grade will determine the type of homework assignments that are developmentally appropriate for their grade level. Classroom teachers will inform parents of their homework expectations at the beginning of the school year. The amount of time spend on homework will

increase as children move up in grades. Home reading will be an expectation nightly at every grade level.

Average Amount of Homework Per Night

Kindergarten: 20 minutes

First Grade: 25 minutes

Second Grade: 35 minutes

Third Grade: 40 minutes

Fourth Grade: 45 minutes

Fifth Grade: 50 minutes

Sixth Grade: 60 minutes

*These averages are based on a typical student. Well-organized students may not need to spend as much time on homework as the averages stated in the chart above.

In the case of illness make-up work for students will be given to the child when they return to school. For an extended illness, please check with the child's teacher

Immunization Records

In compliance with the state law, all children in Colorado schools must have a complete up-to-date immunization record on file in the school office.

Student Records

It is essential to keep the following student information up-to-date in the case of illness or emergency:

- Work and home telephone numbers of parent/guardian.
- Name and number of an emergency contact person.
- Name and phone number of family doctor.
- Any court order (restraining or custody).

Medication

Long-term medications must be in the original bottle and accompanied by written permission from the physician and the parent/guardian. A form for this is available in the school office.

Short-term prescription medication (10 days or less) must be in the original container and accompanied by a note signed and dated by the parent/guardian.

Over the counter medications such as cough drops, Tylenol. etc. whether

long-term or short-term, require a permission slip signed by a physician and parent/guardian and must be in the container in which they were purchased.

All medications must be kept in a locked cabinet in the school health office. Students may not keep medications in their lunchboxes, desks, coats, etc. and administer them to themselves.

These procedures are important for safeguarding all students against the possibility of improper or accidental ingesting of drugs.

Recess

Recess will be held every day unless the temperature or wind-chill is below 15 degrees Fahrenheit. If your child is well enough to attend school, he or she is well enough to go outside for recess.

School Insurance

Accident and dental insurance is made available by Poudre School District at a cost. The student is covered the moment the premium is paid. The school district provides the insurance services and receives no part of the money.

Leaving the School During School Hours

Parents must check a student in and out of school during school hours in the school office. If someone other than parents/guardians will be picking up a child, a signed and dated note will be needed to support this.

Students who go home for lunch regularly must bring a signed note which will kept on file in the office. They are expected to sign out before they leave school for lunch and sign in when they return to the school following lunch.

Clothing

A lost and found container will be in the school lunchroom. Lost and found items not claimed at the end of each month will be donated to good will.

If an item has a child's name on it, it will be returned to the child. Be sure to mark all coats, lunchboxes, sweaters, etc.!!!

School Property

Students will be expected to pay for any damage to school property as a result of neglect or abuse. Students will be expected to pay for lost or damaged books and/or materials.

Bicycles, Skateboards and Roller Blades

All bicycles, skateboards, and roller blades are to be walked or carried onto school property. Bicycles are to be parked in the bike racks provided by the school and are off limits until school end for the day. The school cannot be responsible for stolen bikes, so please have your child lock their bike.

Treats

There are three times a year when parties are organized for school-wide participation. These are Halloween, Winter Celebration, and Valentine's Day. If a student wishes to celebrate his/her birthday with treats, the child's teacher needs to be contacted at least on day in advance. All treats for these events must be purchased! No homemade food will be permitted to be shared with other students.

Food in Rooms

The following food/beverages will not be allowed at any time:

- Orange, grape, or cherry drink.
- Gum

Invitations

If your child is going to bring invitations for a party to be held at their home, he/she may bring them to school to distribute only if all children in his/her class are invited. Again, all treats must be purchased. No homemade food will be permitted to be shared with other students.

Equipment

Some equipment for playground use will be offered by the school. Equipment brought by students should be clearly labeled with their name. Students will be responsible for their own equipment.

Valuables

Students should not bring large quantities of money or valuables to school.

School Closure

All emergency dismissals for Poudre Schools will be handled through the Superintendent's office. All emergency dismissals will be announced on local radio and TV stations.

If emergency closing of school occurs during the school day, the Zach staff will follow the emergency-closing plan submitted by parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year.

Bus Passes

A student can make a request to ride a bus home from school with another student. The request must be made in writing by the child's parents and turned into the school office before noon to be processed by the end of the school day.

Headphones, CD or Tape Players, Cell Phones, and Electronic Games

Headphones, CD or tape players, cell phones, and electronic games will not be allowed at school.

Pets at School

For the health and safety of students, **pets will not be allowed on school property or in the school** unless special permission by the school principal is granted. There are children who have allergies to fur bearing animals

Student Visitation

Students not enrolled at Zach Elementary will be allowed to visit student relatives and friends only during lunch and lunch recess.

Use of Drug Dogs

Please be informed that drug dogs may be used if there is reason to believe that drugs are in our school or on our school property.

Child Abuse and Neglect

All public school employees are required under Colorado law to report child abuse or neglect to the county department of social services or to a local law enforcement authority. This duty occurs when the employee has reasonable cause to know that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or the employee has observed circumstances or conditions that would reasonably lead to abuse or neglect. Upon such report, an investigation shall occur. The employee making the report is not allowed at anytime to contact parents/guardians about the report. Employees making the reports in good faith shall not have any civil or criminal liability, nor shall their employment be affected.

Parent Volunteers

All parent or community volunteers are required to log their time in a notebook kept by the school office each time they volunteer.

Spanish Instruction

Language study is best begun in kindergarten and continued without

interruption through grade 12 and beyond. Research confirms that children easily and naturally acquire language at an early age.

Language study at the elementary school level is one that should enrich and inspire the acquisition of world language(s). The program should be both exploratory and instructional-one that provides an excellent balance between both. Such a program should be both vertically and horizontally articulated with age-appropriate learning and developmental levels in mind. Furthermore, we hope that such a program will provide a "springboard" for further study at the secondary level.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

Applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, person with disabilities, employees, and all unions or professional organization holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the Poudre School District are hereby notified that this school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nation origin, sex age, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities.