

Riffenburgh Elementary School  
"HOME OF THE ROADRUNNERS"

2011-2012 Student and  
Parent Handbook

**PSD Web Site** [www.psdschools.org](http://www.psdschools.org)

Riffenburgh Web Site [www.psdschools.org/schools/riffenburgh/](http://www.psdschools.org/schools/riffenburgh/)

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**Marc Ryby**  
**Principal**

# Welcome

Dear Riffenburgh Students and Parents,

On behalf of the staff at Riffenburgh Elementary School, we are excited to welcome you to the upcoming school year. Our goal at Riffenburgh is to provide a quality comprehensive educational program that will encourage students to attain their highest possible achievement level while recognizing and respecting their needs as individuals. We strive to help each child to develop academic and social skills that will contribute to their future successes and enjoyment of life.

As we begin the 2011-12 school year, several major improvement projects have been completed over the summer. Riffenburgh's roof has been replaced as part of preventative maintenance, and building insulation has been upgraded substantially. Our fire alarm security system has been replaced with a new digital system. These projects have been financed through the November passage of Poudre School District's Mill and Bond Override by voters in the community. We are also receiving strategic replacement of our Technology equipment as a result of the Bond initiative. The addition of new computers, interactive white boards, and professional development for teachers will increase our ability to help Riffenburgh students use and enjoy technology as part of their learning and preparation for the future.

We are very pleased that we have been able to add several positions to our staffing plan for the upcoming year, in addition to hiring new teachers for the retirements in 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> grades and Physical Education. Paraprofessionals have been hired to support classroom instruction and interventions, to teach Spanish, and assist our Literacy and Media programs. We also have added part-time coordinators for our International Baccalaureate initiative and our Intervention/Enrichment efforts. The growth in our staff has occurred because of our increased enrollment and resources from the Mill override approval in November. We are excited about having additional help for Riffenburgh students and are committed to the effective use of these resources to meet our goal of all students making at least a year's growth during 2011-12. We continue to move forward with our IB initiative, which includes implementation of three thematic units in all grades, expansion of inquiry-based instruction and continuing training for all staff members. We anticipate further integration with our Pre-K classrooms and focus on implementing the revised Colorado standards in all subject areas.

The Riffenburgh Student/Parent Handbook is intended to make useful information available to families and may answer questions that come up during the year. By sharing expectations we hope to be able to work closely with parents to support the growth of your children. Please do not hesitate to call us when there are situations where you need additional information or clarification of material in this handbook. Effective schools are characterized by strong partnerships between school and home to help children become successful. We look forward to your involvement and support as we enjoy the opportunity to work with your children!

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### **Special Education and Itinerant Teachers**

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## Absences and Tardies

When a child is absent from school for illness, doctor appointments, or any other reason, parents are asked to call the school before 8:25 a.m. **on each day of a child's absence.** This procedure for reporting daily student absences exists to help insure the safety of your child. **Please call the attendance line, 488-7936, available 24 hours a day.** When prompted, give your name, your child's name, and reason for absence. Students arriving after 8:40 a.m. are tardy, and **must** check-in at the office before going to class.

The success of this procedure rests with parent initiating the phone call to school. For each student who is absent, but not accounted for, we will attempt to contact parents by phone. **This requires the school to have accurate home and work phone numbers at all times.** Please inform the school office of any necessary updates on home or work phone numbers.

When at all possible, visits to the dentist, doctor, orthodontist, etc. should be scheduled at times other than school hours. Should it be necessary to take your child from school during school hours, we request that you come to the office and sign the student out personally. **Students cannot be checked out on their own-they must have a designated person from their pick-up list sign them out.**

Refer to district policy "Compulsory Attendance Ages (JEA), Student Absences and Excuses (JH) and Truancy (JHB)" for further information.

## Arrival and Departure Times

Children should arrive in time for the beginning of school each morning, which is 8:45 a.m. **Unless students are having breakfast, which opens at 8:20 a.m., there is no supervision on the playground before 8:35 and students should not arrive on campus before that time.**

School is dismissed at 3:28 and upon departure, children are expected to go directly home. **It is important to pick your child up promptly. There is no supervision after 3:45 and students remaining will be taken to the office and parents contacted.** Exceptions to that are students who will be staying after school by request of the teacher. In these situations parents will be contacted so they are aware their child is staying after school. Students who need to be dropped off earlier or need to stay later should contact *BASEcamp* 266-1734.

### ***Daily K-5 Student Schedule***

First bell	8:45 a.m.
Tardy Bell	8:50 a.m.
Morning Kindergarten	8:45 a.m. to 11:40 a.m.
Student dismissal	3:28 p.m.

### ***Early Childhood Schedule***

	<i>Monday-Thursday</i>
Morning pre-school	8:40-11:25
Afternoon pre-school	12:05-3:40

## Attendance

We are committed to making school an important and interesting learning environment for your child. Please help us to maximize your child's academic potential by having them at school as much as possible. One of our school goals this year is to have 95% rate of attendance. If a child misses more than 9 days of school in a year their attendance falls below 95%. While we discourage you from taking vacations during school days, we understand and support students who miss school because of serious/contagious illnesses, accidents or emergencies. Absences for these reasons are excusable and, in most cases, is not a violation of the law. We also want to encourage students to be on time for school. Every 3 tardies a child has is considered to have one absence. If we are aware of a potential attendance/tardiness problem, we will follow these steps:

1. A first attendance/tardiness letter will be sent to the parents and a copy to the district attendance officer.
2. Continued attendance/tardiness problems will result in a second letter sent to the parents and the district attendance officer.
3. After 15 absences, the Truancy Officer will take over the case and notify parents of possible legal action according to the State school attendance law. Absences greater than 15 will require a doctor's excuse or it will be recorded as unexcused.

**Also it is very important that students be at school on student count days, September 26, 2011 through October 7, 2011.**

Refer to district policy "Student Attendance/Truancy (JH/JHB)" for further information.

## Back-to-School Night

Please join us for this important event. You will be introduced to your child's teacher and learn about the plans for this exciting school year. **Due primarily to space restriction and the nature of the presentations, we ask that children NOT attend Back-to-School Night.**

Kindergarten	August 16 at 7:00 p.m. in the Media Center
1 <sup>st</sup> grade	August 23 at 6:30 p.m. in the Media Center
5 <sup>th</sup> grade	August 25 at 6:30 p.m. in the Media Center
2 <sup>nd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> grade	September 1 at 6:30 p.m. in the cafeteria

## B.A.S.E Camp

Riffenburgh will once again be hosting B.A.S.E Camp, a before and/or after school childcare and enrichment program. B.A.S.E. camp provides a safe, nurturing, and structured environment for your child. It is located in the cafeteria from 6:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. and in the afternoon 3:28 p.m.- 6:00p.m. Fees are based on a sliding scale. Please call B.A.S.E. Camp directly at 266-1734 to register and for more detailed information.

## Bicycle Safety Rules

All students may ride bicycles to and from school. We strongly recommend that students wear helmets when riding bicycles to and from school. Students are highly discouraged from riding their bicycles to school on icy and snowy days. Upon arrival at school, please make sure that your child has an adequate lock for his/her bike.

**Bicycles are not to be ridden on the playground, blacktop, or sidewalk.** The immediate area around the bike racks is off limits to students during the school day. The school is not responsible for bikes that are vandalized or stolen.

Should a student be found to be in violation of these rules a Riffenburgh staff member will give him one warning. A teacher will communicate this warning to the parents also. Should a second infraction occur, the child would not be permitted to ride a bicycle to school for the remainder of that month.

Students riding skateboards, scooters, or roller blades must follow the same rules as those riding bicycles. Skateboards and roller blades should be stored in a location designated by each unit. Scooters should be locked in the bike racks. Again, we strongly recommend that students wear helmets when riding bicycles, skateboards, scooters or roller blades to and from school.

## Busing

The privilege of riding a school bus is contingent upon a student's good behavior and observance of established regulations for student conduct at bus stops and when using bus services.

If a student needs a bus pass to ride home with another student, the parent needs to send a note to school. **The student will bring the note to the office before school begins, not at dismissal,** to obtain a bus pass.

Refer to district policy "Student Conduct on School Buses (EEAEC and EEAEC-R) for further information.

## Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Students are **not** permitted to bring any electronic devices such as video games, CD players, etc., to school. These items are easily lost or damaged and are not needed during instructional activities.

Poudre School District currently has a district-wide policy that regulates student possession on use of personal communication devices (PCDs) at school. A PCD is defined to include all cell phones, pagers, personal digital assistants, cameras, audio/video recorders, and other hand held electronic communication and data storage devices.

Students may possess and use PCDs at school, **EXCEPT** under the following circumstances:

1. Students shall not use PCDs at any time they are in class or participating in or attending education-related activities.

2. Students shall keep PCDs out of sight at all times they are in class or participating in or attending education-related activities.
3. Students shall keep PCDs turned off or dormant at all times they are in class or participating in or attending education-related activities. In regards to "dormant" means elimination of all vibration alerts, alarms, ring tones, flashes, and other means of notification of incoming calls or messages.
4. Students shall not use PCDs when they are not in class or when they are not otherwise participating in or attending education-related activities, such as during recess and lunch.

While we do not encourage students to bring cell phones to school, we ask for your cooperation in seeing that cell phones are used only before and after school for contact with a parent/guardian. During school hours they must be kept in backpacks and turned **off**. The student and guardian must take full responsibility for bringing this expensive item to school.

## Communication

We feel that communication is very important to the success of our program. We would like to keep you highly informed, involved and a part of the education of your child. Please go to the PSD website at [www.psdschools.org/riffenburgh](http://www.psdschools.org/riffenburgh) and sign up for email alerts. Many communications will go home via email to help conserve resources.

Because we realize this close communication cannot happen by any single method, many attempts and opportunities are available. Monthly newsletters, report cards, conferences, Friday folders, and Riffenburgh's website are a few means by which we hope to meet this challenge. Please let us know if there is another form of communication we can employ to reach parents.

## Community Use of District Property

Please be aware of the following Poudre School District policy:

Community Use of District-Owned Property (KF & KF-R) (Elementary, Junior High, High School).

- ❖ District-owned property is available for use for community groups.
- ❖ It is governed by district policy (community Use of District-Owned Property (KF & KF\_R)
- ❖ Please contact Customer Service at 490-3333 for information visit the district website ([www.psdschools.org](http://www.psdschools.org)) and search for "Information About Use of District Property" to obtain the customer service website.

## Computer Access

**PSD excited to offer computer access at Walmart.** You can now access PSD information at a computer in the Walmart SuperCenter, 1250 E. Magnolia, Fort Collins.

The PSD computer, which is available during regular Walmart business hours, gives you access to the PSD website that includes the latest district news and events, as well as information about school registration, bussing, calendars and district policies. You also have access to specific information about your child through the Parent Portal on the PSD website.

Please know that this computer does not have access to outside email or Internet sites beyond the PSD website.

PSD thanks the Walmart SuperCenter for partnering with the district on this project.

## Computer Use

At the beginning of each school year and as student enroll throughout the year, parents are asked to read and sign "Parent Non-Permission Form". This notice gives parents an opportunity to choose for their student to NOT have supervised email and internet access. Please talk with your students about the responsibilities that come with this access.

Refer to district policy "Student Access to Network Information Resources (IJNDA and IJNDA-R)

## Conferences/Reporting System

The parent-teacher conference is a basic part of our reporting system for student progress.

**Formal parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for October 20 and 21, 2011.** In addition to this time, Riffenburgh parents will be scheduled for conference on a "needs" basis throughout the school year. Telephone contacts also allow parents and teachers to exchange information and truly work together toward the education of the child. In addition, each teacher's e-mail address is included in the front of this handbook. We encourage use of this convenient form of communication.

## Curriculum

Riffenburgh follows Poudre School District's standards-based curriculum that specifies goals and expectations. Progress is assessed in each grade in reading and language arts, math, science, and social studies. Specialists in the areas of art, music, P.E., counseling and technology instruction work in collaboration with classroom teachers to provide well-rounded curriculum for the whole child.

Literacy Lab is available to qualified children K-3. In addition, Riffenburgh offers special education programs for learning and emotionally disabled children.

## Discipline Philosophy

The discipline philosophy at Riffenburgh Elementary School is intended to help all students act responsibly and respectfully toward others in our school community. There are several elements related to student behavior expectations at Riffenburgh. The first is Poudre School District's Student Rights and Code of Conduct, which is sent home to parents in the fall of each school year. This publication specifies student rights, responsibilities and the consequences for serious misconduct by students. We will implement the policies in the Code of Conduct as part of our legal and educational commitment to our students and families. Riffenburgh also has behavior standards that apply to the classroom setting, and other areas of our building, including the hallways, cafeteria and the playground. Riffenburgh is participating in Positive Behavior Support training to help us to be as effective as possible in helping children to make positive behavior choices and work through any interpersonal problems they may experience. More information about behavior expectations will be made available through the school newsletter, Friday folders, and information meetings such as Back-to-School nights.

Refer to the Students Rights and Code of Conduct Booklet for further information.

## Dress Code

Riffenburgh encourages our students to take pride in their appearance. We are convinced that how they look effects their attitude and the overall school environment. We ask that parents help in making sure students are appropriately dressed for school.

Because we want students to be comfortable, they will be permitted to wear shorts to school on hot days. Dress shorts of appropriate length are acceptable. The following are examples of apparel that are NOT acceptable:

- Clothes that have inappropriate language, sexual, racial, ethnic or religious slur and depict any controlled substance.
- Tops with "spaghetti straps" (Straps must be three fingers wide)
- Running/jogging shorts with slits up the side
- Short-shorts
- Halter tops
- Tube tops
- Half shirts
- Bathing suits
- Tops that expose the midriff
- Wallet chains, or chains of any kind worn outside of clothing
- Baggy pants that are worn below the waist line

Coats and hats must be worn outdoors only, unless the heating system is not working in the school. We also encourage appropriate footwear, especially athletic foot wear on PE days. Students not using good judgment in their dress will be loaned a t-shirt to wear over, or in place of any inappropriate top. If necessary, a student may be asked to call a parent for replacement clothing.

Remember also that students go outside every day, even if it is for a short time. Daily outside exercise is vital for student concentration in the classroom. Please send

appropriate outerwear with your child, even on snowy days! You can call 225-0500 24-hours a days for complete temperature and weather forecast.

Refer to district policy "Student Dress (JICA)" for further information.

## Enrichment Programs

Enrichment activities include: Odyssey of the Mind, Missoula Children's Theater, Accelerated Reading, Choir, Running Club, Healthy Kids Club, Student Council, Buddy Classes, Yearbook, and Young Scholars. As opportunities arise, more enrichment programs will be added to the list.

## Health

Antibiotics and medications can often be scheduled to be given outside of school hours. In the unique situation when a student has a continuing health problem and when medications must be given during school hours, please be aware of the Poudre School District Policy Ib080, which reads:

"it is not permissible to administer any medication **(including over the counter drugs such as cough drops) by school personnel including the nurse, except on the written orders of a physician,** with permission and direction from parent. Medications may be given in school when a written, signed permission is received from a physician and the parent. **Any written request for giving medication must be renewed each year.** All medications, including "over the counter" must be sent to the school in the original container or prescription bottle with the correct name and dosage and current date. The student will be responsible to remembering to take the medication."

At Riffenburgh, medication is to brought immediately to the school office where it will be placed under lock and key. **It is the student's responsibility to remember to come to the health room for the medication at the appropriate time.**

School personnel will give emergency care to sick and injured children. Parents will be called immediately if a serious accident or illness should occur. **It is most important the school have up-to-date telephone numbers including home, office and emergency numbers.**

In case a child should need emergency treatment at the hospital and the parents are out of town and cannot be reached, it would be an excellent idea for parents to have a notarized form granting power of attorney to a baby-sitter or guardian. This would allow immediate treatment to be given to the child. This is optional, however, and is the responsibility of parents.

If a child is ill, please keep him/her home. While attendance is important, it is in the best interest of everyone that the sick students remain home so other children will not be exposed. **If the child is at school, he/she is expected to participate in all activities of the day, including recess.** It causes supervision problems for teachers when children are requested to be exempt from recess and other activities.

Refer to district policy "Administering Medications to Students (JLCD/JLCD-R)" for further information.

## **Homework**

Homework is an important part of a student's development at Riffenburgh Elementary. There are several reasons for assigning homework:

1. To reinforce concepts that have been introduced and practiced in school.
2. To do work that can be done more effectively at home than at school.
3. To complete work that a student did not finish in the allotted time.
4. To make up work missed because of absence.
5. To assist a pupil in developing better home study techniques.

At Riffenburgh we follow the Board of Education guidelines for assigning homework. The guideline calls for age-appropriate time limitations that increase by 10 minutes per day as children increase in age. This means 10 minutes per day for 1<sup>st</sup> graders up to 50 minutes per day for 5<sup>th</sup> graders. This is a guideline, not an everyday requirement. Some days there may be less homework than prescribed; perhaps occasionally there might be more, due to a variety of factors. If you find your student consistently having more than the recommended amount of homework, please contact your child's teacher in order to discuss the reasons for this.

For the benefit of your child, it is very important that we work together in partnership in this important aspect of school. We thank you for checking with your child each day regarding homework, to build the confidence of managing this responsibility. Great satisfaction comes from being a responsible person.

Because we value homework for the positive gains it can help produce, we commit to recognizing the accomplishments of students who handle homework appropriately. We all have days when we perform less effectively than others, so we know there are times when a student may come to school without having successfully completed assigned work. We acknowledge that it is important to have a break from working, and that is why we schedule age appropriate breaks for our students. However, we feel the importance of learning and growing in responsibility takes precedence over missing recess on a given day if work is not completed. If a child is habitually coming to school without completed homework we will need to have a conference with the student, parents, and teachers. Thank you in advance for your support of this important aspect of school.

## **IB**

### **RIFFENBURGH ELEMENTARY PURSUING IB STATUS (D)**

The staff at Riffenburgh Elementary School, with the support of parents on our School Improvement Team (SIT) and the Riffenburgh PTO, are pursuing completion of requirements to become an authorized International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Program. Discussions about the future direction of our school started in earnest in

January 2010, and resulted in a consensus on the part of the school staff to begin the process of offering the inquiry-based, international IB curriculum and fulfilling its program standards. Meeting IB authorization standards is a three to five year process that entails training of all staff members, development of instructional units (known as planners) that incorporate IB learning principles and offering of foreign language instruction for all students.

We will begin implementing aspects of the IB program throughout the 2010-11 school year so that our current students can benefit right away from this integrated approach that helps students to make connections across curriculum areas. With the backing of Riffenburgh's SIT and PTO, IB training was completed this summer by the principal and a 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher. We have plans to complete IB training of one teacher at each grade level by the end of this fall to have IB experience and perspective as teachers begin to develop planners for implementation in Kindergarten through fifth grades. In addition, we are resuming weekly Spanish language classes this fall, thus addressing the IB expectation that all schools offer foreign language instruction.

Several considerations emerged during the visioning conversations last spring that identified the IB Primary Years Program as a strong match for Riffenburgh. Given that the vast majority of our students go on to 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Lesher International Baccalaureate Middle School, where parents have been extremely satisfied with the IB program, it makes sense to create a continuity of program between our elementary school and the middle school it feeds. The revised Colorado education standards that will be implemented include an inquiry component consistent with the IB philosophy. Our prior work on sustainable learning concepts and wellness fits very well within the IB focus on "sharing the planet."

In addition to providing information about IB on Riffenburgh's website and in the handbook and newsletter, we will be holding an information night for interested parents on Thursday, September 23, to learn more about the Primary Years Program and Riffenburgh's progress towards it. It is our goal to increase the awareness and appreciation of the advantages of the IB philosophy among parents this fall and we invite your help as we add this dimension to the tradition of excellence that Riffenburgh has always offered. We welcome you to be part of this exciting journey toward becoming an ever more effective school!

## Immunizations-State Statute

Colorado State law requires that all school children present a completed immunization record and must have a complete and up-to-date immunization record on file in the school office. **Students not in compliance will be excluded from school until complete records, signed by a physician, are received in the school office.** Required immunizations for 2010-2011 include:

- 5-DPT/TD
- 4-OPV (Polio)
- 2-MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella given in combination no sooner than 15 months of age)
- 3-Hep B series
- 2-Varicella (Chicken Pox) grades K-3

- 1-Varicella (chicken Pox) grades 4-5

When a District employee becomes aware of a communicable disease that threatens the school population, they are required to report it to the responsible school official that will then report it to the Health Department and obtain a consultation on how to handle the communicable disease.

**Poudre School District Responsible Officials:**

- Principal and/or School Nurse for that school
- Department Supervisor (sites other than school buildings)

**Reportable Communicable Diseases:**

- Whooping cough (Pertussis)
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis C
- Salmonella
- Group food poisoning outbreaks
- Animal bites
- Tuberculosis
- Measles
- Mumps
- Giardia
- Shigella/Reye's Syndrome
- Lyme Disease
- Meningitis/Encephalitis
- HIV/AIDS (only with permission of person and/or guardian)

Refer to district policy "Immunizations of Students (JLCB/JLCB-R) for further information.

## **Lost and Found**

Most articles that are lost or found are put in the pod areas. If the article is not claimed, it will be turned over to Goodwill Industries or Salvation Army three times during the year: after Winter Break, after Spring Break and at the close of school in June.

## **Lunches**

Hot lunches may be purchased for \$2.05 daily or \$10.25 weekly. You can also purchase lunches for a month at a time if you wish. Children who eat school lunch or who bring a sack lunch and desire an extra carton of milk may purchase this milk for \$.45 a carton.

**In an emergency, students who forget lunch or lunch money may borrow from the cafeteria once. NO ADDITIONAL CHARGES WILL BE PERMITTED UNTIL THE FIRST CHARGE IS PAID.**

Parents can now pay for lunches on-line and monitor their student's accounts. This is a free service provided by PSD. It's quick and easy!

To sign up go to <https://www.schoolpaymentsolutions.com/login.aspx>

Students are encouraged to pay for their lunches on at least a weekly basis. You may send a check to cover a week's school lunches in advance. If you have more than one child eating hot lunch, you may send one check to cover all children in the family.

**It is advisable for all lunch money to be brought to school in an envelope marked with the students name and teacher's name.**

Parents are welcome to come to school any day and eat lunch with their child. Please sign in as a visitor in the office and get a visitor tag before joining your student for lunch. The price of an adult lunch is \$3.00. If you take your child from school for lunch, it will be necessary to officially sign the student out in the office and sign in upon returning.

### **Lunch Recess and Lunch Schedule for 2011-2012**

**11:55-12:20 Lunch    12:20-12:40 Recess**  
**Kindergarten -2<sup>nd</sup> grades**

**12:25-12:50 Lunch    12:50-1:10 Recess**  
**3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grades**

### **Music Program Etiquette**

Please help us all enjoy the concert by following good audience behavior/manners

- While a group is performing there should be no talking. This distracts the students from performing.
- Walking around, entering or leaving the gym should be done only for emergency. If you do need to exit the gym it should be done between musical pieces.
- You should plan to stay for the entire program. Leaving right after your child has performed is considered disrespectful.
- You should excuse yourself if you have a persistent cough or if you have an infant that is crying, making noises, etc.
- Turn off all cell phones, beepers, and watches that make noise.
- No flash photography during the performance, please. It distracts the performers and could cause an accident.
- Do not try to get your child's attention while they are performing. They have been trained to watch the director.

Remember, our children follow examples that are usually set by adults. This is a good time to set respectful, acceptable behavior while they are young.

## **Newsletters**

All notes, letters and communication from the principal, teachers, PTO and other organizations which go home via the student you should find in their weekly folder. In order to encourage your child to want to take notices home, please show an interest by asking to see notes that come home in the Thursday or Friday folder as designated by his/her teacher. Often time these notes are posted on Riffenburgh's web page. Please consider looking through the notes and monthly newsletter for information before calling the office to check on information.

In an effort to implement a mostly paperless system of information that we send to our Riffenburgh families we can communicate to you via email. Sign up for email alerts at [www.psdschools.org](http://www.psdschools.org) .

## **Parents Right to Access Records**

Parents of students under eighteen years old are entitled to access all educational records of their children. The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) requires that we provide this access to either parent. The term "parent" means a natural parent, guardian, or an individual acting as a parent or guardian. This term includes non-custodial parents.

An individual who falls under the definition of a parent may not be denied access to his/her child's records. The exception to this rule is when the school district has been provided with evidence that a court order or other legally binding document (i.e. divorce, separation, or custody decree) has revoked the person's parental rights. Any concerns regarding the sufficiency of evidence regarding the revocation of a person's parental rights should immediately be brought to the Assistant Superintendent's attention to review with legal counsels.

If a custodial parent expresses concern about providing the student's address and other information to a non-custodial parent, we must inform the parent of our obligation to disclose this information absent a court order to the contrary. We may provide the custodial parent with a brief time period to request judicial intervention. Also, it is entirely appropriate to notify a custodial parent of a request for information so that judicial action may be pursued.

Again, the general rule is that either parent is entitled to access his/her child's educational records. Any exception to this rule will necessarily have to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by looking at the circumstances of each case. All district employees who receive requests that cause them any concern or uneasiness should be directed to review the matter with the Assistant Superintendent before taking any action.

Refer to district policy "Student Records/Release of Information on Students (JRA/JRC)" for further information.

## **Parking and Student Drop Off/Pickup**

We ask your help in making our parking lot safe. Please park only in designated, marked parking spaces. Do not leave your car unattended in the drive-through area in

front of the school or in the drive through lanes in the parking lot. When you pull up in the drop-off lane, please pull up north as far as you can. Thank you for your help.

### **To idle or not to idle?**

PSD has a district-wide 'no idling' policy for all district vehicles including buses during drop off and pick up times. Please do your part and help protect our children and environment by turning off your car engine when dropping off and picking your children up from school.

According to the American Lung Association, high concentrations of carbon monoxide occur in areas with heavy traffic congestion, such as school drop off and pick up. Carbon monoxide pollution can be especially harmful to children.

Please turn off your car engine; it's good for the air our children breathe, it's good for the environment and it helps save you money at the pump.

## **Parties**

**District-Approves Parties** According to our district policy, there are to be only three parties during the school year: Halloween, Winter Holiday and Valentines Day. Room parents will be selected through *Tickets for Time* at the beginning of the school year to assist with the parties and provide refreshments.

**Birthday Treats** If children wish to bring treats on their birthday, they should inform the teachers in advance. All food items served for birthdays MUST be store bought. Please do not make deliveries of birthday balloons, flowers and/or presents to school for your child, this is very disruptive to the class

**Party Invitations** Invitations will not be passed out in school. This is unfair to children not invited. Please, take care of your invitations from outside of school hours.

## **Photographs**

Skillman Photography will be at Riffenburgh on Thursday, September 8th, 2011, to take individual photos. Group photos will take place on a date to be determined in the spring.

## **Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)**

NO MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS and NO FEES

We have an active, involved, supportive group of PTO members at Riffenburgh. All parents, guardians, teachers and staff are members of the Riffenburgh PTO. The purpose of the PTO is to promote the welfare of our children in the home, school and community. Parent and teacher participation in PTO meetings, volunteering in the school and fundraising are beneficial in shaping the direction of our children's lives. The

fundraising sponsored by the PTO enables us to provide programs and services to the whole Riffenburgh community.

PTO publishes a **Student Directory** each year. You will find lots of helpful information in this publication. The Riffenburgh PTO welcomes all parents and guardians to attend the monthly meetings, and to become actively involved in the support of school programs.

The 2011-2012 PTO meeting schedule is as follows:

Monday, September 26<sup>th</sup>

Monday, October 24<sup>th</sup>

Monday, November 21<sup>st</sup>

Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup>

Monday, February 27<sup>th</sup>

Monday, March 26<sup>th</sup>

Monday, April 30<sup>th</sup>

Monday, May 21<sup>st</sup>

All PTO meetings are held in the Media Center/Library at Riffenburgh Elementary School at 6:30 in the evening.

## Recess

As much as possible, students will have recess outside. If it is extremely wet or the temperature is below 15 degrees, students will be permitted to come into the cafeteria at 8:35 a.m. and remain in during other recesses due to inclement weather. If a child is at school he/she is expected to participate in all activities of the day. Please help your child dress appropriately for outside weather conditions.

## School Closures

### PSD Weather-Related Plan for Schools\*

Should the need arise due to inclement weather and/or questionable road conditions, PSD may implement a delayed start of all schools by 2 hours. The following is important information for parents regarding notification of delayed start, as well as a refresher on school closure and early release plans.

### Delayed Start of Schools Due to Weather, Road Conditions

Should the need arise, the delayed school start time will be 2 hours, for all schools.

- **Delayed start decision:** A decision about delayed start will be made by 5:30 a.m.
- **Parent notification:** Visit the PSD website at [www.psdschools.org](http://www.psdschools.org) or tune in to local radio or television stations to find out about delayed start the morning of the day in question. Please do not call schools, district offices, or broadcast

media. No announcements by media and on the website means all schools are open as usual.

- **Bus pick up times:** Buses will pick up students at bus stops 2 hours later than regularly scheduled pick-up times. Buses will make every effort to be punctual, although traffic and road conditions may increase travel time. Please ensure your child is dressed warmly in anticipation of a potentially longer wait time. Parents are encouraged to walk their children to bus stops and avoid walking along the roadways. Sidewalks are safer even if these areas are not cleared of snow.
- **Drop off and arrival times:** Parents dropping off students, students who walk, and students driving to school should arrive 2 hours after their regular arrival times. Please do not arrive earlier.
- **Kindergarten and Early Childhood programs:** Morning-only kindergarten programs and morning Early Childhood programs are cancelled when there is a delayed start schedule. Afternoon kindergarten and afternoon Early Childhood programs will run on normal schedules. Full-day kindergarten and full-day Early Childhood programs will start 2 hours later than normal.
- **Before- and after-school childcare:** B.A.S.E. (Before and After School Enrichment) Camp will open as normally scheduled for students attending these programs. If your childcare provider is other than B.A.S.E. Camp, contact them for start times.
- **School dismissal times:** School dismissal times will remain on regular schedules, including bus drop-off times in neighborhoods and parent pick-up times at schools.

### **School Closures Due to Weather, Road Conditions**

If schools are closed due to inclement weather and/or questionable road conditions, parents should visit PSD's website at [www.psdschools.org](http://www.psdschools.org) for information about school closures or tune in to local radio and television stations the morning of the day in question.

**Media outlets are informed if schools are closed.** No announcements on the PSD website or by the media means all schools are open as usual.

A decision about weather-related school closures is made by 5:30 a.m., and media outlets are notified immediately. **Parents should NOT call schools, district offices, or broadcast media.**

**The PSD website ([www.psdschools.org](http://www.psdschools.org)) and the following radio and television stations will provide information about PSD school closures.** We will notify Spanish radio stations KGRE 1450 AM and KJJJ 1170 AM for Spanish speaking families.

**Note:** When PSD schools are closed, B.A.S.E. (Before and After School Enrichment) Camp will be closed.

**Television Stations (Comcast Cable channels are listed below; channels vary by provider):**

Channel 2, CW2 Colorado/KWGN-TV  
Channel 4, CBS4 Denver  
Channel 5, CBS 5 (Northern Colorado)  
Channel 7, 7News KMGH  
Channel 9, 9News KUSA  
Channel 10, PSD public access TV (available on Comcast and U.S. Cable)  
Channel 13, Fox 31

**Radio Stations:**

KCOL 600 AM  
KCSU 90.5 FM  
KFKA 1310 AM  
KGRE 1450 AM  
KJJD 1170 AM  
KVUU 99.9 FM  
KKQZ 94.3 FM  
KOA 850 AM  
KOOL 105 FM  
KPAW 107.9 FM  
KIIX 1410 AM  
KRFC 88.9 FM  
KISS 96.1 FM  
KUAD/K99 99 FM  
KUNC 91.5 FM  
TRI 102 102.5 FM

**Other Media:**

Fort Collins Coloradoan: [www.coloradoan.com](http://www.coloradoan.com)  
Northern Colorado Tribune at [www.greeleytribune.com](http://www.greeleytribune.com)

**Early Release of Schools Due to Weather, Road Conditions**

If the weather forecast suddenly changes to adverse conditions, PSD may put in to action an early release. Parents are urged to develop a plan for your student's early release to your home. B.A.S.E. (Before and After School Enrichment) Camp will not be available after school if schools release students early.

When PSD makes a decision to close schools earlier than the regularly-scheduled release times due to inclement weather and/or questionable road conditions, parents will be notified by phone. **In addition, the PSD website ([www.psdschools.org](http://www.psdschools.org)) and media outlets (listed above) will communicate early release information.**

**Parents are urged to make sure family contacts and telephone numbers are current at your child's school for such an emergency.**

\*Each time there is a concerning accumulation of snow or a fear that the roads will be impassable, PSD transportation team members perform roadway checks throughout the district. Each person on this team is assigned to cover areas east of I-25, Wellington,

Fort Collins, Rist Canyon, Red Feather and Highway 287 (to the Wyoming border). Each member of the team drives 130 to 160 miles when checking road conditions.

Members consider travel safety for busses and school staff when checking road conditions. It is the individual decision of parents to determine whether they feel their high school aged student(s) are capable of driving in these conditions. Parents may choose to explore other options, like finding alternative transportation, if they do not want their child driving to school. Parents have the option to keep their child at home if they do not feel it is safe for their child to walk or ride to school due to weather and/or road conditions.

For additional information about the policy and procedures, contact the transportation department at 490-3155.

Refer to district policy "School Closings and Cancellations (EBCE)" for further information.

## School Improvement Team

This site-base team is made up of parents, a community member, a classified staff member, team teacher leaders, and the principal. The philosophy of site-based management is grounded in the belief that those individuals closest to students and responsible for planning and decision making should be directly and comprehensively involved in the educational decision-making processes. A primary objective of site-based management and shared decision making is the improvement of education by involving parents and community members as partners, and by allowing sites to make and evaluate decisions that improve the quality of education.

## Sex Offender Registry Information

State law (C.R.S. § 22-1-124) requires that all schools notify parents about how to access records on registered sex offenders. Following are ways to obtain information about registered offenders:

- **List of offenders living inside city limits is available at City of Fort Collins Police Services:** Information about sex offenders via Colorado Bureau of Investigations statewide sex offender list is available at <http://sor.state.co.us/> which will take you to the State of Colorado registry. Simply follow the steps and select the city or county of interest for the information which is maintained by CBI. The local Fort Collins sex offender registration list can also be accessed by going to the police station at 2221 Timberline Road, and filling out a request form (no charge to view list; \$7.50 to purchase copy).
- **List of offenders living outside city limits in Larimer County is available from Larimer County Sheriff:** Residents can go to the Sheriff's Office administration building, 2501 Midpoint Drive, and view books with information and pictures of sex offenders at no charge. Residents can purchase a list for a

fee of \$7.50 through the records department. A database is online at:  
<http://www.larimer.org/sheriff/sexoffenders/index.htm>

- **Colorado sex offenders registry from the Colorado Bureau of Investigation:** available online at <http://sor.state.co.us>

## Student Placement Policy

The staff at Riffenburgh Elementary are responsible for creating balanced classes at each grade level which maximizes the opportunities for all students to achieve academic and social success. There are many factors that are considered by teachers in creating balanced classes, including:

- ❖ Class size (number of students per class)
- ❖ Gender (distribution of boys and girls)
- ❖ Academic ability (comparable between both classes)
- ❖ Leadership (some children with leadership qualities in each room)
- ❖ Individual student needs (learning, behavior, independence)

We also consider parental requests for teachers as part of the process. We will try to honor requests as we create balanced class groups using the factors listed above. Parents should indicate their preference for the next school year to your child's current teacher in written form (note or email) during the month of April. Please provide some reason for your request, such as the learning style of your child, experience of an older child with the teacher, or a strength of the teachers. We will not place children because of friendships with other students, since all students in a grade level have shared recess and we hope that students will continue to develop new friendships.

## Telephone Calls to Students

Students will not be removed from class for telephone calls. This disrupts the learning process for the entire class. Please make after school pick-up arrangements **before** your child comes to school in the morning. The office staff will work with you to get messages from home to students.

## Testing Dates

We have two major testing periods during the school year, CSAP and MAP tests. Please mark these two testing periods on your calendar in order to avoid scheduling events that would conflict with your child's participation.

Fall MAP testing	August 2- November 22, 2011
CSAP (3 <sup>rd</sup> grade reading)	February 21 – March 2, 2012
CSAP (3 <sup>rd</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> grades)	March 19 – April 12, 2012

## Vision and Hearing Screening

The sight and hearing of all students in kindergarten, first, second, third, fifth, seventh and ninth grades, or students in comparable age groups referred for testing, shall be tested during the school year by the school nurse, teacher, principal or other qualified person authorized by the District, as required by law. The parent/guardian shall be informed when a deficiency is found. This provision shall not apply to any student whose parent objects on religious or personal grounds.

**This testing is scheduled for September 20, 2011.** We appreciate your efforts to have effected students attend school on that morning. If your student wears glasses, please bring them on this day.

Refer to district policy "Screening/Testing of Students (JLDAC)" for more information.

## Visitation

Parents are encouraged to visit school. Please refrain from bringing preschoolers children or infants when visiting the classroom, as younger children often distract the attention of both the visitor and the class.

An adult must accompany student visitors. Visits from out-of-town students, friends and relatives are discouraged. Due to liability issues, non-Riffenburgh students cannot accompany your student to school. **Upon your arrival, please stop by the office to let us know you are in the building and to acquire a visitor's nametag.**

Refer to district policy "Visitors to Schools (KI)" for further information.

## Volunteering

**ALL** Poudre School District volunteers **MUST** register online before volunteering at **ANY** school in the district.

By PSD directive, this policy will be enforced this year. No excuses, no exceptions.

If you registered with PSD in the last year, all you need to do is update your child's grade and teacher information by using the User ID and Password. You do not need to re-register.

TO REGISTER ONLINE:

Go to <http://www.psdschools.org>, click on the *Volunteers & Partners* icon on the lower left side of the screen. Once on the *Volunteers* page, select *Online Volunteer Registration* from the menu on the left-hand side. Simply follow the prompts and instructions to complete your registration.