



# **FAMILY/STUDENT GUIDEBOOK**

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<http://steck.dpsk12.org>

## **2017-18**



# STECK ELEMENTARY STAFF

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Ann Warner .....	Secretary/Registrar
Liz Riggleman .....	Bookkeeper/Secretary
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Nichole Hansen .....	Kindergarten
Bev Kretz .....	Kindergarten
Beth Shuter .....	1st Grade
Natalie Keane .....	1st Grade
Bev Herbert.....	2nd Grade
Melanie Anderson .....	2nd Grade
April Gould .....	3rd Grade
Kerry McRae .....	3rd Grade
Andrew Menard .....	4th Grade
Debbie Heinz .....	4th Grade
Kerrie Trujillo .....	5th Grade
Laura Miller .....	5th Grade
Jonathan Almon .....	Librarian/Computer Technology
Pam Newton .....	Grades K-2 Literacy Intervention
Val Collins .....	Grades 3-5 Literacy Intervention
Anda Seale .....	ESL (English as a Second Language)
Joyce Rosenblum .....	Special Education
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Holly Grady .....	Physical Education
Sylvia Doud .....	Art
Emily Ward .....	Psychologist
Amy Fowler-Funk .....	Social Worker
Lori Neiswanger .....	Nurse
Brandy Bishop .....	Health Technician
Jane Jensen .....	OT/PT
Courtney Rossman .....	Speech Language Pathologist
Blanca Hernandez .....	Facilities Manager
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# **PARA-EDUCATORS**

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# WELCOME

Welcome (back) to Steck! Please carefully review the topics covered in this 2017-18 edition of the Family/Student Guidebook. It is our hope that presenting this important information in one location will be a useful resource throughout the school year.

## **SCHOOL HOURS:**

Office Hours: 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Playground Supervision: 8:00 – 8:10 AM and 3:00 – 3:10 PM

Breakfast: 7:55 – 8:10 AM

School Day: 8:10 AM – 3:00 PM

## **MISSION STATEMENT:**

*As a community, we work to ensure every student achieves academic, social and emotional growth.*

## **STUDENT VISION STATEMENT:**

*Steck Stars are known, safe, inspired, challenged, and empowered.*

## **LUNCH RECESS SCHEDULE:**

ECE	11:00 – 11:45	(11:00-11:20 in Cafeteria)
Kindergarten	10:45 – 11:30	(11:10-11:30 in Cafeteria)
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	11:15 – 12:00	(11:40-12:00 in Cafeteria)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	11:00 – 11:45	(11:25-11:45 in Cafeteria)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	11:30 – 12:15	(11:55-12:15 in Cafeteria)
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11:45 – 12:30	(12:10-12:30 in Cafeteria)
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12:00 – 12:45	(12:25-12:45 in Cafeteria)

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# SCHOOL AND OFFICE PROCEDURES

## ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is very important to maintain a consistent learning environment for our children.

School begins each morning at 8:10 AM on the playground as teachers greet every child to welcome them back to the Steck community of learners. Please make sure that your child is on the playground by 8:05 AM every morning to participate in this wonderful routine. Excessive absences and tardies disrupt the climate and culture for your child and their entire class. Please make every attempt to schedule family holidays in sync with the DPS school calendar. The DPS school calendar is available at <http://www.dpsk12.org/calenders/> and can also be found on the Steck website at <http://steck.dpsk12.org>.

We recognize that illness is a part of life. If your child has a fever, uncontrollable cough or has vomited in the past 24 hours, please keep your child at home and notify the office attendance line at **720.424.3880**. This line only receives messages and is available 24 hours a day.

If the office has not heard from an absent child's parent by 9:00 AM, the audio dialer will call to assure that the child is home.

**PERFECT ATTENDANCE:** Perfect attendance is described as fewer than 3 tardies and attendance every day for at least 6 hours (75%) of the day. Students will receive an award at the end of the school year for perfect attendance.

### ***Please Remember:***

*"A student must work twice as hard the next day to catch up on missed information and missed homework. The U.S. Department of Education maintains that for every missed day of school, it takes a student two days to catch up."*

Please be responsible and make sure your student arrives at school on time and is ready to learn as many days of the school year as possible.

**EXCUSED ABSENCES:** An excused absence means that a student is absent for a reason identified within the attendance policy, set by local school board of education as declared in 22-33-104(4)(a) C.R.S. which may include, but is not limited to: funerals, illness, injury, legal obligations, medical procedures and religious observations. The following shall be considered an excused absence (or excused tardies):

- A student who is temporarily ill or injured, or whose absence is approved by the administrator of the school of attendance on a prearranged basis. Prearranged absences shall be approved for appointments or circumstances of a serious nature only which cannot be taken care of outside of school hours.

- A student who is absent for an extended period due to physical, mental or emotional disability.
- A student who is attending any school-sponsored activity or activities of an educational nature with advance approval by the administration.
- A student who is absent in observance of an established religious holiday.
- A student who is attending a funeral will have up to 3 days excused for travel. Prior approval, by the Principal is needed for any extensions.

**MEDICAL AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS:** Whenever possible, schedule your child's medical or other appointments outside of school hours. Please sign the SIGN IN/OUT Book in the office when leaving early for the day or leaving and returning the same day.

Per DPS Policy, a doctor's note is required for excessive absences. If a student is absent from school for more than two consecutive days due to illness please provide a doctor's note excusing the absence. Our attendance officer will contact families with attendance concerns to provide support and information

**UNEXCUSED ABSENCES/TARDIES:** An unexcused absence/tardy is defined as an absence/tardy that is not covered by one of the foregoing exceptions.

**EXCESSIVE TARDIES:** Students who are tardy on a regular basis are missing the first instructions of the school day and are also disruptive to the class when they arrive. Please make every effort to have your children arrive at school on time. The first bell rings at 8:00 AM. Teachers will pick up their classes outside at 8:10 AM, and so students are tardy if they are not in the classroom by 8:15 AM. If a student is tardy, they must sign in at the attendance table in the hallway outside the office and receive a tardy slip to hand to their teacher. **Parents should walk late students into the building and sign them in for safety reasons.** If a student is tardy 3 times, it will count against perfect attendance. Students must "check-in" with the attendance desk when they arrive late. Students who are tardy negatively impact instruction in the classroom.

Tardies are excused when accompanied by a note or appointment card from a health care professional, due to an illness, or when active weather is severe enough to make travel difficult. Teachers will make initial family contact regarding excessive tardies.

**HABITUALLY TRUANT:** Habitually truant means that a student has four total days of unexcused absences from school in one calendar month or ten total days of unexcused absences from school during the reported school year in congruence with C.R.S. 22-33-107(3)(a). Excessive tardies can lead to habitually truant behavior, and will be followed up with official letters to parents/guardians.

## **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

**BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL SUPERVISION:** There is supervision on the west and south playgrounds beginning at 8:00 AM. **Students MAY NOT be dropped off at school before 8:00 AM, or left on school property after 3:00 PM,** except for a specific function (e.g., Steck Breakfast, Discovery Link, iReady, enrichment classes, clubs, Destination Imagination, etc.). Parents or caregivers must pick up students on the playground at 3:00 PM. There is no after school supervision. Students not picked up by 3:10 PM. are brought to the office and parents will be contacted. Parents will need to sign their child out of the office when they arrive. If necessary, a letter regarding violation of this policy will be sent home and must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned the following school day. Subsequent violations may result in additional measures, including reports to Social Services and/or the Denver Police Department. Please be advised that Social Services considers any student who arrives too early or stays too late on school grounds without supervision to be an abandoned child.

**Discovery Link** is a program for families who need before- and/or after-school care. Please contact them directly at **720.424.8291** for fees, availability and more information or visit: <http://discoverylink.dpsk12.org/>

**DROP OFF/PICK UP IN DESIGNATED AREAS:** Motorists should drive slowly through student crossing areas. To assist with parent parking procedures, banners and signs are posted designating pick-up and drop off areas. We need your help and cooperation!

**TEACHER PARKING LOT:** Dropping off students or driving through the teacher parking lot is strictly prohibited, as the lot also serves as a walk way for our students coming to and from school. Unfortunately, the lot is too small to accommodate parent parking, even outside of drop off and pick up times. We have more teachers than parking places, and a number of our teachers do not have spaces in the lot. Cars parked in the handicapped parking for drop off to before/after care are subject to ticketing by the Denver Police Dept. or DPS Safety and Security.

**BICYCLES:** Bicycles may be ridden to and from school. Bicycles are to be locked in the bike rack and they are not to be moved during the school day. Students are asked to please walk their bicycle on school grounds between 8:00 AM and 3:30 PM. Students are encouraged to wear a helmet. *Wheelies or Heelies are not allowed at school.*

**DISMISSAL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY:** If your child must be excused before the end of the school day, please come to the office window to sign your child out. To reduce classroom interruption, office staff will call your child down to the office. Children are only released to individuals previously authorized by you unless your written authorization is received by the office. Please send authorization via email to both [Ann\\_Warner@dpsk12.org](mailto:Ann_Warner@dpsk12.org) and [Liz\\_Riggleman@dpsk12.org](mailto:Liz_Riggleman@dpsk12.org).



## CLASSROOM INTERRUPTIONS

Our administration recognizes its obligation to minimize the number of classroom interruptions so that students and teachers may fully take advantage of all opportunities for maximum learning time in the classroom. **Teachers use time before school for planning. Please respect this time.**

To maximize instructional time, we have the following expectations, which permit necessary communication while protecting student instructional time:

- Parents needing to leave emergency messages may do so by contacting the school office by **2:45 PM** which will then ensure the student gets the message through their teacher prior to dismissal. All other parent concerns (and those messages received after 2:45 PM) will be transferred to teacher's voicemail. Teachers have been asked to return calls within a 24-hour period.
- Any article to be delivered to children should be brought to the office, not taken to classrooms; i.e., money, books, homework, etc.
- If it is necessary to pick up your child from school during school hours, please report to the office to sign your child out. Your child will be called down to meet you unless they are in a Specials class (Music, Art, PE, Library/Technology), in which case you will be given an Early Dismissal Slip to take to the Specials location to excuse your student. The Early Dismissal slip is given to your child's teacher to notify them of a student's departure during a Specials class.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS

When the weather conditions prevent children from being outside before school, they will come into the school at the regular supervision time (8:00 AM). All ECE-second graders will go to the auditorium and all third-fifth graders will go to the gym. If it is raining or snowing after school, parents and caregivers will pick ECE-first grade children up from their classrooms and third-fifth graders outside.

During the winter, temperatures must be 20 degrees or warmer for students to play outside. We will also take the conditions of the field and playground equipment into account when making decisions to go outside during colder, snowy days.

In the case of severe storms, school will be in session unless closings are announced on radio or TV. Radio stations KOA 850 or KBNA 1220 are the official announcement stations for school closing information. TV stations begin announcements at 5:00 AM. If it is announced that the Denver Public Schools are on a "STORM SCHEDULE," it means school starts on time but elementary buses are running 1/2 hour late.

You may also refer to the DPS website: <http://www.dpsk12.org> for information about school closures.

## LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found items are located near the auditorium on a hanging rack. Small items, such as glasses, are held with the office staff. Please mark your child's name inside all jackets, lunch boxes, backpacks and anything else they might lose! The school is not responsible for lost items! Lost and Found items are donated to charity 3 times per year (normally at school breaks: Thanksgiving, Winter, Spring, etc.)

## SAFETY

All parents/visitors **MUST** sign the visitor's roster at the office window and wear a visitor's pass while in the building. Please do not be offended when staff members ask you for your visitor's badge if they do not see one when you are in the school.

***This is for the safety of your children as well as the school staff.*** Volunteers who regularly help in the classroom need to complete a Volunteer Application (<http://volunteerservices.dpsk12.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Volunteer-Application-Background-20133.pdf>).

## CHARACTER EDUCATION

Steck's staff, parents and students are committed to increasing awareness of personal success factors (grit, gratitude, self-control, optimism, kindness and integrity) into the curriculum and throughout the building and school grounds.

Our goal is to recognize personal success factors and imbed the teaching of these strengths into our daily lessons and interactions with students, staff and parents. Our desired outcome includes creating a positive school culture where:

- students are taught and expected to exhibit strong positive personal success factors.
- shared language communicates expectations.
- students' social and emotional needs are supported.
- students problem solve on the playground and in other areas/times with less structure.
- students show respect toward peers, adults, self and school.
- teachers model similar behavioral expectations
- teachers are supported in providing strategies for positive classroom management and discipline
- recognition and celebrations of positive student behavior is demonstrated school-wide

Teaching Content: Personal Success Factors

Process: Empowering Education

Structure: Morning Meeting (Responsive Classroom)

## DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

At Steck, different levels of intervention will be considered when conflicts arise. Teachers will handle most conflicts. The student is provided an opportunity to tell his/her version of the incident. Consequences may include one-on-one counseling, time-outs, in-school community service, parent contacts, scheduled conferences, etc. If behavior problems continue, a major referral will occur and students will solve problems with the Principal or Principal Resident. When continued or serious violations of responsibilities occur, the principal or principal resident may consider in-school or out-of-school suspension to help support students' positive school adjustment. If a student is suspended, a meeting will be set with the parents(s), the child, the Principal, and any appropriate teachers to discuss and devise a plan before a student can return to school.

Steck teachers follow the DPS District Discipline Matrix. For a complete description of the Denver Public Schools discipline policies, go to the home page of the DPS web site. For more in depth information on any part of the Discipline ladder, please refer to DPS discipline matrix and policies:

[http://webdata.dpsk12.org/policy/pdf/Policy\\_IK-R\\_Attachment\\_B.pdf](http://webdata.dpsk12.org/policy/pdf/Policy_IK-R_Attachment_B.pdf)

**Note:** If the Principal and Principal resident are out of the building, a leader-in-charge is always available. This person will have the authority to take action that is appropriate and consistent with the policies outlined here.

## HEALTH AND EMERGENCIES

**ALLERGIES AND FOOD INTOLERANCES:** The school should be informed of any student who has a serious known allergy that could endanger his/her life, especially bee stings, food, or medication that causes severe or life threatening reactions. In the case of intolerance to milk or other foods, the Federal Hot Lunch Program requires a physician's note if the food or milk is not to be served to your child.

**IMMUNIZATIONS:** The State of Colorado requires evidence of immunization for school enrollment. A child entering school must meet the requirements for each vaccine, or have a signed Statement of Exemption. A child will be denied entry into school until this information is provided. Immunization requirements for the State of Colorado can be found at the following website:

<http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/dc/Immunization/index.html>

**MEDICATION GUIDELINES:** If a student needs medication at school, the following requirements must be met for prescription and over-the-counter medications:

- Written approval from the doctor and the parent for the school to administer the medication. Forms are available in the school office. Forms must be completed before medication can be administered.
- Must be clearly identified by the name and type of medication.
- Must be in the original container.
- Must carry a prescription label with the child's name, drug identity, dosage instructions, doctor's name, and prescription date.

- The prescription must be current (not expired).
- Over-the-counter medication (cough syrup, aspirin, etc.) will also need a doctor's permission to dispense.

Please DO NOT attempt to give your child's medication to his/her teacher. ALL medications MUST be cleared through the health office and the school nurse, who is in the building one day per week and will be happy to make the process as simple as possible. Students are NOT PERMITTED to carry medications, **including cough drops, inhalers, and lip treatment balm.**

**STUDENT ILLNESS GUIDELINES:** The following guidelines are necessary to help ensure the health of our students and staff. If your child exhibits the following symptoms do not send them to school:

- If the child has been vomiting during the night or before school.
- If the child has a fever of 100 degrees (F), or greater, or has been running a fever during the night.
- If the child has been diagnosed with strep throat he/she must be on antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

**ILLNESS:** If a child becomes ill, has a fever or is injured at school, the nurse, health technician or a member of the office staff will contact the person listed on the emergency form and supervise the child until pick-up. Calls will be made using numbers on the emergency form provided during registration until an adult is reached. (Pick-up should occur within 30 minutes or the next emergency contact on your list will be called.) In cases of emergency, we will call 911. Please keep your child's emergency information updated.

**EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:** 911 will be called first when an extremely severe (life threatening) medical emergency arises. In the case of a serious illness or injury, parents will be called at the phone numbers listed in order of priority designation. If parents cannot be reached at home or at work, designated emergency contacts will be called. Every attempt is made to notify parents when there is a serious injury. **It is extremely important that your child's emergency contact information is current at all times. Please inform the school office of any changes in residence, employment and/or phone numbers, which occur during the school year.**

## DRESS CODE

Student dress is an essential aspect of creating a school environment that is safe and conducive to learning. Student dress and personal appearance shall meet reasonable standards of cleanliness and safety and show respect for others. Students should also dress appropriately for weather. Skirts and shorts should be mid-thigh length or longer; shirts should cover stomachs and backs (this includes thin straps - 2 adult finger rule), sunglasses and hats may be worn outside the building; and footwear

needs to be safe (no rubber-soled thongs/flip-flops). Exceptions to the dress code may be made by the principal or designee for religious or medical reasons.

## TOYS AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Students may not bring toys, cards, games, balls, electronics or other personal, non-essential belongings to school. Loss of, or damage to personal belongings often occurs when these items are brought to school.

## USE OF PHONES

**SCHOOL PHONES:** Students should only request to use the classroom/office phone if it's an emergency. The following are **not** considered emergencies:

- Forgotten homework
- After school plans (going to friend's house, etc. These can be made during the evening hours.)

**Cell Phones/Smart Watches/Internet devices:** Students may not use cell phones, smart watches and/or other internet connected devices at school. Phone access is provided at school for students who need it with the teacher's permission. If a child needs to bring a device to school, it should be turned off and left in the student's backpack/locker. If a student wears a smart watch to school, it may not be used (apps, texting, calls, etc.) during school hours. Steck is not responsible for devices that are lost, damaged or stolen on school property. **We are asking parents to limit cellphone use when inside the school, particularly in classrooms and hallways.**

## ANIMALS ON CAMPUS

Denver City Ordinances prohibit having dogs or other animals on school grounds (this includes buildings, playground and parking lots). Please respect this ordinance even after school hours and on weekends. *We recognize that some dogs are service animals and are exempt from the above policy. However, please be cognizant of potential student allergies and/or fears children may have of strange dogs.*

## FOOD SERVICE

We serve hot lunch for those students who choose this option. Lunch is available for \$1.85 (\$0.40 for students who qualify for reduced lunch. *Forms for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program are available in the office.*) Families are encouraged to purchase lunches by the week or month. You may write a check with the child's name on it payable to Steck Elementary. The money can be paid directly to the lunchroom after 10:30 AM Monday through Friday, or may be given to the office staff to be placed in the cafeteria's mailbox. **If a child's lunch money is lost or forgotten, a lunch will be provided but the child must repay the lunchroom manager the following day.** A child is only allowed 2 charges so use of the online payment system is recommended so that balances may be easily monitored.

**ONLINE PAYMENT OPTION:** Families can pay on-line and view lunch account balances by subscribing to [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com). Lunches may also be brought from home. Please write the child's name on the sack or lunch box. Soft drinks (soda) may not be brought in sack lunches.

**BREAKFAST:**

Free breakfast is provided to all interested Steck students from 7:55 – 8:10 AM, Monday through Friday. It is important that students arrive on time as they have only 15 minutes to get their food and eat. Steck para-educators will supervise students and then send them outside promptly at 8:10 AM to line up with their teachers. Students do NOT need money on their accounts to eat breakfast.

Please do not leave children unsupervised before the drop-off at 7:55 AM at the north-facing Cafeteria door on the ground level (near the handicapped parking spaces). The parking lot is not a drive-through drop off. Students should be walked through the door.

## ACADEMICS

**PROGRESS REPORTS:** Progress reports based on students' proficiency on the standards are issued 3 times a year on a trimester basis. Conferences shall be held for every child during the fall and as needed in spring (to be arranged with teachers).

**HOMEWORK:** Following instruction in the classroom, students in Kindergarten—5<sup>th</sup> grades will receive homework assignments Monday through Thursday because we believe families should spend time together on the weekends without the focus on school. (Of course, it is ALWAYS great to read on the weekends and practice math facts!) The homework assignments are to be completed outside of the regular school day. Homework serves the following purposes:

- Provide an opportunity for students to practice skills learned in class
- Provide additional time needed to complete an assignment given during the school day
- Teach students responsibility and planning
- Inform parents of the materials being covered
- Enrich and extend learning
- Provide opportunities for families to learn together

***Average Times for Homework:***

These averages are dependent upon the focus that a student maintains while completing the assignments. These are averages, so some nights there will be more time on homework, other nights less. Other factors that can impact nightly assignments are: long term projects, individual needs, and make-up work:

*Kindergarten:* 10-15 minutes per evening, plus 15 minutes of reading

*Grade 1:* 15-20 minutes per evening, plus 15 minutes of reading

*Grade 2:* 20 minutes per evening, plus 15 minutes of reading

*Grade 3:* 30 minutes per evening, plus 30 minutes of reading

*Grade 4:* 40 minutes per evening, plus 30 minutes of reading

*Grade 5:* 50 minutes per evening, plus 30 minutes of reading

**MAKEUP WORK:** It is important that students who are absent from school complete make up work. It is the responsibility of the student and parent to initiate requests for makeup work. Makeup work should reflect class assignments missed during an absence, and a reasonable amount of time should be allowed for its completion. Time allowed to make up work is twice the number of classes or days missed. (District Policy JH-R)

Make-up work will be provided by the school for excused and unexcused absences. Teachers need at least one-day notice (24 hours) in order to have time to prepare the necessary make-up work for the student or two days if student will be gone for an extended time. Students will likely have additional assignments to make up upon their return as it's not possible to anticipate all essential assignments ahead of time. Please remember, there is no substitute for active learning. Making up an assignment cannot replace being present for high quality instruction, interaction, feedback and collaboration.

**HOMEWORK REQUEST:** In the event that your child is unexpectedly absent, we ask that you follow our homework request procedure above. In order to avoid classroom interruptions, we request that parents pick homework up after 3:15 PM, when students have been dismissed. Teachers have been asked to leave weekly homework assignments for absent students in the file sorter or box with their name outside the classroom.

**ASSESSMENTS:** Steck recognizes the importance of standardized tests in today's society although we consider them only one indicator of individual abilities or future successes. Steck students use multiple measures to determine students' needs and progress. The assessments below are administered to Steck students:

3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grades take online CMAS PARCC tests in language arts and math.

4<sup>th</sup> graders will take the online CMAS social studies assessment every three years; 5<sup>th</sup> graders take the online CMAS in science.

K-5<sup>th</sup> grade will take math and literacy iReady assessments 3-4 times a year

All English Language Learners (ELLs) take The ACCESS test.

All new ELLs to the district take the W-APT placement for language All students take on-going literacy and math unit assessments.

# HOME AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

## SNACKS

**SNACK POLICY:** Primary grades (K-2) have a designated snack time each morning. Students are responsible for providing their own snack. Snacks need to be nutritious. Do not send foods high in trans fat or sugar content. A recommended snack list is provided. Intermediate grades (3-5) do not have a snack time. If your

child has a medical need for a snack, you will need to provide a statement from your doctor and the teacher will help your child work out a routine.

Starting this year, food sold and provided to students during the school day, outside of the school meal program, must now meet new nutritional guidelines. The new guidelines are intended to reduce students' consumption of high calorie foods and sugary drinks. This means healthier options like fruits and vegetables and less food like chips and candy for students.

These guidelines apply in all locations and through all services where food and beverages are provided and/or sold, which may include, but are not limited to school stores, parties and celebrations, and food provided as rewards or incentives in the classroom.

Rules for food sold through breakfast and lunch programs at school will not change through this policy. Additionally, rules for food provided and sold at special events occurring outside the school day (for example, family nights or sports events) and for food sold to students off of school property (such as food bought elsewhere during open campus lunchtime) will not change through this policy.

## UPDATED NUTRITIONAL GUIDELINES

Beverages: First ingredient may not be a form of sugar (sugar, honey, HFCS, sucrose, corn syrup, brown sugar, cane sugar, etc.). Examples of beverages that can be provided include: As part of recent changes to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's regulations for school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program, Denver Public Schools has updated its **school wellness policy**.

For more information, please visit: <http://foodservices.dpsk12.org/school-wellness.php>

- Low-fat white milk, 8 oz portion
- 100% juice, 4.23 oz portion (1 juice box)
- Water
- Foods: Single serving size and must be less than 300 calories and less than 20 grams of sugar. Examples of foods that can be provided include:
  - Fresh fruits and vegetables, unlimited
  - Low-fat dips to accompany fruits and vegetables, 1 T. per student
  - Fruit cups, no added sugar, ½ cup serving
  - Low-fat pudding cups, ½ cup serving
  - Pretzels, crackers, 1 oz portion
  - Vanilla wafers, animal crackers, 1 oz portion
  - String cheese, cheese sticks, 1 oz portion

We appreciate your support in ensuring our kids have healthy food throughout their school day so they are better equipped to learn and develop life-long healthy eating habits.



## VOLUNTEERS

Parents are welcome and encouraged to volunteer at Steck Elementary. Most teachers begin scheduling parent volunteers the third or fourth week of school to allow for classroom rituals and routines to be established. Please read about the process for volunteers by visiting: <http://volunteerservices.dpsk12.org/volunteer-at-dps/volunteer-process/>

We will be using [signup.com](http://signup.com) this year to organize volunteer schedules.

## VISITS/VISITORS

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit and volunteer at Steck Elementary. For safety and security purposes, all visitors must stop at the Office to sign in and pick up a VISITOR sticker or badge. This is a DPS policy requirement as we are responsible for the safety of everyone in our building. Students are not allowed to bring students from other schools (e.g. friends, brothers, sisters or cousins) to visit due to district insurance regulations.

## CONFERENCES

If you wish to meet with a teacher, please contact the teacher in advance to schedule a time convenient to both of you. **Teachers use time before school for planning and collaboration. Please respect this time.** There are scheduled Parent/Teacher conferences twice each year. Most teachers hold conferences before and after school during a two – three week window.

## STECK STAR-LIGHTS (E-News)

An e-newsletter with important information about Steck happenings, activities and upcoming events will be sent to all parents with email addresses listed in Infinite Campus (DPS's student database). Please make sure we have updated email addresses at all times. In an attempt to minimize our carbon footprint, we limit the number of print documents sent home with students so please review this important electronic communication each week to stay informed and up to date.

## FRIDAY FOLDER

Each child at Steck Elementary is given a **Blue** "FRIDAY FOLDER" that they bring home each week. It contains your child's scored or graded school work for that week. General information and announcements are distributed electronically through our weekly newsletter. Newsletter documents are archived on the Steck Elementary website under the Communications tab.

Time sensitive announcements are email "blasted" to parents, so [please make sure that the office has your current email address.](#) If you are not receiving our Newsletter every Friday, please contact the office so that we can correct this since it is our primary source of communication.

## WEBSITE

The Steck Elementary Web Site is <http://steck.dpsk12.org>. It contains current information regarding the school including a calendar of events that is updated regularly. Friday e-newsletters are also posted on the web site. Meeting agendas and minutes from the Collaborative School Committee (CSC) and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) will be posted after they have been approved – usually at the following monthly meeting.

## PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE):** Full Day ECE is offered at Steck Elementary for children four years old by October 1st on a space available basis.

**ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE:** The English as a Second Language (ESL) Program provides English language development instruction for individuals and small groups of students for whom English is not their native language.

**GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM:** Steck is committed to providing a rigorous learning environment that meets the needs of and appropriately challenges all students, including identified gifted and advanced learners. Steck's Gifted and Talented (GT) teacher supports both staff and students through identification, "push-in" and "pull-out" teaching models, and consultation with teachers to develop effective classroom differentiation. Our goal is to create a continuum of services that meets individual student needs both academically and affectively. As part of this continuum, Steck offers a variety of enrichment opportunities to extend students' learning beyond the school day, including Destination Imagination, Denver Public School's spelling bee, Shakespeare, and others.

## CELEBRATIONS

**DISTRIBUTION OF INVITATIONS:** *Please do not hand out party invitations at school.* The Directory has addresses for most of the students.

**BIRTHDAYS:** Birthdays are celebrated on the child's birthday in Kindergarten. First grade through 5th grade students celebrate birthdays on a monthly basis. Students with birthdays in a given month often help plan the class celebration. Grade levels celebrations are short, usually 15-20 minutes at the end of the day. Store-bought treats are recommended due to allergy accommodations. If homemade treats are

brought in a detailed ingredient list must be provided. Please note the new nutrition guidelines provided by the food services department:  
<http://foodservices.dpsk12.org/school-wellness.php>

**COFFEE WITH THE PRINCIPAL:** Morning coffee meetings with the principal to discuss school based topics are held throughout the year. Watch for email notifications of these events.

**HALLOWEEN:** ECE-5th Grade students may wear their costumes to school for an all school parade in the morning. Weather permitting; we meet outside at grade level tables for breakfast treats after the parade.

**VALENTINE'S DAY:** The Steck Elementary Valentine's Day activities usually include classroom parties and decorating boxes or bags to receive valentines by student's classmates. Room parents help coordinate events.

**SCIENCE FAIR:** Students participate in the DPS Science Fair, creating investigations, experiments and displays demonstrating their knowledge of the scientific process. Families come to Steck Elementary to see all the wonderful, creative ideas and take part in having the children explain their project.

**FIELD DAY:** Our Physical Education Teacher coordinates field day held in the spring with all students (ECE-5) competing in a variety of fun filled events.

**END OF YEAR PICNIC:** Each grade level will celebrate the end of the year with a picnic in a neighboring park. Students usually walk to a nearby park. More information will be available through your room parent.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES**

**CSC: *WHAT IS IT?*** CSC is the acronym for the DPS Collaborative School Committee. Steck Elementary CSC is an elected body of community representatives, parents, teachers, and staff who work together to give input regarding the short and long term goals of the school. The CSC gives input regarding school policies, assists in the development of the School Improvement Plan, approves the budget and makes a variety of policy decisions that affect the school. In addition, sub-committees may include non-CSC members that are under the direction of the CSC. These committees may include, but are not limited to, the Technology Committee, Character Education, as well as other committees created to address special areas of need. CSC meetings are held once per month after school. Meetings are open to the community. Check the calendar on the Steck website for dates and times. If you wish to bring an issue or concern to the CSC, submit your topic to the CSC Chairperson at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting. Elections for CSC vacancies are held in the Spring.

**Steck PTSA:** *What do we do?* PTSA stands for Parent Teacher Student Association. Our goal is to continuously improve our school through creating and strengthening the community of parents, teachers and students. We are dedicated to fostering a strong learning environment for our students. We do this through events, volunteering and fundraising. There are several ways we raise funds: a direct donation campaign called the "Annual Fund" which kicks off in the Fall, with a series of giving parties, Book Fair, Dine Out nights, grocery card and bag donations and our largest event, the annual Steck Auction which happens in the Spring. Through our fundraising efforts we support many programs including:

- Para-Educators and intervention teachers
- "Mini Grants" for teachers to use for classroom education, field trips, materials, etc.
- Library and classroom reading materials
- Reading Intervention professional
- The continual upgrading and beautification of our school grounds
- The creation and distribution of the school newsletter and electronic communication
- Before and after school tutoring

In addition to our fundraising efforts, we coordinate and host many community-building events including Family Reading Night, Arts Night and Science Fair. The Steck PTSA also coordinates and provides the after school enrichment program. By becoming a PTSA member, you automatically help your child as a portion of your dues stays at Steck Elementary and supports its programs.

**ANNUAL FUND PROGRAM:** A direct donation campaign that encourages each family to donate one dollar for every day of the year. This amounts to a suggested donation of \$365.00 per student. The Annual Fund Program consists of giving parties hosted by Steck families as well as an on-line giving option. The Annual Fund Program funds are used exclusively to keep the student/teacher ratio as low as possible by providing funds to support additional paraprofessional hours.

**BOOK FAIR:** The Book Fair held in the fall is an opportunity for families have to browse and buy books with 30-35% of each dollar spent staying at Steck Elementary. The Book Fair is held in conjunction with Family Reading night.

**FAMILY READING NIGHT:** Family Reading Night is a family event during the fall celebrating the joys of reading. Students listen to stories and make crafts while enjoying a snack. Family Reading Night is held in conjunction with the Book Fair.

**ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS:** *Discovery Link* offers a variety of after school activities. Recent offerings have included Spanish, Tae Kwon Do, yoga, tennis, golf, visual arts, bike skills and Kids Stage. Enrichment sessions typically run 6 to 8 weeks with offerings changing each session. Information on enrichments is available on our website and in the Friday e-newsletter. After school music programs will also be offered this year by our music teacher.

**ROOM PARENTS:** Each general classroom at Steck has one to two room parent volunteers who act as parent liaisons between the teachers, PTSA and parents. An overall Room Parent Coordinator sits on the PTSA board and provides direction to the room parents for such things as the Annual Fund, Talent/Art Show, Haunting and Steck Fun Run. The room parents help to support the teachers in organizing classroom activities and volunteers throughout the year. Room Parent is a great way to get involved with your child's classroom and help promote community at Steck!

**ANNUAL FUNDRAISING AUCTION:** This annual auction is the PTSA's major fundraiser. Both live and silent auction items are collected from the Steck Elementary parent and business community. This always fun, adults only event lets the parents and teachers enjoy each other's company while raising needed funds for our children's education.

**ARTS NIGHT:** Each Spring the PTSA coordinates a school wide Arts show. In addition to visual arts, some years have included try-outs for a Talent show. This event will showcase various forms of Steck students' talent. Come be amazed at what our children can do!

**BOXTOPS:** Box Tops provide Steck Elementary with additional funds for just a little effort. Box Tops for education are small coupons found on the boxes of General Mills product including their cereals, Gogurt, Yoplait, Fruit Gushers, frostings and cake mixes, as well as many other products. Please clip all box top coupons and send them in with your child. Each Classroom will have a collection area for the box tops. This is fun for the kids and a NO COST fundraiser for the school.

**DINE OUT NIGHTS:** Steck Elementary partners with local restaurants throughout the year to arrange a special evening for families. On the designated evenings, families can dine at the specified restaurant and a portion of the proceeds go directly to Steck. These events are a great way to support local businesses and the school. Look for details in the PTA News and on our website.

**GROCERY CARDS & GROCERY BAG GIVE-BACKS:** Families have the option of purchasing a grocery card to their favorite store. The card is reusable and can be reloaded as often as needed. Each time the card is used a portion is donated back to Steck. In addition, we participate in bag credit donation programs at other local grocery stores. Each time you bring your reusable bags to the store you can donate your bag credit to Steck. Currently we have partnerships with King Soopers, Safeway, Target and Whole Foods and continue to expand. This is an easy way to support Steck. Look for details in the Friday e-newsletter and on our website.

**TEACHER APPRECIATION:** We have a whole school of wonderfully talented teachers who work very hard with our children. The Spring Teacher Appreciation Week includes a luncheon and other activities. It's our way of saying thank you!

**PHONE DIRECTORY:** The Steck Elementary directory is a resource provided by PTSA. It is a helpful tool for keeping in touch with other Steck Elementary parents, as DPS will not give out phone numbers without permission. The online directory is only available to Steck Elementary families via a secure login through the Steck PTSA website and is not for any other distribution. A permission form was distributed to all families during registration.