



# Parent/Student Handbook

2023-2024

## [Arabic Translation](#)

1651 S. Dahlia St.  
Denver, CO 80222  
Office: 720-424-7700  
Attendance Line: 720-424-7777

[www.dpsk12.org](http://www.dpsk12.org)  
[Ellis Website](#)

## Mission Statement

**At Ellis, we are learners. We celebrate our mistakes, because that is when we do our best learning and unlearning. Our school prioritizes the importance of educating and supporting the needs of the whole child, and believes that actively confronting all systems of oppression are necessary for students to thrive in and outside of our school walls. We acknowledge that families are the experts on the strengths and needs of their children, and we commit to working collaboratively to ensure each individual student experiences a joyful, safe, and engaging school experience.**

# Welcome

Dear Ellis Elementary Families,

Welcome to Ellis Elementary, home of the Eagles. Our teachers and staff are committed to providing a safe, stimulating, challenging and friendly learning environment that encourages students to reach their full potential academically and socially. We pride ourselves on shaping global citizens who learn at an early age the importance of taking action to help others.

The purpose of this handbook is to give you much of the information you will need throughout your journey at Ellis. Within this handbook you will find a range of information covering everything from attendance to emergency procedures. Please review the handbook carefully and refer back to it when you have questions.

Elementary school is a special place for children. It is a time filled with learning, exploration, excitement, growth, and so much more. However, we cannot do it alone here at Ellis. Teaching your children is a collaborative effort between home and school. We appreciate your partnership and all that you do to support your children and the Ellis learning community.

Respectfully,

Jamie Roybal, Principal  
Kimberly Ulery, Assistant Principal

## SCHOOL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

### Phone Numbers

Ellis Elementary Attendance Line	720-424-7777
Ellis Elementary Office Number	720-424-7700
Ellis Elementary FAX Number	720-424-7725
DPS Weather Hotline	720-423-3200
Transportation Hotline	303-825-2611

### School Hours: ECE –5th Grade

7:15 - 7:30 a.m.	Soft start - students are greeted and enter at their grade level entry
7:30 - 7:45 a.m.	Breakfast in the Classroom
2:30 p.m.	Student Dismissal

### School Hours/Bell Schedule

- Office Hours: 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- Lunch/Recess 10:15 a.m.-1:00 p.m.\*Please check with your teachers as we stagger lunches and rotate cafeteria and playground times.
- Door Beel Policy–All parents/guests must use the main entrance to enter the building. After proper identification, parents/guests will be “buzzed” in and need to sign in at the main office.
- Students will be dismissed by their teachers at 2:30 p.m at their grade level entry/exit.
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### Emergency Contacts

It is **imperative** that additional addresses and phone numbers, other than the home address and telephone number, are on file at school for emergencies and updated in Infinite Campus (IC). These emergency numbers will be used only in the event that a parent or guardian is not available. Also, please notify the school immediately of any change of home address, telephone numbers, or names of the adults allowed to pick up your child.

### Visiting

We welcome parent visits. Please arrange classroom visits ahead of time, so the teacher can be prepared for your arrival. When visiting Ellis, everyone is required to first report to the main office to sign-in and to get a visitor sticker to wear before going to classrooms.

### Classroom Interruptions

At Ellis we value every instructional minute; therefore, we try to keep classroom interruptions to a minimum. If you need to bring something for your child or to leave a message for your child,

please bring it to the school office. The student will be notified that there is something for him/her to pick up. Please do not go directly to your child's classroom.

## **Attendance**

Students are expected to be present every day for school, except when ill. Prompt and regular attendance at school helps develop good personal and academic habits. All absences and tardies are recorded in Infinite Campus. The only legal reasons for excusing an absence or tardy are: illness, medical appointments, religious holidays, or a death in the family. Absences and tardies for any other reason are recorded as unexcused.

## **Absences**

If your child is ill or will not be in school for any reason, a parent or guardian must notify the school. Please use our attendance hotline number to notify the school that your student will be absent, providing your child's first and last name, teacher name and grade level.

State law places the responsibility of regular attendance upon the parent/guardian. Each absence must be confirmed by a phone call from the parent/guardian stating the reason for the absence. If your child is sent home during the school day for a fever, they must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

## **Tardies**

Students who arrive after 8:00 am are considered tardy and are required to check into the office for admission to school.

## **Steps Followed When There Are Attendance Concerns**

- **Step 1** --Teacher will contact parent/guardian after 3-5 absences (excused or unexcused), especially when absences are consecutive.
- **Step 2** -- After 5 but before 10 absences (excused and unexcused), the parent/guardian will be contacted by a member of the Attendance team (Principal, Assistant Principal, Mental Health Support Staff) to begin discussing and planning for improved attendance.
- **Step 3** -- When the student accumulates 10 or more absences (excused and unexcused), a meeting will be scheduled with parent/guardian and the Attendance team for more in-depth attempts at improving student's attendance. The principal has the ultimate authority to accept or decline parent-provided excuses. An attendance contract will be developed with the parent/guardian. After the 10th absence for illness, even if non-consecutive, or if a student has a high number of tardies, verification from a doctor for all subsequent illness-related absences/tardies may be required.
- **Step 4** -- The Student Support Team will meet with the parent for in-depth planning aimed at attendance improvement.

- **Step 5** -- Notarized Truancy Notice will be sent to parent/guardian warning of possible court action if no improvement takes place. A Truancy Court filing will occur as a last resort.

**Early Sign out:** Come to the office and sign out your child. Students will not be permitted to leave campus during the school day unless signed out and accompanied by a parent or designated guardian (who is listed on the emergency card). We will not call students out of class until you arrive for pickup.

### **Custodial Arrangements**

If there are special circumstances involving court-ordered custodial arrangements, such as restraining orders, please notify the school office immediately. It is important to provide the school with a copy of any orders regarding your child's custody, which may impact your child's safety while at school.

If duplication of report cards and/or other information is needed for joint custody arrangements, please notify your child's teacher. Also, please confirm that the office has both addresses listed on the registration.

### **Bicycles, Skateboards, Scooters**

Students who bring bicycles, skateboards, or scooters to school, are responsible for them at all times. The school cannot assume responsibility for these. Bicycles are to be locked to the bike rack on the playground. Bicycles must be walked on and off school property during school hours. Parents are responsible for ensuring that students understand the rules of the road and bike safety.

### **Before & After School Rules**

When arriving at school, all students should report to their grade level entry doors. We ask that all cell phones remain put away during school hours. (7:30-2:30). We are not responsible for the security of your child's cell phone. If a child is caught using their cell phone during school hours, the teacher or office staff will take the phone and hold it until the end of the day. Parents will be contacted and the phone will be returned at the end of the day. If this is a recurring issue, there will be a meeting with the student's parents to discuss the cell phone. All toys, dolls, cars, Pokemon cards, spinners, etc... must stay at home.

Students who are not picked up promptly at 2:30 will be brought to the school office by 2:45 pm. In cases where a student is left on campus for more than thirty minutes after school has been dismissed, the school office may contact the Denver Police Department and Safety and

Security for assistance and next steps. **After 3:00, there is no supervision and our school office closes.**

## **Weather**

When hot, rainy, or cold weather occurs, students should come to school prepared with appropriate clothing for the weather. Barring extreme weather, students will play and eat outside every day. Please remember that weather can change dramatically over the course of the school day. Additional clothing may be needed, such as sweatshirts, jackets, rain gear, and appropriate footwear. **Please label** these items with your **child's last name** as extra clothing may be removed over the course of the day. Students are encouraged to wear hats and sunscreen on hot and sunny days.

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## **School Closures/Early Closure/ Bad weather dismissal**

The decision regarding school closures, delayed start, and early closures are made by the Superintendent and appropriate authorities.

Information regarding school closures, delayed openings, and early closures will be posted on the front page of the DPS website: [www.dpsk12.org](http://www.dpsk12.org) and announced on social media. Please do not call the school.

In the event that severe weather occurs during dismissal, students will remain in the school until the weather subsides.

If a Heat Day is called, you will be notified via social media and DPS of an early release.

## **Weather Delay**

When DPS announces a Delayed Start, every DPS school will start 2 hours later. This means that the Ellis staff will begin greeting students at 9:15a.m. at their grade level entry. Dismissal will remain the same at 2:30 p.m.

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## **Lost and Found/Personal Property**

Hats, coats, lunch boxes, and other personal property **should be marked with the child's last name to aid in their return if lost.** Students should inquire promptly about lost items.

Encourage your child to check the Lost and Found hooks in the hallway outside the auditorium for any lost items. Unclaimed property will be donated to local shelters or charities at the end of each trimester.

The school cannot assume responsibility for personal belongings, toys, equipment, or electronics that are not permitted at school. Items brought to school, without teacher permission, will be held in the school office until a parent can pick them up.

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## **Emergency Plan**

Ellis Elementary School has a very thorough emergency plan in place for a variety of scenarios including a disaster, intruder, or lockdown. This emergency plan has been developed by Ellis in conjunction with Denver Unified School District, Denver Police and Fire Department. Each employee of the school has been trained in the event of an emergency so that he/she will be prepared to carry out his/her responsibilities. Each year the plan is reviewed, revised, and the school personnel conduct drills to practice all steps and phases of the emergency plan.

## **Emergency Procedures**

In the event of an emergency situation (fire, earthquake, intruder, etc.) please follow the important steps listed below:

- Be available by phone, cell phone, and/or email. **There will be an “all call” from the school district with further, specific directions** as well as notifications by email, Facebook, and on the website if possible.
- **Do not call the school office or district.** We will need to keep all phone lines open for emergency communication. If your student has a cell phone, please do not call the cell phone. When possible, we will have your student contact you.
- Do not come to the school until you receive directions from the district office. When you are directed to come to the school (or another designated area), please follow the directions for reunification. There will be designated areas for pick-up and a procedure for checking out your child. **Please come prepared with identification. Students will not be released to you if you do not have your ID.**
- If an emergency situation should occur while your child is at school, **please remain calm.** DPS and Ellis Elementary School, in conjunction with Denver Police and Fire Department, have procedures in place to address a variety of situations.

## **Ellis Discipline Guiding Principles**

Ellis elementary is dedicated to maintaining a positive learning environment for all students. Ellis is a school where we believe in the collaborative responsibility of teachers, staff, students and families to contribute to the learning and development of all students. We believe that all

students can learn when they are provided with a safe and nurturing learning environment where everyone is treated with respect.

Ellis Elementary follows the Denver Public School's guiding principles outlined in the district's policies JK and JK-R

[https://www.dpsk12.org/wp-content/uploads/JK-R-Student\\_Conduct-Discipline\\_Procedures\\_English.pdf](https://www.dpsk12.org/wp-content/uploads/JK-R-Student_Conduct-Discipline_Procedures_English.pdf), which lay out:

- **Prevention first.** School discipline is best accomplished by preventing misbehavior before it occurs and using effective interventions after it occurs.
- **Relationships are key.** School safety and academic success are formed and strengthened when all school staff and personnel build positive relationships with students and are actively engaged in their lives and learning.
- **Minimizing suspensions and expulsions.** Effective school discipline maximizes the amount of time students spend learning and minimizes the amount of time students cause disruption or are removed from their classrooms due to misbehavior.
- **Discipline as learning.** School discipline should be reasonable, timely, fair, age-appropriate, and should match the severity of the student's misbehavior. School discipline that is paired with meaningful instruction and guidance offers students an opportunity to learn from their mistakes and contribute to the school community and is more likely to result in getting the student re-engaged in learning.
- **Graduated interventions.** Effective discipline is built on consistent and effective classroom management and is supported by a positive school and classroom climate. The vast majority of disciplinary issues are addressed at the classroom level by teachers; however, behaviors that cannot be addressed at this level should receive more targeted and intensive interventions, as determined by a team through the MTSS Process.
- **Eliminating institutional barriers.** The District serves a diverse community. In order to serve all students and to prepare them to be members of an increasingly diverse community, school and staff must build cultural competence. Ellis will work to eliminate any institutional racism and any other discrimination that presents barriers to success.
- **Protecting early educational experiences.** Positive experiences in school and with teachers, beginning with the earliest experiences in school, lay a foundation for engagement with and connection to school throughout a student's academic career. These early experiences have the most critical impact on students' and families' perceptions and trust of school and teachers and are fundamental to the development of the social and academic skills necessary to support them through school and beyond. Removal from school during this time period negatively impacts a student's opportunities for success, and will not be part of the discipline plan at Ellis.
- **Reintegration procedures**



- o Parent, teacher, student, school leader conference to establish/promote understanding of expectations and needed supports to put in place

## **Positive Behavior Supports**

At Ellis Elementary, we understand the importance of utilizing proactive strategies to address student misbehavior.

- Responsive Classroom to include community circles and a classroom Cozy Corner
- Morning meeting and closing circle that incorporates the Harmony Curriculum and classroom routines and rituals
- Use of calm voice when addressing student behavior
- Consistency with stated expectations and follow through with what they say they will/will not do.
- Take a “teacher moment” to regulate adult behavior and avoid engaging in unproductive power struggles, especially when emotions and behaviors are elevated
- Avoidance of calling student behavior out in front of all students
- Redirecting students when misbehavior occurs with clear expectations
- Implementing interventions and other strategies to set students up for success
- Providing positive feedback and praise when students follow class and school-wide expectations
- Utilizing a classroom behavior management system that positively rewards students when they follow expectations and holds them accountable when they do not follow expectations.
- Communicating with parents in a timely manner when behavior concerns first arise, and follow up with families to share progress notes.
- Individual teacher reflections on culture classroom and community during coaching meetings
- Daily TSEAL learning in classrooms for 20 minutes, with student and teacher learning opportunities to co-create classroom communities

We encourage and support students to self-advocate for their needs at all times. Students should demonstrate awareness around their growth as a learner by demonstrating the following:

- Following classroom rules and school-wide expectations at all times
- Keeping their hands and feet to themselves at all times
- Being respectful of all students, staff, and themselves at all times
- Using kind words in all interactions with others
- Seeking out the help of an adult when problems arise
- Communicating issues to adults to avoid escalation
- Communicating with their teacher or other staff member when they need a break, or if they need space to avoid conflicts.

## **Bullying**

- Ellis uses the Anti-Bullying Alliance's definition of Bullying: *the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.*
- Ellis prohibits bullying, retaliation against those reporting bullying and making knowingly false accusations of bullying behavior.
- The Ellis staff implements the Student Perception Survey each year to monitor students' perception of the overall school environment, and specifically on bullying behaviors and feeling safe.
- The Ellis staff has been trained in Responsive Classroom, implements Morning Meetings and Closing Circle as a way to build community and identify bullying preventive responsibilities of each student and the class community
- Ellis students are encouraged to report any bullying behavior to the supervising adult immediately, whether outside at recess, in Specials, their classroom or the lunchroom.
- All Bullying reports are followed-up with a complete investigation to include bully(s), victim(s), and bystanders.
- Parents/guardians are informed when their student is involved in a bullying incident and engaged in the restorative practices in an effort to:
  - change the behavior of students engaged in bullying
  - support targets of bullying in ways that avoid increasing their likelihood of discipline
  - support witnesses of bullying

## **Discovery Link**

Free after school program to all families of students registered in Discovery Link.

- [Program Information](#)
- [Returning Family Registration](#)
- [New Family Registration](#)
- [Family Resources](#)

## **Health Concerns**

Our full-time school nurse, Annie Hegland, is happy to confer with parents regarding health concerns. She does not diagnose illness, but may send a student home after first contacting the parent or guardian when such action is judged necessary for the good of the child and/or for the

protection of others. The school asks to be notified immediately if your child has a communicable disease such as strep throat or pink eye.

## **Medication**

Students are not to carry medication at school. If medication is needed, it must be brought to the office by the student's parent/ guardian and kept in the school office. All medication must be: *Accompanied by a written message from the doctor detailing dosage, method and time schedule by which the medication is to be taken.*

## **Allergies**

Ellis Elementary has several students who have life-threatening allergies, especially to peanuts. If you provide your student with a home lunch you may want to consider providing foods without nuts as a courtesy to classmates with allergies.

## **BEING AN ELLIS PARENT**

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### **Communicator:**

**Students who are COMMUNICATORS express their ideas by speaking, drawing and writing. They can also communicate using mathematical language and symbols. They also communicate in more than one language. They are good listeners as well. Being a good listener is an important part of communicating with others.**

*How can parents help to develop students who are Communicators at home?*

- When working on mathematics homework, encourage your child to explain his/her answer to you orally or by drawing a picture.
- Ask your child thought provoking questions and encourage them to discuss them with you. For example:
  - Is there anything you cannot buy with money?
  - Should you get an allowance? Why or why not?
- Work with your child to improve his/her listening skills by modeling active listening.

### **Risk Taker:**

**Students who are RISK-TAKERS try new things and consider new ideas. They try to solve problems in a lot of ways. They have the bravery to tell people what they think is right.**

*How can parents help to develop students who are Risk-Takers at home?*

- If your child is feeling uneasy about trying something, encourage them to attempt it and then reflect on both whether they liked the activity and how it felt to try something new.
- Your child might want to set some short-term goals. Consider activities that make him/her nervous. What are realistic goals for the week? Your child might set a goal to:
  - Offer an opinion in class

- Spend one recess with someone they might not usually play with
- Order something different from the lunch menu
- Try an activity they haven't tried before
- Be careful to explain to your child the difference between being a risk-taker by trying new things and doing dangerous things.

**Principled:**

**Students who are PRINCIPLED have a sense of fairness and are honest with themselves and with others. They understand that sometimes there are rules and they follow them. They have an understanding of moral reasoning.**

*How can parents help to develop students who are Principled at home?*

- Involve your child in deciding on the rules for a game or activity and then ensure that they stick to the ones that have been decided upon.
- Encourage your child to play games that involve teams. Discuss with your child the qualities of a team player. What sort of person would they want on their team?

**Thinker:**

**Students who are THINKERS work to solve problems independently. They can imagine many solutions to a question or challenge. Thinkers make good decisions and can predict the outcomes of their actions. They think creatively and critically.**

*How can parents help to develop students who are Thinkers at home?*

- Encourage your child to try to think of solutions to problems independently.
- Pose different real-life problems and questions to your child:
  - "I'm not sure how to arrange the glasses so they can all fit in the cupboard."
  - "I wonder how much the groceries in the cart will cost... how can we make an estimate?"
  - "We need enough cookies for the 25 people in your class. What kind of change should we make to our recipe?"
- Ask your children questions when they are working on a problem:
  - " Do you have any ideas about how we might begin?"
  - " How can we do this differently?"
  - " I had never thought of that. Tell me more about it."
  - " What other ways can we show that?"
  - " Why do you think that?"
  - " How did you figure that out?"
- Give your child an opportunity to think; reflection time is crucial for developing thinking skills.

**Open Minded:**

**An OPEN-MINDED student knows that all people are different. They listen to the points of view of others and consider many possibilities before making a decision. They celebrate the differences that make all people unique.**

*How can parents help to develop this Open-Minded trait at home?*

- Encourage your child to try new things – new foods, new games and new activities.
- Expose your child to different festivals, celebrations and traditions and be sure to present them in a non-judgmental way.

- Encourage your child to really listen to others when they speak.
- Introduce literature about many different cultures into your home library. Be sure that it is appropriate and reflects the culture in an appropriate way.

### **Balanced:**

**Students who are BALANCED are healthy and are aware that eating properly and exercising is important in their lives. They understand that it is important to have a balance between the physical and mental aspects of their bodies. They spend time doing many different things. They balance work and play.**

*How can parents help to develop students who are well-balanced at home?*

- Encourage your child to participate in a wide variety of structured activities.
- During less structured time, also be aware of the activities that your child is participating in. Too much time in front of the computer or television is not desirable. Generally active kids should take time for quiet reading or reflection; students who spend a lot of time drawing or reading, should be encouraged to also exercise and play.
- Discuss the food groups with your child. Spend a few minutes during a mealtime deciding if what your family is eating is balanced.
- Spend time as a parent or family doing many different things.

### **Reflective:**

**Students who are REFLECTIVE know what they are good at and what they're not. They make changes where they can. They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and consider their personal strengths and weaknesses in a constructive manner.**

*How can parents help to develop students who are Reflective at home?*

- Spend some time reviewing their report card with them. They should have the opportunity to look at this document and consider it as well. Discuss it with them and truly consider their thoughts on their strengths and areas for improvement.
- Consider the goals that your child could set for the next term. Make a list not only of the goals, but of specific actions that can be taken to achieve these goals. You might want to list action that your child will take independently as well as action parents will take to support them. For example, if one of the goals your child sets for herself is to improve her writing, her action might be to keep a journal and write in it for at least 10 minutes each night. As a parent, you might decide that the two of you will participate in shared writing, for 30 minutes each week and produce a book of narratives together.
- Consider non-academic strengths and areas for improvement. Set goals and create an action list.

### **Caring:**

**Students who are CARING want people around them to be happy and are sensitive to their needs. They think about the world and work to take care of their community and the environment. They remember to treat others how they themselves would like to be treated.**

*How can parents help to develop students who are Caring at home?*

- Role model the caring behavior you would like to see in your child all the time. Your child has big eyes and ears and notices everything you do. Using kind words, helping people without being asked, being an active listener all show your child that you care about people. Even a simple thing, like holding a door for someone, shows your child that you are aware of others around you and want to help them.

- Think about how your family can get involved with community organizations.
- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Compost
- Smile.
- After reading a book, spend some time considering how the people in the book acted. Was someone in the book caring? All of the time or just some of the time? Were all of the characters in the book caring or just some of them?

### **Inquirer:**

**Students who are INQUIRERS are curious about the world. They can conduct research independently. They love learning and discovering new things and will carry this love of learning with them throughout life.**

*How can parents help to develop students who are Inquirers at home?*

- Encourage areas of your child’s interest by visiting the library to borrow books that explore these topics.
- Develop an understanding of the Internet. Work with your son or daughter when the Internet is being used and try to instill the understanding that some Internet sites are not reputable.
- Model being an inquirer. Admit when you don’t know the answer to a problem or a question and seek out answers in front of your child.

### **Knowledgeable:**

**Students who are KNOWLEDGEABLE have explored relevant and significant concepts and can remember what they have learned. They can draw on this knowledge and apply it in new situations.**

*How can parents help to develop students who are Knowledgeable at home?*

- Encourage your child to read books at home that correspond with the topics being covered in school. In particular, books in their mother tongue will help your child make more meaningful, lasting connections to what is being taught in their classroom in English.
- Ask your child about what they are learning in school and engage them in conversations about it:
  - “Why do you think that is an important thing to know about?”
  - “Can you think of anything happening in the world today that might be similar to that aspect of history?”
- Foster any area that your child expresses an interest in with books and activities, but also be sure to encourage them to explore other areas.
- Encourage your child to become familiar with current events and to read the newspaper and listen to the news when appropriate.
- Explore a topic and learn something new together.

### **Volunteers**

- Adults who would like to volunteer regularly in the classroom will need to apply through the district and pass a district background check.
  - **Volunteer Services** 1350 E. 33rd Ave Denver, CO 80205-3924.
  - Tel: 720-424-8245 Fax: 720-424-8266
  - [Volunteer\\_Services@dpsk12.org](mailto:Volunteer_Services@dpsk12.org)