



“Every Child Learning Every Day”

Prairie Elementary School Handbook 2026-2027

Principal: Jon Rehder

Secretary: Jennifer Riener

Phone # 962-3521

1916 East Street

Cottonwood, ID 83522



PRAIRIE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STAFF

• Jon Rehder	Superintendent/Principal
• Megan Frei	Kindergarten
• Tiffanee Wernhoff	First Grade
• Ashle Sowa	First Grade
• Andrea Brannan	Second Grade
• Cami Shears	Second Grade
• Olivia Arnzen	Third Grade
• Julie Schumacher	Third Grade
• Becky Higgins	Fourth Grade
• Allison Pape	Fourth Grade
• Kristi Bruegeman	Fifth Grade
• Micah Weber	Fifth Grade
• Kim Schumacher	Sixth Grade
• Brittany Stewart	Sixth Grade
• Shane Chapman	Art
• Isabella Baldwin	Music/Band
• Garrett Beckman	PE
• Rachel Hernandez	Special Education
• Vikki Riener	Special Education
• Ryan Hasselstrom	Technology
• Jennifer Riener	Secretary/Food Service Director
• Shelley Schlader	School Counselor
• Vacant	School Nurse
• Maureen Munger	Librarian/Testing Coordinator
• Lisa Riener	Paraprofessional
• Debbie Schmidt	Paraprofessional
• Danica Seubert	Paraprofessional
• Lexi Schumacher	Paraprofessional
• Whitney Westhoff	Paraprofessional
• Stephanie Riener	Paraprofessional
• Cara Duman	Paraprofessional
• Amber Nuxoll	Head Cook
• Hallie Michels	Cook
• Shelly Sanford	Custodian
• Carly Behler	District Clerk/Business Manager
• Rick Forsmann	Maintenance Supervisor
• David Shears	Transportation Supervisor
• Erin Shears	Center for Discovery

COTTONWOOD SD #242
2026-2027 SCHOOL CALENDAR

AUG 17-22 - IDAHO COUNTY FAIR
AUG 26-31 - TEACHER IN-SERVICE DAYS
SEPT 2 - FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
SEPT 7 - NO SCHOOL LABOR DAY
OCT 9 - TEACHER IN-SERVICE DAY - No School
OCT 23 - END OF FIRST QUARTER (36 DAYS)
OCT 26-28 - PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES 3:30 - 7:00
OCT 26-29 - REPORT CARDS GO OUT
OCT 30 - NO SCHOOL
NOV 25-27 - NO SCHOOL - THANKSGIVING BREAK
DEC 21-JAN 1 - NO SCHOOL - WINTER BREAK
JAN 15 - END OF SECOND QUARTER (46 DAYS)
JAN 18- NO SCHOOL - MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY
JAN 20-21- REPORT CARDS GO OUT
FEB 12 - NO SCHOOL - TEACHER IN-SERVICE DAY
FEB 15 - NO SCHOOL - PRESIDENTS DAY
MAR 19 - END OF THIRD QUARTER (42 DAYS)
MAR 22-24 - PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES 3:30 - 7:00
MAR 22-25 - REPORT CARDS GO OUT
MARCH 26 - NO SCHOOL
MAR 29-APR 2 - NO SCHOOL - SPRING BREAK
APRIL 30 - NO SCHOOL - TEACHER FLEX DAY
MAY 21 - NO SCHOOL - TEACHER FLEX DAY
MAY 31 - NO SCHOOL - MEMORIAL DAY
JUNE 3 - LAST DAY OF SCHOOL (45 DAYS)
JUNE 4 - HS GRADUATION/TEACHER IN-SERVICE
REPORT CARDS GET SENT HOME WITH
STUDENTS

1st Semester = 82 days taught/2nd Semester = 87 days taught

PRAIRIE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A NOTE TO PARENTS

This handbook is intended as a guide to rules, activities and opportunities for students and their parents. Much of the information in the handbook is condensed from district and state policy or taken from classroom rules and regulations. Our rules and policies are not meant to unduly restrict freedoms, but to help provide a pleasant, productive learning environment to help teach responsibility and acceptable social behavior. We welcome parent input concerning rules and policies and also our overall management and operations. Parents are invited to visit the school, observe classes and eat lunch with us. Please pre-arrange your visit with your child's teacher, and check in with the school secretary or principal when you do come to visit. Parents wishing to volunteer at the school need to talk to the principal. For many reasons we ask that you do not bring your preschool aged children when you come to volunteer or spend the day in the classroom.



WELCOME TO PRAIRIE ELEMENTARY

Prairie Elementary is a warm and friendly school for children in Kindergarten through grade six. Early childhood classes are also offered for students who qualify. A well-qualified staff is on hand to help students learn. Special staff members provide help to students with special needs.

RESPECT POLICY

RESPECT IS THE CORNERSTONE OF ALL OUR INTERACTIONS AND BEHAVIORS. WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE DIGNITY AND WORTH OF ONE ANOTHER, AND STRIVE NEVER TO DIMINISH ANOTHER BY OUR CONDUCT OR OUR ATTITUDES. *Our students practice the 3 R's on a daily basis. They are responsible, respectful, and ready each and every day!*

OUR MISSION: We will create, deliver and responsibly manage opportunities for all children to learn every day and become contributing citizens. These opportunities will be developed in partnership with the community and will be provided in a safe and supportive environment utilizing current technology.

DEFINITION OF MISCONDUCT; *Any physical, spoken or written act of abuse, violence, harassment, hazing, intimidation or extortion, the use of vulgarity or cursing, making remarks of a personally destructive nature toward any other person, and any restriction or prevention of free movement of an individual. This prohibition*

applies whether the act is deliberate, intentional or unintentional or is directed toward an individual or group regarding race, color, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, political or religious ideology. Federal law and Idaho State rules and regulations will be adhered to.

EDUCATION, A COOPERATIVE VENTURE

Student/Teacher/Parent Compact

As students, teachers and parents we are reminded of the benefits and value of cooperative planning and combined efforts. When the student, teacher and parent all work together it is possible to achieve the maximum positive good from a student's educational experience. To increase the likelihood of your student's success, we have listed a Student/Teacher/Parent Compact for your review. Please take a few minutes to go over these items with your child and then take a few minutes to discuss these goals and guidelines with his or her teacher at any time.

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL:

I support and encourage student/parent/teacher compacts and partnerships. I will:

1. Provide an environment that permits positive communication between the student, parent and teacher.
2. Encourage teachers and parents to provide regular opportunities for practicing academics at school and at home.
3. Provide equal and fair opportunities to access staff and the opportunity to volunteer.

TEACHER:

I understand the importance of the school experience to every student and my position as a teacher and a role model. I agree to:

1. Be aware of your child's needs.
2. Communicate with you about your child's progress frequently.
3. Teach basic concepts and skills to your child to meet state student achievement standards.
4. Motivate and encourage your child to practice academics at home.
5. Hold parent/teacher conferences annually.
6. Deliver high quality curriculum and instruction.
7. Provide materials for home to enhance literacy and other academic subjects.

STUDENT:

It is important that I do my best. I know my parents and teachers want to help me, but I am the one who has to do the work. So, I will:

- Believe that I can and will learn.
- Be responsible for my behavior.
- Give work and school papers to my parent/caregiver.
- Pay attention and ask for help when needed.
- Complete class work on time and to the best of my ability.

PARENT/CAREGIVER:

I want my child to succeed. I will encourage him/her by doing the following:

- Encourage positive attitudes about school.
- Support the school discipline policy and school policies.



- Make sure my child attends school regularly.
 - ≥ my child to get enough sleep and to eat nutritious meals.
 - with my child a place and time to study and a daily reading time.

COTTONWOOD JOINT SCHOOL DISTRICT #242 STUDENT - PARENT HANDBOOK

Preschool. Although Prairie Elementary does not have a preschool program for all students, help is provided for those students with special needs who are enrolled in the private preschool program. Children must be at least three years old to qualify for this special assistance.

Preschool Screening. A special preschool screening is held during the year to screen students for school readiness and special needs. Parents with children who are three or more should take advantage of this screening.

Child Health Services. The school does not have a nurse on staff. The school can give students band-aids, ice packs, and any other minor medical attention with parent consent. If it is a major medical situation, parents will need to be notified immediately.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

Children may enroll for kindergarten if they are five by the 1st of September. First grade students must be six by the 1st of September. All students must have an immunization record showing that the required immunizations have been received before they may be enrolled in school. Parents may file for an exception to the immunization requirement for specific reasons if they wish to do so. Birth certificates are also needed for first time enrollment in school.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance at school is very important. Students may make up written work following an absence, but the class discussions, teacher explanations and demonstrations, social interactions and other important learning activities will be missed. Students are required to be in attendance at least 90% of the time. This allows a maximum of nine days each semester for absences. Days missed beyond this number without extraordinary reasons may cause a student to fail.

Parents are urged to call in or in some way let the school secretary or the teacher know when a child is out and the reason for the absence. Parents should also notify the school any time a child is tardy for any reason. If a child is absent for an extended period of time, but is able to do school work, the teacher can send work home. In exceptional cases involving an extended absence, a teacher or instructional assistant may come to the home to work with the child.

The school's policy is to call the parents of a child who is not in school at the beginning of the day unless a parent calls the school. This provides assurance for both the school and the

parent that a child is not lost or missing. Students who do not ride buses should not arrive at the school earlier than necessary, preferably not before 8:00 AM. Doors will be locked until 8:00 a.m.

RELEASED TIME CLASSES

Students in grades 1 through 6 are allowed to be released for religious classes or for other special reasons. Parent must sign a permission slip for the student's release; this slip is then placed in the student's record folder. The school has no authority or responsibility for students who have been released to such programs. We recognize the value of the released time programs and encourage parents to cooperate in adding this valuable training to their child's educational program.



CLOSED CAMPUS AND SCHOOL BREAKFAST/LUNCHES

Prairie Elementary has a "CLOSED CAMPUS" which means that students may not leave the school grounds during the school day except for a special prearranged appointment. The school lunch/breakfast program serves a balanced meal with a good variety of food at a reasonable cost. Students may choose to eat hot lunches/breakfast every day or bring a cold lunch from home. Extra milk may be purchased. Parents are invited to come in and eat lunch with their children at any time they wish. **Please contact the secretary prior to 9:00 AM if you plan to eat with your student.**

VISITORS

As a security measure in all buildings, parents, visitors, friends and volunteers will be asked to check in at the front office. Only the secretary or principal can remove the child from the classroom.



Parents who drop students off in the mornings, or who have a regular routine of picking a child up after school should continue to do this. The main security issue is during the day when people drop in unexpectedly or when routines are not followed.

EMERGENCY CLOSURES

There may be times when school must be called off for various reasons, including inclement weather and equipment failure. We will announce all closures via School Messenger and Facebook, and will notify bus drivers who will in turn try to notify parents that school has been cancelled or delayed. We will try hard to avoid school cancellations during the school day due to the fact that children cannot be sent home unless we are sure there will be an adult there to receive them. If it does become necessary, we will make sure someone is at home or we will drop the student off or send him or her to a relative's or neighbor's home.

ILLNESS

Please call the school at 208-962-3521 to inform the school secretary if your child is ill and will not be attending school. When a child becomes ill at school, we will try to notify a parent or the other person or persons listed as alternate contacts. In case we cannot, we will isolate the child and care for him/her as best we can.

Children will not be allowed to stay in at recess without a written request from a parent. We will need a note each day stating that you would like your child to stay in during recess, not a single note asking for your child to stay in the entire week.

SCHOOL HEALTH

Student Health Requirements: The school will send a health information form home yearly so that the school records can be kept up to date.

Health Conditions: The school should also be informed of any allergies, reactions, chronic illnesses, serious health problems, seizures, disorders, and/or diabetes, so that proper measures may be taken if something occurs at school. If a child is taking medication, the school should be given this information.

Student Medications: Administering medication to students is a responsibility we take seriously. We request that you follow these procedures:



- The school requires that you have a signed medication permission form (available from the secretary or school nurse) prior to the staff administering any medication to your child.
- Please request a second container with complete directions from your pharmacist when you have a prescription filled for your child. This will allow you to keep a container at home and send one to school. The medicine container will stay in the office and be administered by school staff when medication is needed.

Communicable Diseases: Any child having a contagious disease or symptoms of it may be excluded from school. In certain cases, the school administration reserves the right to require a note from the doctor before the child returns to school.

Head Lice: Head lice is a common problem among school-aged children and adolescents. The district shall take appropriate steps to assist parents/guardians in preventing and addressing head lice while respecting the confidentiality of students with head lice and limiting disruption to their education. If a student is found to have head lice, the district would ask the parents to perform the proper procedures to help eliminate the lice. If a child had head lice, they should avoid hair-to-hair contact with other students, sharing brushes/combs, hats, coats, hair accessories, towels, scarves, etc.

2026-27 GUIDE TO IDAHO SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Children in or Entering Preschool & Grades K-12 - Children must meet immunization requirements as stated in Idaho law to attend school. To meet legal requirements, a record with evidence that children are up-to-date on their immunizations (shots) or a valid immunization exemption must be provided and kept on file at the school. When children are in group settings, there is the potential for the spread of infectious diseases. Diseases like chickenpox, measles, and whooping cough spread quickly, so children need to be protected before they enter preschool and grades K-12

You will need to present your child's immunization record or a valid immunization exemption to the school at the time of registration to enroll your child. The immunization record must show the date (month, day, and year) your child was given each shot. If you do not have an immunization record or your child has not received all required shots, call your doctor or local public health agency for an appointment.

For more information please go to:

<https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/services-programs/children-families/child-and-adolescent-immunization>



TELEPHONE USE AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

We ask that you make your child aware that students may use the office phone **ONLY** in cases of necessity. Examples would be an illness, or confusion of where they are to go after school. We discourage social calls in which the child is attempting to have another child over to his or her home for a playdate.

Any electronic devices (iPod, cell phones, handheld games, smartwatches etc.) brought to school will be collected in the morning and given back before school is out. If a child has a smartwatch, it will be for clock use only. If students are found to use a smartwatch as a way of communication, it will be treated the same as a cell phone. A student can keep a device in his/her backpack in their locker or cubbie. If it is taken out during the school day, it will be confiscated. The reason behind this is that we want our students to talk and interact with one another during lunchtime. We also do not want to be responsible for pictures or messages that may be sent to and about other students.

INSURANCE

Accidents do happen. Regardless of how carefully we supervise the playground, gyms and buildings, children do have accidents. Accidents can be caused by something as simple as running into one another while playing. The result—a broken tooth and a cut on the head. A fall from a swing can result in a broken arm and so on.

Many parents are unaware that the school does not carry any medical insurance for such accidents. This has always been regarded as a parental responsibility. If your family does not have any form of medical insurance, you might consider buying medical coverage for students. This insurance, offered by a third party commercial vender varies in coverage and price.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Programs that are offered in addition to the regular academic program for grades K-6 include the following:

SPECIAL EDUCATION

This program is designed to aid those students who have recognized, special challenges including learning, emotional, physical, speech, hearing, vision or any combination of these.

Title 1. The Title 1 program provides assistance to those students who do not qualify for Special Education, but who have an identified learning need for special help on a one-to-one or small group basis.

TOYS AND OTHER PERSONAL ITEMS

Children may bring personal toys, dolls and other items from home with the parent's and teacher's permission. The school cannot, however, be responsible for any personal items that are broken or lost.

Every year we have many articles of clothing, lunch boxes, toys, and other personal belongings that are left at school and never claimed. Some coats, for example, are expensive and in very good condition; we just can't seem to find the owners. **We suggest that you sew, or mark with a permanent laundry marker, your child's name somewhere on the inside of coats, boots, etc.**

PARTIES AND CELEBRATIONS

Each teacher will have rules concerning classroom parties.

HOMEWORK

Homework is generally not a problem at the elementary level. There are occasions, however, when students need to be responsible for completing an assignment or for gathering materials

for an upcoming lesson. Please help your child in this endeavor by providing a quiet time and place for study at home, and by encouraging your students to assume this responsibility and to take it seriously.

CENTER FOR DISCOVERY

An after school program is available to students in grades K-6. Please contact Erin Shears at (cell) 208-816-0202 or at the elementary school 208-962-3521 for details.

REPORT CARDS AND CONFERENCES

Report cards are issued quarterly, and progress reports at 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ weeks after the start of a new quarter; conferences are held twice each year. The reports and conferences provide an excellent opportunity for parents, students and teachers to discuss needs and accomplishments. (Please take advantage of this opportunity to have an impact on your child's educational future.)

Report cards will be sent home on the following days

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| October 26-29 | - Parent/Teacher conferences - report cards will be given out |
| January 20-21 | - End of first Semester |
| March 22-25 | - Parent/Teacher conferences - report cards will be given out |
| June 3 RD | - Last day of classes - Early Out |

SAFETY

Safety is a #1 concern while children are at school or traveling to and from school. Most of the rules we have are related to safety, or to courteous and respectful behavior.

BICYCLE SAFETY

Students may bring bicycles to school during good weather. We ask that students not ride their bikes during dangerous conditions. Student must park their bicycles in the designated areas (in the bike racks if there is room) and not ride or move them until they are ready to go home after school. Bike riders are to stay on the designated sidewalk when riding bikes to school and riding home.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are held once each month to practice what must be done if a real fire were to occur. Students must leave the room in an orderly manner, without running and without stopping to get books, lunches, toys or even coats. The teachers will escort the students to a safe place away from the building where they would not be in the way of firemen, fire engines or other traffic. The teachers will then call the roll to make sure everyone is accounted for.

LOCKDOWN DRILLS

We will conduct lockdown drills periodically throughout the school year to assist students and teachers of what to expect if it were needed to be done in a real-life situation. We know this can be a scary situation for students at the elementary age. If we do conduct a drill, we will contact parents via School Messenger. If you have any questions, please contact the school at 208-962-3521.

PLAYGROUND RULES

- Kindergarten and 1st grade students stay by playground equipment.
- Jump ropes stay on the cement and are to be used only for jumping rope.
- Ask permission to go in the building for any reason.
- Sit on the swings; no standing or twisting around.
- No soccer balls on the cement or bounced against the buildings.
- No kicking balls on cement, towards buildings, or on the ice/snow.

PROPER SCHOOL DRESS

The appearance of a student is primarily the responsibility of the student and the parents. We expect students to maintain an appearance which is not distracting to students, teachers, or in any way disrupts the instructional program of the school.

Students are expected to dress in a clean, neat, modest and safe manner at all times. Dress that tends to disrupt the class or contributes to a safety hazard in class will result in a referral to the Principal for appropriate action.

Tank tops, sleeveless shirts, must have a 2 inch strap. No shirts with looping arm holes. Clothes, apparel, or attire must be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times. Clothing must provide adequate coverage of the body. Skirts and shorts must be at least mid-thigh in length. Hats/caps or sunglasses will not be worn in the building.

LUNCH/RECESS SCHEDULE

Preschool - Kindergarten - 1st Grade

Lunch- 11:15 am - 11:35 am

Recess- 11:35 am - 11:50 am

2nd Grade - 3rd Grade - 4th grade

Lunch- 11:45 am - 12:10 pm

Recess- 12:10 pm -12:25 pm

5th Grade-6th Grade

Lunch- 12:20 pm-12:40 pm

Recess- 12:40 pm - 12:55 pm

BREAKFAST/LUNCH PRICES

Breakfast:	Adult	\$2.00	Lunch:	Adult	\$5.50
	Students	\$2.00		Students	\$3.40
				Reduced	\$0.40
				Milk	\$0.50

Cottonwood Joint School District No. 242**COMMUNITY RELATIONS****4175**Required Annual Notices

The following policies, procedures, and forms shall be distributed to students and their parents/guardians on an annual basis. This requirement may be met by distribution in the District's student handbook. In some cases, additional notices may be necessary to reach staff, applicants, or others.

2140, 2140F	Student and Family Privacy Rights
2425	Parental Rights
3280	Equal Education, Nondiscrimination, and Sex Equity
3295P	Hazing, Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, and Cyber Bullying
3320	Substance and Alcohol Abuse
3330	Student Discipline
3335	Academic Honesty
3500	Student Health/Physical Screenings/Examinations
3570F1	Student Records
3575	Student Data Privacy and Security
4160	Parent Right-to-Know Notices
5120	Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination
5265	Employee Responsibilities Regarding Student Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying
8200	Local School Wellness
8245	Unpaid School Meal Charges

Note: This list only includes those for which general notice is required in all school districts.

Policy History:

Adopted on: October 19, 2020

Revised on: January 15, 2024

Reviewed on: January 23, 2025

Reviewed on: January 19, 2026

A more descriptive version for each policy above can be found on the Cottonwood School District webpage: <https://sd242.org/district-policies/>