FREEDOM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



PARENT HANDBOOK 2017-2018

**Dear Freedom Families,**

On behalf of the staff at Freedom Elementary School, we are happy to welcome you to the 2017-18 school year! We are looking forward to a productive partnership with you to ensure our children can achieve their highest potential. We recognize that in order to be successful in school, our children need support from both the home and the school. We know a strong partnership with you will make a great difference in your child’s education. As partners, we share the responsibility for our children’s success and want you to know that we will do our very best to carry out our responsibilities. We ask that you guide and support your child’s learning by ensuring that he/she:

1) Attends school daily and arrives on time, ready for the day’s learning experience

2) Completes all homework assignments given by teachers

3) Reads daily to develop a love for reading and to improve literacy skills

4) Shares school experiences with you so that you are aware of his/her school life

5) Informs you if he/she needs additional support in any area or subject

6) Knows that you expect him/her to succeed in school and go on to college

Please consider joining our school PTA as our students can greatly benefit from your involvement and contributions to the school’s program and its operations. PTA seeks volunteers to help with the following activities:

1) Friday Sales

2) Bingo

3) School-wide events

4) Various activities throughout the year to include class parties, field trips, and fundraisers

Please make sure that you read the Freedom Parent Handbook so that you are familiar with school procedures and guidelines. Keep it in a safe place for easy referrals throughout the year. If you have any questions about the rules and expectations, please feel free to contact us to discuss concerns. It is very important that you and your child are fully informed regarding standards related to appropriate behavior for a safe and productive school year. Please feel free to review the LPS Parent Handbook which you will receive at Back to School Check-in.

We, the wonderful Freedom Elementary staff, feel privileged to be a part of this school family. We thank you for your support and look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Freedom Administrators

**SCHOOL HOURS**

The school day begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 3:45 p.m. Doors will open at 8:40 am for all students to go immediately to their classroom.

**TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF ALL STUDENTS AND STAFF, PARENTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ENTER THE BUILDING PAST THE MAIN ENTRY AREA. IF YOU HAVE A SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT, PLEASE CHECK IN WITH THE OFFICE WHICH INCLUDES** **MORNING DROP OFF!!! PLEASE TRY TO SCHEDULE APPOINTMENTS BEFORE OR AFTER SCHOOL.**

**DISTRICT ATTENDANCE POLICY**

The following procedures have been established for unexcused absences:

1. **Absences**

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school on a regular and punctual basis. The purpose is to help students learn daily and be educationally prepared for the next school year. The District believes that teaching children the importance of regular and punctual attendance also helps them mature into responsible adults who will one day be prepared for the world of work. Children are expected to be in school a minimum of ninety percent (90%) of the time. The following steps assist in accomplishing this goal.

1. Before 9:15 a.m. on the day of any absence, it is the responsibility of the student’s parent/guardian/legal custodian (hereafter referred to as the parent) to notify the school secretary or building administrator regarding the reason for the absence. In the event the school is not contacted, a school official will attempt to contact the parent.
2. If a student has three unexcused absences, a school official will contact the child’s home, and the child’s parent will be required to meet with the school official to discuss the unexcused absences, as well as the student’s academic standing and potential for success in school.
3. In accordance with Oklahoma School Law (Section 232), when a child is truant four (4) or more days or parts of days within a four-week period or is absent without valid excuse for ten (10) or more days or parts of days within a semester, the district office of student services shall report such absences to the Comanche County district attorney. *The district attorney has responsibility for initiating legal proceedings pursuant to Title 10 of* *the Oklahoma Statues. (70-10-106).*

2. **Absences and the Ability to Receive Credit**

No student shall receive semester credit in a course in which the student is absent more than ten (10) days per semester, excluding approved activity absences, court appearances, religious observances or illnesses documented by a licensed medical practitioner. The building principal shall have discretionary authority to approve any make up or waiver for days missed beyond the 10-day limit.

3. **Absence and Removal from Attendance Roll**

In compliance with Oklahoma School Law (Section 387/Part 2), a student who has been absent without a valid excuse for ten (10) consecutive days shall be removed from the district’s attendance roll beginning with the eleventh day.

**In the event your child is absent from school, please call the school office before 9:15 am on the day of the absence. It is school policy that if an excuse is not received within three days of the absence, it will be recorded as an illegal absence. A doctor’s note is required for verification of a student absence.**

**HOW TO CONTACT US:**

Freedom Elementary Office: 580-713-0060

Address: 5720 Geronimo Road

Fort Sill, OK 73503

**Principal:** Mikel Shanklin - K and 2nd

Extension: 4900 Email: [mshanklin@lawtonps.org](mailto:mshanklin@lawtonps.org)

**Asst. Principals:**

* Sara Breeze—Grades: 3rd 4th, 5th

Extension: 4905 Email: [sbreeze@lawtonps.org](mailto:sbreeze@lawtonps.org)

* Lana Welch Pre-K, 1st, Special Education

Extension: 4990 Email: [lwelch@lawtonps.](mailto:lwelch@lawtonps.org)org

* Brenda Walker - Grades 3rd, 4th, 5th

Extension: 4906 Email: [bwalker@lawtonps.org](mailto:bwalker@lawtonps.org)

Counselors:

* Courtney Harter

Extension: 4907 Email: [charter@lawtonps.org](mailto:charter@lawtonps.org)

* Kim Shahan

Extension: 4983 Email: [kshahan@lawtonps.org](mailto:kshahan@lawtonps.org)

* Linda Butemeyer

Extension: 4942 Email: [linda.butemeyer@lawtonps.org](mailto:linda.butemeyer@lawtonps.org)

Secretaries:

* Charlene Lawson Extension: 4902
* Sharon Scruggs Extension: 4903
* Sheri Hennessee Extension: 4904
* Liz Worth Extension: 4901

School Nurse:

* Kim Abernathy Extension: 4909

Freedom Cafeteria: Extension: 4913

District Website www.lawtonps.org

**LPS TRANSPORTATION OFFICE 580-248-3255**

**COMMUNICATION**

Teachers will communicate weekly through grade level newsletters, emails, etc. The office will communicate emergency type situations, example: late bus, school cancellations, tornado via District Messaging. The office will also send home a bi-weekly newsletter

* Parent Communication: Every teacher is expected to communicate weekly via newsletter, email, etc. informing parents of upcoming events, celebrations, visitors, etc.
* School Website: Reading/Math lessons will be uploaded to our school website each week, along with an updated spelling list for each grade level.
* READING PLUS—3RD-5TH CAN BE DOING THIS AT HOME FOR WEEKLY HOMEWORK.

**WE WILL NOT COMMUNICATE THROUGH FACEBOOK!!!**

**PLEASE FEEL FREE TO EMAIL OR CALL.**

**CHECK OUR SCHOOL WEBSITE FOR INFORMATION.**

[www.lawtonps.org](http://www.lawtonps.org)

**Schools-Freedom**

**PHONE CALLS TO AND FROM HOME**

Phone Calls from Students to Parents-Teaching students to be responsible is an integral part of the educational process at Freedom Elementary. We discourage students from making phone calls home because they forgot lunch money, homework assignments, books, and personal items.

It is our desire that the student, parents and staff will work together to promote responsible behaviors in our students. We encourage students to organize their belongings the evening before, for the following school day. Included in these needs:

* Books, homework assignments
* Lunch or lunch money
* Permission slips and money for field trips or special events
* Musical instruments
* Notes from home: Bus passes, absence
* Sneakers for gym
* Appropriate dress for winter (boots, hats, gloves/mittens)

**ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

**Arrival—Doors will open at 8:40 a.m. for all students and they will walk directly to class.**

* Walkers—enter A Wing South entrance.
* Bikers—enter A Wing South entrance.
* Bus—enter through gyms.
* Car Drop-Off
  + - **8:30 am - Pre-K, Kindergarten, and First grade students and their siblings car drop off will be utilizing the main drive. Please proceed to the blue awning.** Students will walk directly to their classroom where they will be greeted by their teacher at their classroom door. Faculty and staff will monitor every hallway to ensure your child gets to class.
    - **8:40 am - 2nd through 5th grade students transported by vehicle will be dropped off at the South parking lot and walk down the steps to A wing doors to enter the building. PLEASE SEE MAP AND DIRECTIONS.**

Parents wishing to remain with their child until 8:40 am must park in the South Parking lot and walk your child to the A Wing South entrance.

**Please take this into consideration and help us keep your children safe by adhering to our arrival procedures.**

**ATTENTION: If you drop your student/students off prior to 8:40 am they will NOT be supervised. Please be conscious of weather when dropping off students.**

**Dismissal- 3:45 p.m.**

* Walkers—escorted up the hill to crossing guard.
* Bikers—escorted up the hill to crossing guard.
* Bus—escorted to designated gym to be released. **ONLY DESIGNATED BUS STUDENTS WILL BE ALLOWED TO RIDE A BUS.**
* Parent Pick-up**—Park in South parking lot and walk down to designated area (Library). PLEASE SEE MAP.**

**CAR LANE PICK-UP**—**Pre-K with siblings will begin at 3:45 pm (*WHITE PLACARD).***

**“Gold Ticket” MOMS/DADS WITH NON-SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN—car line will begin at approximately 3:55 pm (*Gold Placard*).**

**Pre-K Parent Walk-up**—begins at 3:45 pm. Must have color coded classroom ticket.

**Early Pick-up**

All students will be released for dismissal starting at 3:45 pm. Please be aware that instruction occurs until the end of the day, and your child will miss important learning if they are signed out early. If you do need to sign your child out early for an appointment or legal excuse, etc., please call the office in the morning, so we can prevent disruptions to instruction at the end of the day. Please come to the main office to sign your child out.

**Please be sure to call the office, prior to 3:00 pm if your child will not be transported home according to their normal procedure. Dismissal time can be very hectic, please be courteous and contact the office before 3:00 pm if there will be a dismissal change. There will be no guarantees if later than 3:00 p.m.**

**Daily Schedule**

8:40 am - Building opens.

8:40 am - Breakfast served.

9:00 am - Homeroom/Instruction begins.

3:45 pm –School is Dismissed, End of the day.

**UNIFORM GUIDELINES for LPS ELEMENTARY STUDENTS**

Boys:

\* Knit polo style shirt with collar - (short or long sleeve) any solid color, no emblem.

\* Slacks – black, navy blue or khaki

\*Shorts – black, navy blue or khaki

\*Sweatshirt, hoodie, cardigan or sweater – any solid color, no emblem.

\***NO DENIM will be permitted unless it is a “Spirit Day”.**

Girls:

\* Knit polo style shirt with collar - (short or long sleeve) any solid color, no emblem.

\*Slacks, capris, shorts – black, navy blue or khaki

\*Skirts or jumpers – black, navy blue or khaki

\*Sweatshirt, hoodie, cardigan or sweater – any solid color, no emblem.

\* **NO DENIM will be permitted unless it is a “Spirit Day”**

**\*\*\*IF WEARING A HOODIE, SWEATER, OR JACKET ALL DAY IT MUST BE A SOLID**

**COLOR WITH A UNIFORM SHIRT UNDERNEATH!!!\*\*\***

**Spirit Days**

***The last day of each school week, even if the day is not Friday, will be “Spirit Day”. Students are allowed to wear their school shirts and jeans. If not participating in “Spirit Day” students will be required to wear their uniform.***

School shirts may be purchased through Freedom PTA.

https://www.facebook.com/groups/64212105307734/

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**VISITOR’S POLICY**

**DUE TO NEW DISTRICT POLICY** All visitors are required to enter through the main entrance, report to the office, show a picture ID, sign in, and receive a visitor’s pass. All visitors are required to wear this pass while in the building; the pass will be removed when the visitor signs out of the building. In order to ensure only authorized persons are in the building, any staff members may ask visitors not wearing a pass to report to the office to sign in and receive one.

**Scheduling Appointments/Conferences**

Parents are always welcome at Freedom; however, if you wish to visit with your child’s teacher you must make an appointment and schedule the conference during their teacher’s planning time or after school.

**If you have concerns regarding your child’s education follow the chain of command:**

* **TEACHER****GRADE LEVEL ADMINISTRATOR****HEAD PRINCIPAL**

**ELECTRONICS AND OTHER DEVICES**

The use of electronics and other devices during the school day is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, mp3 players, IPods, electronic games, tablets, PEBBLE SMART PHONE WATCHES, SPINNERS AND FIDGET CUBES. All electronic devices must be kept in their backpack, NOT THEIR PURSE, and turned off during the school day. Electronic devices used by students during the school day are subject to confiscation. Freedom Elementary will not be responsible for the loss or damage of electronic devices brought to school by students. Parents are asked to refrain from text messaging or calling their children during the school day. Should an emergency arise during the day, please contact the elementary office at 580-713-0060.

**FOOD SERVICES**

**School Breakfast**

Breakfast is offered to all students who wish to take advantage of it. Breakfast is served beginning at 8:40 am each day.

**School Lunches**

The school lunch menu is posted on the Lawton Public Schools website (www.lawtonps.org). Any amount of money can be deposited on a student’s account in the form of check or cash for purchasing lunch and/or milk (to go with bag lunch brought from home). Money can be added to a student’s account in the cafeteria any day of the week or you can go online to food service through the LPS website and pay your bill/deposit money online. A student will debit their account each time they purchase a meal. Please remember that whenever you send money to school with your child, send it in a sealed envelope and labeled with your child’s name, grade, the amount enclosed and what the money is for.

**Students are allowed ONLY three charges on their account before being served a cheese sandwich and milk.**

**Elementary School Lunch--$2.35**

**Reduced--$.50**

**Adult--$3.35**

[**www.mypaymentsplus.com**](http://www.mypaymentsplus.com)

**Eating lunch with your child.**

* If you plan on eating lunch with your child you must notify the office prior to the child’s scheduled lunch time so the office has plenty of time to notify the teacher of a parent visit.
* There will be a designated table for parents and students to sit when possible.
* If you choose to eat lunch with your student you must follow the school-wide lunch room procedures.
* Parents, once lunch is over please report back to the office to sign out.

**GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER AN ILLNESS**

**Communicable Disease Policy**

For the protection of all school children and staff, students should be kept home or will be sent home in the following situations:

* Students with a fever of 100 degrees or more will be sent home and can return when the student is fever free for a 24 hour period without the use of fever reducing medications (Tylenol, Motrin, etc.).
* Students with any nasal discharge and/or persistent coughing accompanied by fever will be sent home and can return when fever free for a 24 hour period without the use of fever reducing medications.
* Students with vomiting and/or diarrhea will be sent home and can return when the student has not had an episode for a 24 hour period without the use of medication (Imodium, Pepto Bismol, etc.).
* Students with any type of rash will be sent home. A rash is defined as an eruption or oozing of the skin. Students can return the following day if the rash is no longer visible. If the rash remains, then a clearance must be obtained by a physician stating the diagnosis and they are clear to return to school.
* Students with any inflammation of the eye or lid will be sent home and can return to school when a clearance has been obtained by a physician.

When there is reasonable doubt as to the contagiousness of any student who has been excluded from school for infectious disease, a written statement from the physician can be required before the student is allowed to return to school.

**LOST AND FOUND**

We ask parents to encourage their child to check the Lost and Found Department. Each year many articles go unclaimed. It would be helpful if your child’s name was placed inside their belongings. Those items misplaced will be returned to your child quickly and accurately.

**PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Parents play a vital role in the education of children. Children excel when their parents are actively involved in the educational process and emphasize the importance of learning to their children. This involvement may take many different forms, from reading to your child each evening to becoming a parent volunteer during the school day. We invite you to find a level of involvement that you are comfortable with and one that fits into your schedule. We would love to have you involved!

**PRIOR TO VOLUNTEERING YOU MUST COME TO THE OFFICE AND FILL OUT A VOLUNTEER FORM.**

**CRISIS PLAN**

In the event of an emergency a **Quick Reaction Force** will respond. Please respect our policy and procedures during a time of crisis.

**If for some reason Fort Sill closes, Freedom will still follow Lawton Public Schools closing policies.**

**WEATHER PROCEDURES**

During times of severe weather watches, we will follow the procedures that have been established by LPS and Ft. Sill. The procedure for severe weather watch are as follows: monitor **NOAA Weather Station**, **Bring all persons inside**, **Prepare students by reviewing weather drill procedures**. When severe warning has been issued or spotted the following will take place:

* **Sound the Weather Alert**
* **Students and Staff will immediately proceed to their assigned Safe Room**
* **Remain in Safe Room until warning expires or until Ft. Sill has given the “All Clear.”**

During a severe Weather Warning, **STUDENTS WILL NOT BE RELEASED** until after Ft. Sill has given the “ALL CLEAR.” All staff and students will follow procedures taking shelter so it will not be possible to release students during this time. Freedom has (4) safe rooms built to FEMA standards to withstand F-5 category Tornados and have the capacity to occupy all students and staff.

We want to encourage you to keep safe by seeking shelter during a Severe Weather Warning and wait for the "ALL CLEAR" from Fort Sill before coming to the school to get your child.

**SNOW and ICE**

Lawton Public Schools does not dismiss school early in the case of snow or ice. Once school is in session we stay in session until the end of the school day. All bus routes will run as normal. School closings will be announced on KSWO TV Channel 7 or you will be alerted via the district messaging system.