



Cottonwood Creek

Principal Newsletter

February 3rd, 2025



From Principal Francis

Dear Cottonwood Families

Cottonwood PTO Fundraising:

All donations that are donated go directly to our students through 6 additional Paraprofessionals, 2 Behaviors Technicians, 1 Librarian, school-wide enrichments, and community events that bring us all together! The contributions you make as a community give our children opportunities and services that would not happen without your generosity. One additional area we wanted to highlight this week is what happens in our library! The idea of having a designated librarian who prioritizes this time is unique to Cottonwood!



Join Our PTO – We Need You!

Calling all parents and guardians! Our amazing PTO is looking for new members, and we have an exciting opportunity for a **Co-Vice President** to join our team for the remainder of the 24-25 school year that then leads into a **Co-President** role for the 25-26 school year. This is a great way to get involved, connect with other families, and make a difference in our school community.

A few of the roles & responsibilities of this position include:

- Act as liaison for selected PTO committees
- Attend PTO meetings and PTO-sponsored events
- As a Co-VP, you are given the opportunity to work alongside others that understand our traditions and processes so you can easily learn the role.

Whether you have a little time or a lot, your help is valuable, and we'd love to have you on our board! If you're interested or have any questions, please reach out to Ben Bear or Peter Marle at

PresidentCottonwoodPTO@gmail.com, or you can complete [this form](#) for the Co-Vice President position.

Together, we can make Cottonwood Elementary even better! 💖 📖 ✨

Sincerely, Mr. Drew A Francis

From the Library...

My name is Ms. Elle, and I'm thrilled to introduce myself as the school librarian this year. One of the biggest updates is the new library schedule. Instead of the previous 20-minute checkout-only block, we now plan 15-20 minute lessons, read-alouds and activities, followed by book checkout time, creating a 30-minute session overall. This new structure allows us to intentionally promote critical thinking skills, foster creativity, and introduce students to a variety of cultures.

So far this year, we have written winter haikus, drawn snowflakes while learning about Wilson Bentley, and discussed a diverse range of celebrations. Some of the celebrations we've highlighted include Native American Heritage Month, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and Lunar New Year.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the parents and grandparents who have already volunteered in the library. Your support means so much! We always welcome more parent and grandparent volunteers to help make the library experience even more special for our students. If you would like to volunteer in the library, please click this [link](#). To contact me directly, please email EForney@cherrycreekschools.org.

My goal for the library is to open new windows to different worlds—whether that's through stories set in far-off lands or through learning about the cultures of their classmates. Thank you for supporting your child's love of reading! I hope our school library becomes a place where their passion for books continues to grow.

Warm regards, Elle

February at a glance...



2/1 5th Grade Parent Campus Middle School



2/3 Registration for Kindergarten and Pre-K opens



2/13 SEAC Meeting

2/24 Individual/Class Pictures

District Information

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Date: Thursday, February 13th

Time: 9.30 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.

Where: SARC (14188 E Briarwood Ave, Centennial, CO 80112)

Topic: *Post-Graduate Opportunities*

[Upcoming SEAC meetings](#)



Community Night with the Denver Nuggets

Join us for Mile High Basketball Community Night with the Denver Nuggets on March 5th and April 6th or April 11th!

Click [Here](#) for more information

Evening Classes for English as a second language (ESL)

Evening classes now being offered free to parents in Cherry Creek School District starting January through May. Please click the ESL Flyers for more information: [English](#) [Chinese](#) [Russian](#) [Spanish](#)

School Information

Early Student Pick Up and Student Messages

Please note: As of Monday, February 3rd, early student pick up will not be permitted after 2.30pm (1.30pm on Wednesdays). If attempting to pick up a student after this time, you will need to wait until dismissal time.

In addition to this change, messages called in for students must be received prior to 2.30pm. This is a safety concern and we cannot guarantee that we can get those messages out in time.

Thank you for understanding.

Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences

Spring parent-teacher conferences will be held the week of March 3rd. A conference Sign-up Genius will be emailed out the evening February 20th. If you have limited flexibility in your daily schedule, we suggest you sign-up as early as possible.

2025-2026 Enrollment

Kindergarten Round-Up and UPK Registration:

Registration for 25-26 Kindergarten and Universal Pre-Kindergarten will open on February 3rd. Please see the attached Kindergarten Round-Up flyer. Please feel free to pass it along to any friends or neighbors who will be registering a Kindie in CCSD for next school year.

Registration for Universal PreKindergarten (UPK) is a 2-step process. It requires registration with the State of Colorado and with Cherry Creek District Admissions. The website for the Cherry Creek registration will open February 3rd and we understand that the State will also open their registration at the same time. If this is not the case, parents are encouraged to continue with their registration with CCSD. Just be sure to also submit the State portion when their website opens. Our understanding is that UPK enrollment will be into the student's school of residence with two exceptions; if an older sibling attends an alternate school or the student was previously enrolled in the CCSD Child Find Program and would like to stay with their teacher.

Please note, enrollment in a school other than your neighborhood school in UPK does not qualify the student for continued enrollment in that school for kindergarten.

If you have any problems or questions regarding enrollment for next school year, please contact Alison Button at (720) 554-3201. See [flyer](#) for more information. For Spanish click this [flyer](#)

Leaving Cottonwood?

To assist us in estimating enrollment for next year, please let us know if you have plans to move out of our neighborhood or otherwise enroll your student in a different school. Additionally, please let us know if you have a 5th grader who will not attend Campus Middle School for 6th grade. To notify us of either of these, [please complete the attached Form.](#)

School Of Choice

School of Choice (SOC) applications for the 25-26 school year are now being accepted. Through SOC, the Cherry Creek School District gives district residents and non-residents the opportunity to apply for enrollment in a Cherry Creek school of their choice. The first lottery will run in February 2025 on or before the 15th of the month. Subsequent lotteries will run bi-weekly starting February 28th.

Applications are considered based on lottery number and space availability for each school. Priority is given to students with siblings who will be attending the same school and children of district employees. There is a limit of one application per student, on which 3 different schools can be requested. Addresses must be up to date for residents of the school district in order to be considered for School of Choice. If you are moving at a later date, applications for School of Choice can be submitted once you move and update your address with the district admissions office.

Please note, School of Choice does NOT apply to you if:

- You live within the Cottonwood Creek boundaries and you want your child to attend our

school.

- If your student was previously accepted through the SOC process to Cottonwood Creek, and continues to meet the eligibility criteria.

If you have any questions about the SOC process or your student's enrollment status, please contact Alison Button at (720) 554-3201. More information available [here](#)

Attendance and other reminders

Attendance

As we enter a new year, it seems like a good time for some reminders:

For the purpose of district-wide consistency, the attendance noticing and truancy process is being transitioned to the district level this school year.

The following guidelines apply to students grades K - 5:

- If your student is going to be late or absent from school, **a parent/guardian must leave a message on the attendance line (720-554-3295) before the start of the school day.**
 - You will need to provide:
 - the student's name,
 - your name and contact number,
 - the date(s) of absence and
 - the reason for the absence or late arrival.
 - **Absences without an attendance line message** or valid reason for the absence will be marked as unexcused. For more specific information on allowable reasons for school absences, please see the [CCSD Student Conduct and Discipline, Rights and Responsibilities](#).
 - Parents are discouraged from keeping/taking their student(s) out of school for reasons other than illness, grievance or emergency. **Extracurricular activities are not an allowable reason for school absences or tardiness.**
 - For safety reasons, attendance calls are generated to parents/guardians of students who are identified as unexcused at 8:30 AM. If you believe you received a call in error, please contact the front office immediately.
 - **A medical excuse** must be provided for students who miss a full or partial day of school due to a medical appointment or who miss more than 3 days of school within a week period due to a medical reason. The medical excuse must specify the date(s) of absence.
 - **Absences (excused and unexcused) are limited to 10 days for the school year.** To have absences in excess of 10 days excused, an acceptable medical excuse must be provided.
 - **Travel** up to 5 days per school year *may be* excused if 1) a message is left on the attendance line in advance, and 2) it will not result in the student missing more than 10 days in the school year.
 - If your student will miss school due to an unusual or unforeseen circumstance, please contact the front office.
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Cougar of the Month 🐾



Kindergarten - Theodore Kintz



1st Grade - Rylie Trobec



2nd Grade - Connor Korejwo



3rd Grade - Livia Van Harken



4th Grade - Benjamin Kauffman



5th Grade - Reese Miller

Reading Buddies



1000th Day of School!



In Specials this week with Ms Bird and Mr Mondragon...



Traditional dance from the Philippines

Tinikling is a traditional Philippine folk dance where dancers step between bamboo poles that are tapped together by other dancers. The dance is named after the tikling bird, which the movements are said to mimic.

Personal Items

- In an effort to minimize classroom disruption, only one delivery of personal items (including student lunches) will be made each day at 9:30 AM to the classrooms. Therefore, if your student forgets a necessary item at home, please drop it off by 9:25 AM to the front vestibule. Items dropped off after 9:25 AM may not get to your student. However, remember that both water and school lunch is free. **Students will ALWAYS have water available throughout the day and a lunch provided to them.**
- **All medication** should be dropped off directly to the Nurse's Clinic.
- **Musical instruments** dropped off for band will not be delivered to the classrooms. These items will be kept in the front office and your student should know to come to the front office before band practice to retrieve it.

School Breakfast

- School breakfast is served at 7:45 AM. Students who are going to breakfast should come through the main entrance **no earlier than 7:45 AM and proceed directly to the cafeteria.** Please talk to your student about making it to their classroom by the 8:00 AM bell. Students who are late will be marked tardy. UPK students having breakfast at school must be supervised by their parents at all times.
 - [Click here for the 24-25 School Meal Guide](#)
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Class/Individual Picture Day is coming!!

Save the date! Class and individual student photos will be taken on Monday, February 24th. Please note, there are no picture make-ups for this picture day. More information to come!

Kids Heart Challenge

Kids Heart Challenge will begin on 1/29/2025

For the COT Kids Heart Challenge page Click [Here](#)



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**KIDS
HEART
CHALLENGE™**

5th Grade Parent Night at Campus Middle School:

On Thursday, February 1st at 5:45 PM Campus Middle School will hold parent night for 5th grade families whose children will be attending CMS next year. During this time, their 6th grade and elective teachers will share information about their classes and answer any questions. Principal Staal will also be addressing parents at the beginning of the evening. Please see the [Flyer](#) for details.

From the Clinic

Health & Wellness Reminders: [A note from the Health Clinic](#)

At Cottonwood Creek, the health and safety of our students is our top priority, and understanding allergies is essential in creating a safe environment for everyone.

Allergies have become increasingly common among children. It is crucial that we work together to address potential allergens and create a supportive atmosphere for those affected. Understanding allergies can help prevent serious reactions. CCSD is an "Allergy

Aware" environment. We encourage students to wash their hands before and after eating and the sharing of food is not allowed at school.

Your involvement is crucial in making our school a safe place for all students. Please communicate with the school nurse if your child has any allergies to specific foods or needs allergy medications in the school clinic. Together, we can create an inclusive environment where every student can thrive. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to Mandy, the School Nurse, or your child's teacher.

Ablakeney@cherrycreekschools.org

720-554-3208



Library Volunteers Needed

The Cottonwood Creek library needs volunteers to help with: checking out books for students during their weekly class visits, checking books back into the computer system, and re-shelving.

You are welcome to sign up for as many shifts as you'd like each day/week/month through the end of the school year.

You can Sign Up [here](#). If you'd like to volunteer during your child's allotted time, please read the sign up description for a schedule of each class' weekly visit.

**Volunteer at the
Cottonwood Creek Elementary Library!**



Please contact Rachael Holsted, PTO Library Coordinator, with any questions at:

rachael.holsted@gmail.com

Don't forget! 🙌

Cold Weather Recess:

With cold temperatures in the forecast, students will require outdoor winter clothes for recess. The district's policy is that, in the absence of lightning, thunder or precipitation, students will have outside recess if the temperature "feels like" 20 degrees Fahrenheit or above. Therefore, please remember to send students to school with appropriate clothing to play outside in the cold and possible snow. Unfortunately, we cannot assure that items dropped off after the start of school will be delivered to students before their recess, so please do your best to send these items to school with your child in the morning.



Smore Templates

Smore is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters

