

REBA O. STECK

ELEMENTARY

SCHOOL



2009-2010

STUDENT-PARENT

HANDBOOK

August 2009

Dear Parents,

Welcome to another exciting year at Reba O. Steck Elementary School, now 17 years in existence. I am very anxious to greet you and your children and to begin our work together as we strive for quality educational programming that meets the needs of all our students.

This year we will again focus on the development of six character education traits and always putting forth our personal best efforts in academics and achievement. We will be focusing on: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. In addition, we will continue to encourage working together as a team to accomplish our goals in learning and in service to our community. Please watch for announcements and information throughout the year about exciting activities that will support our work in these areas.

This handbook contains useful information that you can reference throughout the school year. There are some new items/policies included this year that are highlighted below for your convenience:

- NEW: Wednesday Late Arrival procedures – see page 5
- NEW: Student absence and evening program attendance – see page 5
- NEW: Homework Philosophy/Statement – see pages 11 & 12
- NEW: Automated Phone Communication System – see page 19
- Reminder: Lunch Visitors/Bringing Lunch for your Child – see page 14
- Reminder: No Student Pull Out (during in-school performances – see page 18)
- Reminder: Policy Statement for Student Appearance – see pages 21 & 22

Please take a few minutes and read the new additions to our handbook and other information that will keep you informed so that we can all have a positive and productive school year. In addition, teachers and Steck PTA provide newsletters and websites that will assist you in staying informed about classroom activities and upcoming events at our school.

Our entire staff welcomes you at any time. We are available to answer questions, discuss concerns, and celebrate the discoveries and progress our students will make during this school year. We encourage you to support our efforts by making sure your child attends school consistently and punctually, attending school functions, monitoring your child's academic progress, and becoming involved as a volunteer in some capacity. When children see us as active participants in the school community, they will realize the importance of learning and its impact on their future.

Best wishes for a successful school year,
Mrs. Kerry Merrill
Principal

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MISSION STATEMENT

We believe that all students can learn and can develop academic skills, regardless of their previous experiences or background. We believe that our district's purpose is to educate all students to optimum levels of academic performance, while fostering positive growth in social/emotional behaviors and attitudes. We accept the responsibility to encourage all students so that they can attain their maximum educational potential.

REBA O. STECK SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GOALS 2009-2010

- We will improve teaching and learning in the area of reading in order to increase student achievement.
- We will improve teaching and learning in the area of writing in order to increase student achievement.
- We will support a positive learning environment by fostering a sense of mutual respect for all members of the school community.

Please refer to our School District website (www.ipSD.org)
for a copy of the District calendar.

All District calendar dates are listed on the following Reba O. Steck calendar.

Reba O. Steck 2009-10 Calendar

Mon.	8/17/09	Meet the Teacher (students may bring supplies), 2:00-3:00 PM
Mon.	8/17/09	PTA School Supply Pick-Up in Classrooms & Same Day Sales, 2:00-3:00 PM
Mon.	8/17/09	PTA Sponsored Back to School Social, 3:00-4:00 PM, MPR and Playground
Thurs.	8/20/09	First Day of School
Sat.	8/22/09	Market Day, 10:00-11:00
Thurs.	8/27/09	PTA Spirit Wear Sale begins
Thurs.	8/27/09	Curriculum Night, 6:30-8:10 PM
Tues.	9/1/09	5th Grade Band & Orchestra Parent Information Night at WVHS
Thurs.	9/3/09	PTA Committee Chair/Room Parent Orientation, 9:30-10:00 AM & 10:00-10:30 AM
Mon.	9/7/09	NO SCHOOL - Labor Day
Tues.	9/8/09	PTA Fundraiser (gift wrap) begins
Thurs.	9/17/09	PTA Meeting, Newcomers Reception, 6:30-8:00 PM, MPR
Thurs.	9/17/09	PTA Spirit Wear Sale ends
Fri.	9/18/09	NO SCHOOL - Building Articulation Day
Sat.	9/19/09	Market Day Pick-Up, 10:00-11:00 AM
Fri.	9/25/09	PTA Fundraiser (gift wrap) ends
Mon.-Fri.	10/5-10/9/09	PTA-sponsored "Walk to School" week
Tues.	10/6/09	PTA Executive Board Meeting, 9:30-10:30 AM
Wed.	10/7/09	Student Picture Day
Thurs.	10/8/09	General Volunteer Orientation, 9:30-10:00 AM & 10:00-10:30 AM
Thurs.	10/8/09	Halloween Costume Exchange, 6:00-8:00 PM, MPR
Mon.	10/12/09	NO SCHOOL - Columbus Day
Tues.	10/13/09	PTA Publishing Center opens
Wed.	10/14/09	Early Dismissal 12:00 Noon - Teacher In-Service
Sat.	10/17/09	Market Day Pick-Up, 10:00-11:00 AM
Tues.-Mon.	10/20-10/26/09	Fall Book Fair
Thurs.	10/22/09	Grade 1 P.E. Night, 6:30-7:30 PM
Fri.	10/23/09	End of First Quarter
Mon.-Fri.	10/26-10/30/09	Red Ribbon Week
Tues.	10/27/09	PTA Gift Wrap Pick-Up in the Gym, 3:30-6:30 PM
Fri.	10/30/09	Report Cards Go Home
Fri.	10/30/09	Halloween Parades -- weather permitting Room Parties -- 2:15-3:15 PM
Wed.	11/4/09	Parent/Teacher Conferences, 4:30 PM - 8:00 PM
Tues.	11/10/09	NO SCHOOL - Parent/Teacher Conferences, 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM and 4:30 - 8:00 PM
Wed.	11/11/09	NO SCHOOL - Veteran's Day
Sat.	11/14/09	Market Day Pick-Up, 10:00-11:00 AM
Wed.	11/18/09	Picture Retake Day
Thurs.	11/19/09	PTA Meeting, 9:30-10:30 AM
Thurs.	11/19/09	2nd Grade Music Program, 7:00-8:00 PM
Wed. - Fri.	11/25 - 11/27/09	NO SCHOOL - Thanksgiving Break
Wed.	12/2/09	Band Concert at WVHS at 6:30 PM; Orchestra Concert at WVHS at 7:45 PM
Sat.	12/5/09	PTA Season of Sharing/Pancake Breakfast/Winter Wonderland, 8:30-11:00 AM
Thurs.	12/10/09	Chorus Concert, 7:00-8:00 PM
Sat.	12/12/09	Market Day Pick-Up, 10:00-11:00 AM
Fri.	12/18/09	Winter Parties, 2:15-3:15 PM
Mon.-Fri.	12/21 - 1/1/10	NO SCHOOL - Winter Break

Mon.	1/4/10	School Resumes
Thurs.	1/14/10	End of Second Quarter
Fri.	1/15/10	NO SCHOOL - Teacher Workday
Mon.	1/18/10	NO SCHOOL - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Thurs.	1/21/10	PTA Meeting, 9:30-10:30 AM
Fri.	1/22/10	Report Cards Go Home
Sat.	1/23/10	Market Day Pick-Up, 10:00-11:00 AM
Tues.	2/2/10	NO SCHOOL - Parent/Teacher Conferences, 1:00-8:00 PM
Thurs.	2/11/10	Open House, 6:30-8:00 PM
Mon.	2/15/10	NO SCHOOL - President's Day
Thurs.	2/18/10	PTA Executive Board Meeting, 9:30-10:30
Fri.	2/19/10	PTA Carnival Set Up, 6:00-11:00 PM
Sat.	2/20/10	Market Day Pick-Up, 10:00-11:00 AM
Sat.	2/20/10	PTA Carnival
Fri.	2/26/10	NO SCHOOL - Institute Day
Mon.-Fri.	3/1-3/12/10	ISAT testing for Grades 3, 4 and 5
Thurs.	3/11/10	Kindergarten Parent Orientation, 6:00-7:30 PM
Thurs.	3/18/10	PTA Meeting, 7:00-8:00 PM
Fri.	3/19/10	5th Grade Group Picture, 9:15 AM
Fri.	3/19/10	End of 3rd Quarter
Sat.	3/20/10	Market Day Pick-Up, 10:00-11:00 AM
Thurs.	3/25/10	Kindergarten Music Program - time to be determined
Thurs.	3/25/10	Grade 3 Art Night, 6:30-7:30 PM
Fri.	3/26/10	Spring Parties, 2:15-3:15 PM
Fri.	3/26/10	Report Cards Go Home
Mon.-Fri.	3/29-4/2/10	NO SCHOOL - Spring Break
Mon.	4/5/10	School Resumes
Thurs.	4/15/10	PTA Executive Board Meeting, 9:30-10:30 AM
Fri.	4/16/10	NO SCHOOL - School Improvement Planning
Sat.	4/17/10	Market Day Pick-Up, 10:00-11:00 AM
Wed.	4/21/10	Volunteer Luncheon
Thurs.	4/22/10	PTA Earth Day Celebration
Mon.-Fri.	5/3-5/7/10	Staff Appreciation Week
Sat.	5/8/10	Fine Arts Festival @ WVHS
Tues.	5/11/10	PTA Publishing Center closes
Thurs.	5/13/10	PTA Meeting, 9:30-10:30 AM
Thurs.	5/13/10	4th Grade State Fair Program, 7:00-8:30 PM
Fri.	5/14/10	NO SCHOOL - School Improvement Planning
Wed.	5/19/10	5th Grade Showcase, 6:30-8:00 PM
Thurs.	5/20/10	5th Grade Funway Trip
Sat.	5/22/10	Market Day-Pick-Up, 10:00-11:00 AM
Fri.	5/28/10	Last Day of School for Gr. K-5 (Tentative) - refer to Emergency Days below*; Abbreviated attendance schedule; Report Cards Go Home for Gr. K-5
Tues.-Mon.	6/2-6/7/10	* Emergency Days (if needed)
Sat.	6/19/10	Market Day Pick-Up, 10:00-11:00 AM

SCHOOL HOURS

Due to supervisory schedules, students should arrive **at school between 8:50-9:05 AM** and report directly to their classrooms where they will be supervised by the classroom teachers. Students should not arrive before 8:50 since there is no adult supervision. Doors open at 8:50.

The student day begins at 9:05 AM (Monday through Thursday) and ends at 3:35 PM each day. Every day begins with the Pledge of Allegiance and student announcements.

Wednesday Late Arrival Procedures

District 204 is adjusting the starting time for students on Wednesday mornings for the 2009-2010 school year. This set block of time for teachers to work collaboratively on improving student learning will occur each Wednesday before school. The start of the elementary school day will be adjusted to 9:15 am. School staff will be available to supervise students beginning at 9:00 am. Students will enter the building and report directly to their classrooms for supervision by their classroom teachers.

The district is assisting elementary parents who might not have flexibility in their morning schedules. Elementary school parents unable to make the 10 minute adjustment will be permitted to drop off their student at the same time as other school days, and supervision will be provided for those additional 10 minutes.

OFFICE HOURS

The Steck Office is open each day from 7:45 AM to 4:15 PM. Our school telephone number is 375-3500.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Expectations: Reba O. Steck School expects parents or guardians to make reasonable efforts to ensure the regular attendance of their children, consistent with Section 26-1 of the Illinois School Code, and to inform the school of any absences and their causes. The Steck Office will monitor each student's attendance and punctuality on a quarterly basis. **Parents will be notified quarterly if there are excessive absences or tardies.**

A parent should call the school each day his/her child will be absent at 375-3535 between the hours of 7:00 AM and 10:00 AM. In case of a known extended absence of one week or more, one call need only be made. If we are not contacted by 10:00 AM, a parent will be called. If the sickness is interpreted to be a contagious disease, readmission to school should be by a back-to-school permit signed by a physician.

Philosophy: Reba O. Steck School's educational program is built on the premise that regular attendance and punctuality are vital to a student's success in school. Seeing that a student maintains regular attendance requires a cooperative effort by the student, parent(s) or guardian(s), and school personnel. The student who is frequently absent or leaves early misses social interaction and class instruction and discussion, even though written work is made up.

Student Absences and Evening Program Attendance

If a student is absent during the school day, they should **NOT** attend any evening performance or activity scheduled for their grade level. Your cooperation is needed in helping to maintain a healthy environment for all students and staff.

Make-Up Work: If a student is unable to attend school for one or two days, he/she will receive make-up work upon return to school and be given an appropriate due date. For extended emergencies/illness, a parent may call the office on the morning of the third day of absence to request make-up work. A parent may then come to the office the following morning to pick up homework. If the extended illness results in an absence of more than two weeks, a homebound tutor may be provided. Please contact the school office.

Medical Documentation: Under certain circumstances, parents or guardians may be required to present medical documentation of physical or emotional conditions causing a student's absence.

Health Policies: The health policies listed below are recommended by the DuPage County Health Department and are followed here at Reba O. Steck School to maintain a safe and healthy school environment:

1. If your child is running a fever, the Health Department recommends the child's temperature be normal (98.6) for **24 hours** before returning to school.
2. Do not send your child to school with a consistent cough or runny nose, as this infects other children.
3. Keep children home for **24 hours** after vomiting and flu symptoms subside. This helps to ensure a healthy reentry into the classroom.
4. Please report **all** cases of strep throat and strep-related infections to the school nurse or health aide.
5. All communicable diseases (chicken pox, head lice, impetigo, mumps, measles, etc.) must be reported to the school nurse. There are specific requirements and regulations for readmission to school after having a communicable disease.
6. Please do not send children to school if they have diarrhea or vomiting.
7. A student who has been absent from school for more than five (5) days or who has a communicable disease must present a physician's release for readmission to school.
8. If a rash is present, it needs to be evaluated by a physician. A diagnosis of the underlying cause should be elicited before re-admittance to school.
9. If there are signs of conjunctivitis ("pink eye") with matter/ drainage in one or both eyes, itching, redness, or crust on the eyelid, the child needs to be evaluated by a physician. Antibiotic therapy needs to be maintained for 24 hours before re-admittance to school.
10. Parents **must report absences** to the office by 10:00 AM (attendance line is 375-3535).
11. Please keep your emergency phone numbers and contacts updated! Notify the school office of any changes.

Again, your help and cooperation in maintaining a healthy school environment is most appreciated. If you have questions, please contact our School Nurse or our Health Aide.

Vacations: Every effort should be made to not have students miss school for vacation purposes. When absence occurs due to a vacation, **students will not receive homework in advance**. Experience has shown that it is difficult at best for teachers to accurately predict what homework will be and for students to do homework properly on vacation. Upon return to school, students will receive make-up work and an appropriate due date.

Excessive Absenteeism & Tardiness: Reba O. Steck School considers absenteeism/tardiness excessive when it significantly interferes with a student's learning, as reflected in academic performance or social development and/or is more than 10% (i.e. 4-5 days per quarter) of the days school has been in session. Excessive absenteeism includes excessive tardiness of 10% or more of the days school has been in session. Parents will be notified if there are excessive absences or tardies.

Resources and Supportive Services: The following resources and supportive services are available to students with attendance problems and their parents or guardians: conference with school personnel; or any other appropriate support team members; or referral to community agencies for appropriate services.

Tardiness: If a student arrives at school after 9:05 AM, he/she should report to the office for a pass. Please note: students enter the building at 8:50 AM and are in the classroom by 9:05 AM, ready to start the day.

EARLY DISMISSAL - LATE ARRIVAL

A request to have a child dismissed early should be sent in writing with the child on the morning of the dismissal. Parents must come to the school office. We will send for your child as you sign them out for dismissal. A child will be released only to their parents unless other arrangements have been made. Because of natural congestion at dismissal time each day, we ask that if you pick up your child early, you must do so before 3:25. No students will be dismissed from class after 3:25.

Late arrivals must sign in at the office and will be issued a pass to enter their classroom.

FORGOTTEN LUNCHES/ITEMS

We have implemented a procedure for parents who drop off “forgotten” items or lunches for their students.

Blue bins are located in the Entryway--one for each grade level, one for lunches, one for apparel. When a parent drops off a “forgotten” item, they must mark the item with their child’s name and teacher and put it in the appropriate bin.

Teachers will check these bins. **We ask that you follow this procedure rather than taking a Visitor’s badge and going to the classroom. When parents go to a classroom, instruction is interrupted for the students.**

Lunchroom supervisors will check the lunch and apparel bins at the beginning of each lunch period to insure that a student receives his/her lunch or outdoor apparel. Classroom teachers/aides will check the grade level bins as often as possible. We will no longer be able to make any emergency deliveries of forgotten items.

Please go over this procedure with your child and stress to them **their responsibility in planning ahead and remembering their necessary items.**

FORGOTTEN HOMEWORK (END OF THE DAY)

Because of our office hours and for security reasons, students and parents will not be allowed to enter the building after 4:15 PM to retrieve forgotten homework materials or other items.

STUDENT DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

The following procedures are recommended for dropping off students and picking up students by car. We think these are the best, most efficient and safest procedures for our students. Please review the procedures very carefully and completely.

TO DROP OFF:

1. Our recommended route to reach the school is along Inverness Drive. Inverness is a wide street and cars will not interfere with the crossing of children on Breckenridge. Using Inverness is our

recommended route, however, if this does not work for you, please use your common sense and good judgment in determining a safe driving route to Steck. Please be reminded that you will need to enter the Circle Drive by turning right from Inverness--LEFT TURNS ARE NOT ALLOWED INTO THE CIRCLE DRIVE.

2. Line up on Inverness to turn right into the Circle Drive. (Left turns are not allowed into the Circle Drive except by buses and day care vans.) Traffic should ideally come from the same direction to ensure a smooth and safe flow of cars. No U turns are allowed on Inverness.
3. Please make sure that you stop at all stop signs and obey all crossing guards if they stop you to cross children in the crosswalks. Please remember that it is illegal to block the crosswalks or the yellow areas near the crosswalks.
4. After turning right into the Circle Drive, proceed and pull ahead as far as you can around the Circle Drive so that the maximum number of cars can pull in behind you.
5. As soon as you are in the Circle Drive and stopped, let the children exit from the passenger side only onto the sidewalk. (It is not safe to release children from the driver side of your car.) Please have your children ready to exit the vehicle as soon as you are stopped.
6. Please stay in line in the Circle Drive until the person ahead of you has moved forward. Do not pass on the left--you must stay in line until all the cars ahead of you have exited. You are welcome to turn either right or left upon exiting the Circle Drive.
7. Please understand that buses and day care vans will be given priority in coming into the Circle Drive and unloading passengers. A staff member may hold the line of cars to allow these vehicles to enter the Circle Drive. (Please remember that only these vehicles are allowed to turn left into the Circle Drive.)
8. Please remember that it is illegal to pass buses when they are unloading students. If you are behind a bus, you will need to stay in line until the bus exits the drive.
9. Please refrain from unloading children on Inverness Drive between the entrance and exit of the Circle Drive. It is unsafe for children to be walking across the Circle Drive. No Parking signs are posted in this area.
10. Please remember that drivers should not exit their cars for any reason. This interrupts the flow of cars. Please make accommodations for your child to exit the passenger side of your vehicle by himself or herself--parents should not be walking around the car to open doors. If your child needs help getting a project in, please find a parking place and walk your child to the office.
11. There will be no supervision for students until 8:50 AM. Please do not drop off your child before this time. At 8:50, students will be allowed to enter the building and proceed to their classrooms where they will be supervised by their teacher. Staff will be supervising in the front and rear of the school as well.
12. Absolutely no parking will be allowed in the parking lot between 8:40 and 9:05. Cones will be blocking the entrance and cars will not be allowed in or out of the lot.

TO PICK UP:

1. If you choose to drive to school to meet your child, you may park and wait in your car along Inverness or Breckenridge and your child can walk from the rear of the building to meet you at your vehicle. (There are No Parking areas on Inverness and Inverness Court. The spaces between the entrance and exit to the Circle Drive are designated No Parking as well. Please do not park in these areas.) Parking in the visitor spaces in the circle drive is not allowed from 3:25 - 3:45 PM.

2. Another option is to park in the school parking lot. Some important reminders about the lot:
 - Parents must be in the lot before the cones are put up at the entrance (3:25-3:30)
 - Parents must park in a designated space--if there are no spaces left, you must park and wait on the street. Double parking is **NOT** permitted.
 - Parents must exit their vehicle to walk and meet their child (children are **not** allowed to walk through the lot without you)
 - Parents must remain in their parking spot until all students have left the school premises, the cones are removed, and a staff member signals that it is acceptable to move from your space.

NOTE: Children should never be picked up on McCoy! This is extremely dangerous!

Morning Drop Off Procedure Highlights

1. Children are not supervised at Steck until 8:50. Do not drop your children off before this time.
2. Inverness Drive is our recommended route. Vehicles should enter the Circle Drive by making a right turn from Inverness.
3. Crosswalks and yellow zones should be clear of cars. Obey crossing guards.
4. Once in the Circle Drive, pull ahead as far as possible.
5. Children should exit only on the passenger side of the vehicle and should enter the school at the closest entrance door. (Door #1, 2 and 12.)
6. Parents should not exit their vehicles for any reason when using the Circle Drive.
7. Cars should remain in line until the cars in front of you are moving. All cars should stay on the right side of the Circle Drive.
8. Remember that buses, day care vans and vehicles driving special needs students have priority. You may be waiting in line longer if you are behind one of these vehicles—do not pass these or any other vehicles. Please stay in order to exit.
9. Children should not be dropped off anywhere other than the Circle Drive. Students should not be crossing the Circle Drive.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

A list of bus routes is available on-line at www.ipsd.org or in the school office. Students may ride only their assigned bus. Busing students may not bring "guests" home with them on the bus. If your child does not qualify for busing, he/she may not ride the bus to go to another student's home after school.

If your child will not be riding the bus on any particular day, please send a note stating that he/she will not be riding the bus and who will be responsible for picking him/her up.

Bus drivers are not authorized and should not be approached to make any changes to designated stops. Route change requests will only be considered if submitted utilizing the form which is available on the district website for this purpose. **Please do not contact the school or First Student.** After school begins, route changes will not be made until after the third week of school unless there is a safety concern.

For bus transportation procedures to and from permanent, in-home day care providers, please call the school or refer to the district handbook.

In order to provide the safest and most efficient transportation, the district has developed certain rules and expectations which will be enforced. We ask that students and parents familiarize themselves with the following information and encourage observance of these guidelines and regulations:

- 1) Remain in your seat.
- 2) Do not throw objects on or from the bus.
- 3) Keep head and hands inside the bus.
- 4) Do not eat or drink on the bus.
- 5) Obey the driver.
- 6) Be at your bus stop 5 minutes before the scheduled time.
- 7) Be courteous to classmates and neighbors at bus stops and while traveling on the bus.
- 8) Do not use profane language.

If a student violates a safety regulation, the following disciplinary action will be taken:

- 1) Disciplinary referral filed and parent notified.
- 2) Disciplinary action recommended:
 - 1st offense – warning
 - 2nd offense – disciplinary referral
 - 3rd offense – possible bus suspension
- 3) If it is in the best interest of the school and the safety of the students riding the bus, an immediate bus suspension may be imposed without the 1st offense warning.

VISITORS

All visitors, **even parents**, are required by State Law to report to the office upon entering the building. Everyone must sign in/out and state the purpose of their visit. Each visitor will be issued a visitor's tag to wear while in the building. All persons are required to make prior arrangements before visiting a teacher and/or classroom at least 24 hours in advance. It is most important that the classroom instruction not be interrupted for individual matters. As always, student safety and good educational practice are our main concerns.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

While we highly appreciate and value the support parents are able to provide through volunteering, we must request that younger siblings do not accompany parents who are volunteering at school. Child care arrangements will be necessary for pre-school age siblings.

GRADING

Grades are an evaluation of student achievement of grade level objectives. Teachers use frequent and ongoing evaluation in determining grades. Components of these grades will reflect varied age-appropriate opportunities for students to demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter and may include the following:

Punctuality	Participation	Discussion
Homework	Cooperative Projects	Quizzes and Tests
Note taking	In-Class Assignments	Special Projects
	Performance Evaluations	

The grading scale for School District 204's elementary schools is:

Grade K:	Progressing satisfactorily
	or
	Additional help or growth needed

Grade K report cards are sent home for the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th quarters only. Quarter 1 assessments are discussed at the Parent/Teacher Conference in November.

Grades 1-2:	S+	Demonstrates strength
	S	Satisfactory progress
	I	Showing Improvement
	N	Needs to improve
	U	Unsatisfactory progress
	N/A	Not applicable to quarter

Grades 3-5:	A	91-100
	B	81-90
	C	71-80
	D	65-70
	F	64 and below

Homework Policy for Grade 3: Parents will be informed of their student's late assignments during the 1st and 2nd quarters, but grades will not be lowered. During the 3rd and 4th quarters, homework will be lowered one letter grade each day it is late.

Homework Policy for Grade 4 and 5: Homework will be lowered one letter grade for each day it is late; there will be no warnings given.

Report cards are sent home with students at the end of nine weeks as determined by the school district calendar. Progress reports are issued as needed at the midpoint of each quarter.

Homework Philosophy Statement

INDIAN PRAIRIE UNIT DISTRICT 204 ELEMENTARY HOMEWORK STATEMENT

The following information supports District 204's Homework Policy 725.03, current research, and the philosophy and practices of elementary school educators.

Please keep in mind as homework is assigned and completed that homework benefits student learning when it connects to, not replaces, direct instruction. It should be used for remediation, meaningful practice, and to expand concepts taught in the classroom.

The following specifics support positive, productive homework as a tool for learning:

- The “Ten Minute Rule” should be applied as a general rule for homework assignments; ten minutes multiplied by the grade level per night. (up to 10x1 for kindergarten, 10x1 for first grade, 10x5 for fifth grade, etc.) These minutes represent a total expectation from all teachers with which a child works but do not include independent reading. The time requirements and the frequency of homework will vary according to each student’s abilities, grade level, and the subject matter; however, if a child is consistently devoting time beyond the “Ten Minute Rule”, parents should contact the classroom teacher. Workload adjustments, time management improvements, and/or motivation strategies are examples of ways to address such issues.
- Projects assigned as homework should be included in the “Ten Minute Rule.”
- Nightly study to include homework assignments should occur on weeknights only. Weekends and vacation periods will be avoided for specific assignments unless students are making up work previously assigned. Independent reading is encouraged on a routine basis, including over the weekend and during vacation periods.
- Once homework is assigned the teacher is responsible for appropriate follow through until the assignment is completed with feedback offered in a timely fashion.
- It is appropriate for parents to answer occasional questions or provide guidance regarding an assignment. It is not appropriate for parents to do most of the assignment for their child. It is not appropriate for an assignment to require a parent to be the primary instructor. If parents feel that their child is particularly struggling with an assignment or is confused, parents should contact the classroom teacher.

Make Up Work:

- Make up work is determined by the teacher involved. Considerations include length of absence and nature of absence.
- When a student has been absent for three or more days, teachers will provide homework as appropriate given adequate time to prepare. A teacher might advise alternative assignments such as keeping a journal and assigning some reading when appropriate. Parents are asked to keep in mind that much of what happens in class (direct instruction, discussions, activities, informal assessing, group work, etc.) cannot be made up by sending paper/pencil work home.
- Upon return from an absence, students will submit make-up work in a timely fashion, generally within one to two days for every day absent.

Grading:

Assessment of student learning should occur in conjunction with instruction. Grades for that student learning should be based solely on academic achievement that takes place during instructional time. Therefore, although it is appropriate to provide feedback to students on their quality and completion of homework, their effort, behavior, and attendance, this feedback should be kept separate from that provided on academic achievement.



A Note to Parents Regarding the Elementary Homework Statement

During the course of the 2008-2009 school year, the District #204 elementary school principals conducted an in-depth study on the topic of homework in order to guarantee that the district was current with best practices.

Several interesting results were found. They included:

- The focus on the purpose of homework should be student learning not compliance. Teachers know that certain learning skills require practice to perfect, and often homework is used for practice. Research confirms that mastering a skill requires focused practice (Marzano et. al, 2001.)
- Research does seem to verify that a small amount of homework may be good for learning, but too much homework may be bad for learning. Up to a point, homework appears positive, but past the optimal amount, achievement either remains flat or declines. Curiously, the research about the appropriate amount of homework for different grade levels is already consistent with an informal guideline that many teachers already practice – the “ten minute” rule (Cooper, 2007.)
- All homework can be used to check for understanding if we convince students not to be threatened by grades. Grades are not necessary for learning to take place. Grades on homework often get in the way of learning, de-motivate students, and create power struggles between students and teachers and between students and parents (Guskey, 2003).
- The goal of assessment of learning should be to keep failure at a minimum and to maintain learner’s confidence – the opposite occurs when homework is graded. The most important question to ask about grading homework is “What is the effect on future learning?” (Stiggins, 2007.) Priority must be given to tasks that do not cause students to give up.
- All homework should receive feedback. Moving from grading to feedback encourages student ownership of learning. Allowing students to take control of their learning makes learning personal (Guskey and Anderson, 2008.)

As a result of these findings, the principals with input from the teachers revised the District #204 homework statement in order to confirm that reasonable time-limited homework, which provides feedback to our students, is still important to the learning process. Although homework will not be graded, the practice it provides is key to the learning process. Generally, most students will not receive good grades if they do not practice.

Homework Tips for Parents

Facilitating the learning of your child is the primary focus of the District #204 elementary staff. As a result, we understand the importance of an on-going partnership with our parents and students as they attempt school work at home. The following guidelines and tips are offered to assist you and your child to be successful:

Parents are encouraged to

Ask your child what they are studying in school.

Ask your child to show you homework assignments.

Assist your child in organizing homework materials.

Help your child formulate a plan for completing homework.

Provide an appropriate space for your child to do homework.

Parents may if they wish.....

Help your child interpret assignment directions.

Proof read your child's work, pointing out errors.

Read aloud required reading to your child.

Give practice quizzes to your child to help prepare for tests.

Help your child brainstorm ideas for papers or projects.

Praise your child for completing homework.

Parents should not.....

Attempt to teach your child concepts or skills the child is unfamiliar with.

Complete assignments for your child.

Allow your child to sacrifice sleep to complete homework.

Contact the teacher if.....

- Your child refuses to do their assignment
- Instructions are unclear
- Your child can't seem to get organized to finish assignments
- You can't provide the needed supplies or materials
- Neither you nor your child understand the purpose of the assignments

(Vatterot, 2009) (Pandur, 2005)

CURRICULAR & EXTRACURRICULAR SUPPORT

LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER (LMC)

Our LMC is integrated into the curriculum and is central to the learning process. The LMC is a service center for all students and a computer lab is located in the LMC. Students will have the opportunity to learn about and effectively use the resources available in the LMC as well as choose personal reading books.

BOOKS FINES

Students who lose or misuse textbooks or library books will be charged an additional fee based on the decreased life of the book. Reasonable wear is accepted but fines will be imposed for excessive wear or damage.

ART – MUSIC – PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Each student will receive instruction in the following special areas:

Grades K-5

Art	-	50 minutes once per week
PE	-	25 minutes three times per week
Music	-	25 minutes twice per week

P.E. CLOTHES

All students need a few basic supplies for P.E. All children should have a separate pair of gym shoes to wear in their classroom for P.E. use only. This is so we have dry shoes for emergencies and for changing when the ground is wet outside. Girls should also have shorts to wear when they are wearing a skirt or dress on gym days.

P.E. PARTICIPATION

In the event your child is recovering from illness or you have concerns regarding P.E. participation, you may request, in writing, that he/she not participate in P.E. for up to 3 days. After the third day, a doctor's note is required. If the student is not participating in P.E. because of a note, he/she will watch the P.E. class during that period; they will not remain in the classroom or LMC. A note to the P.E. teacher to monitor participation keeps the P.E. teacher informed as well.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

The Reba O. Steck Elementary staff believes in assisting all students to reach their potential. Support, remedial, English as a second language and gifted resource teachers are available in our building. A speech and language therapist, social worker and psychologist are available as well. We will make every effort to meet the needs of every child.

GIFTED PROGRAM

Project Arrow is District 204's gifted and enrichment program designed for those students who demonstrate high performance in intellectual and academic areas. Information from achievement and ability tests, classroom performance, teacher input, and a point-system referral form are used to determine eligibility for the Project Arrow program. Identified students are provided direct contact time with a gifted resource teacher at their home school.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

A wide range of extra-curricular activities will be offered this year to the students. Activities include band, orchestra, chorus, science club, computer club, chess club, student council, and a variety of other programs. More information concerning these activities will be sent home by each sponsor at a later date.

LUNCH/RECESS/SNACKS

We will have a thirty-five minute lunch/recess period for Grades K-5. A hot lunch program will be available to students on a daily basis. Information about menus and payment fees will be available in the school office. Milk is available and may be paid for by semester, by year, or by day.

In the lunchroom, we expect students to respect the rights and property of others. Good manners are essential. Students may lose lunch/recess privileges if they choose not to follow these rules. Please review the Project Respect lunch rules with your child. They are listed on pages 16 -17 of this handbook.

A 15 minute recess is held each day following lunch. During the winter, we will go outside for recess if the wind chill index is at 5 degrees or above. The wind chill report will be obtained from the National Weather Service. Students are expected to dress appropriately for winter weather recess with hats, gloves, boots, and winter coats. All students participate in recess unless a doctor's note is provided to the school.

Students in Grades K-4 are provided with a Snack Time each day. Students may bring healthy snacks (fruit, pretzels, crackers, cheese) to eat in the classroom during this time; however, we are requesting that students not bring juice boxes and other colored drinks to have during Snack Time. These drinks could be used at lunch time in the Multi-Purpose Room. Since the carpeting was replaced recently, we are trying to maintain it by avoiding spills with colored juices/drinks. Students will be allowed to have water.

LUNCH AND RECESS VISITS

In the interest of liability and student safety, please note the following policies regarding lunch and recess visitors.

First, only parents are allowed to join their child for lunch. (Please let your child's classroom teacher know that you are planning to attend so that the lunchroom supervisor can be notified.) Siblings, friends and extended family members are not invited to come to lunch with students.

Recess is a 15 minute time for students to interact and play. We ask that any visiting parents leave after lunch rather than going out to recess. We know this a valuable "kid time" for our students. Furthermore, we are concerned about the liability of having other adults on the playground (or in the classrooms when indoor recess occurs.)

BRINGING LUNCH FOR YOUR CHILD

Parents may choose to bring lunch for their child. However, we ask that parents do NOT bring lunches for other children. This presents a problem for the school staff in that we do not know that other parents have approved the lunch. In addition, other children may feel excluded. Please only bring lunch for your child.

REMINDER

We respectfully request that food and drinks are not brought into our school gym. Signs are posted outside the gym as a reminder.

PLAYGROUND GUIDELINES

Students are not to play on the playground equipment before school.

During lunch/recess, students will be able to enjoy the playground except for days of extreme weather. Please make sure your child is dressed for the outdoors. All students will participate unless a doctor's note is provided.

Please be aware that the playground is not supervised before or after school.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT – SEX EQUITY – DRUG FREE SCHOOLS

The Indian Prairie Board of Education has formally adopted policies concerning sexual harassment, sex equity, and drug free schools. Copies of these policies are on file in the school office and at the Board of Education Office located at 780 Shoreline Drive in Aurora.

DISCIPLINE – SCHOOL RULES

We believe and expect that all students can behave appropriately at school. We will not allow any student to disrupt teaching/learning time and we continually promote the positive approaches by recognizing those who behave appropriately. Our goal is to provide an organized and positive learning climate for all students and staff.

All clubs or extra-curricular activity groups must have appropriate adult sponsorship. There will be no formation of any exclusive clubs.

Maintaining a safe learning environment for all students is a high priority at Reba Steck. Any threat of violence will be taken seriously and will not be tolerated. The use of profanity, verbal or physical abuse, assault, or fighting during school hours will not be allowed. Having or displaying any type of weapon or other dangerous instrument or object is also a violation of school and district rules. Referrals will be handled by the Administrative staff and parents will be notified.

A classroom discipline plan from your child's teacher will be sent home. Please review the plan with your child.

As a school guideline, parents will be called as an intervention for support and cooperation prior to a detention or further discipline. Severe disruptions will be referred to the building administration.

PROJECT RESPECT

Reba O. Steck School implements "Project Respect" as a school-wide focus on appropriate behaviors. We encourage the 3Rs: **Respect** yourself, **Respect** others, **Respect** property. The following charts are posted in classrooms and throughout our school as a reminder to show respect wherever we are, so that we can be the best that we can be!

Respect for Self, Others and Property On the Way To and From School (Created by Reba Steck Students)

Self

- Cross at street corners and watch for traffic.
- Be nice first, then ignore.
- Keep yourself safe.
- Follow the 3 Rs.
- Think before you do anything.
- Stay off snow piles.
- Wear your helmet.
- Wait for the crossing guard.
- Go straight home.
- Use bridge stairs safely.
- Walk across bridge.

Others

- Keep hands and body to yourself.
- Leave snow and ice alone until you get home.
- Use only nice words.
- Help younger students.
- Tell an adult if you see problems.
- Be peaceful with others.
- Leave other people's things alone (forts or snowmen).
- Listen to adults.
- Walk bikes, skateboards, and skates on bridge and school property.
- Respect people walking or driving under the bridge by not throwing anything over the bridge.

Property

- Walk on sidewalks only.
- Pick up trash if you drop it.
- Clean up after your dog.
- Respect neighbor's property.

CHARACTER TRAITS

In addition to our school focus on "Project Respect", students have the opportunity to learn about and practice examples of Character Traits which have been identified by the Steck Staff. Throughout the school year, students will learn about: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship. This information is often passed along through morning announcements by students and staff and is reinforced in the classrooms by integrating the concepts throughout the curriculum.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS/EVENTS

In our efforts to maintain the best classroom instruction and not disrupt the learning process, students will not be dismissed from their classes to attend special events for siblings during the school day. This may include: DARE, Star of the Week, Wax Museum, Kindergarten Music Program, and other special events that may occur during the school day.

BICYCLES - ROLLER BLADES - SCOOTERS

Students have the opportunity to ride bicycles, scooters, or roller blade to school. Scooters and bikes are to be walked on school property and locked in the bike racks during the school day; roller blades must be removed when on school property. Children should obey all traffic rules when traveling to and from school. Safety helmets are strongly suggested.

ADULTS ON BIKES

We request that adults, who choose to accompany their child/children to and from school on bikes, assist in setting a good example by walking their bicycles on school property also. This will help to ensure safety for all students and adults.

PETS AT ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL TIMES

In the interest of student safety, we request that pets not accompany you when picking up/dropping off your student(s).

Many parents bring dogs when they are dropping off or picking up their children, and this can become a safety concern. With the number of students we have entering in the morning and dismissing after school, some animals could easily be jostled and/or overwhelmed, thereby compromising the safety of our students. In addition, we have some students who are afraid of dogs and become upset walking near them, as well as students who are allergic to animals.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

It is of the utmost importance that your emergency telephone numbers listed on the registration form and health card be current. As changes occur during the year, please contact the office to revise information.

In case of accident or illness of a student at school, this procedure will be followed:

- 1) Provide immediate first aid.
- 2) Phone parent.

- 3) Contact school nurse (depending on severity).
- 4) If parents are unavailable, phone the emergency contact.
- 5) If the parents and emergency contact are unavailable, phone family physician.
- 6) If the parents, emergency contact, and doctor are unavailable, 911 will be called. School District 204 does not assume any financial obligation.

MEDICATION POLICY

If your child will need to take medication during the school day, it is important that you review the district policy concerning medication. Please contact the Nurse or Health Aide at Reba O. Steck School.

PTA

The Reba O. Steck PTA, an affiliate of both the Illinois and National PTAs, seeks parent membership and support in the many projects, events, and activities throughout the year. There will be a PTA representative at Curriculum Night in August. At Parent Orientation/Curriculum Night, classroom volunteer opportunities will be presented to you. Reba O. Steck is also represented on the District 204 Indian Prairie Parents Council (IPPC) which works for the betterment of the entire school district. Membership and board meetings, as well as other PTA activities, are included in the events calendar.

PARTIES

Special parties are sponsored by the Reba O. Steck PTA in conjunction with room parent contacts in October, December and March. Individual classroom teachers may, on occasion, plan a special activity and ask for parent participation. We are requesting that NO edible treats (candy, gum, crackers, etc.) be sent in for any room parties. Approved refreshments will be provided. Please consider this when purchasing Valentine cards.

AUTOMATED PHONE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

Throughout this school year we will be using an automated phone communication system to remind parents about upcoming school events, emergency situations, or school closings/early dismissals. Calls will be sent to each family's home phone unless otherwise specified. It is very important that phone numbers and/or changes in phone numbers are kept current and updated with our school office in order to ensure that communication is delivered in a timely manner.

REBA O. STECK NEWSLETTER

The Reba O. Steck "Eagle Eye" newsletter will be published by the Reba O. Steck PTA. Enjoy reading it and reinforcing school activities with your child.

INFORMATION ON SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In cases of bad weather or dangerous road conditions, school closings or early dismissals may be announced. You may call the Steck office at 375-3500 for a recorded message with school closing information or tune your radio to one of the following stations: WMRO 1280 AM, WMAQ 670 AM, WGN 720 AM, or WKKD 96 FM. If bad weather develops during the day, please listen to the radio for instructions. Your child will be safe at school.

FIRE AND DISASTER DRILLS

A sufficient number of fire drills will be held during the year in order to familiarize the students with the alarm sound and procedures.

Our school is equipped with a warning system radio for severe weather bulletins from the Aurora Civil Defense System.

During tornado warning conditions, all students are directed to designated areas of cover within the building.

If severe weather conditions exist at dismissal time (tornado warning, high winds, severe thunderstorm and lightning), consideration is given to announcing an EMERGENCY DELAYED DISMISSAL, whereas students are retained at school. Our procedure during an EMERGENCY DELAYED DISMISSAL is as follows:

- 1) Announcement to students and staff of delayed dismissal.
- 2) Students and staff instructed to remain in safety areas or classrooms until all-clear signal.
- 3) Parents who wish to pick up students during this time are required to sign them out prior to release. Parents must enter and assemble in the office for instructions and must sign out students with the office. Students will be called from their classrooms by the office. Under no circumstances should a parent pick up their child directly from their classroom. Students with their parents are to exit from the front main doors.
- 4) Parents may sign out only their own child--no friends or relatives without written permission.
- 5) No buses or vans are released during an emergency delayed dismissal.
- 6) All-clear announcements signal general dismissal for release.
- 7) Reba O. Steck's staff will help monitor and assist parents and students during the emergency delayed dismissal.

This plan offers students safety and a secure/calm atmosphere within the building.

Parents are responsible for reviewing and developing pick-up plans for students under these emergency situations.

With the unpredictable spring weather, parents are also encouraged to listen to radio announcements and watch TV for weather reports that may affect our school dismissal.

SECURITY DRILLS (LOCK DOWN)

Security drills (lock down) are also conducted throughout the school year in the event of unwelcome visitors to our school. Students and staff must practice the specified procedures/plan in order to facilitate everyone's safety while at school.

GENERAL INFORMATION

DISTRICT 204 HANDBOOK

Indian Prairie School District 204 provides a parent/student handbook that contains information pertinent to the entire school district organization. This handbook will be given out at the beginning of the school year. It is also accessible on the District 204 website.

STUDENT BIRTHDAYS

We are requesting that NO edible birthday treats be sent to school for distribution. Each student is honored by having their name read during the morning announcements and receiving a birthday pencil from the office. Classroom teachers will supply parents with a list of suggested ways to honor your child's birthday. Your cooperation will help to ensure safety for all our students.

Distribution of birthday party invitations is the responsibility of the parent. Invitations may not be distributed at school. For reasons of privacy and confidentiality, our office cannot release addresses or phone numbers of students.

DRESS CODE - STUDENT APPEARANCE

A student's dress and grooming must not disrupt the educational process, interfere with the maintenance of a positive teaching/learning climate, or compromise reasonable standards of health, safety, modesty, and decency as determined by the building principal, the Superintendent, or Board of Education. Please refer to the School Board policy below:

POLICY STATEMENT: Student Appearance

A student's dress and grooming must not disrupt the educational process, interfere with the maintenance of a positive teaching/learning climate, or compromise reasonable standards of health, safety, modesty and decency as determined by the building principal, the Superintendent, and/or the Board of Education.

Student dress or attire will conform to the following minimum standards:

Clothing must effectively cover the student's torso. Underwear must be covered. Bare midriffs are not permitted. Prohibited shirts include, but are not limited to, backless, one shoulder, strapless, or thin-strapped shirts or blouses. Also prohibited is clothing with revealing holes or low-cut necklines. Shorts and skirts must come to at least mid-thigh.

1. Hats, head coverings, jackets, coats and gloves will not be worn in classes. Students must remove their head coverings upon entering the building. (Religious head coverings are exempt).
2. Students must wear shoes. Metal, plastic, or rubber cleats or other shoes that may damage the floors may not be worn.
3. Students will not wear beachwear to classes, except for special school-approved days.
4. Student dress will be appropriate for the school activity. Undergarments must be covered.
5. No garments or jewelry depicting any alcohol or tobacco products, or other drugs will be worn at school.

6. No garments or jewelry with messages, graphics or symbols depicting weapons or which are derogatory, inflammatory, sexual, or discriminatory will be worn at school.
7. No spiked or dangerous jewelry (such as handcuffs, chains, etc.) may be worn.
8. Students may not wear or display items that are considered to be gang identifiers by our school and community. These identifiers include, but are not limited to, Playboy Bunny insignia, a single glove, 5- or 6- pointed stars, arrows or pitchforks shaved into the hair or otherwise displayed. Any other attire, item, insignia, or symbol, which the administration has reasonable cause to believe is a gang identifier, will be prohibited even if it had not previously been so designated in this or any other statement of policy.

SHOES WITH BUILT-IN ROLLERBLADES (Heelys)

A new footwear choice for children offers roller blades built into a tennis shoe. While popular, we are requesting that these types of shoes not be worn to school in the interest of student safety, especially on our stairs.

LOST AND FOUND

Please clearly label your child's clothing and other articles with his/her full name. Remind your child to check for lost items in the bin in the multi-purpose room. Feel free to come in to look for lost items anytime.

MAIL DAY

Informational items, community announcements, and school schedule reminders will be sent home on Fridays whenever possible. Please check your child's book bag each day - especially Friday. In order to conserve on paper, we will be sending most items home with the youngest family member enrolled at Reba O. Steck. Many announcements and informational items are also accessible on the District 204 website or by subscribing to the Steck List-Serv.

MONEY

Any money sent to school for hot lunch, field trips, book orders, etc. must be put in a sealed envelope marked with the child's name, teacher's name, purpose for the money, and the amount enclosed.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Dates for parent/teacher conferences are listed on the events calendar in this handbook. This is an important time to share information. At Parent Orientation/Curriculum Night in August, sign-up sheets will be available on which you can schedule a conference time. We look forward to seeing you.

STUDENT INSURANCE

Student insurance is available for purchase. If interested, insurance information is available in the office. Follow instructions provided on the insurance envelope.

TELEPHONE USE - MESSAGES

Our primary goal is to provide a learning environment free from disruption. It is for this reason that parent cooperation is requested in helping students be aware of dismissal procedures, after school events, and other special arrangements before coming to school in the morning. Your cooperation is appreciated with the following:

- 1) Students should not expect to use the telephone.
- 2) Students will not be called from class to answer telephone calls unless in an emergency.
- 3) **Messages will not be delivered unless in an emergency.**
- 4) **Plans for after school should be made before school.**
- 5) A pay telephone is available near the gym for public use during after-school activities.
No student should have to use the pay telephone during the school day.

At the beginning of the school year, teachers will provide their Voice Mail numbers to parents. Teachers are instructed to check their voice mail at the end of each school day.