

LINDER PARENT HANDBOOK



WELCOME to Linder Elementary!

At Linder, our goal is to develop lifelong leaders and learners. Helping students become scholars is a responsibility shared between students, parents and teachers. Learning is expected for every child, every day.

Our motto: From Good to Great! Linder Eagles soaring to new heights!

ARRIVAL

The school day begins at 7:45 am and ends at 2:57 pm. Main doors open at 7:00 for bus riders and walkers. Car riders will be able to drive up at 7:10, after buses clear. Classrooms open at 7:25. Parents may drop students off in front of the main entrance. Students/parents must enter through the front door. At 7:45, all visitors must sign in at the front office.

Students arriving between 7:25 - 7:45 go directly to their classroom. Students arriving between 7:00 and 7:25 go to the gym. These students will be escorted to their classrooms by teachers at 7:25 am. All students should be in their classrooms by 7:45 am. Breakfast will be available in the classroom between 7:30am-8:00am.

DISMISSAL

All students need to be picked up no later than 3:00 pm, unless they are enrolled in one of our after-school programs. Please make arrangements so no child is left behind without parent/guardian supervision before or after school. School personnel are not responsible for students before 7:00 am and after 3:15 pm.

Teachers will need to be notified if your child is a “parent pick up”, “bus rider”, or enrolled in “aftercare” at the school. Students will be released only to persons listed in their file. Any changes to the authorized pickup list must be done in person at the office by the enrolling parent before 2:00 p.m.

Parent Pick Up – Parent pick up students are escorted by a teacher to the gym. **Parents or caregivers must enter at the gym entrance or main front entrance.** To ensure the safety of our students, parents will not be allowed to enter the building from any other entrances. Dismissal will begin promptly at 2:57pm. Students should “high five” the teacher before leaving their designated areas. Students 3rd grade and older may walk home independently with written permission from parents. Younger students may walk home with older siblings/cousins with written permission from parents.

Bus Riders – Students riding buses will be escorted to their buses by teachers.

After School Care – Students will be escorted by teachers to their after-school care programs. Check with your program for pick up information.

PARKING & TRAFFIC

From 7:10-8:00 AM our school side curbs are used for student drop off. During dismissal, buses line up for pickup between 2:00-3:10. When parking in front of our school, please do not block the driveways of our neighbors.

To ensure student safety, all students should cross the streets only at a crosswalk. To keep traffic moving, parents are asked to use the designated drop-off locations and not park in the drop-off locations.

Parents dropping off students should pull up to the curb and let children out.

STUDENT DRESS

Clothing should be appropriate to weather conditions and daily school activities. Students should come to school wearing clothes that allow them to participate in all school activities comfortably, including P.E. and during recess.

ATTENDANCE & TARDIES

Absences--Regular, on time, attendance is essential to student achievement. State law requires that students be in attendance unless legally exempted or excused. Notes are required for ALL ABSENCES and must be given to the office no later than 48 hours (3 days) from when the student returns to school. Notes turned in more than 3 days after an absence are not valid and will require a doctor's note. Please note that parents receive an automated phone call from the district any time

a child is absent. Students who are absent or tardy three times will receive an automated letter from the district. These calls and letters are sent regardless of whether a note was submitted or not.

Please do everything you can to ensure your child is at school and on time! Every day a student is absent costs AISD \$45 in revenue from the state. Illness and family emergencies for absences are understandable. Vacations, extended trips, and other recreational activities, which can be scheduled during weekends, holidays, or during the summer, should be avoided during instructional time as these are not excused absences.

Schools receive funding for every child in attendance for that day. If a student is not present at 9:30, they are counted absent and the school loses funding. However, if he/she returns with a note from a medical professional indicating the absence was for an appointment, the absence is excused and we still receive funding. A note from the parent explaining the reason for the absence within three days of him/her returning to school can also justify the absence as excused. However, when absences are chronic (ten or more absences during the school year) parent notes are examined more carefully.

Excused & Unexcused Absences the following reasons will be accepted as excused:

- Medical –The student has a personal illness, doctor’s appointment, or an appointment with a healthcare professional, and provides a note.
- Religious Holy days – A student may be excused from attending school for the purpose of observing religious holy days when it is one generally recognized by the student’s religious denomination as a holy day that is required to be observed by all members of that denomination.
- Extenuating circumstances –i.e. funeral or family emergency as approved by the principal
- Shadowing at another school (with a note from the other school)
- Court Appearance -The student is involved in court proceedings or is participating in an activity related to those court proceedings.
- Citizenship Activities – The student is engaged in the process to secure his/her own U.S. Citizenship or participation in his/her own naturalization ceremony.
- Weather – in rare instances where weather impacts school attendance, absences or tardies will be excused if AISD designates a late start or school closure.

The following are common reasons for unexcused absences and tardies:

- Failure to provide documentation when student is out ill, or incorrect dates on the note

- Being signed in or out during the day for a medical appointment without providing a note from the physician
- Travel
- Family event
- Oversleeping
- Car trouble or traffic

Tardies--Students not in the classroom when the bell rings at 7:45 am are considered tardy. Students who arrive late or leave early are counted tardy (tardy also means “absent part of day”).

Appointments--Students are expected to attend school regularly and arrive on time. AISD’s official attendance is taken at 9:30 am. To be considered “present” for the day, a student must be physically present on campus at this time. If a student is not present at 9:30 a.m., the student is counted absent unless he/she returns to school the same day with a note from a medical professional indicating that the absence was due to a doctor’s appointment. We recommend scheduling appointments for as late in the day as possible, or first thing in the morning in order to minimize interruptions to their learning and attendance.

Consequences for Unreported Absences or Tardies--Unreported absences are documented and excessive tardies and/or absences may result in an attendance contract and/or court action. After 3 unexcused absences and/or tardies, a warning letter is automatically sent from the district. After 10 tardies and/or unexcused absences, court action may be taken. We are required by law to report the parents of students with 3 or more unexcused absences in 4 weeks or 10 unexcused absences in 6 months. Excessive tardies will also be reported to the court system.

LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY

Students sometimes need to be picked up early for appointments. While these are similar to a tardy, they are usually excused with a doctor’s note. However, when early pick up becomes a common practice, it impacts learning time in class. When picking a child up early, students will not be called from class until the parent has arrived in the office. In this manner, we can limit the impact leaving early has on instruction and learning.

Any student leaving school during school hours must be signed out at the office by a parent or guardian. Please do not go directly to classrooms to pick up students. The person picking up the student must provide identification to verify that the person has authority to pick up the student.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

It is essential that we have current telephone numbers and addresses where parents, relatives, or friends may be reached as soon as possible in the event of an emergency.

Students will be released only to persons listed in their file. Any changes to a parent's contact information or authorized pickup list must be done in person by the enrolling parent. We cannot accept changes to child records over the phone. Please make sure your contact information is current with the office and your child's teacher. In case of an emergency, we need to be able to reach you.

ILLNESS

Your child should stay home for at least 24 hours if:

- They are running a fever of 100 degrees or more
- They have vomited more than once or have diarrhea
- They have flu symptoms, like fever, cough, sore throat, chills, aches, and pains

Make sure your child is free of symptoms without medicine for a full day before sending them back. Central Texas is a hotbed for allergies, and some symptoms of allergies are similar to those of other illnesses. Students shouldn't stay home for allergies unless it is extremely severe. If you have questions, contact the school nurse.

SECURITY

Security is a top priority at Linder Elementary, and we need parents to follow the protocols just as much as the teachers and students. When entering the school, everyone must enter through the front doors and provide valid ID to check in the front office. Do not enter through any of the side doors. Often when parents are running late, they will ask someone to hold a side door open for them or ask a child that is inside to open the door. PLEASE do not do this. It's important we set the example for following rules intended for every child's safety.

After 7:45, if parents plan to stay at school/volunteer or have arrived late and wish to drop off their child, they MUST check in at the office to receive a visitor/volunteer sticker. During the school day, children who need to be outside the classroom (ex: to see the school nurse) travel in pairs. Additionally, there are security cameras at access points to the school and doors require a badge for entry. Always raise any concern you have about security to the main office.

While it may be inconvenient at times to follow these rules, remember that these are in place to protect your child, and keep all students and staff safe.

VISITORS

Parents that wish to visit during the day for a conference or to volunteer are encouraged to make an appointment with the teacher beforehand. For the safety of our students and staff, all visitors are to report to the office where their ID will be checked and a visitor's pass will be given. Visitors, including parents, must show a picture ID before being allowed to visit classrooms or other areas.

VOLUNTEERS

We encourage parents to volunteer whenever possible. Volunteer Orientations are offered at the beginning of the school year for new volunteers. Information about volunteer opportunities are shared in the Thursday Folders, and/or contacting our Parent Support Specialist, Maria Hanley.

CAFETERIA, BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

Linder participates in Breakfast in Class (BIC). Breakfast is served in the classroom from 7:30-8am. Breakfast is offered to all students free of charge, regardless of background or income, however, participation is optional. Students may bring their own breakfast to eat at that time if they prefer. Students may also eat at home before arriving but must be in their classrooms at 7:40 am. Between 7:40-8am teachers will begin the day with morning meetings or other lessons as students eat breakfast. Accommodations will be made for students with food allergies, please contact the Cafeteria Manager to arrange accommodations. Parents may sign up with their child's teacher to be a breakfast helper.

Starting the 4th week of school, after students have settled into their schedules, students may have visitors for lunch. Lunch times are scheduled by classroom; please check with your child's teacher for the exact time. Be sure to sign in at the office before meeting your child in the cafeteria. You may eat in the cafeteria with your child and their friends, or at the table marked for Parents.

Breakfast and lunch are free for all students.

MEDICATION AND ALLERGIES

Any medication to be given at school must be sent to the Nurse in its original container along with proper utensils for dispensing the medication. A signed permission form (obtained from the Nurse) must also be submitted. Please do not send any medication for your child to take "on their own."

Parents of children with food allergies should contact the Nurse for action plans. Due to severe allergies some grade levels may be nut, egg, or dairy free. Parents in these grade levels will receive information from their child's teacher about what steps are needed to keep classmates safe.

ELECTRONICS

Personal electronics and cell phones should NOT be brought to school. Items will be confiscated and sent to the office for safekeeping until a parent can come pick it up. Linder ES and AISD are not responsible for lost or stolen personal items. Parents may communicate messages to their students through their child's teacher or the office.

TOYS

Toys should not be brought to school as they disrupt class and can get lost or stolen. Linder ES and AISD are not responsible for lost or stolen personal items. Students caught using toys in class will have them confiscated at the teacher's discretion. Items such as fidget spinners are considered toys, and will not be allowed in class unless they are part of an accommodation plan.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthday parties, flowers, or balloons for a student's birthday are NOT allowed in the classroom. Students may share healthy snacks with classmates on their birthday at the end of the day, no earlier than 2:15 pm. Please notify the teacher beforehand that you will be sending snacks so as to reduce distractions to learning time. Some grades have specific allergies, so please see your teacher for appropriate snacks.

LOST & FOUND

When items are found at school they will be placed in the "Lost and Found" bin located behind the stage in the cafeteria near the bottom of the stairs. A secondary lost and found bucket is in the gym. Children and parents are asked to check this area for items that are lost. After a few weeks, unclaimed items are donated to our clothes closet here at school. Adding your child's name to lunchboxes, water bottles, coats, backpacks, and other items will greatly help lost items find their owners again! We strongly advise keeping valuable items at home to avoid losing them at school.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Linder ES does not provide after school care, but we are partnered with the following organizations: Extend-A-Care and ACE. Please contact these organizations directly for information on pricing and availability.

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

Back to School Night is an important opportunity for parents to learn about their child's classroom and expectations for the year. Typically held in September, this evening event includes sessions where teachers meet with parents in groups and share information about curriculum, field trips, homework, behavior expectations and more. The evening also includes time to visit our special areas- art, music, PE, computer lab and library. All parents are highly encouraged to attend.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Communication between parents and teachers is essential for each student's progress. Parent-teacher conference days are held in the fall and spring of each year on the dates indicated on the AISD calendar. Your child's teacher will prearrange conferences on the set day, sometime within the week before, or the week after that day. Conferences have different forms—some will include students and others will be just parents. If you are unable to attend a conference, please notify your child's teacher and reschedule the meeting.

**Please note that during the school day, teachers cannot hold conferences outside of their regular planning times because they cannot leave their class unattended while they meet with you. If you are unsure what time your child's teacher has planning, please contact the teacher or the front office.

At the conference, teachers and parents discuss a child's strengths and areas of need and review work, school-based assessments, and teacher observations. In the event a parent is unable to attend an in-person conference with the teacher, the parent may request a telephone conference. If a child has learning or behavioral difficulties, additional conferences can be scheduled at mutually agreed upon times. If you have a classroom concern, please contact the teacher first. If after communicating with the teacher, the concern is not resolved, feel free to contact an administrator.

COFFEE CHATS

This is a monthly forum where parents can communicate directly with school administration about issues, concerns, and feedback. Information about Coffee Chat dates and topics will be sent home in Thursday Folders.

COMMUNICATIONS

Website – Our website has lots of information about school programs and events as well as resources for parents: <http://linder.austinschools.org/>

Thursday Folders – This is the main form of communication for the school. Every Thursday your student will bring home a folder that contains important information. Take time to read through the papers and fill out any necessary forms. Please return the Folder the next day.

Facebook – Like us on Facebook to see reminders, announcements and photos from events.

Twitter- Follow us on Twitter @LinderEagles to see reminders, announcements, and photos from events.

CALENDAR

The school calendar is available on our website: <http://linder.austinschools.org/>

HOMEWORK POLICY

Our campus goal is to ensure homework is specific and purposeful. Our teachers have this goal in mind when they assign homework for their respective grade level/classroom. Best practices recommend no more than 10 minutes/grade level starting at Kindergarten (adding 10 minutes thereafter per year). Reading at home will always be a component of the home-to-school connection. Every child is encouraged to read, either by themselves or with a parent, for at least 20 minutes daily (Dual Language students should include Spanish and English reading during this time). Each grade level has a different policy regarding homework; please see your child's teacher for more information on homework expectations.

If your child is struggling with homework or cannot complete assignments on her/his own or without a great amount of assistance, it is very important that you speak with your child's teacher so she/he can modify work or differentiate the work. Homework is meant to reinforce skills, not to discourage a child. If homework seems too easy or you are looking for ways to enrich your child's learning,

please speak with your child's teacher as well. Should you have questions/concerns about your child's homework after working with your child's teacher, or if you need help speaking with your child's teacher, please contact an administrator (Parent Support Specialist, Counselor, Assistant Principal, or Principal).

RECESS POLICY

Every child receives recess or active movement daily, weather permitting. Recess is 30 minutes of unstructured time for socialization and play every day. It is valuable for your child's health and social-emotional growth. It is not to be used to complete homework nor is it to be taken away as a punishment (unless an altercation occurs during recess which requires a cool-off period/reflection). Should you have questions/concerns about your child's recess, please contact her/his teacher first. If you continue to have questions/concerns or need help speaking with your child's teacher, please contact an administrator.

WOW TIME

WOW time is separate from recess as it is structured time for teachers to engage children in body/brain breaks during the learning process within the school day. WOW Time is integrated throughout the day with brain breaks and active physical movement such as dancing or physical exercises. Many teachers pair WOW Time with learning activities or access ideas from websites such as "Go Noodle" which parents can access from home for free. Check it out!

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

We strongly believe that every child has the right to learn; therefore, no child will be permitted to disrupt the learning process. Students are expected to display behavior that shows respect towards classmates, school property, and all personnel. The Expectations for Student Behavior will be posted in all classrooms. The expectations along with student behavior interventions will be communicated to parents at the beginning of each year. Severe disruptions warrant an immediate office referral to an administrator. The administrator will take disciplinary action appropriate to the student actions(s). If a student is suspended, an administrator will notify parents.