

# STECK ELEMENTARY

P A R E N T H A N D B O O K

450 Albion Street • Denver, CO 80220 • 303.355.7314  
Fax - 720.424.3895 • Attendance Line - 720.424.3884  
DPS Web Page Address - <http://steck.dpsk12.org>

## 2008-2009 SCHOOL YEAR



# Steck Elementary Staff

La Dawn Baity .....	Principal
Krystie Warlum .....	Secretary
June Willhite .....	Full Day ECE
Molly Kirschling .....	Half Day ECE
Kelly Hegarty.....	Kindergarten
Stephanie Otto .....	Kindergarten
Stephanie Zollinger .....	Kindergarten
Mary Schonebaum .....	1st Grade
Jennie DiPaolo .....	1st Grade
Bev Herbert .....	2nd Grade
Sue Stephen .....	2nd Grade
Kelly Harrison .....	3rd Grade
Debbie Heinz .....	3rd Grade
Andrew Menard .....	4th Grade
Jan Winget .....	4th Grade
Mirriah Elliott.....	5th Grade
Rhonda Rau .....	5th Grade
Guy Pasquino .....	Math Enrichment / Support
Sarah Naughton .....	Literacy Enrichment / Support
Bev Laughlin .....	ESL (English as Second Language)
Linden Silver .....	LD Specialist/Resource
Kathy Eichenberger .....	Music, GT (Gifted and Talented)
Dan Dea .....	Physical Education/Dance
Susan Buck .....	Technology Coordinator
Chris Wells .....	Reading Intervention
Cherryl Sage .....	Humanities Facilitator
Lynn Richards .....	LMC (Library)
Jessica Bostrand.....	Art
Betsy Semones .....	Psychologist
Debbie Iacino .....	Nurse
Rachel Johnson .....	Speech
Jane Jensen .....	OT/PT
FACILITIES MANAGER .....	Chuck Mier
CUSTODIANS .....	Kelly Massi – assistant FM and Earnestine Fuller
PARAPROFESSIONALS	
Gigi Jensen .....	Nurse Para
Debbie Anderson .....	ECE
Derek Henderson .....	Half Day ECE and office support
Renee Erickson .....	Kindergarten
Annette Steinauer .....	Kindergarten
Betty Dolmas .....	1st Grade
Caroline Gries .....	1st Grade
Lisa Krause .....	2nd Grade

# Welcome

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Welcome to this year's version of our parent informational handbook. We are hopeful that in presenting the following information in one location, this book will be a useful resource throughout the school year.

## SCHOOL HOURS

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Playground Supervision: 8:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. – 3:10 p.m.

Grades K-5 school day: 8:15 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Early Childhood Education: FULL: 8:15 a.m. – 3:00 p.m./ HALF: 8:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

**ATTENDANCE:** Regular daily attendance is required of all students. **Please notify the school if your child will be absent or tardy by phoning the school attendance line at 720.424.3884.** The office staff will contact parents of absent students if the absence has not been called in earlier. Children who are tardy should report to the office before reporting to class. A written note signed by the parent or guardian explaining an absence or tardiness should be sent with your child when returning to school.

**TARDIES:** Being on time is a necessary lifetime skill. In order for your child to have a good start to their school day all students are to be lined up on the blacktop by 8:10 a.m. or in their classrooms by 8:15 a.m. every day. Instruction and social interaction begins immediately. Being on time ensures your child does not miss out on any of these two valuable routines.

**BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL SUPERVISION:** There is supervision on the west playground beginning at 8:00 a.m. **Students should not be dropped off at school before 8:00 a.m.** After school supervision ends at 3:10 p.m. Students not picked up by 3:10 p.m. are brought to the office and parents will be contacted. We ask that students be picked up from school on time every day. If there is a situation that will cause you to be late picking up your child, please call the office as soon as possible at 303.355.7314. Steck Elementary offers Kaleidoscope Corner for those parents who need before and after school care. Their phone number is 720.424.8291. Please contact Kaleidoscope Corner directly for fees and availability.

**STUDENT DROP-OFF/PICK-UP:** Please use the designated street parking around the school for drop-off and pick-up purposes if you are getting out with your child.

- For safety reasons, do not use the staff parking lot.
- The corner of 5th and Albion is very busy with cars parking, driving and students trying to cross the street.
- **Please be extremely careful around this area. Visibility is poor and makes seeing small children crossing the street difficult.**
- Areas designated for "SCHOOL BUS LOADING ONLY" should not be used for drop-off and pick-up.
- As this is a neighborhood, please be considerate of our neighbors surrounding the

school. There are drop off zones for parents to let their child out of the car on each side of the street. Please do not park in the drop off zones.

**DISMISSAL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY:** If your child must be excused before the end of the school day, please come to the office to sign your child out. Teachers should not release a student without office authorization. Children are only released to the people listed on the emergency card unless written authorization is presented to the office.

**BAD WEATHER DAYS:** When the weather conditions prevent children from being outside before school, they will be permitted to enter the building at regular supervision time (8:00 a.m.). In case of a severe storm, schools will be in session unless closings are announced on radio or TV. Radio stations KOA 850 or KBNA 1220 are the official announcement stations for school closing information. TV stations begin announcements at 5:00 a.m. If it is announced that the Denver Public Schools are on a "STORM SCHEDULE," it means school starts on time but elementary buses are running 1/2 hour late.

**CELL PHONES:** Students should not bring cell phones to school. We have phones at school that students may use with the teacher's permission. If a child needs to bring a cell phone to school they should turn it off and give it to their teacher to lock up until after school.

**LOST AND FOUND:** The center for lost and found items is located near the auditorium on a hanging rack. Small items are held with the office staff. Please mark your child's name inside their clothing, on their lunch boxes and anything else they might lose! The school is not responsible for lost items! Once a Trimester we will donate unclaimed items to charity organizations. We will post the date on our web site each trimester.

**ILLNESS:** If a child becomes ill, has a fever or is injured at school, the nurse or a member of the office staff will contact the person listed on the emergency form and supervise the child until pick-up. In cases of emergency, we will call 911. Please keep your child's emergency card updated.

**MEDICATION:** If possible, all medication should be given at home. If a child must be given medication during school hours, the *Student Medication Request Release Agreement* must be filled out by your child's doctor (for prescription and non-prescription medicine) and returned to the office. Medication can only be administered by the nurse or office staff and will be given in the office. Students should not have any medications in their pockets, classroom or backpack (including cough drops) for safety reasons.

**FOOD SERVICE:** We will be serving hot lunch for those students who choose this option. Lunch will be available for \$1.40 (\$0.40 for students who qualify for reduced lunch). Families are encouraged to purchase lunches by the week or month. You may write a check **with the child's name on it** payable to *Steck Elementary*. The money can be paid directly to the lunchroom after 10:30 a.m. or may be given to the office staff to be placed in the kitchen's mailbox. Each child is responsible for his/her own lunch money. If the money is lost or forgotten, a lunch will be provided but the child must repay the lunchroom manager the following day. A child is only allowed 2 charges before an alternative meal

(peanut butter or cheese sandwich, fruit and drink) will be served. Lunches may also be brought from home. Please write the child's name on the sack or lunch box. Soft drinks (soda) should not be brought in sack lunches. Forms for the *Free and Reduced Lunch Program* are available in the office. Breakfast is not served at Steck Elementary.

**ONLINE PAYMENT OPTION:** Families can pay on-line and view account balances by subscribing to [www.mylunchmoney.com](http://www.mylunchmoney.com). This service is not connected to or promoted by DPS, but many parents have found it to be a convenient option.

**SNACK POLICY:** Primary grades (K-2) have a designated snack time each morning. Students are responsible for providing their own snack. Snacks need to be nutritious. Please do not send foods high in fat or sugar content. A recommended snack list is provided. Intermediate grades (3-5) do not have a snack time. If your child has a medical need for a snack, you will need to provide a statement from your doctor and the teacher will help your child work out a routine.

#### RECOMMENDED SNACKS (K-2)

*No snacks should require preparation, cutting, peeling or the use of utensils.*

- any fresh fruit ready prepared
- any fresh vegetables ready prepared
- granola bars
- yogurt sticks
- cheese sticks
- raisins
- nuts (*well packaged in the case of nut allergies*)
- apple sauce
- rice crackers
- crackers
- cereal

**BIRTHDAYS:** Birthdays are celebrated on the child's birthday in K - 2nd grade. 3rd - 5th grade students celebrate birthdays on a monthly basis. The students with birthdays in a given month often help plan the class celebration. At all grade levels celebrations are kept short, usually 15-20 minutes at the end of the day. Please review the recommended birthday treat list carefully.

#### RECOMMENDED BIRTHDAY TREATS

*All birthday treats provided must be **SMALL** and in individual servings.*

*No treats should require preparation, cutting, peeling or the use of utensils.*

- fruit
- fruit with dips such as yogurt
- fruit kebabs
- veggies/dips
- mini muffins
- mini cupcakes
- small cookies
- banana bread
- rice krispie treats
- donut holes
- savory treats
- cheese/pineapple on sticks
- popsicles
- frozen yogurt

#### Non-edible treats

- pencils
- erasers

# Parent Communication

**VISITS:** Parents are welcome to visit and volunteer at Steck Elementary at any time. For safety and security purposes, please stop at the Office to sign in and pick up a **VISITOR BADGE**.

**CONFERENCES:** If you wish to meet with a teacher, please contact the teacher in advance to schedule a time convenient to both of you. There will also be scheduled Parent/Teacher conferences throughout the year and you will be notified in advance as to when they will be held.

**FRIDAY FOLDER:** Each child at Steck Elementary is given a "FRIDAY FOLDER" that they bring home each week. It contains information about your child's school work for that week. This year, we are offering an e-folder system to post all information except your child's actual school work. If you are interested in this environmentally friendly option, please sign up by notifying the office.

**PHONE DIRECTORY:** The *Steck Elementary Directory* is a helpful tool for keeping in touch with other Steck Elementary parents, as DPS will not give out phone numbers without permission. The directory is only given to Steck Elementary families and is not for any other distribution. A permission form will be distributed to all families and if you wish to have your information listed you may fill out the form.

**STECK STARLIGHT NEWSLETTER:** The *Steck Starlight Newsletter* is the school wide newsletter and will be published and distributed regularly. The newsletter reports on school happenings, PTSA and CSC meetings and news, special events, dates to remember, and children's work. The newsletter will be sent home in your child's Friday Folder and is the primary source of information about what is happening at Steck Elementary.

**SCHOOL BULLETIN BOARDS:** CSC + PTSA information is posted on the bulletin board across from the Office door. Meeting agendas and minutes will be posted on web sites following monthly meetings.

**WEB SITE:** The *Steck Elementary Web Site* is <http://steck.dpsk12.org>. It contains current information regarding the school including a calendar of events that is constantly updated. Copies of the newsletter are also posted on the web site.

# School Activities and Opportunities

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**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE):** Full Day and Half Day *ECE* programs are now offered at Steck Elementary for children four years old by October 1st. Contact the Office for information.

**ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE:** The *English as a Second Language (ESL) Program* provides English language development instruction for individuals and small groups of students for whom English is not their native language.

**GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM:** The *Gifted and Talented Program* at Steck Elementary has two main components. One is to identify and provide differentiated instruction and opportunities for students who meet specified criteria of the *Gifted and Talented Instructional Program*. The second component is to provide enrichment to the general student body to encourage creative thinking, develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills and enhance general classroom activities. Kathy Eichenberger is the GT Coordinator and our Music Teacher. We have two half-time teachers in 2nd through 5th grade to provide additional enrichment and support to meet the needs of all students.

**DESTINATION IMAGINATION:** *Destination Imagination* is a wonderful opportunity for students to participate in a team problem-solving, imagination process in competition with other schools. This competition is open to students K-5. Volunteers are needed to coach/manage each team. Work begins in October/November and finishes with competitions in the spring. Our GT teacher generally is involved with the DI team(s) with parents serving as coaches.

**STECK CHOIR:** Our school choir is open to 4th and 5th grade students who are interested in singing and performing. Parents are encouraged to help with costumes, chaperoning trips, and performance assistance and piano accompaniment.

**YOUNG AUTHOR'S PROGRAM:** The *Young Author's Program* is a district-wide literary competition, open to all students in the school. Students enter their stories or poetry collections that they have written during the school year. Two winners (1 from K-2 and 1 from 3-5) per school are selected. The winners and their parents are invited to attend the *Young Author's Tea and Conference*. Entries for this event are collected in early March. Classroom teachers help select appropriate entries.

**BROWN BAG LUNCHES:** This program is a new optional, enrichment opportunity. The *Brown Bag Lunch Program* gives children a chance to learn about a variety of topics that are interesting to them. During the lunch time once or twice a month, a guest speaker will present a topic to a group of interested children. Please check our web site frequently for updated information on student activities and opportunities.

# Celebrations

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**BIRTHDAYS:** See page 4 for details and a list of recommended birthday treats.

**DISTRIBUTION OF INVITATIONS:** Please do not hand out birthday invitations at school. The directory has addresses for most of the students. If you need something mailed because you don't have an address, bring a stamped envelope to the main office and we will address it and mail it for you.

**HALLOWEEN:** ECE-5th Grade students bring their costumes to school for an all school parade in the afternoon. Each classroom then participates in activities organized by room parents and teachers. Alternative activities are provided for students who choose not to participate in Halloween.

**WINTER PROGRAM:** Our Gifted and Talented/Music teacher creates a December musical program involving all of the children at Steck Elementary. The performance is held in the evening at the Hill Middle School Auditorium. It is not to be missed!

**VALENTINE'S DAY:** The Steck Elementary Valentine's Day activities usually include classroom parties and the decoration of boxes to receive valentines by student's classmates. Room parents help coordinate events.

**SCIENCE FAIR:** Students participate in the DPS Science Fair, creating investigations, experiments and displays demonstrating their knowledge of the Scientific Process. Families come to Steck Elementary to see all the wonderful, creative ideas and take part in having the children explain their project.

**INTERNATIONAL NIGHT:** ECE-5th grade students participate in studies about different areas of the world. An all school evening activity for families, serves as a culminating activity.

**FIELD DAY:** Our Gym Teacher coordinates a fabulous field day held in the spring with all students (K-5) competing in a variety of fun filled events.

# Parent Involvement Activities

**CSC:** *WHAT IS IT?* CSC is the acronym for *Collaborative School Committee*. The Steck Elementary CSC is an elected body of community representatives, parents, teachers, and staff who work together to provide for the short and long term direction of the school. The CSC determines school policies, develops the School Improvement Plan, approves the budget and makes a variety of decisions that affect the school. In addition, sub-committees may include non-CSC members that are under the direction of the CSC. These committees include the Personnel Subcommittee, Technology Committee, Character Education, as well as other committees created to address special areas of need. CSC meetings are held once a month and notifications are sent home in Friday Folders. Meetings are open for anyone to attend unless otherwise specified. Elections are held in the spring.

**PTSA:** *WHAT IS IT?* PTSA is the acronym for *Parent Teacher Student Association*. We are a gathering place to provide support to our students and teachers. We are dedicated to fostering a strong learning environment for our students. We do this through volunteering our time in the students' classrooms, in the office, and at various PTSA functions.

The PTSA is also a way to raise additional funding for Steck Elementary, above what is allocated to us through DPS. Our fundraising efforts:

- Help support our teachers through "mini-grants" for teachers to use for classroom education.
- Continue the upgrading and beautification of our playground and school building.
- Support the *Steck Starlight Newsletter*.

By becoming a member, you automatically help your child as a portion of your dues stays at Steck Elementary and supports its programs.

**BOOK FAIR:** The *Book Fair* will be held in the fall and 30-35% of each dollar you spend at the *Book Fair* stays at Steck Elementary. Several volunteers are needed to help with sales, set-up and clean up.

**FAMILY READING NIGHT:** *Family Reading Night*, held in conjunction with the Book Fair, is a family event during which our school community gathers to celebrate the joys of reading.

**BOXTOPS COLLECTION:** *Box Tops* provide Steck Elementary with additional funds for just a little effort. *Box Tops for Education* are small coupons found on the boxes of General Mills products, including their cereals, Go-Gurt, Yoplait Yogurt, Fruit Gushers, frosting and cake mixes, and many other products. Please clip all *Box Tops* coupons and send them in with your child. Each classroom will have a special collection area for your *Box Tops*. This is a fun, NO COST fundraiser for our school.

**CLEAN UP, BEAUTIFICATION OF THE PLAYGROUND:** We know how important a clean and well-maintained environment is to our school community and our residential neighbors. A couple of times a year there will be designated clean up days when we can all pitch in and help do a little extra to keep the playground clean and green!

**DOLLAR A DAY PROGRAM:** Steck Elementary has a program called “*Dollar a Day*,” which encourages each family to donate one dollar for every day their child is in school. This amounts to a suggested donation of \$180.00 per student. The *Dollar a Day* funds are used exclusively to help Steck Elementary keep teacher and Paraprofessional/student ratios as low as possible.

**ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS:** Throughout the years, the PTSA has offered a variety of after school activities for our children. Chess Club, Karate, Pottery, Spanish, Kite Making and Visual Arts are some of our most recent offerings. Look for information in your Friday Folder for details regarding this year’s programs.

**REFLECTIONS:** Reflections is an arts competition sponsored by the National PTSA, open to all students in the school. Categories include literature, music, visual arts, photography and dance. Submissions are judged according to the child’s age. Winners at the District level advance to statewide and national competition. Prizes are awarded at each level. Entries are due the first week of January and specific information about the program is given to each student in November.

**ROOM PARENTS:** Each classroom has one or two *Room Parents* who act as Parent liaisons with the other parents and the teacher. Room parents work with the teachers to help plan holiday activities, help with other teacher directed activities, help plan the class project/item donation for the *Step Up! for Silent Auction*, and the class participation in the *Steck Stomp*. It is a great way to be involved in your child’s classroom and help promote the community atmosphere at Steck Elementary.

**SILENT AUCTION:** The *Silent Auction*, held in March this year, is our major fundraiser. We will be working hard collecting donations, marketing the event, and doing all the small details to ensure a great auction. Each classroom donates an item, and the teachers get involved by donating a fun event that lets your child have a special time with their teacher. It’s always a fun, adults-only event during which we enjoy each other’s company while raising needed funds for our children’s education.

**SPRING SOCK HOP:** The *Sock Hop* is a fun-filled evening for the whole family. The PTSA gets a DJ and everyone comes to the gym for a fun night of dancing with your friends. Lots of people show up in their favorite 50s attire, providing lots of photo opportunities as well.

**STECK STOMP:** The *Steck Stomp* is a terrific end of the year community event and fundraiser. This 1-mile pledge/walk or run through the neighborhood combines fitness with a fundraiser, plus a morning of family fun on the playground for carnival games and events.

**TALENT SHOW:** In the spring, the PTSA coordinates a school talent show providing all children an opportunity to try out for a spot in the talent show. Watch for details in your Friday Folder.

**TEACHER APPRECIATION:** We have a whole school of wonderfully talented teachers who work very hard with our children. The Spring *Teacher Appreciation Luncheon* and other activities provided by parents, is our way of saying Thank You.

**DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES:** Teachers at Steck Elementary School have systems for setting up rituals, routines, and building a sense of community in their classrooms that involves shared expectations. When student behaviors or disruptions require discipline interventions, Steck teachers follow the DPS District Discipline Ladder. For a complete description of the Denver Public Schools discipline policies, go to the home page of the DPS web site.

**DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISCIPLINE LADDER**

