

Family Handbook

Office Hours: 7:45 - 3:45

School Hours: 8:45 - 3:15

Phone: 651-748-6800

Attendance Line 748-6824

Absent from school

Attendance Policy

Please note that school attendance is mandatory under Minnesota State Law. State laws are specific in pointing out parental and administrative responsibilities in the matter of school attendance. Also note that on average, students in Minnesota are only absent 7 days per school year. The following guidelines will assist you in following attendance expectations:

- All absences are to be reported to the school attendance line (748-6824) by 8:45 am. The reason for the absence must be stated.
- *Lawful school absences* include sickness, doctor appointments, religious holidays and extreme family emergencies.
- Examples of *invalid excuses* are: staying home to baby-sit, too tired, travel, needed at home, the weather (when school has not been called off), missed the bus or removed from the bus, child not immunized, and overslept.
- Students who arrive late to school are to report to the school office for an admission slip.
- A student who arrives less than 60 minutes late in the morning will be counted tardy. If the child arrives 60 or more minutes late, s/he will have a ½ day absence.
- If a child is excused less than 60 minutes early in the afternoon, s/he will be credited with an early release. If the student is excused 60 or more minutes early, s/he will have a ½ day absence.
- If a parent/guardian has not informed the school of a child's absence, it will be considered unexcused. Once the reason for absence is known, the building administrator has the discretion to change the absence from unexcused to excused.
- Family vacations (planned events of two days or longer) and early dismissals over one hour that are not for medical or family emergencies will be classified as unexcused. Building principals have the discretion to excuse these absences.

- When parents know their child/ren will be absent for more than three days, a note of explanation should be sent to the attendance office. Parents are to contact the teacher to receive assignments for the time missed.
- The following procedures are common practice when absences and/or tardies are excessive:
 - 1) If a child has 3 unexcused absences (absence without lawful excuse), or 10 out-of-building tardies (meaning the child is not in the school building at the time school begins), the school will send written notification to the family and report the situation to the appropriate county agency. The county agency will exercise progressive steps, if the unexcused absences and/or tardies continue.
 - 2) A warning letter will be sent out after 7 absences.
 - 3) A doctor's note or examination by the school nurse will be required, when warranted, if absences reach 10 days. Vacation days are included in the excused absence count.
 - 4) If absences continue without verification of illness from a doctor or the school nurse, or other lawful excuse, the school will notify the appropriate county agency.

Adventure Connection

The Adventure Connection Program provides extended day opportunities. All children must be registered with Adventure Connection call 651-748-6898.

Announcement Line

Cowern Elementary has an announcement line that is updated every month. Call 748-6823 to listen to upcoming events.

Behavior Expectations - *Be Kind *Be Safe *Be Responsible *Do your Best!

Each student is instructed as to student behavior expectations. Our school includes a strong education component that is designed to help children learn better ways of behaving. If a child fails to follow the behavior expectation guidelines the child will enter into a process that will include a verbal warning, or a "Fix it Plan" sheet to reinforce the discipline action. The student's behavior also may warrant a call to home or a visit the Principal's office. In some cases, the parent may be asked to come to school for a conference. Parents please help us by reinforcing these rules.

Bus Stops

Children should arrive at bus stops no more than 5-10 minutes before the scheduled time. Please respect neighbors' property and wait calmly.

Bus Discipline:

Riding the school bus is a privilege. To maintain a safe riding atmosphere, students must remain seated, keep their hands and feet to themselves, and treat their driver and other students with respect. If there is a problem, students need to notify the bus patrol or bus driver. Drivers will report serious problems to the Principal and bus privileges will be removed when warranted.

Cowern Clipper

A weekly school newsletter is sent home on Friday's with your child. Please make sure that you watch for important dates and events brought to your attention in the Clipper.

Clothing

We ask that students dress in good taste with appropriate writing on clothing. No short shorts or bra straps showing. During the winter months please make sure your child wears plenty of clothing. Snow pants, boots, hats, and mittens or gloves are a must, as students go outside daily.

Emergency Cards

Emergency cards are necessary for each child. If a child becomes ill or injured in school parents will be contacted first. If the school is unable to contact the parents the alternate person on the emergency cards will be called. Please notify the school when a change in telephone numbers or other pertinent information occurs.

Emergency School Closing

Once in a great while it is necessary to cancel school for a day. Poor weather conditions are the usual reasons for such action. This information is broadcast over WCCO-AM radio and television. Please do not call the school as the switchboard is jammed with calls when these situations occur.

Lost and Found

Articles of clothing are displayed by the west exit door near the office, small valuables are kept in the office.

Lunch and Milk Program

Children in grade KG-5 have the option of eating a hot lunch or bringing a lunch from home. Milk is served with each hot lunch, however, if a student wants a second milk the charge is \$.40. Menus are given to the students the last week of each month for the following month.

Fees and Reduced Lunch School Meals:

Elementary Breakfast	\$1.50
Reduced Breakfast	No Charge
Elementary Lunch	\$2.35
Reduced Lunch	\$.40
Milk	\$.40

Lunchroom rules

- Follow lunchroom supervisors directions
- Speak using inside voices
- Keep hands, feet, and objects (including food) to yourself
- Clean your space after eating, deposit trays and waste as directed

Medications at School District Policy

•The School District does not provide any medication for students. Whenever possible, the parent, or guardian should administer medications at home. However, when a student needs to take medications at school, the following will provide for a safe administration of any **prescription or non-prescription medication**.

•Written authorization from both parent/guardian AND physician or authorized prescriber must be received before any medication can be administered. This includes over-the-counter medications. The form needs to be renewed annually or whenever medication changes.

•Controlled substances such as Ritalin, Dexedrine, Cylert, Adderall, must be counted as each supply arrives. We ask parents to deliver a one-month supply at a time, and pick all medications up from the health office.

•Call our health office (748-6815) if you have questions.

•Thank you for your cooperation. Our intent is to insure safety and good health for your child.

Parent Teacher Group Meeting

Cowern Parent/Teacher Group (PTG) meets monthly. Watch the Clipper for the dates and more information. The PTG supports our school by organizing a variety of special activities. They fund field trips, classroom materials, assemblies, etc. In recent years they have purchased SMART BOARDS for our classrooms. Please join us at the next meeting to learn more about Cowern Elementary.

Telephone

All classrooms have telephones. See our "Staff Directory" for phone numbers. It will help if you call building staff directly. During teaching time, you will be asked to leave a message on the teacher's voice mail. Teachers will check their messages when they have a break and return the call.

Visitor Sign In

Anytime you come to visit during school hours, you will always need to sign in at the office or volunteer desk and wear a sticker/name badge. All entrances will be locked during school hours except the front door.