

# Jefferson Elementary School Handbook 2025-2026



John J. Decker- Principal

1701 North Maple ~ Watertown, SD 57201

Phone 882-6390 ~ Fax 882-6391

<https://www.watertown.k12.sd.us/o/jefferson-elementary>

**Jefferson Elementary School Staff  
2025-2026**

<b>Principal</b>	Mr. John Decker	<b>Physical Education</b>	Mr. Blake Heiser Mr. Matti Kranz
<b>Admin. Assist Office Asst.</b>	Mrs. Erica Reis Mrs. Tanya Thompson	<b>Music</b>	Mrs. Peggy Moeller
		<b>Art</b>	Ms. Cecilia Paulsen
		<b>Counselors</b>	Mrs. Kristi Flemming
<b>Grade 1</b>	Ms. Katlyn Gades Mrs. Denise Swenson Dr. Keri Tisher	<b>Library</b>	Mrs. Patty Zemlicka
<b>Grade 2</b>	Mrs. Sydney Johnson Mrs. Chandler Nelson Mrs. Jessica Stemwedel	<b>Classroom Paraprofessionals</b>	Mrs. Abigail Dunham Mrs. Jamie Halajian Ms. Keyaira Johnson Mrs. Rose Jones Ms. Chloe Ludvigson Ms. Jolene Kleinlein Ms. Allison Pahl
<b>Grade 3</b>	Mrs. Nicole Deutsch Mrs. Heidi Stoick Mrs. Abby Turbak Mrs. Kylie Weber	<b>Custodians</b>	Mr. Randy Middleton Mr. Dave Hlavinka Mrs. Michele Mack Mr. William Basel
<b>Grade 4</b>	Mrs. Chelsey Butler Mrs. Kim Gilmour Mrs. Emily Hogue Mrs. Kristi Wietzema	<b>Structured Learning Center</b>	Ms. Olivia Peterson- Lead Teacher Ms. JoJo Dallmann- Lead Teacher Mrs. Linda Hoass Mrs. Julie Kaska Mrs. Jamie Kennedy Ms. Lauren Luvaas Ms. McKenzie Gruby Ms. Haydon Bistodeau
<b>Nurse</b>	Mrs. Ann Schell		
<b>Interventionists</b>	Mrs. Tanya Maag Mrs. Twyla Warkenthein		
<b>Spec. Education</b>	Mrs. Nichole Smith-Lead Teacher Mrs. Cristina Brandsrud- Lead Teacher Mrs. Kelli Gilbertson-Lead Teacher Mrs. Jennifer Whiting-OTA Mrs. Sydney Crume Mrs. Kathy Evjen Mrs. Amanda Kliebert Mrs. Tricia Manzey Mrs. Hiliary Settje	<b>Kitchen</b>	Mrs. Barb Olson Mrs. Michele Mack Mrs. Kelly Southwick Ms. Heather Pulscher
<b>Speech/Language</b>	Mrs. Francine L. Johnson Mrs. Toni Wiechman	<b>Educational Psychologist</b>	Ms. Ellie Stevenson
<b>Physical Therapist</b>	Kari Holden	<b>Instructional Coaches</b>	Mrs. Jennifer Brist Mrs. Michelle Wells

## **GREETINGS TO STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

### **Dear Students and Parents:**

I want to welcome you on behalf of the staff to Jefferson Elementary School and hope you have a very successful and enjoyable year! This handbook contains most of the general information you will need to know about Jefferson Elementary School. I hope it is helpful to you and answers many of your questions.

As educators, we strive to provide a safe and nurturing learning environment where children can reach their highest potential. We are extremely proud of our school and the achievements of our students.

Parents are encouraged to become involved in Jefferson Elementary School. The Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) offers many opportunities for volunteer services. You may also volunteer in your child's classroom. Please visit with your child's teacher. You are encouraged to visit our school at any time. We look forward to seeing each of you.

John J. Decker  
Principal

### **ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Jefferson Elementary School, home of approximately 330 students, is located at 1701 North Maple Street. Our internet website is: <https://www.watertown.k12.sd.us/o/jefferson-elementary>

Scroll to the bottom and download the app on the app store. This will give you live feed and immediate notifications. If you have any questions, please feel free to call 605-882-6390.

### **WATERTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT VISION**

The mission of the Watertown School District is to develop literate, motivated, productive, and morally responsible citizens who pursue life-long learning and possess a positive self-image, by providing, through a cooperative effort of community and school, a caring environment that recognizes individuality and uniqueness and is dedicated to excellence and the worth of the individual.

**WATERTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT**  
**“Empowering All Student to Succeed in an Ever-Changing World”**

**Jefferson Elementary School**  
**Belief Statements**

**We believe all students:**

- Can learn and succeed
- Should feel safe, accepted and respected at school
- Are able to develop and utilize positive social skills
- Need positive role models
- Need clear expectations, challenges and structure
- Need to have ownership in their learning and accountability for their actions
- Are influenced by home, peers, teachers and the world around them
- Are unique with different needs and strengths
- Perceive “success” differently

**We believe all staff members:**

- Will have knowledge of curriculum, state standards, district expectations and current research
- Will have positive impact on the whole child (academic, emotional, behavioral, social)
- Will create a supportive, encouraging, and positive environment (nurturing, trusting, safe and respectful)
- Will foster a love/passion for learning
- Will give students and opportunity to read independently from books of own choosing, interest, and ability level
- Have multiple talents and abilities
- Will meet students’ needs through a variety of instructional methods and styles
- Are role models for students
- Have the responsibility to communicate with parents and staff
- Will make learning authentic to fit our changing world
- Will cooperate effectively with staff, students, parents and community
- Will challenge students to reach their highest potential

**We believe all parents and community members:**

- Need to have a positive and supportive partnership with staff
- Will actively support student learning outside the school day
- Will help to make education a high priority
- Want all students to be treated with respect
- Need to help protect our children
- Have a right to have a voice, be involved and informed
- Should feel welcome in our school
- Are a valued resource
- Are role models

**ATTENDANCE**

## ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

Supervision begins at 7:30 AM on the East side and West(playground side). For safety reasons, students **will not** be allowed to go to their lockers prior to 8:30 AM unless special permission from their classroom teacher or the office. The dining room will be open for students who are eating breakfast, at 7:45 AM.

At the end of the day(3:20 PM), students are expected to go right home after school. They are not allowed to play on the equipment unless supervised by a parent. Thank you for cooperating with us as we work to ensure the safety of your children before and after school.

If your child has to be absent from school, or late to school, parents are requested to call the school office at (882-6390) between 7:30-8:30 AM. If we do not hear from you before 8:45 AM, a routine phone call will be made to determine the reason for absence. NOTE: Whenever your child arrives at school after 8:35 AM they will be counted tardy.

Class attendance is necessary for students to gain optimum benefits from their school experience. **South Dakota State Law states that attendance is a responsibility of the parent**, although the school will cooperate and assist students and parents to strive toward good attendance practices. Please telephone the school office at 882-6390 to notify us when a student will be tardy or absent. When your child returns to school from a doctor's appointment, a written excuse for our files is required for it to be excused otherwise it is recorded as tardy. Attendance letters will be issued if there is a concern that the student's attendance is chronic and their academic progress is below satisfaction.

	Absences (U=unexcused, Ex= excused)	Tardies
First Letter	<b>FIVE Absences</b>	<b>10 unexcused reasons</b>
Second Letter	<b>TEN Absences</b>	<b>20 unexcused reasons</b>
Third Letter	<b>FIFTEEN Absences</b>	<b>40 undocumented reasons</b>
TRUANCY	<b>20+ Un/Excused</b>	<b>50+</b>

Communication will be made with concerns after the first letter. The Family Support specialists and School Resource Officer will be utilized in habitual incidents of unexcused absences.

## TARDINESS

Students will be considered tardy if not in the room by **8:35 AM**. Bus children are not counted tardy if the bus is late. However, if a student is late because he/she missed the bus and came to school by some other means, he/she is counted tardy. When arriving at school, please check into the office for a pass.

## ABSENCES

If a child is going to be absent from school, or late coming to school, parents are requested to call the school office at 882-6390 between 7:45 AM and 8:30 AM. If a child does not arrive at school, we want to be sure he/she is safe with you. A call from the school will be made if we do not hear from you. **You are expected to call the attendance office NOT text or e-mail the teacher.**

## REQUEST TO LEAVE SCHOOL EARLY

A request to have a child excused from classes early should be communicated to the OFFICE via phone or note. The time and reason for leaving should be included. **If a parent is picking up a child during the school day they must stop in the office and school personnel will have the child meet them there. The student will not be dismissed from class until the person signing them out arrives.**

A child will be released only to the parents unless the school has been notified by the parent that they have granted permission for someone else to pick up their child.

**Parent or Family Request:** Student illness, weddings, funerals, and special family events. The school reserves the right to determine whether or not an absence is excused. If the family/student does not wish to state the reason for the absence, the student may be assigned an unexcused absence.

**Family Vacation:** All absences of this classification must be requested within reasonable advance notice by the parent or guardian in order for a request for advanced work to be completed. The student's parent/guardian should communicate with the classroom teacher or attendance office stating why and when the student will be absent. Failure to do so may result in the absence being considered unexcused.

**Inclement Weather or Poor Road Conditions:** On days of bad weather, parents will have to use their own discretion in sending their children to school. Road and weather conditions may vary from one end of the school district to the other.

**Medical, Dental or Legal Appointments: Undocumented visits will be considered PAR.** TRUANCY may be filed even if PAR absences accumulate to 20.

If the parent fails to provide the proper documentation, the absence will become unexcused and subject to the consequences of the attendance policy.

In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences as to be justifiable.

### **Unexcused Absences and Tardies**

An **Unexcused Absence** is defined as a school day or period for which a student chooses to miss an academic or non-academic period, and fails to obtain a documented excused absence. Examples of absences considered unexcused would include haircuts, tanning appointments, shopping, oversleeping, sleeping in after an activity, studying for another class, in the school building and not in the assigned classroom, work, "skip days", etc.

### **ACHIEVEMENT TESTING**

**South Dakota Assessment** achievement testing is done each spring for students in grades 3 and 4. The assessment is usually administered the first three weeks in April. Please do not schedule vacations during this time. Tests are difficult to make-up. All students are tested. Benchmark Assessments are given in the Spring for students in K-4 to gauge progress and individualized student learning. All students complete the NWEA MAPS Assessment in the Fall, Winter, and Spring.

### **ACTIVITY TICKETS**

Each child will have an opportunity to purchase a season ticket to all the Watertown athletic events. You can now buy a student or adult ticket on-line. The season ticket will cost \$20.00 for a student and \$ for an individual event. Go to the following link then click on TICKETS:

<https://www.gobound.com/sd/schools/Watertown>

## **ATHLETIC EVENT STUDENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

1. Athletic events sponsored by the school system employ the same rules as any other school related activity.
2. Students are expected to be respectful of the rights of others and take responsibility for their actions.
3. Students are asked to sit with their parents and stay in your seats as much as possible.
4. Students are to refrain from running up and down the bleachers.
5. Students may stand during the contest as long as they are not blocking the view of other fans.
6. Students are to refrain from hanging over the railings on the top or the side of the bleachers.
7. Students are asked not to throw objects off from the bleachers.
8. Students cannot play football on the grass field south of the bleachers during football games.
9. Students are asked to properly dispose of any refuse in the proper containers.

## **AREA BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

### **Assembly Expectations**

1. Eyes Watching
2. Ears Listening
3. Voice Quiet
4. Body Calm

### **Dining Room Expectations**

1. Follow Staff Instructions
2. Use Manners
3. Inside Voice- Level 1
4. Keep Hands and Feet to Self
5. Line up Quietly-Voice Level 0

### **Bathroom Expectations- FLUSH**

1. First Stall Open
2. Leave It Clean
3. Use It Quickly
4. Soft Voices
5. Hands Washed

### **Hallway Expectations- HALL**

1. Hands At Our Sides
2. All Eyes Forward
3. Lips Zipped (closed)
4. Low Speed

### **Playground Expectations- RECESS**

1. Report Problems
2. Everyone Plays
3. Careful On The Equipment
4. Everyone Line Up Right Away
5. School Equipment Only
6. Safety First

Jefferson students are expected to focus on four important behaviors EVERY day.

BE Respectful

BE Responsible

BE Safe

BE Kind

This focus will allow ALL students to reach their highest potential academically, socially and emotionally.

**BICYCLES-the following rules apply when riding bikes to school.**

1. Bikes must be parked in the bike area next to playground
2. Bikes will not be ridden during the school day
3. Bikes should be locked or chained to the bike rack, or chain placed through the wheel and the around the frame

**BREAKFAST & LUNCH**

The cafeteria serves breakfast and lunch daily. The breakfast program runs from 7:45 AM to 8:30 AM and offers a variety of menu items. Students that come to school by means other than the bus need to eat by 8:25 AM. Bus students will eat from 8:20 AM to 8:30 AM. Students may choose items from the major food groups. The breakfast cost is \$2.00. The full lunch is a balanced meal. Student lunch cost is \$3.00. Adult lunch cost is \$5.10. Children may also bring a sack lunch and have the option to purchase milk. The milk cost is \$.40. Both breakfast and lunch money can be deposited in the office or online. The food service will not be serving peanuts or peanut products due to peanut allergies. Please see the last page for examples of appropriate peanut-free snacks.

**NOTE:** Students approved for free and reduced lunch from the previous school year will continue in the category for ten days into the new school year. You must reapply each school year. The application is sent home in the student folder at Open House. The application will take effect the date that it is approved.

**BULLYING(Harassment-Intimidation) Policy JICK**

The School District is committed to maintaining a constructive, safe school climate that is conducive to student learning and fostering an environment in which all students will be treated with respect and dignity. The Board expects students to conduct themselves in a cooperative manner through their interactions. Persistent bullying can severely inhibit a student's ability to learn effectively and may have a lasting negative effect on a student's life.

Bullying consists of repeated physical, verbal, non-verbal, written, electronic, or any conduct directed toward a student that is so pervasive, severe, and objectively offensive that it:

1. Has the purpose of creating or resulting in an intimidating, hostile, or offensive academic environment; or
2. Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with a student's academic performance which deprives the student access to educational opportunities.

If bullying does occur, students must inform staff and know that the incidents will be dealt with promptly. Any staff member observing or suspecting bullying toward another individual is required to report the issue to his or her building supervisor. Students may report bullying anonymously through Safe2Say South Dakota:

<https://safe2say.sd.gov/>

**POLICY JICK**

[https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded\\_file/906/Watertown\\_School\\_District/3127935/6.4.2\\_JICK.pdf](https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/906/Watertown_School_District/3127935/6.4.2_JICK.pdf)



## **BUS RIDING PROCEDURES**

If your child intends to ride the bus either on a rural route or city route, they must adhere to the following rules and safety procedures. Failure to follow the rules may lead to suspension of bus riding privileges.

### **1. RESPECT: OTHER STUDENTS, DRIVER AND BUS**

- a. No fighting/harassing/teasing others
- b. Listen and follow the directions given by the driver
- c. Do not damage or vandalize the bus
- d. Do not use inappropriate language or gestures

### **1. BUS SAFETY PROCEDURES**

- a. Remain seated -do not stick your arms or head out of the windows
- b. Keep the bus clean and do not throw items
- c. Talk quietly
- d. Tobacco, smoking, lighters and matches are not allowed
- e. Weapons or dangerous objects are not allowed

## **CAMPUS**

Parents can access their child's grades electronically through the internet. Parents can see their child's grades, attendance, and behavior record. Please contact the office to receive a password to access campus.

## **CHARACTER COUNTS**

Throughout the year we will focus on the six pillars of character through assemblies and announcements.

Trustworthiness- November

Respect-December

Responsibility-January

Fairness-February

Caring-March

Citizenship- April

## **CELL PHONES, WATCHES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Students may not use any personal communication devices on school grounds during school hours of 7:30-3:20. We ask that cell phones be turned off and stored in the student's locker from 8:30-3:20. Watches may be worn, but if they become a distraction or are used during the learning day, students will be asked to remove them and placed on the teacher's desk.

**We strongly encourage elementary children to leave cell phones at home.**

We also discourage students from bringing other electronic devices to school. These devices must be turned off and stored in the student's locker during school hours. The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen electronic devices.

## **COLD WEATHER DRESS**

Students will go outside all year round for recess unless the temperature falls below 0 degrees (with a -10 wind chill included). We encourage all students to have the appropriate dress for cold weather. This includes a coat, hat, mittens or gloves, snow boots and snow pants. This will protect your child from the winter elements and will keep them dry and comfortable during the school day. If it is a family hardship to purchase proper outside attire, please contact Mr. Decker for assistance.

## **COMPLAINT OR CONCERN**

If a parent has a concern about school related activities, classroom expectations or workload, please contact your child's teacher first, either by setting up a meeting or a voice-to-voice contact. Texting concerns often are ineffective. If a parent has concerns about other issues or wishes to discuss them further, please contact the building principal.

## **CONFERENCES**

Two Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held during the year, a conference in November and a conference in February. At that time, the report card and other student academic information will be discussed with the parent. The school believes the conference is beneficial because it provides the parents and teachers an opportunity to share information, which will be of assistance in working with the child. Parents or teachers may request additional conferences if necessary.

## **DAMAGE TO SCHOOL PROPERTY/TECHNOLOGY**

If a student intentionally damages school property, including the school's iPad or headphones, the student's parent/guardian will be expected to pay for the replacement or repair.

## **DINING ROOM EXPECTATIONS**

Procedures for the dining room:

1. Stop at the computer and give the attendant your number.
2. Take condiment items that you plan on eating.
3. Food will not be exchanged with other students.
4. Clean your area when you leave.
5. Walk quietly with your teacher when dismissed.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Discipline is an important dimension of life. We want to create an atmosphere of respect and responsibility at Jefferson Elementary. We want to foster an environment conducive to learning and caring. In order to do this, students must work at treating all people with respect and take responsibility for their own personal behavior. Each teacher at Jefferson has a classroom management plan. The staff at Jefferson Elementary requests parental support in helping maintain appropriate conduct in school. We use the BOYS TOWN Social Skills at Jefferson. Our teachers and paraprofessionals focus on a new social skill every 2-3 weeks. Some students who lack certain social skills will receive Corrective Teaching Interventions. A staff member will describe their inappropriate behavior and guide them as to what the appropriate behavior should be. When the student complies the interaction is over. However, if the student does not, they may be in Crisis and our staff member now interacts with the student in Crisis Teaching mode. The Crisis mode can take longer which may result in an OFFICE DISCIPLINE REPORT. When a child receives an ODR, it is documented by the teacher, entered in our CAMPUS reporting system and a copy of the report sent home to the parent. The parent is notified by the teacher for the first two ODRs and the principal thereafter. Please review the Behavior Matrix.



## WSD Early Childhood - 4th Grade Discipline Matrix

***Administration and staff reserve the right to administer alternative consequences to inappropriate behavior, as it is impossible to list every inappropriate behavior and/or its possible consequence.***

*Violation of each behavior infraction follows through its own progression of violation/s. (ie. Multiple Class One violations do not add up unless they are the same behavior violation.)			<b>1st Incident</b> Consequences are listed on a continuum depending on severity of infraction. Any or all may be used.	<b>2nd Incident</b> Consequences are listed on a continuum depending on severity of infraction. Any or all may be used.	<b>3rd Incident</b> Consequences are listed on a continuum depending on severity of infraction. Any or all may be used.	<b>4th (or more)</b> Consequences are listed on a continuum depending on severity of infraction. Any or all may be used.
<b>Level One</b>	Academic Dishonesty, Disruption of School, Dress Code Violation, Electronic Device/AUP Violation, Hands and Feet to Self/Physical Aggression, Inappropriate Language	<b>1</b>	Warning Incident Report Office Intervention	Incident Report Office Intervention Detention Behavior Contract	Incident Report Restriction Detention (1+) Behavior Contract ISS (1/2 to 1 day)	Restriction Detention (1+) Behavior Contract ISS (1-3)
<b>Level Two</b>	Bullying, Disruption of School, Electronic Device /AUP Violation, Hands and Feet to Self/Physical Aggression, Inappropriate Language, Threat/Intimidation	<b>2</b>	Warning Incident Report Office Intervention Restriction Restitution	Incident Report Office Intervention Detention (1+) Behavior Contract Restriction Restitution Counselor Referral	Detention (1+) Behavior Contract Restriction Restitution ISS (1/2 to 1 day) Risk/Threat Assessment	Detention (1+) Behavior Contract Restriction Restitution ISS (1-3) Risk/Threat Assessment
<b>Level Three</b>	Disorderly Conduct, Electronic Device /AUP Violation, Fighting, Harrassment, Insubordination, Larceny/Theft, Vandalism	<b>3</b>	Incident Report Office Intervention Restriction Detention Restitution	Incident Report Office Intervention Behavior Contract (20) Restriction Detention Restitution ISS (1/2 - 1 day)	Behavior Contract (20+) Restriction Detention Restitution ISS (1-3) Counseling Referral	Restriction Detention Restitution ISS (3-5) Risk/Threat Assessment OSS (1-3)
<b>Level Four</b>	Alcohol, Battery(Aggravated Assault), Drugs other than Alcohol, Larceny/Theft, Threat/ Intimidation, Tobacco, Vape/Nicotine, Weapons other than firearm	<b>4</b>	Office Intervention Parent Conference Detention ISS (1/2 - 1 day)	Detention Parent Conference ISS (1-3) OSS (1) Law Enforcement Conversation	ISS (1-2) OSS (1-2) Law Enforcement Conversation	ISS (2-3) OSS (2-3) Law Enforcement Conversation
<b>Level Five</b>	Alcohol, Battery(Aggravated Assault), Drugs other than Alcohol, Firearms, Other Criminal Offenses (Non-Violent), Threat/ Intimidation, Tobacco, Vape/Nicotine, Weapons other than firearm	<b>5</b>	Referral to D.O. and/ or SRO Long Term Suspension Expulsion	Referral to D.O. and/ or SRO Long Term Suspension Expulsion	Referral to D.O. and/ or SRO Long Term Suspension Expulsion	Referral to D.O. and/ or SRO Long Term Suspension Expulsion

### DRESS CODE

Students should wear clothing which is clean, in good taste, and does not attract other than normal attention. Clothing displaying obscenities or slogans inappropriate to school will not be permitted. Shorts should be long enough so the child's fingertips touch the hem part. Halter tops or spaghetti straps are prohibited. During the winter months, snow pants, boots, and gloves are necessary to be at the chilly playground. If you are in need assistance of clothing for your child, please contact the school counselors or the principal for assistance (882-6390)

### DROPPING OFF ITEMS

We ask that parents or relatives bring their child's belonging(s) to the office or leave in the entry after communicating with the office. We will ensure that the student will get the item. Going directly to their child's locker or classroom is prohibited.

### ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Personal electronic devices, such as personal iPads, Nooks, Kindles, and Phone Watches may be used in the classroom **at the discretion of the teacher.** They may be utilized for reading purposes. ALL other electronic devices are prohibited.

### EMERGENCY FIRST AID

We make every possible effort to provide an environment in which students will be safe from accidents. If your child is injured, the staff will take whatever steps are necessary to provide the needed medical attention and care. These steps may include contacting a parent or guardian, administering emergency first aid, contacting the child's physician, taking the child to an emergency room and calling an ambulance.

### FAMILY UPDATE

**Please keep the school notified of any changes in address, telephone number, or parent's work number.** We may need to notify you in case of emergency. If you are moving out of the school district, we ask that you allow us a day notice to prepare transfer records and collect student books and supplies.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Students may be involved in educational field trips during the school year. Parents will be notified by notes from the teacher of upcoming field trips. The note will explain the purpose, date and time of the event. Field trips are part of the academic learning. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school if they wish their child not to travel on a field trip. Parents will only be allowed to accompany a field trip if asked to chaperone. Parents, who accompany, may not take picture, unless of their child only. Student electronic devices will not be allowed on a field trip.

## **FIRE/LOCKDOWN/TORNADO SAFETY DRILLS**

Fire, Lockdown and tornado drills are completed according to regulations established by our school district and the state of South Dakota. Every precaution is taken to ensure the safety of staff and students during normal school hours. Periodic drills will be carried out to meet regulations and to make certain students learn proper safety procedures.

## **FOOD, CANDY, GUM, DRINKS, and TOYS**

Food, candy, gum, pop, juice and toys are only allowed to be brought to school with permission from the classroom teacher for special occasions. Water bottles brought to school should be filled at school. Only water will be allowed as a content. We encourage children who eat cold lunch to bring healthy and nutritious food. Please try to refrain from sending pop or candy during lunch.

## **FREE/REDUCED MEALS**

Students approved for free and reduced lunches for the previous year will continue for ten days into the new school year. You must reapply each school year. Applications are available on-line:

## **GATE (Gifted and Talented Education Program)**

The GATE program is for students with high academic abilities. Students qualify based upon their MAPS testing and are referred for testing in February. Classroom enrichment and enrichment programs are available for students who qualify for the program.

## **GRADING SCALE**

### **First - 4th grade**

- 3 Proficient
- 2 Approaching Proficient
- 1 Below Proficient
- Blank=Not Assessed at this time

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

ALL students entering school for the first time are required to have proof of immunization. Failure to do so will result in the student being excluded from school. If you are in the process, you will have 30 days from the start of school to complete this process.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSINGS**

It is the right and responsibility of parents to decide if a student should attend school under abnormal conditions. In bad weather, parents may pick up their child from school at any time during the day.

In the early morning hours during inclement weather, radio stations will begin carrying announcements before 7:00am that school will be closed and buses will not operate.

Worsening weather conditions may force the early closing of schools. If this should happen, radio stations will carry this information. On such a day, our phone lines become jammed. DO NOT plan for your child to contact you by phone. Be prepared in advance. "Operation Blizzard" (a plan for rural bus students to stay with friends in the city) will be announced on radio if necessary.

## **INTERNET**

The Watertown Public School District 14-4 provides internet services for all of its students. This service helps prepare students for their future. The Internet provides a unique opportunity for students to begin to explore the incredible wealth of information that will continue to enhance their learning.

This educational opportunity also requires some responsibility by the students. Although we cannot control how members of the Internet community use their computers, we can and do monitor what students do on the school's computers.

Having Internet access is a privilege, not a right, so students are expected to follow these guidelines when using the Internet at school:

1. Be under direct supervision and observation of a school staff member.
2. Use the Internet for education purposes only.
3. Report to the teacher immediately any sites/emails that make them feel uncomfortable
4. Behave in the online world the same as they are expected in the classroom.

#### **AWESOME ARROW-CAUGHT BEING GOOD**

Students who show exceptional behavior could receive an AWESOME ARROW from any staff member. Once a day a name will be drawn and a prize will be awarded. A student may receive more than one AWESOME ARROW throughout the year.

#### **STAR OF THE WEEK**

Each child will be chosen by grade levels to be showcased as the STAR of the Week. They will be identified on the Friday prior to their recognized week. They will bring home an information sheet and asked to bring it and anything they wish to place in the showcase next to their name. Grades 1-4 will have the opportunity to eat lunch with the principal. During lunch we discuss attributes of good character and our STAR pledge.

“This day has been given to me fresh and new.  
I can learn from it or throw it away.  
Today, I will do my BEST in thought, words, and actions.  
Today, I will be a STAR.  
I WILL Stop, Think, and Act Responsibly.”

#### **JEFFERSON SCHOOL NEWS**

A monthly school newsletter, “**Jefferson Journal**” is sent home at the beginning of each month. This newsletter includes a calendar, lunch menu, recent school news, upcoming events and other school related information. Other news related items are sent as needed to highlight Jefferson activities. The newsletter is accessible on our web site.

#### **LOST AND FOUND**

All items that are found in school will be placed on the lost and found table located in the front entry. Unclaimed items will be given to a charitable organization two weeks after the official end of the school year.

#### **LIBRARY/GUIDED READING BOOKS**

Curriculum and library books are issued to students to practice their reading at home throughout the school year. Students who lose or damage GR books or library books will be charged replacement costs. Parents are responsible for the replacement cost payment. Failure to pay could result in future books not being sent home until the book is returned or replaced.

#### **MAKE-UP WORK**

When a student has been absent from school, it is likely that there will be some work to be done at home or after school. Although the school is willing to cooperate with parents in these cases, it should be understood that each teacher cannot duplicate all missed assignments (ex: lectures, field trips, experiments). It is asked that parents make requests for missed work prior to 9:00 AM to give the teacher time throughout the course of their day to prepare the missed work. Requests for homework will be delivered to the office by 3:00. Advance notice of a student absence is greatly appreciated.

#### **MEALTIME ACCOUNTS**

Lunch and/or breakfast money can be paid in the office. This will be applied to the student's account. A notice will be sent home when the account is down to one and two meals. A phone call or email from school personnel will also be made as a courtesy reminder. The regular lunch for students is \$3.60 and the price for an adult is \$5.10. Breakfast prices are \$2.80 for students and \$2.95 for adults. The price for an additional milk is \$.50.

Reduced price of a student meal is 40 cents and a student breakfast is 30 cents.

## **MEDICATION**

Medication cannot be given without the parent completing and signing the medication request form provided by the school. All medication should be turned in to the office where they will be stored. Please inform us of any changes in medications for your child. A separate medication form is required for each medication.

Any medication that your child needs to take at school must be brought to school by the parent or guardian in the prescription bottle or over the counter container that is labeled. Medications are kept in locked cupboards. This is a safety factor for your child as well as for the other children.

**Medication brought in a zip-lock bag will not be accepted.** When brought in such non-original containers, we don't know who they are for, what they are given for, when to give them and how much to give.

## **NEEDY FUNDS**

Each school is equipped with funds provided by donations from organizations and private individuals to help with the needs of families. Some of those needs may be for clothing, food, various expenses and Mealtime accounts. Please contact the school at 882-6390 if an emergency need may arise.

## **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent/Teacher Conferences are held twice a year. We believe these conferences are beneficial because they provide the parents and teachers an opportunity to share information that is vital to the success of their child's learning and social emotional well-being. Parents may always request additional conferences with a teacher.

**August 21(11:00-7:00), November 9 (1:00-8:00), February 15 (1:00-8:00)**

## **PARTIES**

Parents often wish to send a treat to the class for their child's birthday. It must be **prepackaged** from a store. PLEASE, no at home baked goods are allowed. Please make these arrangements with the classroom teacher. Some of our students have severe allergic reactions to eggs, nuts, or other ingredients. This is done to maintain a safe environment. (Please see the last page for snack ideas.) The school district recognizes two times during the school year for special parties. These two times are Christmas and Valentine's Day. Birthday party invitations will not be handed out unless the entire class is invited. Please utilize the directory to mail invitations to their homes. Please **do not** have balloons or flowers delivered to the school for their birthday.

## **PETS at SCHOOL**

Pets of any sort are not allowed on school grounds before, during, or after school. Some of our students suffer from animal allergies and fear of animals. Please respect the safety of our students.

## **PICKUP PLANS AFTER SCHOOL**

1. Prepare in advance what your pickup plans will be in case your child becomes ill.
2. Discuss your "after school" pick-up plans in the morning before school starts.
3. Contact the main office when needing to pick up your child early. (882-6390)
4. Try not to make it a habit of leaving early to beat the habit. Vital learning is being missed and could impact your child's education

## **PLAYGROUND EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES**

1. Follow directions of all playground staff
2. Remain outside until the bell rings unless permission is given to enter the building
3. Show respect to self, others and equipment
4. Hard baseballs or softballs are not allowed
5. Students and equipment are to stay in designated areas
6. Dress appropriately for the weather

### **POP TABS**

Jefferson Elementary collects the tabs from aluminum cans. These are given to the Ronald McDonald House, which provides temporary housing for parents with children in the hospital. Every student will receive a cardboard house to fill and bring in to dump in our house container. They will then receive a token of gratitude from the Ronald McDonald House.

### **PTO**

The Jefferson PTO exists to promote opportunities for parents to get involved with yearly activities. It sponsors exciting and engaging family activities and support for our teachers. ALL parents are encouraged to attend our monthly meetings.

### **RECESS**

The school operates on the assumption that if students are well enough to be in school, they are usually well enough to participate in recess. School personnel will use their best judgment with regard to taking students outside for recess during the winter months. Students will not be outside if the air temp is below zero or wind chill is ten below zero. If rainy conditions begin while students are outside, playground supervisors will be responsible for bringing students inside. Parents are reminded to dress their children for ever-changing weather conditions. Students will be allowed to stay inside from recess up to three days with a note and a parent signature. A doctor note **will be** required to miss more than three days.

### **REPORT CARDS**

It is the philosophy of the Watertown School District that students will respond more positively to the opportunity for success rather than to the threat of failure. The district, therefore, will seek to make achievement both recognizable and possible for its students, and will emphasize achievement in its processes of evaluating student performance.

Students will receive a standards based report card using a 3-2-1 scale. This notation will indicate how each student is performing in relation to specific learning standards.

Report cards will be accessible to parents through Campus Portal for the 1st thru 3rd quarter. A paper copy will be sent home at the end of the 4th quarter..

### **SCHOOL WEATHER CLOSINGS**

Parents will be informed as to scheduled vacations and early dismissals for holidays or teacher in-service. If it is necessary to close school because of inclement weather, an announcement will be made by radio stations KWAT (950AM), KSDR (1480AM), KXLG (99.1FM), or KPHR 106.3FM. You may also receive a district notification from Dr. Danielsen.

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

The Jefferson Elementary office hours are from 7:45-4:15 PM. Students may enter the East entrance at 7:30. They will be asked to stay in the entry way until 8:05, then dismissed to the WEST playground. Breakfast is served from 7:45-8:25. Teacher hours are from 8:00-4:00. Teachers are available in the morning from 8:00-8:20 and after school from 3:25-4:00. However, many days teachers have meetings or conferencing with each other, it is always best to call ahead and schedule an appointment. Teachers will not be interrupted during ACADEMIC LEARNING TIME(ALT).

### **SPIRIT DAYS**

Every Friday students and staff are encouraged to wear JAGUAR or ARROW WEAR. This is one facet in developing school pride and a togetherness. Students develop an attitude and mindset of pride, loyalty, and caring. There is a positive culture and climate that is developed and a sense of PRIDE as a JAGUAR family.

### **STUDENT DRESS**

Students should wear clothing that is clean, in good taste, and does not attract other than normal attention. Hair color is unacceptable at any time, this includes Homecoming Day. This does not promote an effective learning atmosphere. Clothing displaying obscenities or slogans inappropriate for school will not be permitted.

Many students have similar pieces of clothing, such as gym shoes, coats, mittens and boots. It is recommended these items be marked with the student's name. Students should wear the same shoes on the playground as they would in the physical education class. Sandals are not to be worn in school due to safety reasons on the playgrounds and in Physical Education class.

## **STUDENT/PEDESTRIAN SAFETY**

We ask children to adhere to the following safety procedures.

1. Look both ways before crossing the street, keeping an eye out for cars, especially those turning the corner.
2. Always obey traffic signals and signs
3. Cross only at corners or at designated crosswalks. If crossing 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, use only the intersections. Never cross a street between parked cars.
4. Walk on the sidewalk whenever possible, however, if you must walk on the street, always walk on the left side facing the oncoming traffic.

## **USE OF THE SCHOOL PHONE**

The school phone is for school-related purposes only. Children may use the phone with a pass from their teacher. Teachers and students will not be called from class during instructional time. Messages will be relayed to the student's classroom teacher. Try to prepare after school plans in the morning.

## **VISITORS**

We ask that **ALL** visitors report to the office upon arrival at Jefferson. You will be issued a visitors sticker. This procedure helps our staff know who is in the building at all times. Please do not go to your child's classroom without checking in at the office first. You will be asked to report back to the office. This is not meant to be rude, it is meant to practice safety procedures to keep ALL of our students SAFE.

## **VOLUNTEERING**

We encourage parents to volunteer at Jefferson. There are many opportunities to volunteer in the school or the classroom. During the Open House in the fall, we will have a sign up sheet for specific volunteering needs. If you would like to volunteer in your child's classroom, please visit with the classroom teacher.

# **NON-DISCRIMINATION/ACCESSIBILITY**

Watertown School District 14-4 provides equal opportunity in its employment regulations, educational, and activity programs. It is the policy of the District not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, creed, religion, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, age or disability.

Persons with inquiries regarding implementation and compliance of Americans with Disabilities Act may contact Dr. Jennifer Bollinger, Special Services Director, Watertown School District 14-4, P.O. Box 730, Watertown, SD 57201-0730, 605-882-6398, and persons with inquiries regarding implementation and compliance regarding Title IX or Section 504 may contact the Watertown School District Superintendent's Office, P.O. Box 730, Watertown, South Dakota 57201-0730, 605-882-6312. Additional inquiries may be directed to the Regional Director, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 10220 North Executive Hills Boulevard, 8th Floor, Kansas City, MO 64153-1367, 816-880-4200.

# **COMPLAINT POLICY FOR FEDERAL PROGRAMS**

A parent, student, employee, or district stakeholder who has a complaint regarding the use of federal NCLB funds and is unable to solve the issue, may address the complaint in writing to the district's superintendent.

Disputes addressing the enrollment, transportation (including inter-district disputes), and other barriers to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness are also addressed under this procedure. Parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth may initiate the dispute resolution process directly at the school they choose, as well as at the district or district's homeless liaison's office. The parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth shall be provided with written explanation of the school's decision including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal the decision. Students should be provided with all services for which they are eligible while disputes are resolved.



- The superintendent will investigate, within one week, the circumstances of the complaint and render a decision, within two weeks, after receipt of the complaint.
- The superintendent will notify the complainant of the decision in writing.
- The complainant will be allowed one week to react to the decision before it becomes final.
- The complainant will either accept or disagree with the decision and will provide such acknowledgement in writing, addressed to the district superintendent.
- If the issue is not resolved with the superintendent, the complaint will be forwarded to the district's Board of Education for further review. The parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the district's decision including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal the decision.
- Unresolved complaints may be forwarded by the stakeholder to the South Dakota Department of Education for review. Consult the SD Department of Education Complaint Procedure.

## CHILD FIND NOTICE

The Watertown School District has an ongoing "Child Find" system, which is designated to locate, identify and evaluate any child residing within its geographical boundaries who may have a disability and be in need of Special Education or 504 services. This includes children who are not in school; those who are in public, private, or home school; those who are highly mobile such as children who are migrant or homeless; and those who are advancing from grade to grade, who may need but are not receiving Special Education or 504 services.

The Watertown School District will make sure any child enrolled in its district who qualifies for Special Education or 504 services will be no cost to the parents of the child.

If you know of a child who lives within the boundaries of the Watertown School District, who may have a disability, and may need but is not receiving Special Education or 504 services, please contact Dr. Jennifer Bollinger, Director of Special Services, at 882-6398.

"Child Find" activities will continue throughout the school year. As part of these efforts the Watertown School District will use screening information, student records, and basic assessment information it collects on all children in the District to help locate those children who have a disability and need Special Education or 504 services. Any information the District collects through "Child Find" is maintained confidentially.

### Notice of Non-discrimination

The Watertown School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Dr. Jeff Daniels- Superintendent  
P.O. Box 730

Watertown, SD 57201 605-882-6312

Derek Barrios-Assistant Superintendent

P.O. Box 730

Watertown, SD 57201 605-882-6312

For further information on notice of non-discrimination, see list of Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforcement offices for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-(800)-421-3481.

## Notification of Rights for Elementary and Secondary Schools

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Watertown School District official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal [or appropriate official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the Watertown School District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the Watertown School District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the Watertown School District discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

[NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

## CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

If a child lives with criticism, They learn to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility, They learn to fight.

If a child lives with ridicule, They learn to be shy.

If a child lives with shame, They learn to feel guilty.

If a child lives with tolerance, They learn to be patient.

If a child lives with encouragement, They learn to appreciate it.

If a child lives with fairness, They learn justice.

If a child lives with security, They learn to have faith. If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, They learn to find love in the world.