

Fourth Grade Handbook

Welcome to the 2011-2012 school year! Our team is working hard to provide a rich learning environment for your child. We are looking forward to a challenging and fun-filled learning experience. We hope that you will communicate any important information that might make your child's school experience more successful. Thank you for working with our team to make this your child's best year ever!



Meet the Team!

The 4th grade team works together to create an environment where all kids can learn. Here is our starting roster this year- An All – Star Team!

Daniel Currie: My name is Danny Currie and I moved from Williamstown, MA to Boulder, CO two years ago with my incredible wife Allison, she is in her second year of the C.U. Spanish Lit. PhD. I am finishing my master degree in education as well. When I am not studying or teaching you could find me hiking one of the local trails, tubing the river or at Trident coffee shop reading a history book. I enjoy rock climbing and playing soccer and just started playing racket ball. I have a cat named after the country of Panama where we like to visit. I am slowly learning to play the guitar and to sail, not at the same time. I love the weather here and especially the winter because of the 300 days of sun.

Pam Sanders: Mrs. Sanders has taught at SES since its opening in 1996. Pam and her husband Ronny have two children. Casey, a musician, wife Megan, and grandkids Roscoe and Ruby, live in Nashville, TN. Their daughter Karla and son-in-law Jeremy, and granddaughter, Lilah live in Broomfield. Wrigley and Fenway the dogs round out the family. In the evenings and on the weekends, Mrs. Sanders enjoys cooking, reading, working in the yard and playing with doggies and grandkids.

Cathy Shelby: Mrs. Shelby began teaching in 1991 in Arvada, CO. While she was there, she taught 5th grade, 3rd grade, and was the literacy specialist for 2 years. She left when her first daughter was born. She then came to Superior where she has taught 2nd grade, 3rd grade and now loves teaching 4th grade. Mrs. Shelby is a Boulder native. She went to Boulder Valley schools as well as CU. She got her undergraduate degree in 1990 and then her Master's degree in literacy in 1998. Mrs. Shelby and her husband Sean, along with their daughters Brooke and Courtney, live in Superior and enjoy seeing kids and families around the neighborhood.

Abby Belasco: Mrs. Abby Belasco has been teaching at Superior Elementary School for twelve years. However, this is her third year teaching fourth grade. Abby went to the University of Maryland at College Park for her BA and to the University of Colorado in Boulder for her Masters in Literacy. Abby and her husband Mike have a daughter named Emma who is four and a half. Together they live in Stapleton in a neighborhood very similar to Rock Creek. Mrs. Belsaco enjoys running, yoga, traveling to new places and seeing her family on the East Coast.

Abby Mallett: This is Mrs. Mallett's third year teaching at Superior Elementary. Last year she taught fourth grade for the first time and loved it! She is so excited to be teaching 4th grade again. Mrs. Mallett grew up in Colorado Springs and moved to Boulder in 2003 to attend the University of Colorado. After graduating with a degree in Biology she student taught in 3rd grade at Ryan Elementary. Mrs. Mallett has also taught 3rd grade and 2nd grade in Boulder. She lives in Superior with her husband, David, and her dog, Charlie.

For more info on our teachers and our school, go to the SES website - <http://schools.bvsd.org/superior/>

Communication

The creation of an open, consistent line of communication between home and school is crucial to your child's academic success. We hope that you feel comfortable talking with us about any issues or celebrations that arise. There are various ways we can communicate with each other this year:

Friday Folders

Please look for a Friday Folder to come home with your child every week. This folder will contain some of your child's work and communication from our classroom and the school. It is important that you review all of the information in the Friday Folder since many forms and permission slips will be included. Furthermore, the folder serves as a springboard for conversation between you and your child when you begin to discuss the work they are bringing home. Some work, however, will remain in your child's folders at school as we revisit assignments and use them to demonstrate progress. Friday Folders should be returned on the following Monday.

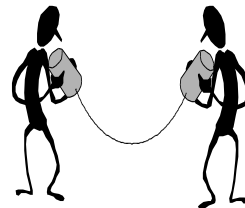
Conferences, Appointments

Student assessments took place on Sept. 1st this year. Fall conferences will be held Sept. 20, 21, and 22. These are mid-trimester, goal-setting conferences to assess your child's growth so far. Conference sign up sheets will be posted outside the office soon. Spring conferences will be held during February. These conferences will be student led as we examine your child's progress through the school year.

At any time, if you have a question, concern, or celebration, you may call to make an appointment with your child's teacher outside of school hours. You may also write a note or send us an e-mail message. Our school's number is 720-561-4100.

E-mail addresses:

Mrs. Sanders: pam.sanders@bvsd.org
Mr. Currie: daniel.currie@bvsd.org
Mrs. Belasco: abby.belasco@bvsd.org
Mrs. Shelby: cathy.shelby@bvsd.org
Mrs. Mallett: abigail.mallett@bvsd.org



Report Cards

Report cards will be sent home at the end of each trimester – just before Thanksgiving, Spring Break, and at the end of the year.



Planners/Goal Setting

Planners were given to students the first day of school. Fourth graders use the planner to write down their homework and responsibilities each day, as well as some home and school goals. We ask parents to look at the planners with their child each night, signing at the bottom of each day **AFTER the student has completed the required tasks**. This process holds the students accountable and guides them towards being more independent learners. The planner is also an effective tool for communicating with us. Feel free to write a short note as the need arises. If a child has an issue with completing a homework task on time, please write a note in the planner.



Homework



In fourth grade, students are expected to be learners that are more independent. Therefore, homework should be primarily the child's efforts (unless otherwise specified). We will be assigning homework Monday through Friday that is intended to take about 40 minutes to complete. More information about homework expectations and routines will be explained at Back to School Night. In addition to curricular homework, your child is expected to read 30 minutes every night. Research shows that reading each day is the most effective way to improve reading skills. Students need to record their book title and reading time in their planners or book log. **Your initials in the planner (see 'Planners' above) indicate that your child completed his/her homework AND reading assignments for the night.** As he/she reads, you can check your child's understanding by asking him/her questions about the book or asking for a summary of the section read. We suggest, however, that you only check for comprehension occasionally (1-3 times per week), as the quiet independent time to read helps children develop a lifelong love of reading.



Vacation/Missed Days

If your child will be missing school for more than one day, he/she will be given the opportunity to complete any missed work. The homework / class work will be given to the child **upon return** and he/she will have two weeks to complete any missed assignments. It is the students/parents responsibility to ask the teacher for the work and to return it in a timely manner.

Discipline

Superior Elementary has adopted the Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) to help students with positive behavior. We are focusing on three words, Respect, Acceptance, and Responsibility. The mnemonic device, "Rock And Roll", will help you remember the words. All fourth graders are expected to follow the Superior Code of Conduct at all times, which reads as follows: "At Superior Elementary School people and property are treated with respect so that all may learn." In addition, each class will develop their own set of classroom expectations for student behavior. Positive reinforcement, through the distribution of Rock and Roll forms, will be used to encourage responsible behavior and consequences will be used when appropriate behavior is not followed. These could include classroom consequences as well as those found in the school discipline policy in the Superior Family Handbook.



Recess and Playground

Please send your child to school appropriately dressed for the varying weather. Our 'Colorado Kids' will go outside unless the temperature is below 20 degrees. 4th graders have recess everyday from 9:15-9:30 a.m.

Before & after school playground time: Students should arrive at school no earlier than 7:45 a.m., as there is no supervision prior to that time. Students are not permitted inside the building without their parents before the first bell. All 4th and 5th graders are expected to be on the upper playground until the bell rings, not 'hanging out' by the exterior classroom doors. Additionally, all students should be off school grounds by 2:40 p.m. and 2:10 on early release day unless an adult supervises them.

Bikes/Scooters/Skateboards

Fourth and fifth graders have the option of riding their bikes, scooters, or skateboards to school. However, **every child must wear a helmet** and use a bike lock to be able to enjoy this privilege. Students must **walk** their bicycles, scooters, and skateboards on the sidewalk as they reach school property to help prevent accidents and injuries.



Snack Time and Lunch

We have an optional snack time as we complete our morning work in the classroom. Healthy snacks are required for optimal learning. Sharing of snacks is not permitted. We do have several kids in 4th grade with nut allergies, so we discourage snacks with nuts. Suggestions for snack include: fruits and vegetables, cheese and crackers etc.... Food may not be stored in the desk (unless it's part of a science experiment). ☺

Hot lunches cost \$2.95 for students. Along with the main entrée kids have choice of side dishes. Also, students can visit the healthy harvest bar for a delicious salad. Students are required to type in their 6-digit student number in order to purchase their lunches.



Star of the Week

Each week we will celebrate and honor one student from the class. Your child will be selected approximately one week in advance of his/her presentation. Each student will bring in photos and artifacts that are significant to him/her. Your child will share and explain these items. Your support in helping collect artifacts and practicing the presentation is greatly appreciated.

Birthdays

We enjoy honoring our students on their special day. This year we are asking parents to help us with offering an alternative idea for celebrating birthdays. This could include pencils, stickers, etc to share. Please do not feel that you have to do this, we will celebrate birthdays in our individual classes. Another idea is to donate a special book in your child's name to the classroom library or the SES library, see Mrs. Dirks for more info. If you do decide to bring in a special snack, please remember that we need to respect everyone's dietary needs. Check with your child's teacher regarding food allergies or other sensitivities.

Class Donations

Superior Elementary School is requesting class donations for each grade level. These funds will be used throughout the year to enhance our learning program. Funds for fourth grade will be used for field trips, consumable supplies, student planners and magazines, class celebrations, digital photo processing, and special supplies related to our fourth grade curriculum. Please make your payment in the form of a check made out to Superior Elementary School. No additional fees will be collected during the school year. Please send these donations to school with your child at your earliest convenience. See our Class Donations list for more specific information about the costs.

Book Orders

Each teacher will have their own routines set up for ordering books from our Book Clubs.

Parents in the Classroom

We will be discussing how you can volunteer in our classrooms on Back to School Night. At this time you will be able to sign up to volunteer in the classroom, help with Literacy and Math Blocks, clerical work, special projects throughout the year, as well as the donation of household items for certain activities. A major change will be the need for help with projects. Each teacher will be more specific as needed. Please sign up if you are interested. Additionally, if you have other skills or items that you feel would benefit our classroom, let us know! These could include donating various art supplies, lending us artifacts from a trip, or special talents that complement our curriculum. Please continue to check out the SES website as it contains information that is important to our school community. * Please note that background checks and non-coaching agreements must be completed and on file in the office for parents or others to volunteer in our classrooms. Refer to SES website for more information.

If you need any additional information about 4th grade, please contact us. Thanks for your part in making this a great year for our kids!

**Abby Belasco, Pam Sanders, Daniel Currie,
Cathy Shelby, Abby Mallett**

