

2016-2017

Swigert International School Parent Handbook



Contact Us!

3480 Syracuse Street
Denver, Colorado 80238
School Hours: 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM
Office Hours: 8 AM - 4 PM

Attendance line (720) 424-4740
Office Telephone (720) 424-4800
Kaleidoscope Corner (720) 424-4763

Swigert International School (SIS) is a neighborhood elementary school that serves preschool through fifth grade students. We believe that a love of learning, high academic achievement and parental involvement are keys to a lifelong education.

Vision:

Swigert International School strives to create innovative, intellectually curious students who share a sense of stewardship for creating a better and more peaceful world.

Mission:

Swigert International School aims to develop knowledgeable, inquisitive, and compassionate young people through the collaboration of students, teachers, parents and community.

Knowledgeable: SIS provides a challenging and engaging instructional program to ensure that each child reaches his or her full potential.

Inquisitive: Through highly effective instructional practices, and including the use of technology, the environment and community resources, SIS inspires creativity, curiosity and critical thinking.

Compassionate: SIS develops respectful students who care for themselves, their communities and the world around them.

The following is important information about SIS. If you have a question that is not addressed in this handbook, please feel free to visit the school. Most questions can be answered by a member of the office staff, your child's teacher or the administrative staff. Please read the following pages and become familiar with some of the basic information concerning the school.

ADULTS ON CAMPUS

Your child's safety is our number one concern. With that in mind, per DPS policy, any non-staff adult on campus must sign in at the office and wear a volunteer name tag or a visitor badge. Whether you are coming to volunteer for several hours or just to drop off a lunch, please remember to come to the office first. The name tag serves as a visual ID that lets any staff member know immediately who belongs in the school and it also reinforces our monitoring of people on our campus. The office will ask you to leave something with them (an I.D., keys or something of importance) in order to ensure that you return your visitor badge to the office.

All parents who have students in a classroom that has outside access (K) should follow this rule unless dropping off or picking up your child at the start or end of the day. You will not be permitted to enter the class during regular school hours via the outside classroom doors. Please remember that consistency in this policy protects the safety of our students and staff members.

Anytime a parent would like to visit a classroom, we ask that the parent have this visit approved with at least a 24 hours' notice. A teacher may reserve the right to reschedule the visit for another day or time. It is respectful to a teacher's classroom environment to allow them this advance notice, and it gives them the opportunity to schedule times that do not interfere with classroom assessments or other activities. Similarly, parents bringing any non-family visitors

must also be approved by the school prior to visitation.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

The school day begins at 8:30 a.m. for all students. Students can report to the playground between 8:15-8:25 a.m.. They are supervised until 8:25 a.m, when the first bell rings. At 8:25 a.m. students will be asked to line up at classroom doors or on the playground. ECE students need to be signed in by a parent or guardian daily. Students are expected to arrive at school on time. Late arrival is an interruption to those already engaged in learning activities and results in a loss of instruction time for the tardy student. Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. need to report to the office before going to class or the parent needs to walk their child into the building and sign them in at the office. The office will give your child a tardy slip to give to the teacher. For all students except ECE and Kindergarten, dismissal begins at 3:30 p.m. when the bell rings. ECE and Kinder will be dismissed at 3:25 p.m.

The west side curb cut is reserved for bus traffic. If you wish to drop off or pick up your student without leaving your car, we recommend you use the drop off lanes in the parking lots. If you wish to enter the building, please park in the parking spaces or on the neighborhood streets. For the safety of everyone, please drive slowly through all sections of the neighborhood.

BIRTHDAYS/CELEBRATIONS

All classrooms will recognize the birthday child through a birthday book, paper chain, or birthday poster. This is an opportunity for every child in the classroom to write something complimentary about the birthday boy/girl. This will be presented to the child in class as a celebration.

We ask that no sweet treats come to school for birthdays; instead we will be recognizing the child as a special member of the community. Summer birthdays can also be celebrated by the classroom community either at the half birthday or in June (this will be determined by the classroom teacher).

Students will receive a book from Swigert, with a birthday stamp inside, as recognition of their special day. Students will choose the book from an assortment of grade appropriate books that we will place on a special Birthday Bookcase in the main office. Parents who wish may make a donation in the child's name or anonymously for the Birthday Bookcase or the Swigert Library.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Students living in the Swigert Priority Zone who live more a mile away are entitled to school bus transportation. Students who requested their priority zone school as first choice but were placed in a different school are also entitled to bus transportation. Students who requested and received a school other than their priority zone school will not be given a bus without an exception form. Exception forms continue from one year to the next, as long as the student is at the school. The routes are set by the district and any questions concerning this service should be directed to its transportation office.

For the safety of each child it is always a good idea to walk your children to and from the bus stops. Younger children should always be escorted or picked up by an adult or a responsible sibling. For information regarding late buses, or any other bus questions, call the parent hotline

number at (303)825-2611.

Please report any problems, concerns or questions to the school office.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENTEEISM

In order for students to receive the full benefit of the SIS education, daily attendance is the first and most important step. The school calendar is published and distributed before the commencement of the school year and parents are asked to schedule any travel within the dates that classes are not in session. Please notify the school if your child will be absent or tardy by phoning the school attendance line at (720)424-4740. This should be done each day a child is absent. If your child will miss more than five consecutive days of school due to travel, a written note should be given to the office in advance to explain the reason for the absence, and must have principal approval to be considered an excused absence.

SIS has an attendance and tardy policy in accordance with the Colorado School Attendance Law and Denver Public Schools' "Denver Plan." These guidelines allow for roughly 10 absences during the course of a school year. Every month the school social worker reviews student attendance and sends letters to parents for those students whose absences are excessive. The definition of "excessive" changes throughout the school year based on number of school days but parents can expect to receive the first letter after 5 absences or 5 tardies.

Once a child's absences have reached a level of concern, which is currently 10 absences/tardies or more (please note that this is outside of medical or family emergencies), an attendance contract must be completed with the school social worker. This will outline attendance expectations as well as the additional requirement of a doctor's note for any absence of two days or more.

If absences are chronic, excessive, unexcused, or otherwise of concern, a child and their family may be referred to truancy court. Excessive tardies and early withdrawals are also subject to truancy law.

If it is necessary to pick up your child from school during the school day, please go to the office to sign out your child. Teachers are instructed not to release children from the classroom or playground without authorization from the office. This procedure is followed to protect your child and to hold classroom interruptions to a minimum. A child will not be released to anyone who is not on the emergency card or to anyone under 18 years of age, unless the school's office has been notified in writing or by phone by the parent.

CAFETERIA

Students have the option of bringing their own lunch to school or purchasing milk or a hot lunch. Lunch will be available for \$1.85 (\$0.40 for students who qualify for reduced lunch). If a child takes a second lunch on the same day, they will be charged the adult rate of \$4.00 for the second lunch. Parents may access their student's account by logging on to www.myschoolbucks.com; you will need to know the ID number for your child. 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 (cheese sandwich, fruit and drink) will be served. Please write the child's name on the sack or lunch box. Students are expected to eat a healthy, balanced breakfast and lunch.

Soft drinks are not allowed in the lunchroom.

Menu: www.dpsk12.org/lunchmenu Nutritional Information: www.foodservices.dpsk12.org

CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL

Denver Public Schools will make a decision in the early morning about closing schools or putting the Storm Schedule into effect. Listen to the local television, radio stations, check the DPS website or the Swigert Facebook page for the announcement. KOA 850 or KBNA 1220 are the official announcement stations for school closing information. When DPS elementary schools are put on the storm schedule, bus pick up times at the bus stops are delayed about one half hour. School will start at the regular time for students who do not ride DPS school buses. In the unusual circumstance where school must be canceled during the school day, parents and/or guardians will be notified immediately. The information on the Emergency Form on file in the office will be used, and administrators and teachers will determine that all students have satisfactory transportation and supervision at home before releasing them from school. Please make sure your emergency contact numbers are kept up to date to ensure we may make timely contact with you during the school day.

CELL PHONES

SIS prohibits students from using and carrying cell phones during the school day. Cell phones create interference with instruction and may impede school safety in a real emergency.

If you wish your child to have a cell phone in his/her possession for contacting you after school, your child should bring the cell phone to the office at the beginning of the school day. The child is responsible for picking up the phone at the end of the day. When a child is out of compliance with this policy, cell phones may be confiscated. It will then be necessary for the parent to come to school to obtain possession of the cell phone.

CLASS PLACEMENT PROCESS

SIS seeks to hire and retain the best teachers in the district. Children will be placed by staff according to individual and class balancing needs. Assigning students to classes is most effectively done by our classroom teachers who have been working with the students daily in an educational setting. Teachers consider the learning styles and academic needs of the returning students and assign them to the different classrooms at the next grade level. This process is done with care and the utmost consideration of each child's academic and social/emotional needs. It takes careful consideration of many factors to create equitably balanced classrooms in terms of academic needs, behavior, gender, ethnicity, and number of students. Reasons to request a teacher generally revolve around a previous relationship with that teacher while having a child in the classroom. The desire to maintain an already positive working relationship between a family and a staff member is good to know. Other requests from incidental contact, rumor mills, or an interview do not possess the depth of background to supersede the normal process. If there is something in particular about your child as far as needs, we would like to be aware of the need so we can support them in placement. If you believe that your child requires to be with another student/or not, let us know and we will attempt to meet that request. Requests to teachers need to be made in writing.

*Class lists are subject to change by the administrative staff due to new move-ins or other circumstances that may arise.

COMPUTER/INTERNET

All parents and students need to sign an acceptable User Agreement governing computer use at school. Failure to comply with any or all of this policy may result in a loss of any or all computer use privileges.

Swigert International School faculty and staff do not accept invitations to join any social networking sites from students. SIS will not search out any student's personal page or website unless there is a concern for safety. SIS strongly discourages parents from allowing their students to use Facebook, Instagram or any other type of social networking site. SIS will not spend time dealing with conflict that arises between students that are using social networking sites.

Because we have directed parents not to allow their students to use these sites, we will not deal with the consequences of their inappropriate use.

CONDUCT

SIS is a place of learning. In order to achieve this purpose, high standards of conduct are expected. These standards are based on mutual respect and responsibility—for oneself, toward classmates, adults and for property. Learning these standards will enable students to develop self-discipline, self-esteem and problem solving skills. Students must be responsible and accept consequences for their behavior. Gentle reminders and specific behavior learning opportunities are part of our learning community. Consequences may range from a reminder, to a written warning, to a detention, or suspension. Our discipline policy has been designed to help our students learn self-control and discipline in a constructive way.

CONTACTING THE SCHOOL

The school telephone number is (720)424-4800. A secretary is on duty from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Outside of these hours, messages are recorded on an answering machine. You can call the attendance line at 720-424-4740 at any time to leave a message if your child will be absent or tardy. The number for Discovery Link (formerly Kaleidoscope Corner) is (720)424-4763. Please call this number directly if your student is in Discovery Link.

DIRECTORY

The PTA publishes a full school directory on an annual basis. At registration, parents complete a Directory Form to be included in the directory. The information listed can include the student's name, address, phone numbers and emails per the parent's discretion. In addition there is a student name listing by grade, a listing of the administration, faculty, staff, and Parent Teacher Association. The directory is available online.

DRESS CODE

Students should come to school looking clean, neat and dressed in a manner that is appropriate and not distracting. Hats are not to be worn inside the school. The Denver Board of Education passed a "Zero Gang Tolerance" policy in 1992 which states that no clothing associated with gangs, including baseball caps, are to be allowed in any DPS school building.

For safety reasons, we also ask for no flip flops, as students more easily trip and lose shoes. Students should dress for weather – especially on field trip days. Please label all outer garments and your child's backpack with his/her full name.

EARLY DISMISSAL

It is strongly recommended that all appointments and extracurricular activities be scheduled

outside school hours as the loss of class time is detrimental to the student. In the event that the occasional appointment cannot be so scheduled, a note should be sent to school with the student requesting early dismissal for that day and giving the time that the parent will pick up the student. Parents will meet their children in the office and officially sign them out of school. Students are responsible for handing in all work due in the classes they will miss, and for completing any assignments for the following day. Should early dismissal become necessary because of an illness or accident in school, the nurse/office will contact that parent or appropriate designee on the Emergency Information Form. A parent or emergency contact person will sign the student out of school as outlined above.

ELECTRONIC READERS/KINDLES

Kindles, Nooks, etc. are allowed at school; however the school will not be responsible if they are lost or stolen. We do suggest you keep these at home. Any Electronic Reader used for reading at school needs to be set on Airplane Mode to ensure that students are using the device to read.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Emergency Information is kept on file in the office. Please notify the school office if there is any change in address, telephone number, place of employment, or emergency contact person so that we may be in contact with you at any time if necessary. It is very important for the safety and wellbeing of your child that you keep this information current. When a parent or responsible adult cannot be contacted, the school may call the Denver Police and/or Office of Social Services.

FIRE/ LOCKDOWN/ LOCKOUT DRILLS

Fire, lockdown and lockout drills are required by law and are an important practice in the event that an actual emergency should occur. During a fire drill students learn the evacuation path established for each room they occupy. Conduct rules during these safety drills are strictly enforced. All building occupants must move silently and in an orderly fashion to a specified area where they remain until instructed to return to the building. All schools practice fire drills along with a lock down or shelter in place each semester. Please refer to the DPS Emergency Response and Crisis Management pamphlet for a complete understanding of the drills.

In case of an evacuation, SIS students will be taken to Westerly Creek Elementary, 8800 E 28th Ave Denver, CO 80238.

FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

Classroom learning takes on a whole new meaning when put in the context of professional performance, firsthand discovery and experiences shared with experts. Field trips are a way of taking the classroom into the community and are therefore regarded as an integral part of the educational experience. These trips also serve to heighten community awareness, involvement, appreciation, and commitment. Students of all ages travel to museums, theaters, farms, historical sites, government buildings, and/or concert halls. Parents are often asked to act as chaperones, especially for outings involving our younger students. Please be aware that there may be times where the school may ask for a nominal fee for your child to attend the excursion. Often times the venue of which the grade level or class is attending needs to have the money in advance. Talk to your child's teacher if there is a question or concern. Teachers will send home a permission form that must be signed by a parent/guardian to be returned to the teacher prior to the field trip.

Swigert International School Homework Policy

As an International Baccalaureate community, we believe that balance is an essential element of the learner profile. Therefore, we have created a homework policy that respects the balance of school and family life, encourages good home habits, and is differentiated to meet the needs of individual students. Students need to read nightly, see time frames dictated below. Each teacher should have an accountability tracker depending on grade level (parent sign sheet, comprehension questions, extensions, etc).

Most homework beyond reading will be sent home on an *As Needed* basis, and your student's teacher will communicate with you about that need. Teachers may also send home work that was assigned in class, but not finished in the time allotted. Students needing extra practice will receive daily homework practice with a skill or concept to help support the student's academic growth.

We ask that parents read the classroom website on a weekly basis to gain a deeper understanding of how to support student learning.

	Nightly Minutes	Reading	Math	Language Skills	Other possible work
K	15 minutes	Establish family reading rituals. Read to your children nightly or let them read to you nightly.	<i>As Needed</i> , Newsletters from Bridges that includes family activities. Home Connections as assigned.	<i>As Needed</i> , handwriting or sight word review	Star Student
1	25 minutes	Students will independently read or read to someone for 15-20 minutes nightly.	<i>As Needed</i> , students will practice math facts for 5-10 minutes per night Bridges Home Connections as assigned.	<i>As Needed</i> , students will work on correct letter formation for 15 minutes per week.	Special projects related to IB units.
2	30 minutes	15 minutes of reading aloud to parent, sibling, stuffed animal, etc. 15 minutes of independent reading nightly.	<i>As Needed</i> , students will practice math facts for 5 – 10 minutes per night to support math fluency. Bridges Home Connections assigned.	<i>As Needed</i> , students will practice learned work/sight words for 5 – 10 minutes per day.	Special projects related to IB units.
3	30 minutes	30 minutes nightly. (Reading out-loud, silently, being read to or combination of all). Monthly tracker for parents to sign/monitor.	<i>As Needed</i> , 10-15 minutes per night of multiplication facts. Bridges Home Connections as assigned.	<i>As Needed</i> , 10 minutes per night of skills or spelling patterns (words their way)	Special projects related to IB units.
4	45 minutes	30 minutes nightly (reading out-loud or silently.)	<i>As Needed</i> , 10-15 minutes per night of math practice. Bridges Home connections as assigned. Skills practice and online with either Reflex math or TTM.	<i>As Needed</i> , 30 minutes per week of skills worksheets.	Special projects related to IB units.
5	50 minutes	30 minutes of independent reading (student or parent choice.) Reflection and/or response once or twice a week with parent signature.	<i>As Needed</i> , 10-15 minutes of math fact or math concept practice Monday-Thursday. Twice week math homework linked to lesson. Skills practice on line with Reflex math or TTM.	<i>As Needed</i> , data analysis or grammatical skill practice.	Special projects related to IB units.

DISCOVERY LINK (AKA: KALEIDOSCOPE CORNER)

Discovery Link is a licensed child care program offered at select Denver Public Schools to children ECE (age 4) through 5th grade (age 14). Select sites serve children 4 to 12 years of age. Discovery Link's philosophy is to provide a creative, safe and caring environment for children before and after the regular school day. Discovery Link child care centers are staffed with qualified professionals trained in the areas of CPR, First Aid, and activity planning and behavior management. Discovery Link operates Monday-Friday with the following program components and hours of operation.

Early Risers: 6:30 a.m.-8:25

After School: School Dismissal-6:00 p.m.

Dismissal Days/Break Camps: Discovery Link may offer special programming on Denver Public Schools' dismissal days and extended vacations for an additional fee. Children participating will enjoy field trips, special guests or theme days. For questions, please visit their website: discoverylink.dpsk12.org or call (720)423-1781.

LOST AND FOUND

Please check the lost and found area that is located across from the cafeteria lobby. Also, please put your child's name on coats, mittens, gloves, lunch-boxes and water bottles. All lost items will be bagged and donated at the end of each *month*.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are essential to the success of our school and enrich our school with their ideas, interests, talents, and resources. We ask all parents to volunteer for a minimum of five hours per year.

Just as we have high expectations for our staff and students, we have the same expectations for parental involvement. One of the most important aspects of involvement is communication between the school and the family. As a parent, it is your responsibility to read and manage communications from the staff, room parents, and PTA. The teachers will provide a bi-monthly correspondence about classroom activities, important dates, and needed classroom help. The PTA will send a weekly update through email or paper copy outlining school activities, fundraising events, meeting reminders, important dates, and volunteer opportunities. Periodically, you will receive messages from your room parent letting you know about upcoming classroom events and needed help. If you feel you are not getting the information you need, please contact your room parent, and let them know so improvements can be made.

RECESS

Students go outside every day for recess. Please make sure that they are dressed appropriately to be outside for up to 25 minutes at a time. We are all aware of how fast the weather in Colorado can change so it would be great if students always have access to a warm jacket or sweater in their backpack. We check the temperature/ wind chill and generally will go out if students won't get wet and it is 20 degrees or higher. We ask that all students create an inside recess bag. Please place items a child can play with in a gallon bag in case we need to keep them in at recess time. Items such as puzzles, games, books, small toys (that don't leave their hand) are all good items. Please no expensive electronic devices.

We also ask students do not run on the concrete. Students may skip on this part of the playground, but we ask that running be on the track or grass to minimize injuries in our busiest play areas.

SCHOOL HOURS

ECE and Kindergarten classes begin at 8:30 am and will dismiss at 3:25 p.m. 1st through 5th grade classes are in session from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Students are not to arrive before 8:15 a.m unless a parent remains with them. There is NO supervision for students or a place for them to wait until 8:15 a.m. Students must be picked up promptly after the 3:30 p.m. dismissal bell. They may not stay and play on the playground, unless a parent or guardian supervises them. If a parent will be late picking up the student, please try to make alternative pickup plans with a family member, neighbor or friend. If there is no alternative, please notify the office as soon as possible that you will be late. Teachers keep the students for 10 minutes, then they bring the student to the office. Teachers will call all contact phone numbers available. The student will be signed in to the late pickup book. Parents will need to come in to the office and sign the student out. Please be mindful that the office closes at 4:00pm daily. If your child is picked up late consistently, the social worker and/or Safety and Security will be notified.

SCHOOL NURSE

A school nurse is in the building five days a week. Office staff is delegated by the nurse to care for students when she is not at Swigert. If a child becomes ill or injured at school, he/she will receive temporary care and first aid, and the parent will be notified immediately so that the child may be picked up. Please be sure an accurate emergency phone number is on file.

Regarding medication, Denver Public School Policy states, in accordance with state law, that medication may be dispensed with a DPS-specific form at school which includes physician and parent/guardian authorizations. The parent must provide the medication in a separate prescription bottle that stays at school. The bottle must have a prescription label clearly stating the student's name, doctor's name, name of the medication, dosage and time(s) to be taken. If the medication is over-the-counter, it must be a new, unopened box and be accompanied by the DPS medication form.

All medication must be turned into the nurse and not carried around by students. Please do not send pills or capsules in plastic bags or over-the-counter medications such as cold pills, Tylenol and cough drops. Medications will be stored and locked in the school nursing office and dispensed by the nurse. The student is responsible for going to the office/clinic to obtain his/her medication.

Regarding immunizations, Colorado state law requires all students to be fully immunized when entering school. Records must be available showing dates of all immunizations, as follows:

REQUIRED IMMUNIZATIONS

- Five DPT
- Four Polio
- Two MMR
- Three doses of Hepatitis B for ECE-3rd grade
- One Varicella for Kindergarten

SNACK

Classes have a designated snack time each day. Snacks need to be nutritious. Please do not send foods high in fat or sugar content. 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.

TOBACCO FREE DISTRICT

Denver Public Schools is a tobacco free district. No tobacco products are allowed on school grounds.

TOYS AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Toys, athletic equipment, gadgets, electronic devices, cell phones and makeup are not to be brought to school without teacher permission. If permitted, they need to be clearly marked with the student's name. Please be aware that we will not assume responsibility for lost, damaged, or stolen materials.

WHEELS AT SCHOOL

The school has a number of bike racks. If your child rides a bike to school, he/she is responsible for making sure the bike is properly locked up. Bicycles must be “walked” on school grounds. Students should ask their teacher where their scooters should be stored. Skateboards and rollerblades are not to be used on school grounds.

Parents should encourage children to follow all safety rules established for pedestrians. This emphasis on safety is also a concern of the school’s staff, and is an important part of our instructional program.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS AND WEBSITES

- School Office Telephone (720) 424-4800
- Attendance Line (720) 424-4740
- FAX to the Office (720) 424-4825
- DPS Bus Transportation (303) 825-2611
- Discovery Link (on site) (720) 424-4763
- DPS Main Office (720) 423-3200
- DPS Web Page www.dpsk12.org
- Swigert Web Page <http://Swigert.dpsk12.org>

Principal: Elizabeth TenCate

Assistant Principal: Shelby Dennis

Director of Operations: Richard Fisher

Office Manager: Krystie Warlum

School Secretary: Daphne Jolley