

August 2009



Dear Parents,

We are all so excited to be starting our 3rd year here at Carroll. As we continue to grow, you will see many new faces joining our staff. With a long and careful selection process in place, I can whole-heartedly say I am so excited about the teachers we have here for your children. We will also continue to increase our focus on our curriculum and rigor to ensure your child is receiving a top-notch education with high expectations.

An increase in our staff means lots of new families joining us! I want to extend a warm welcome to ALL of our new families. If you have any questions about the following “crucials,” please do not hesitate to contact our Assistant Principal, Mrs. Ewing, or myself at 469-633-3725. You can also email us at: ellisme@friscoisd.org or ewingd@friscoisd.org. Here's to a great year!!

For Kids,
Melissa Ellis
Principal

Carroll Crucials for Families

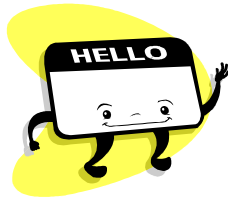
Our mission here at Carroll Elementary is Carroll CARES by cultivating minds, achieving success, respecting diversity, encouraging hearts, and serving one another. Everything we do is with those 5 qualities in mind.

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We believe that the following “crucials” are of great importance for parents to read and understand, so we will be giving them wide circulation. This letter will be distributed at Kinder Kick-Off on Thursday, August 20th, Meet-the-Teacher Night on Friday, August 21st, and again during Curriculum Night for those who have not received a copy by that time. On Curriculum Night, you'll be hearing about your children's curricula and the exciting learning programs the staff has planned. Please plan to attend on Thursday, September 3rd. Of all the special events we plan during the year, we believe this one to be the most important!

New at Carroll...THE MORNING EDGE!!!! Each morning from 7:50-8:30, Mondays-Thursdays, everyone in the school will be participating in our morning intervention time. EDGE stands for Experiencing Daily Growth to Excel. During this time, students will be supported in specific areas of need whether that is remedial, reteaching, extension, challenge, or guided practice. Every staff member will be joining together to teach all of our students. Don't be surprised if the only one in the front office is our receptionist! You will find out more specifics on what this will look like in your child's grade level during Curriculum Night on September 3rd! We are super excited and strongly feel this will continue to improve our differentiated instruction to meet the needs of EVERY Carroll student!

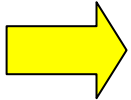
Academic instruction is only part of our job as administrators and teachers. We must also create the *kind of environment* that promotes learning and personal growth. We'd like to share some important policies with you in this document. Based on our conversations with staff and parents, and our experiences as teachers and administrators, we have developed these rules to encourage the growth of children as responsible citizens, to promote campus safety, and to protect the educational integrity of each classroom. We strongly encourage newcomers and “veterans” alike to take a few minutes to read them.



Safety and Campus Integrity

Keeping strangers and unauthorized persons out of our hallways and classrooms is a top priority at Carroll. In addition, it is critical that the campus be dedicated to teaching your children and that distractions from this goal be kept to an absolute minimum.

**Check
out our
new
system!**



- **Office Check-In:** We would like to introduce our new check-in system, **RAPTOR**. It will help protect your children by tracking visitors and volunteers at our school, thus providing a safer more monitored environment for students. When you enter the building, **you must check in at the main office and wear a Visitor's Badge.** When visitors and volunteers check-in, or parents come to pick up students, they will be asked to present a valid state issued ID for entering into the system. The system has the ability to provide alerts on people who may jeopardize the safety of our campus. **Each person will need to have their valid state ID scanned one time into the system.** If you would like to bring your driver's license on Meet the Teacher Night, we can get you scanned in then. Just come by the front office! This will create a record for you to serve as a campus visitor/volunteer. We feel certain this will help us keep our campus a little safer, and ask for your cooperation in presenting your valid state issued ID when checking in at our campus. All schools in FISD will be using this new program.

No exceptions – whether you are volunteering or having lunch with your child, you must check in and get a sticker! This also holds for parents checking their children out of school – office first, please. Only the main door is open for entry during school hours. If you are seen in the halls without a Visitor's Badge, a staff member will stop to escort you to the office to get you signed in. Remember, this is for your own child's protection!

-- **Messages for Your Child:** Please make plans for your child's lunch and after-school activities before s/he leaves for school. We ask that you let us know **BEFORE 2:30pm** if we need to get a message to your child. The end of the day is very hectic, and we want your child to get the message in time! Please set a good example for your child by planning ahead and being responsible in making arrangements early so that we can help ensure they go home the correct way each day.
***Please Note:** It is the parent's responsibility to contact YMCA or Alphabest if your child is not following their normal after school routine.

-- **Picking up Your Child During the Day:** Please send a written note/email to your child's teacher if you are going to pick him or her up from school during the day. When you arrive at school, please report to the office and then we will call for your child. We will not have your child waiting for you. Parents are often later than anticipated which results in students missing even more instruction time. So be sure to allow a few minutes for us to call for your child and for them to make their way to the office to be checked out. Do not go to the classroom to pick up your child.

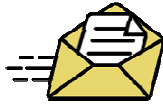
- **Forgotten Lunches:** Bring the lunch, labeled with the child's name and grade, to the office. The teacher will be notified that your child's lunch is in the office, and children may pick them up at lunch time.
- **Forgotten Homework:** Children do learn from their mistakes and are less likely to "forget" if they are allowed to experience the logical consequences of their actions. Our advice would be to make them

responsible for coming to school prepared and experiencing the natural consequences if they do not. Perhaps post a checklist by the door for them to run through each morning on the way out!

- **Appointments and Visits:** While we always welcome visits from parents, life at school with around 600 students is always quite busy. The office staff will be hopping! While we certainly understand the need for the occasional “dropping by” (and you will always be courteously welcomed), we ask that you arrange for office and classroom visits in advance. Classroom volunteering is addressed below.

If you would like to schedule a conference with your child’s teacher, please e-mail or call him or her. The teacher will promptly respond. We appreciate your cooperation in not interrupting teachers during instructional or supervisory times – this includes the time right before school begins, before and after lunch, and before the end of the day.

- **Pets:** We understand that many of you enjoy walking your dog to and from school with your children. We certainly want to encourage families walking to and from school. This helps tremendously with traffic congestion and promotes lifelong healthy habits. However, many children are afraid of dogs and many are allergic to various types of animals. In addition, even dogs with sweet dispositions can snap unexpectedly when children are around. Pets on campus also add to the already-heavy supervisory loads of teachers minding the campus grounds, and there is also the vexing problem of clean-up. Most of us are animal lovers, but the welfare of our kids is paramount. **If you want to walk your dog to and from school, please plan to meet your child on the city sidewalks that border our campus.**
- **Our Wonderful Volunteers!** We value the overwhelming willingness of our parents to volunteer, and we welcome your presence at Carroll. Please work with your child’s teacher to schedule an appropriate time for you to volunteer. We would also like to ask that parents adhere to the student dress code guidelines that are specified in the Student Handbook. In planning your volunteer services, please recall our commitment to an academic focus and be aware that toddlers are not allowed in classrooms or in pod hallways during the school day. We recommend that volunteers share babysitting duties or the use of the many wonderful Mother’s Day Out programs in our area. We would love to see an increase in involvement from our DADS! Strong male role models can really benefit each and every one of our children. We would love to have you up here pitching in too! Let us know what you would feel comfortable doing and we will get your plugged in.
***Please Note:** Each year every parent must fill out a background check in order to volunteer on campus or chaperone field trips. To help expedite the process,so you will be cleared as soon as possible, feel free to access the form online now @ <http://www.friscoisd.org/parentsStudents> and choose Volunteer Form.



Attendance and Tardiness

We cannot overstress the need for students to be in their classrooms, and to be there on time. This year we will be starting instruction promptly at 7:50. While your child will not be counted tardy until 8:00am, please make every effort to drop them off early enough to be in their classroom by 7:50.

- **Attendance:** Regular school attendance is critical for learning. If your child is going to be absent for any reason, please call the office immediately. We account for every child every day. Absences due to vacations are strongly discouraged and will be counted as unexcused. (See our homework policy below for details concerning homework and vacations.) Of course, ill children do not belong at school.

Every day we account for each and every child. If your child misses school for any reason, **please send a note/email with the reason for the absence to your teacher's email and millerp@friscoisd.org.** Keep in mind the following quote from *Parent's Connection* when planning time away from school: "Children can copy notes or make up an assignment, but they can never get back what's most important: the discussions, the questions, the explanations by the teacher and the thinking that makes learning come alive." ***Excessive absences can result in a referral to the truancy officer.*** You will receive letters and/or phone calls to assist you in tracking your child's absences when his/her absences exceed 10% of the days children are scheduled to be in school.

- **Tardiness:** The first bell rings at 7:50 a.m. All children are expected to be in their seats and ready to begin work at 8:00 a.m. If children arrive before 7:50, they will report to the gym (grades 3, 4, 5) or the cafeteria (grades K, 1, 2). If children arrive between 7:50 and 8:00, they will report directly to their classrooms. Teachers will pick up their students in the gym or cafeteria promptly at 7:45. Announcements, and the instructional day, begin at 7:50 a.m. Students who arrive later – after 8:00 just come to the office to receive a tardy slip, which they hand to their teachers before they are permitted to join the class. Another quote from *Parent Connection*: "Being late for school hurts a child's learning. A student who is 10 minutes late every day will miss 30 hours of instruction during the year."
-- All Frisco schools carefully monitor tardies. *As with absences, excessive tardies can result in a referral to the truancy officer.* You will receive letters and/or phone calls to assist you in tracking your child's tardies after your child has been tardy *5 or more times.*

Homework for Illnesses and Vacations

- **Illnesses:** If your child has been absent because of illness **3 or more days**, you may request the child's homework from his or her teacher. Please call or email the office the morning of the third day. Work will be collected that day and will be available for pickup that afternoon. You must submit a written note or email within 3 days of any absence.
- **Vacations:** As noted above, we seriously discourage taking your child out of school for vacations. (Please refer to the District's Student Handbook.)



NEW LAW
**House Bill 55 prohibits drivers from using hand held cell phones
in school zones starting September 1.**

Morning Drop-Off Procedures

1. **All morning car drop-offs will be in the back loop.** Please enter the loop from Throne Hall Drive. Your child can exit your car anywhere once you have pulled up to the curb. Then they can just follow the sidewalk to the 4th/5th pod where they enter to head to the gym or café. For Kinder and 1st graders, a staff member or safety patrol member will assist your child in getting out of the car. You will receive a sign to place on your visor so they can tell who needs help. For safety reasons, safety patrol will NOT step off the curb to assist. The loop is one way at all times, both morning and afternoon (enter from Throne Hall and exit at Legacy). Please allow enough time for morning traffic (especially on rainy days) to have your child dropped off by 7:45. This allows them time to walk to their class with the rest of the students without feeling rushed. **KISS AND GO for efficiency and safety!** Feel free to use either exit as you go out onto Legacy.
2. All walkers and bike riders may enter the campus through the foyer doors by the cafeteria that faces Throne Hall Drive (**to the right of the front doors**).
3. **The Front Loop of the school will only be used for bus/daycare and special needs drop-off and pick-up.** This means there may be parents in cars dropping off a child in front. This is only okay if your child is in one of our special programs. We need all of our students to get to and from school safely. **Thank you for adhering to this important policy!**
4. There will be no other car drop-offs in front of the school. All children need to be dropped off at the back loop where staff members will be ready to assist. There will also be staff members along the hallway to guide students to the gym or the café.

Just a Tip! If you arrive before 7:40 there is very little wait time! 😊

3:00 Dismissal Procedures

1. All parents picking up children in a car will need to enter the one-way loop (that circles the school) and **STAY IN YOUR CAR AT ALL TIMES**.
2. There are three lanes in our loop. The two right-most lanes are for loading. A teacher will put your child in your car. **NO** children will be loaded in any front seats, as this is against the law.
3. The outside lane is used for exiting and driving to your designated area. For example, second and third grade parents will drive around first grade parents to reach their designated areas. Likewise for fourth and fifth grades.
4. The children will dismiss outside near their grade level pods with the exception of kindergarten. Kindergarten parents will drive the length of the carpool lane and turn right in a separate loop on the East side of the building. A staff member will be at that area of the loop to direct traffic to allow kinder parents to turn safely into their designated area.

(Order: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th...and the Kinder in the Eastside loop.)

NEW SIBLING PROCEDURES > This year, in effort to decrease the congestion at our kinder pick-up, all younger siblings will be escorted to the oldest sibling's pod. At 3:00 the oldest sibling will get the younger ones and take them out to his/her dismissal. Example: 4th grader is the oldest. He will grab his little sister/brother from his pod and they will all dismiss together with 4th grade.

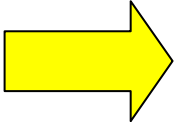
Please follow the guidance of staff members. We appreciate your patience and courtesy!!





Lunch and Recess

**Check out
these new
guidelines!**



- **Lunch:** We are pleased to see parents eating with their child during lunch. Here are a few guidelines to contribute to this special time with your child while preserving the feelings of other students.
 - We ask that you always check in at the office and wait for them in the cafeteria
 - We discourage any lunch-time visitors the first two weeks of school. This is such a crucial time to establish routines, manners, and expectations!
 - Please sit at one of the designated tables with your child and one chosen friend
 - Please do not share food with anyone other than your own child
 - Please do not buy food for anyone other than your own child
 - Please encourage your child to be independent! If they are school-age they are old enough to feed themselves and carry their own food.
 - Please say goodbye once your child's class is called to throw away their trash
- **Recess:** It is very important to us that Carroll students have a safe playing environment; therefore, we require that teachers on duty actively monitor the playground. In order to maintain a high level of safety, we request that visitors and siblings do not attend recess. Only Carroll students and teachers are allowed on the playground during school hours.



Food and Parties

- **Food and Parties:** *The Texas Dept. of Agriculture released new guidelines for schools related to meal service and food items in March 2004.* Several rules affect our elementary students, and a school will be fined if it is not in compliance with these guidelines. Parents and staff may NOT bring food (pizza, Wendy's, cake, cookies) to the school to serve to anyone but their own child(ren). The only exception to this is for your child's birthday (see below) and three party days a year, Winter Break, Valentine's Day and the Year-End Party. We are grateful to our room parents who plan for the three party days each year!
- **Birthdays:** Your child's teachers will be aware of his or her birthday and will make him or her feel very special on that day! Again, per the Texas Department of Agriculture: Parents may bring a store-bought birthday snack for their child and the other students in his/her class. However, these treats will not be served until after 2:30. We encourage parents to simply drop the special treat earlier in the day and leave it up to the child and their teacher to serve them at the end of the day. We want to recognize their special day as well as continue to respect and preserve instructional time! Also, any deliveries for students or special gifts dropped off will not be given to your child until after 2:30.



Dress

- **Dress Code:** The premise for our thinking about student dress is that going to school is like your child's job. It is not like going to a baseball game; it is not like going to a Hannah Montana concert. Appropriate grooming and well-kept clothes help to create the atmosphere of seriousness that is needed before kids can get down to the real fun of learning. We do have some preferences that the school will attempt to enforce even-handedly (skirts and shorts should be finger-tip length; tops over leggings should also be finger-tip length; shoulders should be covered; no midriffs showing, no halter-tops, no strappy tank tops, straps should be at least the width of your child's hand...bringing a sweater or jacket to wear over a tank only helps if the child wears it at all times), but administrators and staff must rely on their own judgment and common sense about what is and is not appropriate and what distracts from learning. Please see the District's Student Handbook for more information. Of note:
 - The FISD dress code for students indicates that flip-flops are discouraged. We agree with that. Full tennis shoes (not cros) are encouraged on all days, as they are safer for recess, however, they are REQUIRED on your child's P.E. days.

Our goal is for the Carroll student body and staff as a whole to exhibit its commitment to learning to the Frisco community. Moreover, we will schedule days where students will be allowed considerably more latitude to wear something fun or goofy. We hope your child will wear a spirit T-shirt on Fridays. You will be able to purchase these at Kinder Kick-Off and Meet the Teacher Night. If we should sell out, we will have order forms provided for you to order additional shirts.

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Of course, there are other rules, some informal, some formal. We'll be reminding you of them as the year goes by, and as circumstances seem to warrant.

In the meantime, we hope that you and your children will appreciate that, although sometimes rules stress the *don't* and *can't* of everyday conduct, these proscriptions are actually intended to be liberating – to free our time, and your child's, to travel the wonderful world of learning.

SIGNATURE PAGE

Please fill out this signature page and return it to your child's teacher. Thank you!



Please fill out the following and return to your child's teacher.

I have read Carroll Crucials.

Children in my family, grade, and teacher's name:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____