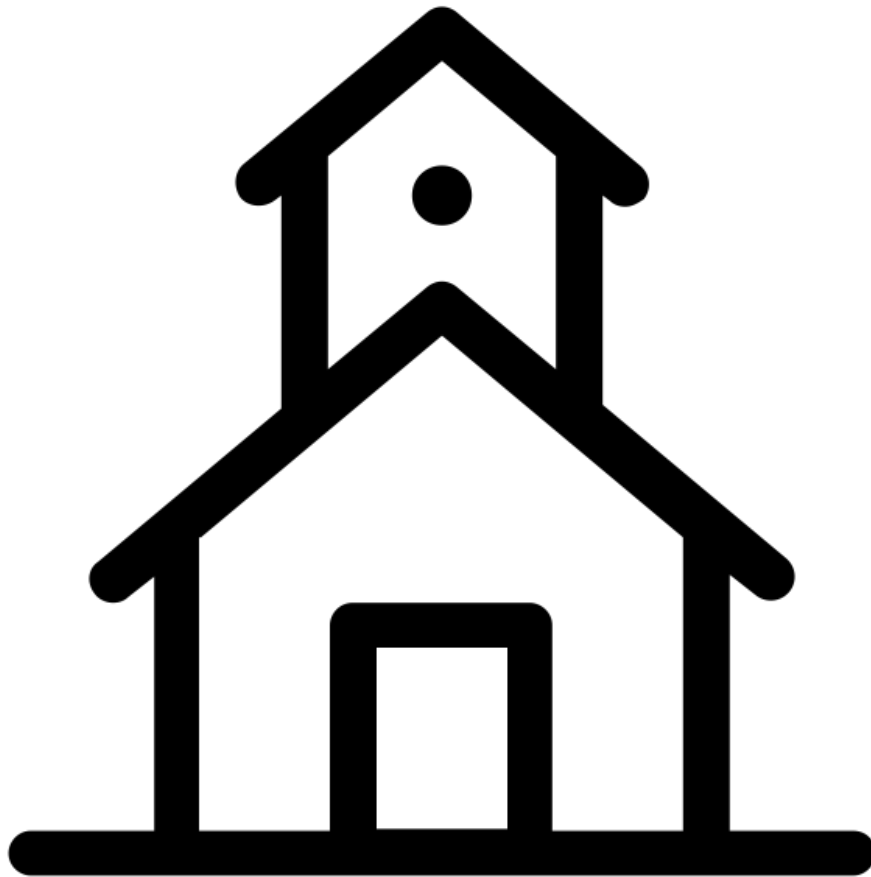


STUDENT HANDBOOK

2025-2026



ACEQUIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PRINCIPAL: MRS. HEATHER HEPWORTH
360 N 350 E RUPERT, ID 83350
PHONE: 208.436.6985 FAX: 208.436.4359

WELCOME

The staff at Acequia Elementary is excited to welcome you to a new school year! Our mission is to partner with students, staff, and families to create a safe, supportive, and engaging learning environment where every child can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. We build school spirit and a sense of belonging through our House System, where all students and staff are members of one of four Houses. Our Houses promote teamwork, leadership, and positive behavior as we work together toward schoolwide goals and celebrations. At Acequia, we hold high expectations for both behavior and learning. With consistent support, clear routines, and a whole lot of heart, we help every student become a kind, capable, and contributing member of our school and community.

ATTENDANCE/TARDIES

Good attendance at school is an extremely important aspect of each student's education. The Minidoka County Joint School District's attendance policy states that students are expected to be in attendance whenever school is scheduled. Failure to attend denies the student learning opportunities and decreases the effectiveness of the teacher's presentation. Parents are encouraged to call the school and report the absence of their child. With any absence, the student is to complete all assignments as required by the teacher. Excused absences are illnesses that are verified by a physician and reported to the school office by a doctor's note.

After three absences, a letter of concern is sent home to parents who are asked to help improve the attendance problem of their child. If absences continue after this, the absences will be referred to attendance court and may be considered truant. We ask that parents not pick up their children prior to the end of the school day.

Teachers begin instruction at 7:45 a.m. and it is important that all students are present for opening routines, likewise students are dismissed at 2:45 p.m. and need to be present up until school is over. Continual tardies or early pick-ups violate district attendance policies (3 tardies = 1 absence). Please avoid tardies and early-picks ups as it disrupts the learning process for all students.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Occasionally students wish to observe his/her birthday at school. Each teacher has his/her own policy concerning this activity. However, there are some general guidelines we all follow:

- Food treats are permissible, but interruption of the school program should be kept to a minimum.
- Food treats need to be individually wrapped and prepared commercially.
- Please avoid red punch or frosting.
- Please do not provide gum.

- Please do not pass out invitations to private birthday parties at school. We do not want to have any student feel left out, so it is more appropriate to do this privately.
- Please do not send balloons to school.

CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES/SMARTWATCHES:

Electronic devices must be kept in backpacks, turned off or silenced during the school day.

If an electronic device is damaged or lost, it is not the responsibility of the school. Smartwatches are allowed in school, but are to be used as a normal timepiece. All communication and video/picture-capturing applications should be disabled during school hours. Student's may come to the office and use the phone during the day if there is a need.

CONSEQUENCES FOR THE MISUSE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES/SMART WATCHES:

The student's device will be confiscated by the teacher. A parent or guardian will be expected to pick up the device from the building principal. Repeat offenders will receive a day of in school suspension.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

We value strong home-school partnerships and are committed to keeping you informed.

Communication happens through newsletters, Remind messages, phone calls, emails, and our school website and social media platforms. If you have questions or need to reach your child's teacher, email or a message through Remind is usually the best way. We're always happy to help!

DISCIPLINE & BEHAVIOR SUPPORT

At Acequia Elementary, we are committed to creating a safe, respectful, and positive school environment where all students can learn and thrive. Our school follows the PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) framework, which focuses on preventing problem behaviors, teaching expectations, and reinforcing positive choices.

We teach students what behavior is expected in all areas of the school—classrooms, hallways, playground, cafeteria, and buses. Students are recognized for showing respect, responsibility, and safety throughout the day.

When behavior challenges arise, our goal is to provide support and guidance, not just consequences. Depending on the frequency or severity of the behavior, support may include:

- Reteaching expectations
- Restorative conversations
- Parent contact
- Behavior check-ins or reflection forms
- Loss of privileges (e.g., recess)
- Referral to our PBIS team for Tier 2 or Tier 3 support

Serious behaviors such as fighting, threats, harassment, or possession of prohibited items are handled in accordance with district policy and may involve suspension or other disciplinary actions.

We work in close partnership with families to address behavior concerns. If you have questions about how we support your child's behavior, please reach out to your child's teacher or the school principal. For more information on our schoolwide behavior systems, please refer to our PBIS Handbook located on our website, monthly newsletters, or in the front office.

DRESS CODE

Students shall show proper attention to personal cleanliness, neatness, and conservative, appropriate standards of dress and appearance. Student dress and student conduct should not disrupt or distract from the instruction at school. Student dress that is deemed inappropriate by the school staff will be corrected in accordance with district policy #344.00. Students should always dress appropriately for weather conditions.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are a fun and educational extension of the classroom. Permission slips will be sent home in advance, and students are expected to follow all school behavior expectations while off campus. All students will travel with their class using district transportation unless otherwise approved by the principal.

FIRE & SAFETY DRILLS

Every precaution is taken to ensure the safety of your child during normal school hours. Monthly fire drills and other emergency drills are executed to make certain students learn proper safety procedures and adhere to all safety guidelines.

FOOD SERVICE & MEAL CHARGES

At Acequia Elementary, we are committed to making sure every child receives a nutritious meal each day. No student will ever be denied a meal, regardless of account balance. All students receive the same meal options, and we work hard to ensure this process is respectful and private.

Meal Account Guidelines:

- Families are responsible for keeping meal accounts current.
- If a student's account balance drops below \$0.00, a notice will be sent home.
- When the balance reaches -\$20.00, kitchen staff will begin contacting families by phone.
- Deeply negative balances may be referred to the building secretary or school administration for follow-up.
- At the end of the school year, unpaid charges will be converted to student fines, and unrecovered losses will be covered by general funds.
- If not resolved, delinquent accounts may be turned over to collections, per district policy.

We strongly encourage all households to complete a Free & Reduced Meal Application each school year, even if you believe you may not qualify. Doing so can benefit both your family and our school's overall funding.

For more details, please refer to District Policy #844.00, or contact the school office with any questions about your child's meal balance.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/INSIDE RECESS

Extremely cold weather can be very dangerous. Parents and guardians should be certain that their children are appropriately dressed with gloves, hats, coats, etc. so they can be comfortable both inside and outside. Most days students will be going outside for some period of time either at recess or travelling to/from school. The front office will have a sign indicating inside or outside recess each day. Decisions for outside recess will be based on weather as listed on www.weather.com for Acequia, Idaho.

NO OUTSIDE RECESS:

- If the air temperature or wind chill is 15°F or lower (For example: 25°F but feels like 10°F)

INTERNET POLICY

Acequia Elementary School integrates current technology into classroom learning. Students will complete an Internet permission form, and adhere to the rules of the form. Violation of the internet agreement can result in loss of device privileges or disciplinary action.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found items are kept in the gym and accumulate quickly as the year proceeds. It is very helpful if parents will check as soon as items turn up missing. At the end of the year, all items not accounted for will be donated locally.

Children are not to bring items to school such as toys, radios, trading cards and electronic devices that can be broken or lost and lead to classroom disruptions. If brought to school, these items will be kept by the teacher or office until the end of the day.

PARENT DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP:

- Drop-off is from 7:15-7:40 a.m. (on the west side of the building) If you come later than 7:40 and there are NO buses in the bus lane, you may pull in and quickly drop off your child. If there is a bus, you must drop your student off on the west side of the building.
- Please DO NOT PARK your cars in the bus loop during this time. If you need to come into the school, please park in the designated area on the west side of the building.
- Pick-up time is at 2:45 p.m. in front of the school. Please be sure to use the right lane to wait and pull forward. Please DO NOT PARK in the drive through loop. This blocks the flow of traffic. Please do not wave your child to walk through traffic to your vehicle as well.
- When picking-up your child in the bus loop, please use the right hand lane (next to the curb) to wait patiently in line for your student to come to your vehicle. The left lane is for cars to drive away. Please do not block the flow of traffic.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

We love having parents involved in our school community! Whether it's volunteering in a classroom, helping at events, joining the PTO, or supporting a school-wide project, your time and support make a big difference. Be sure to watch for opportunities in newsletters and on our school website—we welcome and appreciate your involvement!

PLAYGROUND RULES AND CONSEQUENCES

At Acequia Elementary, we want the playground to be a place where everyone feels safe, included, and has fun! Our expectations are based on being Safe, Kind, and Responsible in all that we do.

Be Safe:

- Use playground equipment the right way (e.g., swings, slides, tires).
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself—no pushing, tackling, or rough play.
- Stay in the playground area and always ask permission before leaving.

Be Kind:

- Include others and take turns.
- Use kind words and actions—no teasing, name-calling, or inappropriate language.
- Solve problems peacefully and ask an adult for help if needed.

Be Responsible:

- Follow directions from the adult on duty.
- Line up quickly when the whistle blows.
- Take care of playground equipment and help keep our space clean.

If a student has difficulty meeting expectations, they may receive a reminder, a time-out, or a loss of recess privileges. Repeated unsafe or unkind behavior will be addressed with additional support and communication with families.

We are proud of the way our Eagles play with heart, include others, and look out for one another!

PTO ORGANIZATION (PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION)

Acequia Elementary School is fortunate to have a wonderful PTO program that helps to bring school and community together. Please be sure to refer to our monthly newsletters and the school website for meeting times and sign-ups.

The PTO also organizes and assists with other numerous activities throughout the year that support our school. Please contact PTO board members if you would like to volunteer.

SCHOOL-WIDE EXPECTATIONS

At Acequia Elementary, we believe in being Respectful, Responsible, and Safe in all areas of our school. These three words guide our behavior expectations and are taught and reinforced regularly. Whether in the classroom, hallway, cafeteria, or playground, students are expected to follow these

expectations to help create a positive and consistent learning environment. Look for posters around the school and talk with your child about what these words mean in different settings!

SOCIAL MEDIA

Acequia Elementary uses multiple platforms of social media to reach all parents and community members of the wonderful happenings in our building. This is used weekly to promote activities in the classroom as well as reminders for upcoming events, etc. If you wish to not have your child appear on social media, please let the office know as soon as possible. *This is different than the District publicity policy.*

Follow along... Facebook: Acequia Elementary School & Instagram: acequia.eagles

SCHOOL CLOSURE

When it becomes necessary to dismiss school because of inclement weather or an emergency, announcements will be made through local radio stations, District automated dialer and/or Remind messages.

SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION LAW

The immunizations listed are required of children who are to attend preschool, kindergarten through grade twelve (12) in any Idaho public, private, or parochial school (Idaho Code 39-4801).

Immunizations must be administered in the manner and in accordance with medical standards recognized by the Idaho Board of Medicine and within "Immunization Recommendations" available from the Bureau of Communicable Disease Prevention.

- 5 doses of DPT vaccine (Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus) unless fewer doses are medically recommended;
- 4 or more doses of Polio vaccine, unless fewer doses are medically recommended;
- 2 doses each of MMR (measles/mumps/rubella vaccine, given after one year of age);
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B vaccine for children
- 2 Hepatitis A vaccine
- 2 Varicella (chicken pox) vaccine

Students not in compliance with Idaho Immunization Law will not be permitted to attend school.

SCHOOL MEDICATIONS

The Minidoka County School Board has established that no medication (prescription or non-prescription) will be given to students except in cases where failure to take prescribed medication would jeopardize the child's health or ability to learn. In these cases, the following procedures must be followed:

- Parents must provide the medication to the school in its original container, clearly labeled with: the student's name, the name of the medication, the dosage and time to be administered and the physician's name.

A Medication Authorization Form must be completed and signed by both the physician and the parent/guardian. This form can be found in the school office or by referencing Policy #370.20 on the district website.

Students who use inhalers may leave them with the classroom teacher or the front office unless, due to the severity of the condition, they need to carry it with them during the school day.

Please contact the school office if you have questions about medication procedures or need help accessing the required form.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Any person needing special accommodations to participate in school activities should contact Acequia Elementary by calling 208-436-6985.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Our goal is to ensure every student gets the support they need to thrive. We offer a variety of services including counseling, academic interventions, English Language support, and special education services. If you have concerns about your child's learning, behavior, or emotional well-being, please reach out to your child's teacher or the principal. Together, we'll find the best support for your child.

TECHNOLOGY & DEVICES

Students at Acequia use technology to support learning in meaningful ways. All students and parents must sign an Internet/Device Agreement each year. Devices are to be used for school purposes only, and students are expected to be responsible digital citizens.

TRANSPORTATION

When riding on district buses, students are required to adhere to all rules and regulations as stipulated by transportation personnel. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and student cooperation is greatly appreciated. Citations will be issued if students are uncooperative with bus drivers or other school personnel on bus duty or acting as supervisors. Please be very cautious when loading and unloading children from private vehicles and be aware of crosswalks, parking areas, and one-way streets.

VISITORS

The front doors of the school are locked. Please ring the doorbell in the corner of the entryway to notify the secretary of your arrival. The secretary will unlock the door for you. Upon coming into the building, we ask that all visitors sign in at the office and pick up a visitor's badge. If it is your first time checking into the office, please have your drivers license available. To ensure our student's safety, we closely monitor traffic in our building. We do not permit students to bring friends or relatives to spend the day with them in class, as these situations are too disruptive to our educational program. Any person needing special accommodations to participate in school activities are welcome to contact our school at 436-6985.

WEAPONS

The Minidoka County School District has very detailed and strict policies concerning the possession or use of weapons, drugs or alcohol at school. Extensive policies listing appropriate consequences also exist for student behavior concerning harassment, fighting, theft or destruction of property. Parents are encouraged to review these and other policies on the school's website. If parents do not have access to a computer at home, we will gladly assist you at the school.

Thank you for following the guidelines to provide a fun and safe education for all at Acequia Elementary. If you have any questions, please contact the school.

Heather Hepworth

PRINCIPAL, ACEQUIA ELEMENTARY

Si gusta esta información en Español, llame a la escuela a 436-6985.