

ATLAS

ELEMENTARY



FAMILY HANDBOOK

2021-2022

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EDUCATION

CHARACTER

COMMUNITY

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INTRODUCTION

School History

Atlas Prep was founded in 2009 with the belief that all children deserve an excellent education that equips them to be successful in life, whatever path they may choose to take. Atlas opened in 2009 only serving 5th grade, and expanded by adding one grade level per year as our capacity to serve more students grew. In 2012, Atlas Prep opened the door to our high school to continue our tradition of excellence in our community. In July of 2020, Atlas Elementary opened at our newest campus facility, along with our new gymnasium and athletic field.

As an institution we plan to deepen our impact on southeast Colorado Springs, because we strongly believe in our mission to provide a quality academic experience for all students.

Atlas Mission

Atlas prepares and empowers all students for success in their post-graduate paths through educational excellence, character development, and community engagement

Our Pillars

Atlas Prep grounds its mission and in supporting our three pillars:

EDUCATION CHARACTER COMMUNITY

It is our belief that these pillars will help our students grow up to pursue their best selves. We live by these pillars each day and guide our students to do the same.



Education. Character. Community.

The commitments below include clear descriptions of behaviors that align to these pillars so that scholars, families, and staff have a complete and shared understanding of them.

EDUCATION

- I will take pride in myself and my work.
- I will give even more effort when things get challenging.
- I will learn from my mistakes and work to fix them.
- I believe in myself and my future and understand that all obstacles can be overcome.

CHARACTER

- I will take responsibility for my own feelings and actions.
- I will do the right thing even when no one is looking.
- I will encourage others to do the right thing.
- I will take turns and follow the rules.

COMMUNITY

- I will consider the feelings and well-being of others before speaking and acting.
- I will take care of myself, my classmates, and my teachers.
- I will love and value my own culture and community and the culture and community of others.
- I will work together with my classmates and teacher to create a positive learning environment.



Education. Character. Community.

ACADEMICS

Rigor

In pursuit of our mission to empower our students, Atlas Elementary has the highest academic standards for all students. Atlas Elementary offers a rigorous and engaging curriculum that is directly aligned to Common Core State Standards. This approach helps teachers establish a clear vision of learning for the year, and is a foundation that our school supplements to reflect the diversity and needs of our student body.

Literacy

Proficiency in literacy skills is vital in order to be successful in school and in life, regardless of a student's post-graduate path, as well as to be able to fully participate in society. Atlas Elementary has a major focus on reading, writing, speaking, and listening throughout the entire course of a student's day. Atlas staff take every opportunity to lift our students' literacy skills; building their language as the tool to access learning.

More Time to Learn

Atlas Prep has an extended school day and calendar year that differs from the surrounding school district. Atlas students are in school 20 days longer each year, and 110 minutes more each week than traditional elementary schools within HSD2. This time is used wisely to create a rigorous and well-rounded education for all students, where the academic and developmental needs of all students can be met.

Blended Learning

A crucial piece of our individualized support and academic program is the use of computer-based math and literacy supplements that students access online. This piece of our program allows students to deepen their skills and knowledge exactly at their level, as well as enjoy focused small-group instruction with the teacher. This instruction happens within the classroom and is connected to the students' daily learning.

Personalized Support

We believe that every student can thrive in a culture of high expectations and accountability. To ensure that each Atlas Prep student is successful, we use observational and assessment data, as well as a Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS), where students will receive focused instruction in small-group settings. This is to ensure that all students are getting the resources they need to be successful, as well as to help our staff use reliable data to determine individual needs for each student.

ACADEMIC SYSTEMS

Homework Policy

Homework is an essential part of our students' education. Homework reinforces skills that are taught each day in class, helps students develop deeper understandings of concepts, and promotes habits of responsibility.

Students will be given homework each weeknight, which will include 20 minutes of reading each night, plus practice on math, phonics, spelling/sight word, and other concepts being taught during the day. The expectation is that homework is completed **every night** and returned to school the next day. Teachers will check homework and send it back with feedback if there are concerns. Teachers will not send back homework if it was done correctly. Please contact your student's advisor directly if you are seeing a pattern of concerns at home regarding your child's ability to complete the work independently or within an realistic length of time.

Homework Folders

Every day your child will bring home their YELLOW Homework Folder, which includes homework for each night, independent reading logs, and a monthly or weekly calendar of events. Please review all materials for the day and leave comments in the provided space. Each weeknight, a reading activity and homework must be completed. **All school-wide and grade level communication (Atlas newsletter, field trip permission slips, etc.) will come home in the yellow folder. Parents must check the homework folder every single day for homework and communication from school .**

Independent Reading

The best way to improve a student's reading skills is to have them READ, READ, READ! **Supporting your child's independent reading at home is the best way to help them improve the speed, accuracy, vocabulary, and comprehension of their reading.** Although Atlas students have high-quality reading time during school, they must READ, READ, READ at home every night, each weekend and during any vacations from school. Students can (and are encouraged to) independently read in English, Spanish, or other home languages. Students can also be read to by a sibling, parent, or read aloud recording from the internet while they are becoming independent readers. Parents/guardians should make sure to supervise their child in reading **at least** 20 minutes every night and every day on the weekends.

Homework Expectations		
Teachers should...	Students should...	Families should...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create meaningful assignments. ● Make sure that homework is able to be completed at home. ● Be certain that every assignment is clearly understood. ● Relate the assignment to class instruction. ● Use homework as a way to check for understanding of previously taught skills and content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promptly inform parents/guardians of homework assignments by showing them the daily homework log. ● Be responsible for completing assignments on time, accurately, and neatly. ● Complete missed assignments due to absences. ● Read every day. ● Always try their best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a time and quiet place for study. ● Help their child develop responsibility for completing assignments. ● Be aware of assignments, review and sign the daily log, review completed work, and assist as necessary. ● Talk to their child about what he/she learned at school and encourage their student to develop a positive attitude about learning.

Grading System

While grades are not a primary indicator of a student’s achievement at Atlas Elementary, we recognize the importance that grades play in communication to parents and scholars about their performance. Student performance will be measured on assessments, homework, in-class work, participation, and other assignments. This work will be graded in relation to student mastery of standards, skills, and subskills.

The grading scale used in Atlas Elementary is used to communicate a student’s progress towards mastery of the learning goal and content standards using the following scale:

- 4** - Exceeding academic standards
- 3** - Meeting academic standards
- 2** - Progressing well towards academic standards
- 1** - Not meeting academic standards at this time

Report Cards & Progress Reports

Students receive a report card for each quarter, which includes a summary of their grades, as well as their progress in academic, behavior, and general conduct skills. Report cards are provided to parents/guardians at the family conference night that is held at the end of each quarter. Progress reports regarding homework, independent reading, and attendance will be sent home at the beginning of each month.

Promotion Policy

Student retention is recommended when considered in the best interest of the student. Through rigorous data usage and careful progress monitoring, we are able to closely monitor and support students who are struggling and best ways to support them.

Promotion decisions will be based on assessments, attendance, homework completion records, social/emotional development characteristics, and other measures.

Any student that is below grade level is the above criteria as determined by multiple metrics, or whose unexcused absences exceed 10 in one school year will be a candidate for retention. Atlas Elementary students will be promoted or retained on the recommendation of the classroom teachers, as well as through a consultation with the principal and family. Please note that our grades are not the sole metric for promotion; many variables including age, social/emotional needs, academic growth, attendance, and more will be taken into account.

**A student's Individual Education Plan may amend this promotion criteria.*

SCHOOL CULTURE

Atlas Elementary seeks to create a warm, caring environment where teachers and staff work to protect the academic, physical, social, and emotional well-being of every child, every day. A safe learning environment is fundamental and shall be maintained at school in order to provide an equal and appropriate educational opportunity for all students.

Social Emotional Learning

At Atlas Elementary we foster a culture that allows students to grow and succeed in an environment that supports and celebrates them. We do this by proactively teaching and coaching children in developing social-emotional skills just as we do academic skills. We take the time to create structures, rituals, and routines that support social-emotional development at each grade level. We recognize emotions and social conflict as an opportunity for growth and talk children through these experiences. Sometimes, as students are developing skill sets, they need extra support. When this is the case we work with families and our school's counseling team to provide small group and individualized support.

Empower Hour

Atlas Elementary has a schedule that provides an excellent balance between "focus time" and "fun time". We have designed our Friday schedule to allow for space to recognize

accomplishments of scholars, honor monthly cultural and character themes, and celebrate holidays, including birthdays (see our Birthday Celebration section for more information). This “Empower Hour” occurs from 1:45-2:30 every Friday. Once a month, we hold a school-wide assembly and strongly encourage parents to attend if they are able. Refer to our monthly event calendar to know when our next “Empower Hour” is being held.

STAR Behavior Expectations

To help students learn good habits for learning and to ensure that we are able to maximize learning time, Atlas Elementary uses the **S.T.A.R.** behavior expectation:

Stand/sit up straight - Students are expected to use good posture to help ensure they are able to focus and not distract those around them. When sitting in a chair, scholars should have their bottoms on a chair, their backs strong, and their hands folded on top of their desks. When standing, students should have their hands to their sides. When sitting on the carpet, students should remain on their designated area and keep their hands in their lap.

Track the Speaker with your eyes - Students are expected to track (look at) the speaker. When the teacher is talking, students should track the teacher with their eyes, as well as any other classmate that is asking a question, reading, or sharing an idea. Tracking the speaker will help all students to stay on task and concentrate on instruction, as well as show respect to the speaker.

Always ask and answer questions - Students are expected to be on task during instructional time with very few reminders by teachers. Students ask and answer questions by raising their hands and waiting for the teacher to call on them.

Respect at all times - Students should be respectful. A student who has a disagreement with another student is expected to ask the offending peer to stop, and then ask their teacher for support if needed. Students who have been corrected by a teacher should not respond in a way other than following the directions given by the teacher.

Student Behavior

We believe that the learning environment is sacred, and that it is our job to ensure that all students are able to learn in a safe, positive environment. Atlas Elementary sets this culture through continual teaching, modeling, and reinforcing positive behaviors and skills. We do this through using non-punitive measures to create a positive environment, teaching and practicing skills to help students learn and meet behavior expectations,

reinforce positive behavior, and respond to inappropriate behavior in an immediate and consistent manner.

If a student's behavior or choices disrupt learning time or cause others to feel hurt or unsafe, Atlas Elementary teachers respond in a way that helps support the student, as well as all those affected by the incident. These consequences will be consistent and logical in nature to support the student in understanding how their actions or words have affected those around them, as well as teach them to repair any harm or advocate for their needs.

We recognize that, just as some students need extra help learning academic skills, some may need additional support learning emotional and social skills. If that is the case, the Principal will work closely with teachers, students, and families to help all students learn and grow and ensure a safe, productive, and joyful learning environment for all students. Escalated or more egregious negative behaviors may result in the students being removed from class or potentially needing to be sent home. Behaviors that warrant removal from the classroom will be communicated to families and will likely require a meeting with the family and administration.

Recognizing Good Choices

With our focus on creating a safe and joyful learning experience for all children, teachers focus on celebrating positive behaviors as a way to teach appropriate and acceptable behaviors throughout the school, as well as set goals towards making these habits a focal point for our students. This system for recognition can be found and felt across all parts of a student's day.

Individual Points & School Store - As a school, we have a set of expectations for our students to follow to ensure that everyone feels safe, is treated kindly, and is a part of a focused and joyful learning environment. Teachers spent large amounts of time at the beginning of the year teaching the students how these expectations are met in all parts of the school. When students show excellent choices that align with these school expectations, their teachers award them with points. These points are tallied in our school behavior system, and the points can be used at our school store to purchase various items or certificates that afford them to participate in fun activities over the course of the year.

Character Student of the Month - Each month our school will have a character trait that we focus on and discuss. At the end of each month, teachers will nominate two students from their homerooms to be recognized for being a model of that trait.

Pillar Points - At the end of each day, one ritual our classes hold is to reflect on how they are embodying our school's pillars. Pillar Points will be given to the class for exhibiting values that align with our Education, Character, and Community pillars. Celebrations are held when a class reaches various point totals throughout the year.

Additional Behavior Incentives

While there is consistency amongst classrooms with regards to school-wide behavior systems, many classrooms also implement additional positive behavior incentives. Teachers use various whole-class and individual incentive systems to invest students in learning and their community. Teachers will communicate with parents about focus areas of the class, as well as progress made towards goals and celebrations that are held once goals are met.

Bullying Policy

Atlas Prep is committed to providing a safe and secure school environment for all students and staff that is free of discrimination, bullying, and harassment. We believe students should be able to learn in an environment that is free from threat, harassment, and any type of bullying behaviors, including cyberbullying.

All students have the right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place
- Be treated with respect
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

Bullying is the use of coercion or intimidation to obtain control over another person to cause physical, mental, or emotional harm to another person. Bullying can occur through written, verbal, or electronic means, or by a physical act or gesture. Bullying can also take place via electronic means when scholars are off campus. If those bullying acts disrupt the safe and inclusive school environment, Atlas Prep may take disciplinary action.

Bullying for any reason is prohibited at Atlas Prep schools, both on school property and at school-sponsored events. If a student engages in bullying, he or she will face disciplinary action. Atlas Prep will support and train students and staff in bullying prevention, immediately intervene in known bullying events, work with students to change bullying behavior and to support victims, and recognize and praise positive and supportive anti-bullying behaviors. These efforts are designed to maintain a bully-free environment. If bullying has taken place, a student or parent should immediately report it to school staff. The staff will include necessary parties to investigate the incident(s) in a thorough and

confidential manner, to the extent possible, and choose the appropriate remedy. If a parent feels the remedy is insufficient, he or she may contact the school principal. Retaliation towards persons participating in an investigation will not be tolerated.

Suspensions

We believe that learning time is sacred, and that in order for a student to achieve their full potential they need to be in class as much as possible for that learning to occur. Though we view misbehaviors as learning opportunities for students, we recognize that some behaviors cannot be contained within a classroom and warrant a larger, more severe consequence. These cases will require a member of the staff to remove the student from the learning environment. Recurring or more serious behaviors can result in the students needing to be isolated from the group for an extended period of time. The actions that require extended removal from class and school are listed below. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list, and other behaviors may warrant in- or out-of-school suspensions as School Leadership sees fit.

In-School Suspension

The following behaviors could warrant in-school suspension:

- Recurring use of insulting, hateful, or profane language
- Recurring, physical aggression (i.e. pushing, kicking, pinching)
- False activation of a fire alarm
- Recurring issues regarding bullying or harassment
- Severe defiance of an adult
- Minor theft or destruction of property

In the event of an in-school suspension, families are notified of the incident and the length of the suspension, and provided with written documentation. If a student is serving an in-school suspension, they are isolated from their peers with a member of our Leadership Team in the office for up to an entire day. They will be provided with the missed classwork to complete during their suspension. In addition, they will work on any restorative efforts needed to repair any harm that may have been done. They will not be allowed to interact with peers unless connected to restorative efforts that have been planned as part of their re-entry process to their class.

Out-of-School Suspension

The following behaviors are considered extreme either in their nature or due to the fact that the school has made many efforts to help the scholar correct them.

- Recurring bullying and aggressive behavior
- Recurring harassment

- Recurring behaviors that warrant in-school-suspension
- Fighting or causing intentional physical harm that results in minor injuries like scrapes, cuts, bloody noses.
- Possession of a weapon, drugs (illegal or legal but unauthorized)
- Major destruction or theft of personal or school property

In the event of an out-of-school suspension, families will be notified of the incident and the length of suspension, both verbally and in writing. A parent or guardian will be required to meet with administration before the student can rejoin their class to review the behaviors that took place, clarify expectations, discuss any replacement behaviors and supports for student success, and commit to changes going forward. Out-of-school suspension, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension. The maximum days of suspension for the school year will be ten (10) days for all students. In the case of a student who has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a student that received 504 accommodations, Atlas Elementary will ensure that it makes the necessary adjustments to comply with the mandates of state and federal law.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Advisory System

One very successful component of our school is the relationships that our families form with members of our school community. Every student across the school is paired with a teacher that serves as the advisor for the school family. This advisor serves many purposes for the school-family connection, but most importantly develops a strong, trusting relationship with the family and learns about the unique strengths and needs of the student.

The following list is a brief overview of components of our advisory system:

- Advisors create an open communication dynamic between the advisor and the family
- Conferences are held with this advisor to look at progress of the student
- Parents can communicate with the advisor for support regarding grades, behavioral concerns, resource support, etc.
- Advisor can connect family with personnel/resources such as counseling, assessments, uniforms, and other supports that the family may need

Communication Methods

Weekly Reminders	Each week, a cover page is added to homework packets that outlines upcoming events.
Phone Calls	At times throughout the year, you will receive phones, text messages, or notes from a teacher or other staff member. If the message requires a response, please contact the school or staff member either by phone or in writing within 24 hours.
Parent-Advisor Conferences	Atlas Prep holds five parent-advisor conferences throughout the year in August, October, January, April and June to discuss academic and social development of the student, as well as seek input from families to inform our school of how we can best support students and families. Please refer to the school calendar for exact dates of these conference windows.
Meetings	If the school requests a meeting with you and your child, there is an important issue that needs to be discussed. Parents are free to schedule meetings with teachers or administrators whenever needed. Please contact them directly or call the school so that the meeting can be scheduled.
FlyerConnect	Atlas Prep has adopted the use of FlyerConnect as a communication platform. It is an app that can be downloaded so that families get up-to-date information relevant to school events and updates.
Seesaw	Atlas Elementary teachers all have Seesaw as a communication app that allows them to communicate updates to parents and allows parents to see independent work that students are completing on their digital devices at school.

Supporting Your Student

Atlas family-school relationships are maintained through:

- Attendance to all parent-advisor conferences, as well as other school sponsored events (including Empower Hour assemblies, Open House, etc.)
- Open, respectful communication between school staff and families
- Use of communication platforms such as Flyer Connect, Seesaw, classroom folders, newsletters, and Atlas's social media pages

Atlas Prep families are asked to:

- Establish a daily routine for students that sets them up for success, including ample sleep and adequate time to read and complete homework
- Provide positive reinforcement of student progress and success
- Help students with homework and independent reading if needed
- Send their student to school in the Atlas Elementary uniform
- Attend all required parent meetings such as orientations and parent-teacher conferences
- Attendance Family Nights to help celebrate and support your child

SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Uniform Guidelines

Uniforms are a critical part of maintaining our focused, community-centered, environment. All Atlas Prep students wear the Atlas Prep uniform to school every single day unless specifically communicated by the school or classroom teacher.

Shirt: Atlas Prep green, short-sleeved polo shirt

Optional:

- **Sweater:** Dark gray Atlas sweater can be worn over the green polo
- **Undershirt:** Plain white, black, navy blue, or gray undershirt under uniform polo (no patterns or stripes)

Bottoms: Navy uniform pants, shorts, skort, or skirt

- If wearing a skirt - shorts, tights or leggings must be worn underneath.
- No jeans, joggers, dresses, or leggings that are worn as pants.
- Shorts, skirts, and skorts must fall past the fingertips when students stand
- Leggings or tights that are worn underneath skirts and skorts must be either plain white, black, navy blue, or gray (no patterns or stripes)

Shoes: Any all-black shoes, including sneakers. The shoe must be mostly black and must cover the whole foot (no slippers, sandals, flip flops, etc.). Shoes should not have wheels attached or light up when walking. The shoe policy is the same for winter months. If your student needs to wear snow boots to school, please have them bring their uniform shoes to change into during breakfast.

Belts: Belts are not a required part of the uniform, but parents should have their child wear a belt if pants are not able to remain at the waist level on their own.

Other Uniform Guidelines:

- No hats or head covering are not allowed in the building except for religious or cultural purposes or for planned, themed dress days.

Gryphon Gear Fridays

Atlas has dubbed Fridays to be “Gryphon Gear Fridays” where we relax our uniform guidelines to show school pride and accomplishments. On Fridays, students can wear **any Atlas shirt** that they own. If students choose to wear their sweatshirt, the polo is not required to be worn underneath the sweater on Fridays.

Note: On Fridays, students are allowed to wear jeans rather than their regular uniform bottoms, as well as any closed-toe shoe of their choice, rather than their black/mostly black uniform shoes.

Over the course of the year, we will have opportunities for students to “dress down” or celebrate fun themed dress days. We will communicate these days and what is appropriate to wear during these events.

Uniform Recommendations

For our youngest students, we recommend purchasing pants that have an elastic waistband that can be pulled up, rather than pants that need to be buttoned and/or zipped. Shoes that have velcro or can be slipped on are also easier for young students to wear and work with than shoes that need to be tied while they are learning.

All uniform pieces should have the student’s name written on the inside, including all pieces of clothes sent to school in case of an accident. Please label all of your student’s uniform items prior to sending them to school or being worn.

Uniform Purchases

Uniform purchases can be made at all orientation and registration events, as well as at the front office at the Middle School during school hours. Uniforms cannot be purchased at the elementary school.

Bathroom Accidents

On the first day of school, **kindergarten and first grade** students must bring an extra set of clothes in the event of a bathroom accident or spill. The change of clothes includes underwear, pants, and a plain polo shirt and socks, but does not have to be a full Atlas uniform. When students have accidents or spills and use their extra set of clothing, the school will communicate this to parents/guardians. Families should send another clean set of clothing to school the following day.

If a change of clothing is not provided, parents will be called in in the case of an accident to come to school with a clean change of clothing for their student. If parents cannot bring a change of clothes to school, Atlas Prep will provide the student with an item of loaned clothing. These are pre-worn articles of clothes that have been donated to the school. We ask that loaned clothing be washed and returned to school.

Uniform Violations

Uniforms are checked during arrival. If a student is out of uniform, it will be logged and tracked in the school’s database system. This will also be recorded on the Communication Log in the student’s homework folder to notify the student’s parent or guardian. Our goal is for students to take personal responsibility for their uniforms.

Violation #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted on Communication Log in the student’s homework folder, noting the violation type and request to have uniform corrected the next school day
Violation #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisor communicates the violation directly to the family
Violation #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisor calls home and notes infraction on Communication Log with request to have uniform corrected by the next school day The Community Team offers support on how to help families get students in full, correct uniform.
Violation #4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If uniform violations persist, students will be given the correct uniform to keep and the cost will be deducted from the Family Scholarship

Special Dress Days

Throughout the year, Atlas Elementary hosts many fun events. Some of those will also include days where we encourage students to dress up as a way to celebrate. These can include days such as Heritage Day, Pajama Day, College Colors Day, Hat Day, Character Day, among others. All of these events will be communicated to families in advance on our weekly newsletters, as well as through Seesaw and our monthly event calendar.

School Calendar & Closings

Atlas Prep follows Harrison School District 2 for all weather-related closures. However, the Atlas Prep calendar does not always align with the Harrison School District calendar. Students are expected to be in school even when Harrison School District 2 is not in session. You will receive updates for weather-related closures via FlyerConnect or our school Facebook page, so please keep your contact information updated with the front office and with your student’s advisor. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to access this information.

School Transportation

Students at Atlas Elementary have three options for transportation to and from school:

1. Walk with a family member (or designated individual) that picks up the student from the school entrance.
2. Receive a ride from a family member (or designated individual).

3. Ride Atlas Prep buses provided by Durham Transportation. Buses are free to all Atlas Prep families and easily accessible across the neighboring region of Colorado Springs. Atlas Elementary students will ride the buses at the same time as Atlas Middle School students, with bus monitors and seat gaps to create an efficient and safe bus ride for all students.

Arrange Transportation Before Your Child Leaves Home: We will request a daily dismissal form from you detailing how your student will be dismissed during registration in July. Students will NOT be allowed to call home to check and see if they are being picked up. If you need to change your student's transportation for that day, you **MUST call the front office by 3:00 P.M.** to change your student's transportation arrangement for that day. Please do not write student dismissal changes in their Homework Folder or communicate them to teachers. Due to the large volume of students being dismissed each day, bus lists are created and distributed by 3:00 on regular dismissal days and 2:00 on early dismissal days. Any last-minute requests to add or remove students from the bus list cannot be guaranteed.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

Atlas works diligently to ensure that arrival and dismissal are safe for students and families and are as efficient as possible for everyone involved. Please see the following policies for arrival/dismissal.

Arrival

- The school entrance is locked until 7:55. Only students enrolled in before-school care and staff are to be in the building at that time.
- The school opens to scholars at 7:55am and students must be in the doors by 8:20am.
- Students are not to arrive at school before 7:55 as there will be no one to supervise them.
- Students are to be dropped off at the carline, or walked by an adult or sibling to the main entrance.
- If a student has not been dropped off by 8:25am, that student is tardy and all families must enter the front office to sign in their student.

Dismissal

- School is dismissed at 3:50pm Monday-Thursday and 2:50pm on Friday.
- If your student(s) must be picked up early, they must be picked up before 3:30.
- Families are responsible for picking up their student on time, and will be called immediately if their student has not been picked up by 4:00.

- If your student has not been picked up by 4:30, the school reserves the right to contact the police.
- For the carline, signage provided by the school must be kept on the dashboard and present in order for your child to be sent to your vehicle. Anyone who does not have proper signage on their car must park and walk up to collect their student.
- If you are sending someone other than a parent, guardian, or sibling to pick up your student, you must notify the front office no later than 3:00pm that day

Bus Policy

To ensure that all students in our neighborhood get access to a high-quality education, Atlas Prep has committed significant resources to providing our own bus system, which is **extremely rare** for a small school. Riding the bus at Atlas Prep is a **privilege** and a **limited resource**, which will be taken away from students who abuse this privilege and resource.

Parents are required to be present at the bus stop for dismissal if the elementary student does not have a sibling to walk home with. If no one is there for the student **they will not be dropped off**. Parents will be called and the family will need to pick up their student at the school.

Bus Behavior Expectations

- Students must follow all directions given by the bus driver and bus monitor
- All food and drink must remain put away in backpacks (including gum)
- Students must stay seated and remain in the same seat during the bus ride
- All body parts (i.e. heads and arms) must stay inside the windows
- Voice levels must be at appropriate levels - students should only converse with other scholars nearest them
- All language should be respectful and appropriate for students
- Bullying and fighting are not allowed and will carry the same consequence as if they happened within school grounds
- Students take care of the bus and to not damage the seats, sidewalls, or floors of the bus

If a scholar does not follow the above expectations, they will receive consequences as follows:

1st Offense	Warning - the student's advisor will communicate the incident to parents
2nd Offense	1 day off school bus (to and from school) - this day will occur on the day following the infraction. The advisor or front office will communicate this to the parent/guardian
3rd Offense	3 days off school bus (to and from school). See above for guidelines surrounding dates for suspension and communication
4th Offense	Extended suspension of bus privileges that will be determined by the Transportation Director and Principal
Fighting	3-5 days off of the bus and additional consequences at school

Note: If a student is suspended from riding the bus, parents/guardians are responsible for finding another means of transportation to and from school. If the student is absent from school due to not being able to find another ride, the absence will be considered unexcused.

Attendance

In order to achieve our ambitious mission, scholars at Atlas Prep must be in school, on time, all day, every day. Regular attendance is a key factor that leads to academic and social success. Students are expected to be in the building from 8:20-3:50pm each day Monday-Thursday, and 8:20-:250 on Friday.

Absences

Absences are excused for all appointments, illness, or a family emergency. For the absence to be excused, a note must be sent in the scholar's homework folder on the day the student returns to school or is brought to the office by the scholar's parent or guardian. All other absences are considered unexcused. When considering promotion and retention, Atlas Elementary counts all absences and does not distinguish between unexcused and excused.

Students will be counted as absent for a half-day if they leave before lunch or arrive at school after lunch. These half-day absences will be considered excused if they are for illness, appointments, or emergencies and are communicated through a note.

Tardies

Students not in the school building at 8:20am are marked as tardy. Students not in the building by 8:20 must be escorted and signed in by an adult. Recurring tardies will be logged and communication from school leadership will occur to support families in helping to make sure their student is here on time.

Early Pickups

Students who leave the school building before dismissal are marked as dismissed early. If a student needs to leave school before the end of the school day, a parent, guardian, or designee must sign them out before removing the student from school grounds. Students can only be dismissed from class when the parent or guardian has physically come to the front office. Early dismissals must occur before the last 20 minutes of the day. Any parent attempting to pick up their student within that window will need to wait until dismissal.

Excessively Poor Attendance

If a student is excessively absent for unexcused reasons, Atlas takes the following action steps to work with the family to mediate further unnecessary absences from school.

- At **6 unexcused absences**, a written warning is mailed to the student's home, letting family know of this status and to reduce the occurrence of absences without the proper documentation.
- At **10 unexcused absences**, the family is required to attend a meeting at the school with the building principal, the student's advisor, and the Dean of Students.
- During this meeting, the family will have the opportunity to communicate reasons for extensive absences, and the school will work with the family to come up with a plan for making up for lost learning time and mitigating future unexcused absences.
- The receipt of the Family Scholarship will be suspended until the family can show a good faith effort in fixing attendance issues.
- **Continued unexcused absences** will be referred to Colorado Springs Truancy Court. The Family Scholarship will be forfeited for the remainder of the school year, and the student is at risk of not being promoted to the next grade level.

Attendance FAQs

Q: *What happens if I do not call or send a note to verify my student's absence?*

A: A member of the office or our automated messaging system will call you to notify you of the absence so that you can verify it and inform us of the reason for the absence. We want to be sure we are always aware of where our students are and if there is anything concerning we should know or can potentially support with.

Q: *If I let my student's advisor or homeroom teacher know the reason for the absence, does that count for verification of the absence?*

A: No, it does not. Please contact the front office and inform them of your student's absence. It is a guardian's/parent's responsibility to notify the office by telephone, email, or note for any absence your child has. It is not the teacher's responsibility to inform the office. We appreciate that level of communication to ensure our teachers remain focused on teaching and their classrooms.

Q: *If my student is absent for a vacation and I let the teacher and the office staff know about it, is my absence excused?*

A: No, it is not. Even if you let the office and the teachers know that you will be on vacation, the reason for absence is still not excused. We **strongly discourage** you from taking a vacation while school is in session. Learning time is sacred and we appreciate you treating it as such.

Lost & Found

To prevent confusion, parents are encouraged to write their student's name in permanent marker on the tags of all clothing. All items that are left in common spaces (playground, cafeteria, etc.) will be put in the school's Lost and Found bin in the Front Office for families or students to retrieve. Note that we are not responsible for any lost items, including clothing. The Lost and Found bin is emptied at the end of each quarter.

School Supplies

Atlas Prep provides all school supplies needed and we ask that you do not bring any school supplies to school.

Backpack/Personal Items

All students must bring a backpack to school that can be worn over two shoulders and is big enough to fit a 10" x 14" folder. Please do not send anything in your child's backpack other than their homework folder, book bag, and a lunch box (if applicable). If you need

assistance obtaining a backpack, please communicate this to your child's advisor, who will connect you with the proper resources.

Students may not have distracting or inappropriate objects during the school day, and any such objects will be confiscated by school staff and returned by the end of the day. The following items are examples of those that are not permitted at school and will only be returned to a parent: lasers, toys, water guns, electronic devices, trading cards. Repeated violations will require a parent conference. Atlas Elementary staff work very hard to provide a safe and educationally-rich school environment. Valuable items sent to school with a child can be lost, damaged, or stolen. All property brought to school is brought at the owner's risk.

Cell Phone Policy

Atlas Elementary's policy is that cell phones that are brought to school are to be turned off and remain in the student's backpack or turned into the classroom teacher. If a cell phone is visible or rings during the school day, a staff member will confiscate the phone and only return it to a parent or guardian. If a student's cell phone is stolen, Atlas Prep is not liable and cannot guarantee its recovery, nor will staff members investigate issues related to cell phones. Please consider leaving all technology at home.

Student Technology Use

Atlas Elementary believes that all students should have access to technology for learning when they act in a responsible manner. Before using Atlas technology, all families must sign the Atlas Student Technology Use Policy. Violations of this policy may result in students losing technology use and privileges and families will be responsible for paying to replace technology that is intentionally damaged by students.

Closed Campus

Atlas Elementary hours are between 8:25 and 3:50 Monday through Thursday and 8:25-2:50 on Friday during which all students must remain on campus as defined by the school unless supervised by a staff member. Students may be dropped off as early as 7:55, but parents will not be allowed to enter the building until after 8:20. All visitors must be allowed into the building by the Front Office staff.

To ensure safety during arrival and dismissal (high traffic times of the day), no one will be allowed to enter the building from 7:55-8:20 and 3:30-3:50 unless there is an event that families are invited to attend. Should families choose to arrive at this time they will be asked to remain outside until doors open. Students who need to leave campus early must be picked up by a parent/guardian or an authorized individual with photo identification

before 3:30. Parents will not be allowed to pick their child up early from school between 3:20 and 3:50 (2:20-2:50pm on Fridays) to maintain safety and efficiency during our dismissal window at the end of the day.

Visitor Policy

Visitors, especially parents and families, are a vital and important part of the Atlas Prep community. We welcome them as volunteers, observers, and partners. In order to assure the safety and well-being of all students and staff, **all visitors - including parents and guardians - are required to report directly to the Front Office, sign in, and receive a visitor's pass during regular school hours.** While parents are always welcome, they are encouraged to make appointments with teachers or administrators. Because the teachers teach most of the school day, they cannot leave the classroom to meet with you. By contacting them ahead of time, you can make an appointment with them during their planning period or outside of regular school hours. You can always call the Front Office to schedule a time to meet with the Principal.

On the first day of school, families are able to come into the school to drop off their student and say goodbye. After the first day of school, please note that at the beginning of each school year, parents and families will only be allowed in the building after two full weeks of school in order to get students adjusted to our systems and routines.

Medication & Allergies

We hope to keep our scholars healthy in order to learn most effectively. If your child requires medication during school hours, you must deliver it directly to our front office with the proper doctor's order - **do not send medication in your child's backpack unless you have been told to do so by front office staff or school nurse.** All medicines are kept in a locked cabinet and may not be given without the proper form. If your student has allergies, dietary restrictions or food preferences, please note this on your student's health information document.

Please **do not** attempt to give your student's medication to his/her teacher. **All** medications must be cleared by the school nurse and the front office. **Please do not send students to school with medication as students are NOT PERMITTED to carry medication.** Medication must be dropped off by an adult at the front office. The school will keep a detailed log of all medicines that are administered. **Prescription medication** must be in its original box with a pharmacy label. **Over-the-counter medication** must be in the **original, sealed** box.

Accident or Medical Emergency

If a medical emergency or serious accident occurs to a student at school or at a school event off campus, first aid will be administered and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of that student will be contacted immediately. If parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot be reached, a person listed as the student’s emergency contact or family physician will be contacted. If the situation warrants, the school will call Emergency Medical Services (9-1-1).

Safety Procedures

At Atlas Prep, the safety of our students is our number one priority. We have detailed emergency plans in place and have trained our staff on how to respond to a variety of potential situations, including but not limited to fire, tornados, medical emergencies, terrorism, utilities malfunctions, threats to security outside our school building, and potential intruders. Drills are practiced for each situation to help ensure staff and students know what to do in case such an event were to occur. Below is a high-level overview of emergency situations our staff is trained to respond to.

Situation	Overview	Communication Protocol
Fire	When signs of a fire are detected, evacuation procedures are immediately followed to ensure all students quickly and safely exit the building.	Once all students and staff are safely evacuated, families will be immediately contacted through text blast.
Shelter in place	In the case of inclement weather, procedures are followed to move students to protected locations until the weather has cleared.	When weather has cleared, families will be contacted as needed.
Lockout	If there is a perceived danger outside of the school, students and staff are moved inside, the building is secured, and the proper authorities are notified.	After contacting authorities, school leaders will send a text blast home immediately.
Lockdown	If there is a potential intruder inside the building, students and staff are moved to secured locations inside the school & proper authorities are notified.	After contacting authorities, school leaders will send a text blast home immediately, followed by a more detailed letter home.

Mandatory Reporting

All school personnel are mandatory reporters and are required by law to report child abuse or neglect if they reasonably suspect abuse or neglect is occurring. All Atlas Elementary staff are required to complete Mandatory Reporter training every year. To report child abuse or neglect, contact the Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-844-CO-4-KIDS or 1-844-264-5437. Anyone witnessing a child in a life-threatening situation should call 911 immediately.

Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of Atlas Preparatory Schools to recruit, hire, train, educate, promote, and administer all personnel and instructional actions without regard to race, religion, gender/gender identity, sexual preference/orientation, age, national origin, disability, need for special education services, marital status, or use of public assistance. We will not tolerate any discrimination, and any such conduct is prohibited. The school also prohibits any form of discipline or retaliation for reporting incidents.

Immunization of Students

In accordance with Colorado law (Board of Health Rule 6 CCR 1009-2) all students attending Colorado schools are required to be vaccinated against certain diseases, unless an exemption is filed. Proper medical records must be filed with our Front Office. Our staff will communicate with you if these records are missing or outdated.

Food Service

Atlas Elementary partners with SLA Management to provide healthy breakfast, lunch, and snack options for your student. Families are encouraged to complete a free- or reduced-lunch application at any point throughout the school year to determine the student's eligibility to receive meals at a free or reduced cost. Breakfast and Snack are free for all students regardless of eligibility. Families are responsible for all food bills that accrue before submitting an application.

Healthy Food Choices

At Atlas Elementary we are committed to healthy food choices for our body. Balanced meals help students get the nutrients they need to focus. If you prefer to pack lunch, please send nutritious food and do not allow your student to have unhealthy drinks and snacks. Items such as chips, candy, sweet and sugary drinks are not allowed. If brought to school they will be sent back home.

Birthday Celebrations

As mentioned in the School Culture section of this handbook, Fridays have a special schedule where the last hour of the day, "Empower Hour", has been built in as time for celebrations, community activities, monthly themes, etc., as well as to preserve the importance of learning time during the week. Birthdays will be celebrated on a monthly basis, where one Friday afternoon each month will be to celebrate the birthdays of all students born during that month. If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday at school, please refer to our monthly event calendar to see which Friday will be reserved for that month's birthdays. Treats are optional. If you would like to bring treats for your child's class, please organize this with your child's advisor. Treats must be store-bought and

sealed prior to being brought to school. No homemade birthday treats or treats containing peanut ingredients will be served to students. You must provide enough treats for everyone in the class if you choose to bring them.

Release of Photos and Other Information

Atlas Prep will periodically highlight student achievement, school life, and school events on the school website, social media outlets, and various publications, for the purposes of enrollment outreach, public relations, and other uses that promote the school. The school may also get media requests to highlight the school and its students. During the enrollment process, each parent/guardian received the Student Photo/Information Release form, and communicated permissions regarding this release. The school will honor these forms, such that student photographs will be included in publications only if the parent/guardian has granted permission.

2021-2022 Handbook Statement of Understanding

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Atlas Elementary Family Handbook for the 2021-2022 school year. By signing below my student and I understand that it is our responsibility to become familiar with the contents of the handbook and my student and I agree to adhere to the policies and procedures included in the Handbook. We understand that if we have questions about the Handbook or any Atlas Elementary policy, we will speak to the school principal.

Student Name

Student Grade

Parent Name

Parent Signature

Date