

**WELCOME  
TO  
STERLING GRADE SCHOOL**

Welcome to Sterling Grade School for the 2011-2012 school year. This is a very exciting year for us as we are in the second year of our brand new building! We look forward to providing many years of quality education in our new building and we are very thankful for the opportunity to educate our students in such a great facility.

The purpose of this handbook is to serve as a guide in providing a positive educational experience. It outlines the basic operation of our school and should be read carefully, however, the handbook is not intended to cover all aspects that may arise in a school year. Board policy and good judgment will also be our guide in handling anything else that may arise.

The staff at Sterling Grade School is committed to striving for excellence in teaching and learning. We are excited about the opportunity to educate our kids and together we will make this a great year!

**STERLING GRADE SCHOOL**

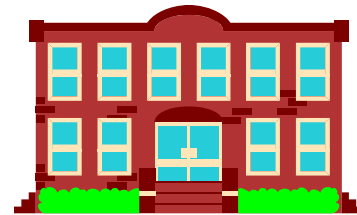
The previous Sterling Grade School building was built in 1927. Construction was started on our new building in the summer of 2009 and we moved in August 28, 2010, just days before the start of school! We educate preschool through sixth grade students and have an average enrollment of 290 students. The following is a compilation of procedures and policies that will be very informative to students and parents. If you have any questions, please call the Sterling Grade School office at 278-3112.

**WEBSITE**

You can access Sterling Grade School on the web. Log on to [www.usd376.com](http://www.usd376.com) and click on the grade school link to find more school information.

**OUR MISSION**

Sterling Grade School is dedicated to helping students become lifelong learners and productive citizens.



**2011-2012  
GRADE SCHOOL GOALS**

Through involvement with all of our stakeholders, we have developed two main goals for our grade school. They are as follows:

1. To improve mathematic skills in the areas of problem solving and application.
2. To improve reading skills in the areas of vocabulary and comprehension.

**PERSONNEL**

The following is a list of the excellent classroom teachers that educate the students of Sterling Grade School.

Carol Frees- Pre School  
Teresa Maxwell- Kindergarten  
Judy Dowell - Kindergarten  
Jessica Schmidt - First Grade  
Rochelle Hewitt - First Grade  
Georgia Vogt - Second Grade

Janet Schnurr - Second Grade  
Sheila Burgess - Third Grade  
Georgia Henry - Third Grade  
Darci Briar - Fourth Grade  
Klarice Farney - Fourth Grade  
Jill Britton - Fifth Grade  
Dwayne Wilson - Fifth Grade  
Clyda Frederick - Sixth Grade  
Mary Nielsen - Sixth Grade

**NON-CLASSROOM TEACHERS**

Susan Brown - P.E.  
Cindy Anthony - K-4 Vocal Music  
Clark Comley - 5/6 Vocal Music  
Larry Brownlee - 6th Band  
Elizabeth Madden - Art  
Wendy Fiehler - Resource Room  
Susan Dierksen- Resource Room  
Dan Weiner - K-8 Counselor  
Cindy Hogan - School Psychologist  
Patty Myers - Behavior Disorder  
Pam Simpson - Gifted Ed.  
Amy Dejmal - Speech  
Lori Humphreys - Title I  
Kay Comley - Title I  
Janis Fair- Title I  
Amy Brownlee - Librarian

**S.G.S. PERSONNEL**

**OFFICE SECRETARIES:**

Diana Krone  
Kaye Boor

**CUSTODIANS:**

Mark Britton  
Tracy McGlynn  
Shirley Farris

**COOKS**

Head Cook: Sandy Skucius  
Susan Durham  
Patty Wagerle  
Virginia Fox Vincent

**LIBRARY AIDE:**

Sherilyn McPherson

**NOTICE OF PROFESSIONAL  
QUALIFICATIONS**

Parents have a right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teacher. We are proud to announce that all of our teachers at Sterling Grade School meet the "Highly Qualified" criteria set by the federal No Child Left Behind legislation. If you would like to see this information please contact Principal Brennan Riffel at the Sterling Grade School office.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Stephanie Buckman	278-3743
Jon Oden	278-2170
Ken Brown	278-2533
Amy Svaty	278-2208
Todd Zimmerman	278-3547
Jeff Proffitt	278-3840
David Foster	278-2888

**WEAPONS AT SCHOOL**

A student shall not knowingly possess, handle or transmit any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon on the school grounds or off the school grounds at a school activity, function or event.

This policy shall include any weapon, any item being used as a weapon or destructive device, or any facsimile of a weapon.

Possession of a firearm or weapon shall result in expulsion from school for a period of one year (186 school days), except that the superintendent may recommend that this expulsion requirement be modified on a case-by-case basis under the provisions of JDC (Probation.)

## **DRUG POLICY**

A student shall not knowingly possess, sell, transmit or be under the influence of any drug, narcotic, marijuana, controlled substance, tobacco, or alcohol:

1. On the school grounds during, before or after school hours;
2. On school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by any school personnel or school group; or
3. Off the school grounds at a school activity, function or event.

Use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician shall not be considered a violation of this rule.

Violation of any provisions of this behavior code may result in suspension and/or expulsion.

## **YEARBOOK**

A Sterling Grade School yearbook will be available to purchase at enrollment or during the fall. The cost of a yearbook is \$12.

## **WHERE TO CALL FOR INFORMATION**

Sterling Grade School	278-3112
Mr. Brennan Riffel, Principal	
Sterling Junior High	278-3646
Mr. Bill Anderson, Principal	
Sterling High School	278-2171
Mr. Bill Anderson, Principal	
U.S.D. #376 Office	278-3621
Dr. Fred Dierksen, Superintendent	

School Nurse  
Kristi Wilson

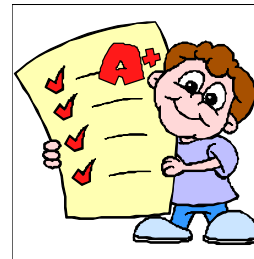
278-3112

## **GRADES**

Continuous communication will take place between teachers, students and parents. Information will be provided to parents about the educational pursuits of their children and concerns will be addressed as soon as they develop.

Students will be issued grade cards on the Wednesday following each nine-week grading period. Parents will be contacted by progress reports that will be sent at the mid-term of each grading period to the home of students.

Parents have the right to request a copy of their child's grades and assessment scores. Please contact the grade school office if you desire to receive this information other than the regular scheduled times. Grades can also be accessed through our Parent Link program. Parent Link information can be found on our website or by contacting the office.



## **TITLE I INFORMATION**

Sterling Grade School is a school-wide Title I school. The Title I program is a federally funded program that provides additional staff and resources to help students learn. Being a school wide Title I school allows Sterling Grade School Title I teachers to help any student needing assistance in the areas of math and reading. The teachers involved with the program are Mrs. Comley, Mrs. Humphreys, and Ms. Fair. These teachers work with children in a variety of settings such as: literature groups,

math groups, math and reading assistance in the classroom, and small math and reading groups outside the classroom.

**Sterling Grade School is proud to report that all teachers meet the federal criteria for being “highly qualified” in their respective fields. If students are instructed four or more continuous weeks by a teacher not meeting the definition of “highly qualified” parents will receive written notification.**

If you have any questions regarding the Title I program at Sterling Grade School please contact Brennan Riffel at 278-3112.

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences will take place at Sterling Grade School in the fall and spring semesters. Please see the school calendar for specific dates. Your student’s classroom teacher will contact you to schedule conference times. The purpose of these conferences is to discuss the academic accomplishments of the student and to discuss any difficulties the child may be having. Student work will be observed and evaluated cooperatively by teacher, parent, and student.

### **STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

We will assess student improvement by four areas of data collection. Teacher tests and grades, portfolio contents, the Accelerated Reader Reading Incentive Program and standardized tests. The standardized tests will be the Kansas Assessments in Reading, Writing, Math, Science and Social Studies, and the Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) test.

**Sterling Grade School is proud to announce that we have met the Standard of Excellence in Math, Reading, Social Studies, and Writing. This is the highest level of achievement on the Kansas Assessment**

### **Tests and represents the quality of education provided at Sterling Grade School.**

Parents are reminded that they have free access to grade cards and state assessment scores at any time during school hours. Copies of state assessments and grade cards are sent home but to request additional copies please contact the grade school office at 278-3112. As an added convenience we have the Pro-Link feature as an option for parents to view their child’s classroom grades over the internet. Please contact the Sterling Grade School office for details on how to sign up for the Pro-Link feature.

### **DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES**

Students may be dropped off and picked up in front of the grade school. **Please drop your student off on the east side or school side of 5th street or on the west side or school side of 4<sup>th</sup> street.** When students are dropped off across the street from the school it creates a serious safety hazard. The north side of the school along Monroe street will be reserved for bus parking. Please park parallel to the school on the east and west sides.

### **THE SCHOOL DAY**

The school day for students is from 8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Our doors will be opened for students eating breakfast at 7:40 a.m. Students participating in the breakfast program should enter the building at the north and south back doors.

We ask students to have something to read when they come into the building before school. Students are to find a seat and read until the 7:55 bell rings. The bell schedule for the morning is as follows:

**7:45 Bell:** Students may enter the building if they wish and read at their designated place.

**7:55 Bell:** All students need to enter the building and go to their classrooms.

**8:00 Bell:** Class Begins

### **CLOSING OF SCHOOL**

In the event schools must be closed due to inclement weather, we will notify the following radio and TV stations:

KAKE-TV, Channel 10  
KTVH-TV, Channel 12  
KHUT-FM, Hutchinson  
KHCC-FM, Hutchinson

In case of bad weather while school is in session, we may need to dismiss early in order to get rural children home safely. We have instructed our staff to follow these procedures:

1. Teachers of non-bus riders in the elementary grades will make every effort to ensure that someone is at home if we dismiss early.
2. Bus drivers have been instructed to see that the children riding buses get to their houses and that someone is home before they leave. In case no one is at home, the child will be left with a neighbor or with someone you have specified.
3. All buildings will remain open and supervised until regular dismissal hours. Students may remain at school until parents arrive to get them.

Parents wishing to have their children dismissed early or to make some special arrangements should call the principal's office.

If the weather and/or road conditions are hazardous and it is deemed advisable, school may start one hour later in the mornings. All buses would begin their routes and make pick-ups approximately one hour later than normal. Any such decision will be announced

either to students when school is dismissed the previous day or prior to 7:00 a.m. on the day of the starting late, or both. Announcements about school starting later would be made over the same stations listed above. Even if school starts later, the buildings will be open at the regular time and school personnel will be at the buildings to take care of students.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Students are expected to attend school unless properly excused by their parents.

**Parents are asked to please call the office before 10:00 if your child is going to be absent.** After an absence, the student should report to the office to pick up an admit slip before reporting to class. In accordance with Board of Education policy, students are not to be permitted back into school without a written excuse or telephone call from the parent or guardian. A one day grace period may be allowed for extenuating circumstances. This will be determined by the building principal.

Absences will be considered as excused when the parent/guardian verifies by a call or visit to the office that the student has been ill, had a medical or legal appointment, or attended a funeral during the hours of the absence. All work missed during excused absences may be made up at a rate of two days make-up time per day missed. Teachers are not required to grant credit for make-up after unexcused absences but may allow work to be completed in advance.

Any student arriving late for any reason will be considered tardy. The student should report to the office to pick up a tardy slip before reporting to class. An excused tardy will allow the student to enter class, but the tardy will still be recorded. An unexcused tardy may result in the student making up the lost time after school. The tardy will also be recorded. The principal shall decide whether the reason for being tardy is excused or unexcused. Excessive tardies and absences as determined by the building principal may result in corrective action.

Parents need to notify the school if their child is going to be absent. The school will

attempt to notify homes not heard from to ensure the child's well-being. **A student is defined as being truant if they have any three consecutive or five total unexcused absences in any one semester.** The Rice County SRS or County Attorney will be notified of any truant students in our district.

**What does "Truancy" mean?**

Truancy is the unexcused or unverified absence from school, or class with out the proper consent from the school principal or personnel.

**What constitutes a student being truant?**

Pursuant to the Kansas State Law, all children age 7-18 are to attend school everyday. The Kansas State law specifically says that a student is truant if they have missed 3 unexcused/unverified days in a row, 5 unexcused/unverified days in a semester, or 7 unexcused/unverified days in a school year.

**What is Unexcused/ Unverified absence?**

An unexcused /unverified absence is an absence for which a parent or guardian has not communicated to the school a valid excuse.

**PERMISSION TO LEAVE SCHOOL PREMISES**

Students shall not leave the school grounds during the school day. To be allowed to leave the school grounds for any reason, the student must receive permission from the office. This permission shall only be granted by the office if they receive a written or telephone request from the student's parent or guardian. Parents or guardians must check in the office and sign their child out of the building before removing them from the school grounds.

**APPOINTMENTS**

Parents are urged to schedule an appointment to visit their student's teacher whenever a concern arises. Appointments may be made by calling the teacher at the school or at their home. If parents need assistance for any reason, please call the school office at 278-3112.

**HOMEWORK**

Homework is a natural basic of schooling. Students will be required at different times to complete homework assignments. These assignments may be completed at school if a students has extra time or may require some time to complete at home. Please help us to ensure homework is completed by taking an active role in your child's education. Students may receive assistance on homework by talking with their classroom teacher or other school personnel.

**EXTENDED SCHOOL DAY**

Extended School Day may be assigned for students in need of remediation or for disciplinary purposes. Extended School Day is an extension of the regular school day. If a student fails to attend, it will be treated the same as if the student was truant from class. Students will be assigned to Extended School Day at the discretion of the principal.

**PROMOTIONAL GUIDELINES**

Promotion is a highlight of a school year and affects the teacher, pupil, and parents. Therefore, serious consideration will be given to the following criteria for promotion in grades K-6.

1. Scholastic Achievement
2. Ability levels
3. Emotion, physical and social adjustment of the child
4. Chronological age
5. Number of years retained in the present grade

Whenever retention is contemplated, the parents will be contacted by the teacher as early as possible. The teacher will also conference with the principal, members of the Teachers

Assistance Team and other staff who may have knowledge of and be involved with the child.

It is best if all parties are in agreement that retention is in the best interest of the student. In some cases, a unanimous agreement is not possible. The following options will be considered at that time:

1. Promote the student unconditionally.
2. Promote the student on condition of a supportive program...(i.e. summer school, remedial work, tutoring, further testing, etc.).
3. Retain the student in same grade.
4. The final decision rests with the building principal and will be announced formally at a hearing.

### **STUDENT APPEARANCE**

The Board of Education and staff expect parents and students to exercise discretion in selecting the clothing to be worn to school. Proper appearance includes such factors as cleanliness, neatness, simplicity, modesty and good taste on the part of the students. Clothing with suggestive or profane pictures or language shall be prohibited at school or at school-sponsored activities. Apparel advertising or promoting cigarettes, beer, and other illicit products etc., is unacceptable. Facial jewelry such as nose rings, eye brow piercing, etc. are not allowed. Proper footwear that allows students to safely participate in physical education is encouraged. "Flip-Flops" should not be worn on days that the student has PE classes.

### **HAT RULE**

Hats and headgear are not allowed to be worn in the school by students. This includes, but is not limited to, hats, bandanas, visors, headbands, etc. The principal reserves the right to allow exceptions in special cases.

### **LOCKER POLICY:**

Lockers are property of USD #376 and are subject to search. Each 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade student in Sterling Grade School is issued a locker. They are responsible for keeping the locker clean and presentable. It should be used for books, supplies, coats, and big notebooks.

Students should not put a lock on their locker without permission from the principal.

Students should not have access to another student's locker without permission from the student.

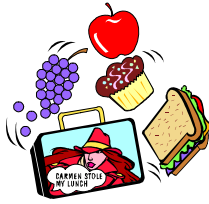
Students should not keep large amounts of cash or candy in their locker.

### **SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM**

Students, teachers, and visitors participating in our hot lunch program should purchase their meals through our office. Preferably this will be done in the mornings before school starts for the day. Visitors are encouraged to call prior to coming so adequate portions are prepared. Our school lunch program's finances are computerized for greater efficiency and accuracy. Notices will be sent home with the student if account balances are depleted. Students may be denied a hot lunch if balances continue to be delinquent. There will be a \$5 charge for returned checks.

The School Board of U.S.D. #376 endorses the following food service guidelines:

1. Our students will eat in the building and remain in school during lunchtime.
2. Students will not be allowed to leave the school during lunchtime except for medical appointments, illness or any other reason accepted by the principal. A note or phone call to the office must be received prior to a blue slip being given to the student.



## **SCHOOL NURSE**

Kristi Wilson is the school nurse. The nurse's office is located at the Sterling Grade School. Office hours are 8:00-3:00. The nurse is available to our students upon request.

## **MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL**

It is the opinion of the State Board of Health, the State Department of Education and Kansas School Health Advisory Council and the board that the public school should never provide students with aspirin or any other medications.

In certain explained circumstances when medication is necessary in order that the student remain in school, the school may cooperate with parents in the supervision of medication that the student will use; but the medical person authorized to prescribe medication must send a written order to the building administrator or nurse who may supervise the administration of the medication or treatment, and the parents must submit a written request to the building administrator or nurse requesting the school's cooperation in such supervision and releasing the school district and personnel from liability.

## **STUDENT IMMUNIZATION**

Each year in the State of Kansas, every student enrolling in a school for the first time shall present to the appropriate school official, certification from a physician or local health department regarding proper immunization prior to admission. The certification verifies

the pupil has received or is in the process of receiving and will have completed within ninety (90) days after admission to school, the tests and inoculations that are deemed necessary by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Environment. These tests and inoculations shall be for diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, poliomyelitis, mumps, rubella (German measles), and measles.

Another requirement is that kindergarteners have proof of 3 Hepatitis B immunizations as well as the Chicken Pox or Varicella vaccine, or date of the onset of the Chicken Pox disease. A second Chicken Pox vaccination is required for 1st graders.

As an alternative to such certification, a pupil shall present:

1. Certification from licensed physician stating the physical condition of the child to be such that the tests or inoculations would seriously endanger life or health of child.
2. A written statement signed by one parent or guardian that the child is an adherent of a religious denominations whose religious teachings are opposed to such tests or inoculations.
3. A written statement signed by one parent or guardian that such tests or inoculations are in the process of being received and will be completed within ninety (90) days after admission to school. (Kansas Statute 72-5209 as amended and Department of Health and Environment regulation 28-1-20).

## **ANIMALS & PLANTS IN THE SCHOOL**

Students are not allowed to bring plants or animals to school. In special circumstances, arrangements can be made through the office along with the supervising teacher for a short presentation. For educational purposes, teachers may bring a variety of species of both animals and plants.



## **TELEPHONE USE**

**Students are not allowed to have cell phones in their possession during the school day.** If parents want their child to bring a cell phone to school, the phone should be kept in the office or locker during the school day. Students who violate this policy may have their phone confiscated by the school for a certain period of time. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged phones. Students may use the classroom phones with proper authorization. In the event a student receives a call, they will be called out of class only in cases of an emergency. Classes are not interrupted to deliver non-emergency messages.

## **COMPUTERS & INTERNET**

Students are expected to use district computer systems for approved educational purposes and follow guidelines approved by teachers and administration. Students shall have no expectation of privacy. Appropriate language and access of sites is expected. Willful violators will be disciplined accordingly and may lose the privilege to use district computers.



## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

We ask students at Sterling Grade School to follow four basic guidelines:

1. Respect yourself

2. Respect others
3. Respect others property
4. Respect learning and class time

The primary purpose of this discipline policy is to provide every student attending Sterling Grade School with the opportunity for the education he/she deserves and to promote a positive learning environment. In order for learning to take place, it is essential to have and maintain a safe and comfortable atmosphere. Therefore, for the benefit of everyone, it is necessary to have rules of conduct for all students. These rules will follow the guidelines for respect pointed out earlier in this section.

Teachers are responsible for the discipline in their classroom and are allowed to use appropriate methods of enforcement.

If a student has to be referred to the office, the parent, in most cases, will be notified. Detention, in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension are some forms of discipline the principal will use when necessary. The principal has the authority to determine which form of discipline is necessary dependent upon the severity of the problem.

## **DUE PROCESS**

When appropriate circumstances dictate, students will be afforded due process as required by current law.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Harassment of any nature is not tolerated in our school. If a student feels they are being treated in a harassing manner, they should contact the principal. Harassment includes sexual, racial, or any other type of intimidation.

## **NOTICE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

The following categories of information designated as “directory information” with respect to each student will be released by Sterling Unified School District #376 to those showing a need for such information, unless a written request by the parent or guardian to withhold such information is received on or before September 1 of that school year.

“Directory Information” includes the following information about the students:

1. The student’s name, address, phone number and date of birth.
2. The student’s participation in officially recognized activities.
3. The student’s weight and height as members of athletic teams.
4. The dates of attendance.
5. The most recent educational agency or institution attended by the student.
6. Awards won by the student.

### **FORWARDING OF RECORDS**

We hope that you will be able to stay in the Sterling schools for your entire school career, but if you should have to move and need to have school records forwarded to your new school, please fill out the proper forms at the school at the time of withdrawal. This will enable us to eliminate any delay in forwarding records. All bills must be paid before any records will be recorded or forwarded.

We hope you and your student enjoy their elementary years at Sterling Grade School. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please contact our office at 278-3112 so we can answer or work with you for a better school system. Thank you again for your support. Together we make a difference.