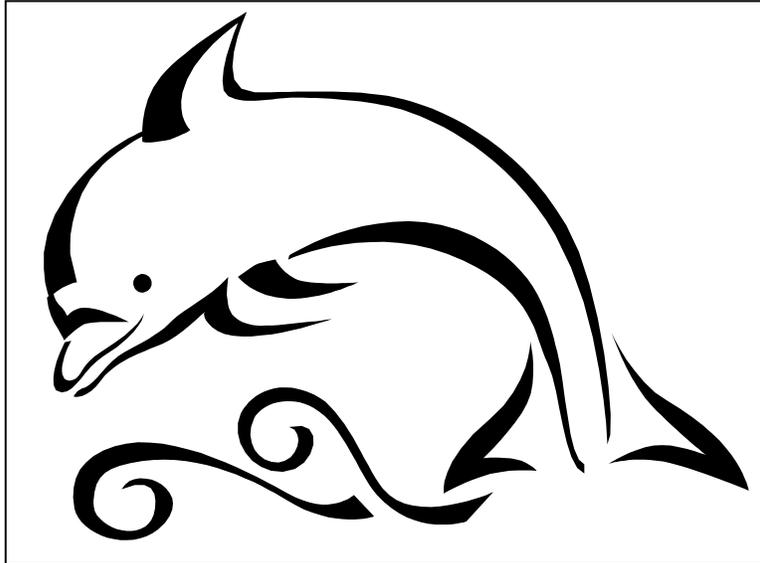


**Prescott Elementary**  
*An Expeditionary Learning Charter School for the  
Arts*

**2015 -2016**

**FAMILY HANDBOOK**



**1151 White Street  
Dubuque, Iowa 52001  
Phone: 563-552-4200  
Fax: 563-552-4201**

**Chris McCarron  
Principal**

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

It is my pleasure to welcome you to Prescott Elementary, *An Expeditionary Learning Charter School for the Arts*. The faculty and staff join me in saying that we're very happy to have you as part of the Prescott family.

The pages of this family handbook contain basic information about our school's policies and procedures. I suggest that parents/guardians and students review and discuss the information together. If you have any questions after reading the information outlined in this handbook, please call the school office to talk with me.

As a charter school, although it is a public school, it has a unique instructional design that parents must select for their child. Parents and students must agree to follow a school contract to assure that the program of the charter can be delivered to the students attending, as promised. It is important that you are aware of your responsibilities as a Prescott community member. In that contract, we also promise to deliver your child a unique learning opportunity, one which actively engages students, makes real-world connections, incorporates the arts, and integrates the curriculum in meaningful ways through in-depth learning expeditions.

In addition, the Dubuque Community Schools has also provided you with a handbook of all common procedures across the district. It is critical to your child's success that home and school have a mutual understanding of the procedures so that every child can have a successful school experience. Please spend time reviewing both of these handbooks. The DCSD handbook can be found online at [www.dbgschools.org](http://www.dbgschools.org).

We look forward to a year of partnering with you to make this school year a success for your child. I look forward to meeting and getting to know each of you.

Sincerely,

Ms. Chris McCarron  
Principal

# **PRESCOTT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FAMILY HANDBOOK**

Prescott Elementary School  
An Expeditionary Learning Charter School for the Arts  
1151 White Street  
Dubuque, Iowa 52001  
Telephone (563) 552-4200  
Chris McCarron, Principal

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

**School hours for Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade are from 8:50 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The hours for the 4-year old pre-school program will be 8:40-11:20 for the AM session and 12:50-3:30 for the PM session. There is a weekly late arrival schedule for each Friday. School hours on Fridays are 9:50 am. until 3:30 p.m. for full-day students. The a.m. preschool hours on Friday also begin one hour later.**

Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students should NOT arrive earlier than 8:20 a.m. SCHOOL DOORS DO NOT OPEN for breakfast UNTIL 8:20 a.m. EACH DAY. Supervision will not be provided for students who arrive before 8:20 a.m.

## **ARRIVAL/MORNING ENTRY**

Students will line up on the playground in a line according to their homeroom assignment. Teachers will NOT provide supervision on the playground until 8:20 a.m. Teachers will tell students their assigned line number. Students are to wait in the line until the entry bell rings. Students who plan to eat breakfast at school should line up on the first line marked with a "B" for breakfast. The breakfast line will enter at 8:20 a.m. and all other students will enter at 8:40 a.m. Parents will be asked to wait outside the playground area in the morning. This rule helps us to monitor the safety of the children more easily. Parents or other non-school adults will not be allowed to enter through the cafeteria doors.

**Preschool students MUST be accompanied by an adult to school and will meet at the front door of the school building each morning.** Parents should remain with their preschool children until an adult comes to meet the children to enter the building. Preschoolers are not allowed to be brought to school by older siblings. Adult to adult hand-off of children is a requirement of our accreditation for the preschool children.

In the case of rain or frigid temperatures, students will be allowed to enter the building for indoor arrival beginning at 8:20a.m. An indoor arrival sign will be placed on the playground doors to indicate that students may come into the school upon arrival.

## **ATTENDANCE and TARDINESS**

We have targeted improved school attendance as one of our main goals for the 2015-2016 school year. Please read the attendance policies carefully and make every effort to have your child at school on time every day. Regular attendance is one of the requirements of enrollment to the charter school.

Regular attendance is critical to student success. Students are expected to be at school every day unless they are ill. *If your child is not going to be in school, please call the office at 552-4200 before 8:40 a.m. to report the absence.* If you do not call to report the absence, the office will attempt to contact you. If we are unable to reach you, your child will be reported as truant. If you are unable to call school, please send a note regarding your child's absence on the day your child returns.

According to Iowa Code, the parent, guardian, legal or actual custodian of a child who is of compulsory age is accountable for the child's school attendance. If your child develops a pattern of excessive absences, the Dubuque Community School District's truancy liaison officer will be contacted to meet with you to assist you in creating a plan to assure that your child attends school on a regular basis. Your enrollment to the charter school will also be at risk should there be a waiting list for entry.

In addition to being at school every day, parents should also make every effort to assure that their children arrive at school to enter at 8:40 a.m. with the entry bell. Children are considered tardy if they are not in class at 8:50 a.m. Children who arrive late to school miss valuable instructional time and cause a disruption to their own learning and the learning of their classmates. **Please make every effort to have your child at school at 8:40 a.m.**

### **BEFORE SCHOOL PROGRAM**

St. Marks is no longer providing before-school care at Prescott. All students are welcome to attend our 7:30 Rise and Shine Club. Due to the late arrival on Fridays, there is no Rise and Shine Club scheduled for Fridays. However, if your family has a **specific need** for consistent a consistent 7:30 arrival time for your child, you may register your child to attend a reading and homework help session for Friday mornings. You may enroll at registration or orientation.

**BIRTHDAYS:** Each child at Prescott will receive a special card and a school memento on his/her birthday unless a parent or child requests not to participate in this tradition. We will not have other birthday celebrations and ask that parents honor the request not to send treats or gift bags to pass out to the children. Please save these traditions for celebrations at home or in your neighborhood. Please do not have flowers/balloons delivered to school. It is our hope that this celebration procedure honors all students in an equitable manner, maximizes student learning time, and encourages healthier eating habits.

### **BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated. Students are specifically taught the skills to identify and report incidences of bullying and harassment. Should the staff be made

aware of an incident, they will address the situation immediately. If there is a repeat of an incident, parents will be contacted. Please encourage your child to report any incident of bullying, discrimination, or harassment to any Prescott School staff member. There is a DCSD policy regarding Bullying and Harassment and the procedures are outlined in that policy. You can locate the policy on the DCSD website.

### CHARTER SCHOOL

Prescott was named one of the first ten charter schools in the state of Iowa. As a charter school, Prescott has the authority to offer unique instructional programming options for parents as an option for their children. Our charter school instructional design includes Expeditionary Learning, an arts-infused curriculum, co-teaching and teachers looping for multiple years with their students.

Our Charter School Advisory Council determines policies and practice for our school. Members of our Charter School Advisory Council are made up of Prescott Staff, Parents, District Employees, Community Members; and a Dubuque Community School District Board Member Representative. If you need to contact a member of the Advisory Council for any reason please call 552-4200 for assistance.

### EXPEDITIONARY LEARNING

Expeditionary Learning is a New American Schools Development Corporation approved model for comprehensive school reform that achieves results: improved teacher practice, higher student achievement and engagement, and a positive and productive school culture. Teachers teach the various subjects through a challenging set of connected, multi-disciplinary, real-world projects called learning expeditions. The learning expeditions also rely upon community involvement by bringing experts into the classroom and taking students out into the community. All learning expeditions also include a service component.

### ARTS- INFUSED CURRICULUM

The visual and performing arts will be infused into all learning expeditions. Students will be provided with specifically designed instruction in the visual and performing arts (music, drama, art, dance), and the arts will be utilized to teach and enrich traditional curricular subjects. Research shows that students who participate in the arts have higher student achievement.

### CLOTHING

Students should be dressed comfortably and appropriately for school. Student attire should not distract from the learning environment. T-shirts and other clothing with slogans related to violence, tobacco, drug and alcohol, mid-drift shirts, mini-skirts and pants that are baggy enough to hang below the waist exposing boxers or undergarments are not acceptable at school, and will not be permitted. Please remember that your child should wear comfortable shoes that allow him/her to walk up and down the stairs easily and to play outside on the playground safely. Students will be outside everyday. Please be sure that your child has appropriate attire to keep him/her warm.

## **DISMISSAL**

Every parent will be required to complete a sheet that gives the teacher clear directions indicating the parents' /guardians' desire for end of the day dismissal. Students will only be released to walk home if the parents have signed the dismissal paper stating that they give permission for the child(ren) to walk home without an adult. Without written permission to walk home, children will be kept at school to be picked up by a designated adult.

Students who will be picked up by parents either walking or in a vehicle, will be dismissed through the main door on White Street. If walking, parents are asked to wait for the children outside the White Street entrance on the front sidewalk. At the 3:30 p.m. bell, teachers will walk the students out the main door. Children will stand with their teacher until a parent, guardian, or other authorized person comes to pick up the child. Staff members will cross them safely across the drop-off/pick-up lane.

## **PARENTS PICKING STUDENTS UP IN THE DROP-OFF/PICK-UP LANE**

If you are picking your child up in a vehicle, you may remain in your car in the drop-off lane, and we will assist your child to your car. **You will not be able to leave your car in the drop-off and pick-up lane unattended.** If you want to talk with your child's teacher, it will be necessary for you to park in a parking stall or on the street.

If you are late to pick –up your child, please stop at the main office. Children who are not picked up by their parents at 3:30 p.m. will be brought inside to await their parents'/guardians' arrival. Please make every effort to pick up your child on time. The end of the working day for the school staff aligns with the end of the student day. We do not have extra staff to supervise children who are left beyond the end of the day.

## **RELEASE OF STUDENTS BEFORE SCHEDULED DISMISSAL TIME**

Students who leave early from school lose valuable instructional time and disrupt the learning environment for the other students. We ask that you make every effort to schedule appointments after school. If it is necessary for your child to leave school early, **please send a note with your child in the morning stating the reason for the early dismissal as well as the time that you will pick up your child.** It is disruptive to the classroom to call for a child during the school day for unexpected dismissals. Please make every effort to limit the unexpected early dismissals.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Every child's behavior should reflect self-respect and consideration for the rights, feelings, and property of others. Students are taught the common language of The Prescott Pledge:

### **PRESCOTT PLEDGE**

***"I promise to be respectful, responsible and resourceful to make the school, community and world a better place."***

Students are taught to demonstrate behaviors that fulfill this pledge. When students do not demonstrate behaviors that align with the Prescott Pledge, staff members will teach

the children the expected behavior and clearly label why their behavior was unacceptable. Instruction in social skills occurs at the individual, classroom and school level. If the inappropriate behavior becomes a pattern, staff will contact parents to discuss the situation.

When a child has difficulty behaving appropriately in the school setting, school staff will meet with the parents to develop a plan to help to teach the student to behave more appropriately. Prescott is fortunate to have an entire team who can help students to develop behaviors that lead to school success and life success. Our teachers, guidance counselor, instructional coaches and other support staff will work collaboratively with you to develop a plan that will assist your child in improving his/her behavior. If you have any concerns regarding your child's behavior, you may contact any of our school staff members to discuss your concerns.

### **DISCRIMINATION AND HARRASSMENT**

Any form of discrimination or harassment can be devastating to an individual's academic progress, social relationships and sense of self-worth. Therefore, the Dubuque Community School District will not tolerate discrimination or harassment in its educational program on the basis of a person's protected status, such as age, color, creed, disability, gender, marital status, national origin, physical attributes, race, religion, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status. –DCSD School Board Policy #1001

At Prescott School we actively work toward creating an environment in which every child, family, and staff member feels safe and valued. If you have concerns regarding your child's welfare at school, please call the classroom teacher or the principal. The Dubuque Community School District forbids retaliation against anyone for reporting harassment, assisting in making a harassment complaint or cooperating in a harassment investigation. Our school will investigate all complaints thoroughly and promptly.

### **EMERGENCY STUDENT INFORMATION**

It is very important that you keep your child's emergency information updated at the school office at all times. Report all changes in your address and phone numbers when they occur. In addition to telling us where you can be reached in case of emergency, your emergency information also lets us know with whom your child may be released. If you want your child to go home with someone other than yourself, that person's name must be listed on the emergency form. You can update your own information at any time by entering your changes into PowerSchool through your account.

**\*\*\*Please make sure that all of your emergency contacts are prepared to provide identification when they pick up your child. \*\*\***

### **ENROLLMENT**

As a charter school, no student may be given preferential access to the enrollment in a charter school. Prescott School does not have the traditional school boundaries, and all students who apply to attend are eligible for entrance, if space is available.

An enrollment period will be held each spring for any openings that are available in kindergarten. Openings that are available in grades 1-5 will be filled first from the waiting list. If there is no waiting list, any openings in these grades will also be made available during the application period. Students who are already enrolled (AND their siblings), continue with their enrollment from year to year, UNLESS the parent selects to withdraw the child's enrollment. The enrollment period will be advertised throughout the community.

If more applications are submitted during the application period than there are openings, a public lottery will be held to fill the vacancies. Those individuals, who submitted applications but were not able to attend, will then be placed on the waiting list. As openings occur throughout the year, students will be invited to enroll at Prescott according to the date and time of their application.

If you live more than two miles away from Prescott, you are eligible for travel reimbursement or busing. Application for transportation reimbursement and busing are sent home at registration. It is the responsibility of the parent to request a form if there is a move during the school year.

Each year, parents are required to sign a Charter School Contract. In this contract, it outlines the expectations for students and families. If students or families do not comply with the contract, the child's enrollment may be revoked or denied.

### **FEES**

Book rental fee for the 2015-2016 school year is: \$70 for students in kindergarten through 5th grade. Please make your checks payable to Prescott School. All parents are asked to complete an income verification form. Parents and guardians who meet the income guidelines could have some or all of their fees waived. Forms are available from the school office. You will also be charged a \$7 agenda fee. Every child receives a home/school agenda. This fee must be paid by the parents and is not covered by the fee waiver.

### **MEALS**

Due to a Federal program, there is NO FEE for ANY student to eat either lunch or breakfast here at school. It will be necessary for everyone to complete an income verification in order for us to participate in the program. The program does not cover milk only purchases, if your student needs milk only they will be charged .50

### **BREAKFAST**

Breakfast will be available every school day at 8:20 a.m. Students who wish to eat breakfast should arrive on the playground at 8:20 a.m. and stand in the first line. A staff member will lead students into the building.

### **LUNCH**

There are always two options for the main entrée for lunch. Students select and order their meal upon arrival each day.

## **FIELDWORK**

A critical aspect of our instruction will be taking students into the community for a variety of learning experiences. At registration, you will be asked to complete a general permission slip giving your permission for your child to go on these trips out of the school building.

Each time fieldwork is planned, the teachers will send home a letter with specific information relating to the trip. You will be asked to sign indicating that you have received that information. If we are unable to obtain the slip for a particular trip, but you have signed the general permission slip, we will allow your child to participate. If you have not signed the general permission slip, we will not be able to have your child participate.

Please consider fieldwork as a critical component of the educational program. Fieldwork should not be withheld as a punishment any more than attending class should be withheld.

## **FRIDAY LATE ARRIVALS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

*Each Friday, the student day will begin one hour later than the typical start of the day.* Breakfast will begin at 9:20, the entry bell will be at 9:40 and the tardy bell will be at 9:50. The morning preschool class on Fridays will be from 9:40-11:40.

This time has been scheduled to provide ongoing professional learning for the staff. This time will include learning new instructional strategies, collaborative planning among teachers, and analyzing data and student work.

There will be NO RISE AND SHINE CLUB on Fridays. There is a reading and homework sessions for families who have a specific need to drop their child off at a consistent 7:30 time throughout the school year. You will be asked to register for this program and your child should be a consistent attender so we can staff appropriately.

## **HEALTH INFORMATION**

For the protection of all students, children should not be sent to school with any of the following symptoms:

- Vomiting- should have had no emesis for 24 hours
- Diarrhea- should have had no loose stools for 24 hours
- Severe sore throat- should have no a sore throat that is red or white spots
- Fever- should have a temperature below 100 degrees for 24 hours
- Rash- children with an unknown rash need a physician's release to attend school
- Severe cold symptoms- children should not return to school with excessive nasal drainage, persistent cough, or moderate to severe ear pain
- Any communicable disease- should have no strep, chicken pox, pink eye, etc.
- Head lice- children may return after their head has been treated

## **MEDICATION**

No medication can be administered at school without a signed release form from your child's physician. If your child must take medication at school, the parent should bring the medication and the signed release to our school nurse's office in the original container labeled and dated from the pharmacist. Releases are available from the school nurse or your child's doctor. **Children are not permitted to carry any type of medication to and from school.** DO NOT send medication with your child.

## **HEAD LICE**

If your child has head lice, please contact our school nurse to discuss appropriate treatment. We follow the protocol and procedures established by the Dubuque Community Schools when addressing head lice. If you have questions regarding these protocols or need treatment supplies, please speak to the school nurse.

## **HOLIDAYS**

We try to be respectful of the diversity of our students and staff and various holidays are discussed and taught, but not celebrated here at school. Celebrations are left for home. We ask that no treats or gift bags be sent to school on holidays unless you are contacted by a teacher.

## **HOMEWORK**

The amount of homework that your child has varies with the age of the child. Homework provides extra practice opportunities to help your child to master the concepts that he/she has been learning in class. Your child's homework assignments will be listed in the child's classroom planner that was provided to each child by his/her teacher. Please help your child to learn to be responsible for returning this planner each day. Your classroom teacher will explain how the planner will be used as a communication tool between home and school.

Reading at home is a critical aspect of the homework for ALL students. EVERY STUDENT at Prescott is expected to read at home each night. The amount of reading expected varies by grade level. Students who can not yet read independently should be read to by an adult. Because reading at home is so critical to the development of strong reading skills, the Dubuque Community School progress report requires that students be graded on their at-home reading. The grade on the progress report is obtained by the evidence that was collected to state how much time was spent reading at home. Teachers will discuss how this information is collected.

## **LEISURE SERVICES AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM**

Leisure services offers an after-school program for students in kindergarten through third grade. The program provides opportunities for involvement in arts, crafts, games, sports and other leisure activities. The program is held in the Neighborhood Resource Center right here at Prescott. Depending on your income level, the program is free or has a cost of up to \$15 per semester for five days a week of programming. Monday through Friday, the hours of the program are 3:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. Questions regarding this

program should be directed to the City of Dubuque Leisure Services Department at 589-4263.

### **LEARNING CELEBRATIONS**

One of the core practices of Expeditionary Learning is sharing learning with a public audience. There are three learning celebrations per year for each grade level. We welcome your family to attend these celebrations.

### **PARKING**

Please **do not** park along the student drop-off/pick-up lane at ANY TIME during the day. This lane is our fire lane, providing access to emergency personnel should it become necessary. Keeping this lane open assures a safer environment for all of our students.

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Students are discouraged from bringing personal items such as toys and other extra items to school unless specifically designated to do so by the teacher. The school cannot assume the responsibility for loss, theft, or damage to such items. These items can be easily lost or stolen and are better left at home.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Physical education is an integral part of the instructional program. All children will be required to participate in gym unless a doctor's release is presented. All children must have athletic/tennis shoes in order to participate in gym class. Please be sure that your child wears appropriate gym shoes on her/his scheduled gym day.

### **RECESS**

Students have an outdoor recess every day that the weather permits. (If the wind chill drops below zero, children are kept in.) It is important that all children come to school dressed appropriately for the weather. Children will be expected to go outside for recess unless they have a doctor's release that requires that they stay in. If the child is well enough to be at school, we assume that the child can participate in all school activities.

**RISE AND SHINE CLUB** Students in kindergarten through fifth grade are welcome to attend the Rise and Shine Club Monday through Thursday from 7:30-8:20. **THERE WILL BE NO CLASSES ON FRIDAYS** due to the late arrival on Fridays. Classes in art, music and PE are offered for each grade level. These classes are free. Students may participate in all classes or just those of interest. Classes are cancelled on late arrival mornings. Students should enter through the main doors between 7:30 and 7:40. Those entering after that will not be able to participate in that day's classes and parents will be called.

## **SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY**

Prescott School is fully accessible. There are accessible parking spots outside the main entrance to the school on White Street. An automated door opener is also available at the main entrance. An elevator assures access to the second floor of our building. The staff will be happy to assist anyone with mobility concerns.

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

The school office is open from 7:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. If you contact the school after school hours, you may leave a voice message. The school phone number is 552-4200. Your child's teacher will notify you of his/her number so that you can leave messages directly in the teacher's voice mail.

## **SECURITY**

We want to provide the safest learning environment possible for every child in our school. In an effort to provide a safe environment, the following procedures are in place: All doors are locked during school hours. All visitors are asked to use the main door on White Street.

We have a security system that requires all parents and visitors to have their state issued ID or driver's license scanned before entering. Once an ID has been scanned, it is on record, and does not need to be scanned on future visits. Visitors should not enter any other door and those without a picture ID will be escorted directly into the main office.

**All visitors must wear a picture ID at all times.**

**STUDENT AGENDAS** As part of your fees for registration, your child has been provided with a student agenda. This agenda provides you with an opportunity to stay connected with your child's classroom teachers. Homework assignments and important messages will be listed in your child's agenda. It will be important that you check your child's planner daily. You may also write a note in the planner and send it to your child's teacher. Teachers will check the planners daily.

## **TELEPHONES**

All classroom teachers have their own direct telephone numbers. Please use the teacher's number to leave a message in the teacher's voice mail. The teacher will contact you as soon as possible. **DO NOT** leave information in a teacher's voice mail that concerns a change in dismissal procedures for your child in case the teacher does not have the opportunity to listen to messages before dismissal. If you are calling to give directions for what your child is to do after school, please call the school office.

## **TREATS and PARTIES**

Because of the Dubuque Community School District Wellness Policy, students with allergies, and other health issues, we ask that parents **DO NOT send any treats to school** with their child **UNLESS** they have been contacted by a teacher and asked to provide a specific item. **This practice extends to ANY type of celebration.**

## **VIOLENCE**

Verbal or physical violence is not tolerated at our school. We have a *no tolerance policy* for violence. Please remind and reinforce this policy with your child. Parents will be contacted if their child is involved in acts of aggression toward other students or staff.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

We welcome volunteers to join us in providing the best education possible. Volunteers are valuable resources for our school. If you would like to volunteer, we can find a task that fits your interest and time availability. It is the policy of Dubuque Community School that **all volunteers** complete a screening packet and receive approval before beginning their volunteer experience. If you are interested in volunteering, please be sure to complete your screening packet right away so that your volunteering opportunities are not limited. Parents who wish to accompany children on field trips **must complete** a volunteer packet, also. Any parent who volunteers to drive for a field experience must be able to provide a valid drivers license and proof of insurance on the day of the field work.

## **WEAPONS**

If a child brings a weapon to school, INCLUDING a toy representation, the weapon will be seized and the principal and/or superintendent will determine the consequences. Depending on the situation, the police may be contacted.

## **WEATHER-RELATED SCHOOL CLOSING and SCHEDULE CHANGES**

When severe weather creates hazardous conditions, the regular school schedule may need to be altered to assure student safety. The directive to close school or to change school hours is made by the Superintendent of Schools. Please listen to the local TV and radio stations for weather-related announcements. We will make every attempt to post delays and school cancellations on the signboard. Be sure to have a plan in place about how you will handle an unexpected early dismissal and/or late arrival. If you are unable to be reached, we will call your child's emergency contacts. You may also call the district weather hotline at 552-3035 for delays and cancellations. **THERE IS NO BREAKFAST SERVED** when there is a delay greater than one hour.

## **WEBSITE**

You can keep yourself updated on what is happening at Prescott by logging on to our school's website. Our website includes the school calendar, the lunch menu, student work and pictures of school events. You may access it at **[www.prescott.dbqschools.org](http://www.prescott.dbqschools.org)**. The DCSD website is also great resource for parents. Check it out at **[www/dbqschools.org](http://www/dbqschools.org)**.