

# PRINCIPAL'S LETTER

## **WELCOME ACACIA OWLS!**

Acacia Elementary is an Arizona A+++ School of Excellence and a National Title I Distinguished School. We achieved our A+ honor from the Arizona Educational Foundation in 2010, and again in 2014. In 2018, we were awarded our third A+, which makes us an A+++ School of Excellence! We were named a National Title I Distinguished school in 2013. We are very proud to be one of the best elementary schools in Arizona! Acacia is a neighborhood school that operates through the collaboration of parents and community partnerships. We are proud of the many programs we have to offer and welcome you! As a student of Acacia, it is your responsibility to know about the privileges and responsibilities expected of each student. These guidelines for good citizenship have been established for the benefit and welfare of the entire campus--students and staff alike. This handbook contains most of the information you need to know to make you a responsible and successful student. When there is new information for your handbook, it will be distributed and discussed in class. It is your responsibility to be aware of the contents of this handbook and keep your handbook for future reference. Parents, your suggestions for change or improvement are always welcome.

This is your school. By working together as a team, we can accomplish more. Please plan on getting involved and have a successful, happy year.

Sincerely yours,  
Christine Hollingsworth  
Principal

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**School Address:** 3021 W. Evans Drive, Phoenix

**School Web Site:** <http://acacia.wesdschools.org>

**Facebook:** Acacia Elementary School Phoenix (with Norm the red owl)

### **Important Phone Numbers:**

Office: 602-896-5000

Health Office: 602-896-5010

Attendance: 602-896-5000

KidSpace: 602-896-5015

**School Hours:** 8:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

**Office Hours:** 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Acacia Elementary, in partnering with parents and community, is to provide a safe, comfortable and cooperative environment ensuring that **all** students develop the knowledge, skills and character necessary to achieve their **highest potential**; and to become productive members of an ever-changing society.

### **Student Arrival/Dismissal**

#### **Arrival at School**

Students may NOT arrive at Acacia Elementary earlier than 7:55 a.m. At 7:55 a.m. the front doors will be open and students will proceed directly to their classrooms. Students can have free

breakfast and then the school day will begin at 8:15 a.m. The school **cannot** assume responsibility for the safety of students who arrive before that time.

We are extremely concerned about safety at Acacia, particularly at arrival and dismissal times. **Students must dropped off in along the green curb or from the right lane of our north parking lot. Children should not be encouraged or allowed to cross the street except at the crosswalk.** Please do not allow your child to jaywalk across the street or accompany him or her in this way. Although the child may be safe with you, the child may attempt it alone next time since it seems acceptable.

### **School Dismissal**

**Acacia has several options for after-school pickup:**

1. **Gate A – A dismissal location where your child is loaded into your car in the right line of the north parking lot.** Cars must enter the south parking lot off of 31<sup>st</sup> Ave. and loop around the back staff parking lot. Cars must then follow the right pickup lane that loops around the playground. Students are called to one of five spots and are loaded directly into your car on the passenger side by a staff member. **Please do not leave your vehicle.** We are unable to release your child from this gate unless we place him or her in a car. Please remind your child to go straight to his or her gate after the dismissal bell and watch for your car. This will assist us in loading in the shortest amount of time.

**Gate B – A dismissal location where parents park and walk to pick up their child through the northeast playground gate.** Parents can park in the north parking lot on the adjacent streets where parking is permitted. Parents enter and proceed through the northeast gate to the students who are lined up by grade level groupings. For their safety, children are **not** allowed to run to parents/guardians standing at the gate. Parents will proceed to their child's designated area where they will pick up their child from a staff member on duty.

2. **Walker Gate – A dismissal location where students who are walking home or riding their bikes are dismissed through the gate on the east side of the intermediate playground that exits to Acacia Park.** Students from the same family who walk together should meet on the southeast intermediate playground and leave campus all together.

3. **Green Curb – A dismissal location for students who are loading into district vehicles or day care vans off the green loading zone on Evans Dr.** District vehicles and day care vans are the only vehicles allowed to drive and pick up from the green curb.

4. **Cafeteria – A dismissal location for Kindergarten students only. This area is for all Kindergarten students who are not being picked up by car at Gate A.** Parents can park in the North parking lot or on the adjacent streets where parking is permitted.

#### **Additional information:**

For the safety of all staff and students, when exiting our parking lot, please follow all posted signs. Please **do not cross lanes** to turn the other way. This presents a dangerous situation, and we want our students to be as safe as possible.

## Early Student Pick Up

Daily student attendance is essential to academic success. We understand, though, there are situations that may require a student to leave early from school such as a doctor's appointment and/or family emergencies. In order to maximize student attendance we suggest the following:

- Make appointments at times that minimize academic disruptions.
- Avoid pulling students out for non-health-related or nonemergency situations.

Please call or send written notification to the school office if your student will be leaving before dismissal time. This will help the teacher and front office prepare accordingly for the dismissal. The office must have a phone call or written notification from parents if someone other than a parent is signing out a student early from school. The person designated to pick up students must be on the emergency pickup list that parents fill out on the student information sheet. This is sent home at the beginning of the year and can be updated in the office any time changes are needed.

Students will no longer be excused from class if the time falls within 30 minutes of dismissal, unless there is an urgent matter or medical appointment. The final minutes of any class serve as a time to review and explain homework. Students who habitually leave 15-30 minutes early suffer from a lack of information and directions that are essential to their academic success.

## Breakfast/Lunch Times

Breakfast is served from 7:55 a.m. until 8:15 a.m. in classrooms, free of charge to all students.

Lunchtimes are as follows (also served free of charge):

Kindergarten	10:30 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	10:45 a.m. – 11:25 a.m.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	11:00 a.m. – 11:40 a.m.
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	11:20 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11:30 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11:45 a.m. – 12:25 p.m.
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12:00 p.m. – 12:40 p.m.

## GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

### Breakfast and Lunch Program

We are a school-wide Title I School so every student receives breakfast and lunch for free. This is a program that provides no-cost school breakfast and lunch to our students regardless of income. All students are invited to participate.

### Lost or Damaged Book Charges

Acacia Elementary students are responsible for taking care of their library books and textbooks. Books that are lost or severely damaged must be paid for by the student or family.

### Tardiness

If your child comes to school tardy, he or she MUST stop at the office to fill out his or her tardy slip BEFORE entering the classroom. This is the only way the attendance clerk knows the child is in school. A student is considered tardy after 8:15 a.m. The importance of making sure your child is in attendance at school on a daily basis cannot be stressed enough. Children miss important knowledge and classroom discussions when they are

out of school. **If your child is absent, please call 602-896-5000 to report the absence and the reason for the absence.** Voice mail is available 24 hours a day.

### Attendance/Truancy

In order to assure students are successful and meet current state legislation, which requires all students to attend 90% of the school year please see the Attendance/General Information section in the Handbook.

Parent cooperation is of the utmost importance in assuring student success. Please note the following:

(1) reinforce being on time and good attendance, (2) call the school each time a student will be late or absent, (3) present any medical documentation to the nurse and/or attendance clerk if illness will be a consistent, foreseeable issue.

### Dress Code "Dress for School"

Any student's dress or personal appearance that distracts or interferes with the learning process will be considered inappropriate. The administration reserves the right to determine which types of dress or accessories are acceptable or not. Students must adhere to the following guidelines for all school-related activities:

1. Hats, caps, visors, bandannas, beanies, and hairnets are not allowed on campus or at school-sponsored events. Prohibited items will be confiscated and returned only to a parent. (However, hats, caps, and visors will be allowed **outside** during recess and PE and other outdoor special events).
2. Makeup, hair spray, perfume, combs and brushes are not to be used in classrooms or the cafeteria.
3. Sunglasses may not be worn in the classroom.
4. Socks must be of the same color and worn at the same height. Pant legs cannot be worn with one leg up and one leg down.
5. **Student ID/Z-Passes must be worn at all times while on campus with a breakaway lanyard.**

### Miscellaneous Information

- Contact sports requiring tackling or pushing are prohibited.
- Possession or use of guns, knives, simulated weapons, projectiles, pocketknives, sling shots, fireworks, lighters, matches, explosives or other potentially harmful objects is prohibited
- Use of chewing gum, candy, seeds is not permitted on grounds or in buildings.
- Possession or use of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol is prohibited.
- Misuse or vandalism of any Acacia equipment/property that includes but is not limited to: playground equipment, learning tools, furniture, technology, or any school property is prohibited.
- Personal computers, personal music players, tablets, computerized games or electronics should not be brought to school. Loss, damage or theft of these items is not the responsibility of the school.
- If a child has a cell phone that must be brought to school, it must be kept in a backpack or purse and turned off until he or she leaves school. Loss, damage or theft of these items is not the responsibility of the school.

- No toys of any kind may be brought to school unless noted in a school-wide spirit day. Toys are deemed as anything that is disruptive.

## **Volunteers (ARS 15-512)**

1. If a volunteer is not a parent or guardian of a student, he or she must be fingerprinted and a background check performed prior to allowing him or her to provide volunteer services.
2. A volunteer who is not a parent or guardian of a student in your class must be within sight of a certified staff member at all times while providing services to pupils.
3. The child of the volunteer must be in the group for whom he or she is providing services.
4. A visitor's badge must be worn and visible while on campus. The above also includes field trip chaperones.

## **Visitors**

1. All visitors must sign in and receive a visitor's badge from the office. The badge must be worn and visible while on campus.

## **HEALTH/SAFETY**

Acacia has a crisis/lockdown plan in place in the event of an emergency.

If a need to evacuate the school should occur, Acacia students will be evacuated to Calvary Church, 12612 N. Black Canyon Highway. Parents, guardians and designated child-care people will pick children up at that location.

## **Safety/Bicycles/Parking Lot**

Students in grades 1-6 are allowed to ride bicycles to school.

Bicycles are to be walked, not ridden, on school sidewalks and on street crosswalks and should remain off the parking lot and grass areas. Bicycle riders on the street should observe the same rules that apply to automobiles when approaching crosswalks. Disregard of bicycle rules may result in bicycle privileges being rescinded. Bicycles should be individually secured in the bike racks. Please understand if skateboards or scooters are ridden to school, they must be locked and kept in the bike rack. The racks are locked after the tardy bell and are opened at dismissal. The school cannot accept any responsibility for damaged or stolen bicycles, scooters, skateboards, etc.

We all understand the importance of having safe walking paths for our children. Acacia Elementary has crossing guards and two crosswalks for all walkers to utilize. To help ensure everyone's safety, we ask that all walkers use a crosswalk on their way to and from school.

An adult **must** accompany students while in the parking lot. Whether walking to or from a car, the adult **must** be with the student.

**As always, for the safety of our students, parents or visitors may not enter playgrounds or classrooms without first going to the office to sign in the visitor's book and to get a visitor's badge.**

## **HONORS/AWARDS**

### **Principal's List (Grades 3-6)**

Recognized quarterly

4.0 grade point average (Straight "A"s, No "U"s)

### **Honor Roll (Grades 3-6)**

Recognized quarterly

3.0 – 3.9 grade point average (No "D"s or "F"s, No "U"s)

### **Acacia "WAY TO GO" Award**

**The purpose of this award is to celebrate students who work hard to be a stellar example and model all expectations in "The Acacia Way."**

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **Newsletter**

The school will send home a bi-monthly newsletter with information about upcoming events, past successes and general information about school. Please read this for important information. Feel free to visit our school and District Web sites for more information. [www.wesdschools.org](http://www.wesdschools.org)

### **Facebook**

**Please like our Facebook page. You will need to search "Acacia Elementary School Phoenix." Our profile picture is a red owl. Liking our page assures you will see all updates, happenings and photos.**

### **PTA Parent/Teacher Association**

Parents can expect occasional communications directly from the PTA. These will take the form of reminders about upcoming events, requests for assistance/volunteers, sign-up sheets and similar communications.

Acacia Elementary is proud to benefit from an active and involved parent organization. The PTA will send home information about membership for their organization. **We urge you to notify the front office if you wish to be a member and be involved in all of the fun planning for the benefit of all Acacia students. We are continually seeking to add dedicated parents to our PTA. If you are interested, please e-mail [acacia.owls.pta@gmail.com](mailto:acacia.owls.pta@gmail.com)**

### **Student Telephone Usage**

The school phone is a business phone, and it is not to be used to make personal arrangements. These arrangements should be made at home the day before, not at school.

As a reminder, teachers are teaching children during the school day. They will not be answering the phone. They will, however, check messages daily and return calls.

Students are not to use the classroom phone to call home if they are not feeling well. They must get a pass to go to the health office. If the student has a fever or other reason to be sent home, the health tech will call home for someone to pick up the child.

# **SCHOOL-SPONSORED EVENTS/ACTIVITIES PROGRAMS**

## **Student Council**

Acacia maintains a student council organization. Comprised of intermediate grade representatives, the Student Council performs several important functions under the advisement of staff members. These functions include advising the administration on issues of concern, sponsoring and supervising student activities, volunteer work and fund-raising to benefit the school.

## **PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports**

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a proactive approach to establishing the behavioral supports and social culture needed for all students in a school to achieve social, emotional and academic success. The PBIS initiative at Acacia is called “The Acacia Way.”

There are three core expectations that are the foundations of “The Acacia Way.” These expectations can be seen in every classroom and non-classroom setting (library, computer lab, cafeteria, etc.) around campus. Students learn about these expectations through classroom lessons, modeling, and practice. Students will be rewarded frequently with various positive rewards and incentives for their excellent modeling of “The Acacia Way.”

## **Rachel's Challenge**

Rachel’s Challenge is our school wide character program. This program is designed to instill values such as kindness, compassion, goal-setting, and acceptance at a young age. Students and staff write “Kindness Links” throughout the year to recognize observed acts of kindness. At the end of the school year, chains are measured to celebrate the kindness spread throughout the building.

## **School-sponsored Events**

Students are expected to follow all school rules at events held before and after school. This includes school-sponsored events held at other locations such as field trips and special outings. Violation of any school rule may result in consequences such as detention, suspension or expulsion, depending on the severity of the infraction. When appropriate, the police will be notified.

## **Athletics**

There are various sports and clubs offered throughout the year. Grade checks will be conducted weekly. To be eligible to participate, students must have grades of “C” or higher in all classes and no discipline issues.

## **Head Start/Extended Day Programs**

Acacia Elementary has Head Start (602-896-5043) and extended day (KidSpace) (602-896-5015) programs on our campus.

# **SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Acacia students follow the rule of “respecting each other’s personal space” and “using their words” when having disagreements. This includes respecting all students, staff members and themselves.

Each classroom has an established set of classroom expectations and consequences. Each classroom has a partner room for a time-out area. Discipline incidents will be handled according to Washington Elementary School District Discipline Guidelines.