

## **PRINCIPAL'S LETTER**

Dear Parents and Students,

Let me welcome you to Sunset Elementary School. It is my intent that you and your child have a rewarding experience while your child is a student here.

This parent/student handbook is only the introduction to your child's school program. After reviewing it for general information, I encourage all parents and students to become actively involved in the Sunset experience.

As a parent, you have a very strong voice. School committees open for parental participation include Site Council and PTO. District committees open for parental participation include Planning and Steering, and Facilities Councils. These are great opportunities for you to be involved in your child's education.

Students are encouraged to get involved as well through activities such as Student Council, girls and boys basketball, cross country and after-school classes. Activities such as these allow your child to make new friends of all ages and teaches him or her the responsibilities involved in working as a team.

In order for school to be a place for children to grow and learn, a place to respect and be respected, a place to experience the excitement of learning, it is important that the students, parents, and school staff form a tri-partnership. Working together, there is no limit to what our children and we can actualize.

Betty Paterson

Principal

### **Mission Statement**

**Inspiring excellence together.**

### **Address**

4626 W. Mountain View Rd., Glendale, 85302

### **School Web Site**

<http://sunset.wesdschools.org>

### **Office Hours**

Sunset Elementary office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Office: 602-347-3300

Health Office: 602-347-3310

Attendance Line: 602-347-3311

KidSpace: 602-347-3315

### **Student School Day**

Students should not arrive on campus until 7:55 a.m. as that is when adult supervision begins. Entry through the back gate is only for the special needs program; all other students must enter through the front gate.

K - 6 8:15 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

### **Early Wednesday Dismissal (Lunch Served)**

Grades K - 6 8:15 a.m. - 1:45 p.m.

### **Early Dismissal for Parent/Teacher Conferences (Lunch Served)**

Grades K - 6

8:15 a.m. - 1:45 p.m.

### **Breakfast and Lunch**

Sunset provides universal free breakfast and lunch daily.

Breakfast is served in the classroom at the beginning of the school day.

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE/BEHAVIOR**

### **"Make Your Day" School-wide Cooperative Management System**

#### **Purpose**

The Make Your Day Program exists to provide a consistent campus-management system for all classes. It demonstrates that teachers hold high expectations for all students and is a cooperative management system, not merely a discipline plan. Make Your Day centers on one rule: **NO STUDENT HAS THE RIGHT TO INTERFERE WITH THE LEARNING OR SAFETY OF OTHER STUDENTS. Do what's expected. Do it the best you can.**

The system encourages students to take responsibility for their own actions, including attendance and academic performance. Emphasis is placed on the importance of each student working to his or her own ability level. The program allows all students to make mistakes without cumulative punitive action. It provides time for thought and direction. The program allows students to make decisions that develop critical thinking skills. School-wide appropriate behaviors are expected as students are taught, and students are expected to understand inappropriate behavior. The foundation of Make Your Day is that **ALL** students are capable of success and that making appropriate choices at school will generate student success.

### **Student Behavioral Expectations**

1. Students will exhibit positive behaviors at all times by respecting the rights of others to learn in a safe environment.
2. Students will: (1) not physically, verbally, emotionally or sexually bully others; (2) help students who are being bullied; (3) include students who are left out, and (4) report any bullying to an adult.
3. Students will foster a safe environment by respecting school property, using it responsibly, and respecting the right of all students to a physically and emotionally safe environment.
4. Students are expected to choose positive alternatives (i.e., teacher assistance, avoidance of confrontations, and/or disagreement during points) to inappropriate behaviors.
5. Students are expected to be in class on time. A student must be in class to earn points; hence, a tardy results in fewer points being earned. Students are expected to make proper use of the instructional setting by assuming the responsibility of being on-task and successfully completing all assignments.

6. Restroom breaks will be authorized throughout the day. Use of the restrooms and visits to the health office will be allowed when necessary. (Refer to section under Earning Points, number 1.)
7. Students must be appropriately dressed for PE to earn full points.

## **Earning Points Through Self- and Peer-review**

### **Occurs Daily**

1. Students earn points inside the classroom by doing what is expected, staying on task, following directions, and maintaining a safe environment. Outside the classroom, students are expected to walk on the sidewalks, not to bother other people, and to play safely on the playground. At the conclusion of the designated instructional sessions, students are asked to review their own performance academically and behaviorally by awarding themselves from 1-50 points (0-10 points in primary grades) for that period.

Trips to the health office must be necessary. Students who make frequent trips to the health office will fail to earn full points for that period.

Children who are tardy must have a note from an adult to be excused. Tardiness without a note will result in a failure to earn full points for that period.

Bathroom and drink breaks are authorized several times during the day. Frequent trips to the bathroom at unscheduled times may result in a failure to earn points. Students with special medical and health needs will be accommodated with teacher approval.

2. Once students have rated their performance, fellow students have an opportunity to give feedback to each other, under teacher direction. Students may offer concerns with another's points for the purpose of improving the behavior if that person interfered with their learning or was doing something unsafe. Some classroom examples of interference would include talking, making noise, touching, getting up frequently, making faces, etc. **TEACHERS MAKE THE FINAL DETERMINATIONS ABOUT THE CONCERNS.**

Students who remain on Steps during the points process forfeit their right to offer concerns with other student's points.

3. An average of 44 points (nine per period in the primary grades) per period means the student has made his or her day and can receive a specific school reinforcement by the teacher and/or fellow students, recognition school-wide by the principal, and positive notes home to parent from teachers. Final points are determined by averaging the student's high and low points.

4. There are scheduled times when 45 points (13 points in the primary grades) per session are possible.

5. Homework/materials - Homework is given for the purpose of practice and reinforcement of classroom instruction. It is an extension of classroom instruction.

### **Children coming to class without homework can expect:**

- to earn a maximum of 45 points in the intermediate and no less than six points in the primary.

- to remain at his or her desk if instruction or discussion occurs during the grading process.

**Since learning is the primary reason for attending school, coming to class with the appropriate supplies is essential. Children coming to class without basic learning materials (e.g., textbooks, science packets, or booklets, etc.) can expect:**

- to earn a maximum of 45 points (intermediate).
- to be given an alternate means to accomplish the classroom expectation.

## **Awards and Rewards**

Make Your Day believes that each student is an active participant in the learning process. Children are encouraged to accept responsibility for their learning and behavior. Sunset establishes a reward system to intrinsically develop self-confidence, high self-esteem, and pride in one's accomplishments.

Daily self-assessment allows children to acknowledge their behavior successes when they make their day. Each classroom teacher uses the school-wide reward system to tangibly award each student's efforts. By the students receiving these awards, their teacher provides individualized personal recognition on a daily basis as well as providing the student behavior recognition leading to improved achievement.

Students may exchange MYDs for items or activities available at school, or they may save them for the pleasure of accumulating as many as they can. The latter choice supports the intrinsic economic concept of saving.

Students should sign their MYD tickets immediately.

Periodic special events are planned to reward more long-term goals. MYD tickets must be collected from students a minimum of one week prior to the special event.

## **Inappropriate Behavior**

Inappropriate behavior that interferes with another's learning or anyone's safety will be handled through Steps. Examples of inappropriate behavior that will be handled through unearned points or steps include:

- Being disrespectful to an adult by using sarcasm, profanity, inappropriate body language, talking back, and disregarding directions or instructions.
- Using inappropriate language: profanity, vulgarity.
- Disrupting classroom instruction or discussions: calling out, making excessive noises, humming, whistling, tapping, playing with objects, throwing objects, and leaving one's seat without permission.
- Running on the sidewalk.
- Misusing playground equipment and/or disrupting another's play at recess, which presents a threat to safety.
- Fighting or play fighting.
- Use of gum, candy or sunflower seeds.
- Throwing rocks, dirt-clods, sand, or other objects.
- Games, such as tackle football, keep-away, etc.

- Tardiness and unexcused absences (points per minute, not steps).
- Anything that interferes with the learning, safety and well-being of others.

***Inappropriate Behavior Shall Be Dealt With On A Five-step Program***

**Step 1**

When a problem occurs for a student in a class, the student will be asked to take a seat away from the academic setting. The student is to spend two to five successive, successful minutes quietly thinking about the problem he or she had. If he or she is successful in doing this, then he or she may return to his or her desk and continue working.

**Step 2**

If a student fails to take advantage of Step 1 time away from his work to think about a more appropriate behavior, he forfeits his or her chair. He or she then stands for two to five successive minutes before returning to Step 1.

**Step 3**

If the student continues to have problems on Step 2, a focus point is placed on the wall to help the student direct his or her attention toward a single place to assist concentration on appropriate behaviors. After two to five successive minutes, he or she returns to Steps 2 and 1.

**Step 4**

If problems continue beyond Step 3, the student will be sent to the office with a Step 4 conference form to phone the parent. With an adult present, the student will call his or her parent to explain the situation. The student will remain out of class until the parent and the student are available to meet with the teacher and/or administrator to conference and determine if the child is ready to return to class for the purpose of learning. The student then returns to Steps 3, 2, 1.

**Step 5/Suspension**

This step is used only when a child is out of control and not functioning appropriately in the school setting. At this point, the principal or designee will contact the parent and indicate that the child needs to be picked up at school immediately. If that is not possible, the principal or designee might transport the student to the parent at home or at work.

When the parent comes to school for a conference, the purpose is to help the student understand the behavior choices expected to occur at school. The Step 5 conference will be held after school or the following day. At Step 4 and Step 5, the STUDENT has requested his or her parent to be present for the conference about his or her choice of behavior. The STUDENT is expected to conduct the conference with parent and teacher, stating the problem, offering acceptable alternatives to handling choices in the future, and requesting permission to return to class. Both parent and teacher must find the outcome of the conference acceptable and make the determination that the student is indeed ready to appropriately rejoin his class. This determination is made as follows:

- Student stated his or her problem successfully and completely.

- Student expressed that it was his or her responsibility to manage his behavior.
- Student verbalized alternative methods of managing his or her problem.
- Student exhibited positive attitude toward accepting responsibility.
- Student expressed desire to return to class.

**Behaviors Constituting Immediate Advancement to**

**Step 4**

1. Willful tampering with, abusing, or destroying of school or private property while at school. Students and parents will be held responsible for the replacement or repair of abused or destroyed property.
2. Physical, verbal, emotional or sexual bullying (subject to teacher/administrator investigation/interpretation).
3. Fighting: premeditated/intended, thought-out, planned or planning, non-premeditated/impulsive, unable to deal with anger, no forethought.
4. Stealing (subject to teacher/administrator interpretation).
5. Cheating.
6. Defiance or disrespect of valid authority or supervisors, teachers or administrators.

**Behaviors Constituting Immediate Advancement to**

**Step 5/Suspension**

1. Possession and/or use of tobacco or matches or lighters.
2. Possession and/or use of alcohol.
3. Possession and/or use of illegal drugs or related paraphernalia.
4. Possession and/or use of illegal weapons, knives, Chinese stars, firecrackers and other dangerous objects.
5. Theft or vandalism (the severity of the infraction is subject to administrative interpretation).
6. Leaving campus without permission when rules are clearly understood (subject to teacher/ administrator interpretation).

Some consequences shall be at the discretion of the principal.

**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, WESD has a Truancy Prevention Unit (TPU). The TPU will work in conjunction with the City Justice Courts to identify students who are chronically absent or are truant.

When a student reaches five unexcused/unverified truanancies or 10 total absences, the school may make a referral to the TPU for appropriate actions (see District guidelines). In order to avoid this eventuality, there are several precautions to take: (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.

A letter will be sent by the school to the families of students who are approaching or pass the midway point for unexcused absences, excused absences and tardies. Parent cooperation is of the utmost importance in assuring student success.

**Additional Dress Code Information**

Sandals should have a back strap. Flip-flops are not allowed. "Heely" shoes are not allowed with the wheels inserted. Wheels must be removed before coming to school.

For safety reasons students are not allowed to go to the playground wearing inappropriate shoes. Parents may be called to bring appropriate shoes for their child.

Hair should not be a distraction in the classroom.

Athletic shoes should be worn on PE days.

(See the District dress code page for the rest of the dress code information.)

**Cell Phones**

Cell phones must be turned off and stay in students' backpacks while they are at school. Any cell phone found on a student will be confiscated. First offense: the student can pick up the item from the office after school. Second offense: the parent must pick up the item from the office. Third offense: the item is kept at the office until the end of the school year. If a parent has any concerns, he or she is welcome to call the office.

**Electronic Devices**

All electronic toys, i.e., radios, CD players, MP3 players, iPods, electronic games, cameras should not be brought to school. Any device found on a student will be confiscated, First offense: the student can pick up the item from the office after school. Second offense: the parent must pick up the item from the office. Third offense: the item is kept at the office until the end of the school year.

**Classroom Parties/Class Field Trips**

The main goal for parents attending these events is to be actively engaged with classroom children and assisting with the activities. Therefore, siblings may not attend classroom parties or field trips.

**Picking Up Students During the School Day**

If you must pick up your child early for an appointment or family emergency, please pick the child up before 3:00 p.m. (on early release days, before 1:30 p.m.). Parents who arrive between 3:00 and 3:15 p.m. or between 1:30 and 1:45 p.m. on early release days will be asked to wait until the dismissal time. This will reduce the number of disruptions to our classrooms.

**NOTES**

Lined area for notes with horizontal lines.