**Portola Hills Elementary School**

**Parent Handbook**

**2017 - 2018**

Dr. Joseph Ledoux, Principal

**Mission Statement**

Portola Hills Elementary School is preparing students for their future. Our balanced programs build skills in critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. We provide students with the technical and communication skills and the positive values that will allow them to be productive and successful citizens in the 21st century. We challenge and empower our students to strive for excellence and to become well-rounded PHE citizens.

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**Office Information:**

**Staff:** Dr. Ledoux, Principal **Office Hours:** 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Mrs. Cookie Rustigian, Office Manager **Contact Numbers:**

Mrs. Evelyn Obitz, Office Clerk Phone: (949) 459-9370

Mrs. Rachel Ebarb, Health Aide Fax: (949) 459-9376

Attendance: (949) 459-9370

**Daily Schedule: Modified Day Schedule (every Thursday):**

Early Bird K 8:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Early Bird K 8:00 a.m. - 10:43 a.m.

Late Owl K 9:40 a.m. - 1:10 p.m. Late Owl K 9:40 a.m. - 12:23 p.m.

Grades 1-6 8:00 a.m. - 2:15 p.m. Grades 1-6 8:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

**Lunch Program:**

All students should eat something nutritious for lunch. We encourage students to bring their lunch or purchase on from our food services. Current menus, pricing for lunches, and information about buying lunches is available online at: [www.svusd.org](http://www.svusd.org). You may also find information from Portola Hills website. Use the “Food Services” button to find current information. You can prepay for lunches online or pay with a check in our school office. Make checks payable to “SVUSD.” We ask that students do not bring anything from home in glass or breakable containers.

**Absences and Reporting Absences:**

In order to keep students safe, we verify student absences as early as possible each day. If your child will be absent from school, please call our 24-hour attendance line **(459-9370**) by 8:00 AM. Please leave your name, your relationship to the child, the child’s name, the date, and the reason for the absence.

It is critical that children attend school consistently. In addition to missing important classroom instruction, absent students are often frustrated by trying to catch up. The State of California considers a student with three or more unexcused absences to be truant. Students are excused if absent because of illness or other justifiable cause**. Children should not be sent to school when they are not feeling well.** If a pupil becomes ill or is injured at school, you will be called to pick him/her up. Students will be given ample opportunity to make-up work that is missed. If your child is absent for 3 or more days, you may request homework on our attendance line. The teacher will prepare homework on the 3rd day of absence and it will be ready at the end of the school day. Let us know if a classmate will deliver the homework or if you will personally pick it up from the office. Each absence must be verified, preferably by a telephone call to the attendance line on the day of absence. This is the quickest and surest method of accounting for the whereabouts of our students. The following absences are excused:

1. Student illness

2. Quarantine, under direction of a county of city health officer

3. Medical, dental or optometric appointment

4. Attending the funeral of a member of a student's immediate family. (Immediate family means mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, or any relative living in the household of the student.)

5. If a child is to be absent for 5 or more days, the District may receive state funds if parents, teachers, and principal develop an independent work contract. This is a fairly simple procedure. Please notify the office ahead of time so the proper contract from can be prepared. It will require the signature of the parent, student and teacher. Upon return from the absence, the teacher will verify that the work has been completed and will be forwarded to the District.

**Absence and Tardy Policy:**

Each year there are some students who are illegally absent from school and many others who are persistently tardy. The California Education Code, Section 48200, makes full time education compulsory for children from ages six to sixteen, or until high school graduation. It is the legal responsibility of parents or guardians to see that their school-aged children are enrolled and attending school every day, unless they have a valid excuse. Under the law, a child may be legally excused from attending school or for being tardy only for illness, quarantine, funeral service of a member of the immediate family, or for medical, dental or optometric services.

**Tardy:**

In order to foster student responsibility, minimize classroom interruptions, and avoid unnecessary embarrassment, students should arrive at school on time. If being late is unavoidable, please call the office and let us know that your child will be late. A tardy is unexcused for any reason other than illness, medical appointment, or a late school bus.

**Medication:**

The Education Code allows school personnel to administer medications only if the following steps are taken:

* Physician’s Request Form is completed and submitted to the office annually
* Parental release form is on file in the office
* The original pharmacy container that is labeled with name of the child, name of the medicine, dosage requirements, and physician’s name
* Medicine is brought to school or taken home only by the parent. Students may not bring any medication including aspirin or vitamins, to school to keep in their possession.

**Early Dismissal / Parental Custody:**

Children leaving campus early must be signed out by the parent, legal guardian, or other adult listed on the child’s Emergency Card. Please come to the office to sign out your child, rather than going directly to the classroom. **Photo I.D. is required**. We will call the classroom and have your child sent to the office. If there are specific limitations related to legal custody, we are required to follow the directions in the most recent legal custody documents on file in the office. Please be advised that the natural mother or father can obtain their child or information from the school at any time unless a court order is on file indicating otherwise.

**Classroom Interruptions:**

The PHE staff makes a concerted effort to establish a learning environment that is conducive to the development of strong study habits and uninterrupted instructional time. We seek your cooperation and assistance in this effort. You can help us by:

* Sending a note if you need to pick up your child early
* Avoiding calling the school and leaving messages for your child, unless it is an emergency
* Bringing forgotten items (lunch, books, instrument, etc.) to the school office. We will get it to your child at an appropriate time

**Campus Visitations / Volunteers:**

Visitors are welcome at Portola Hills. In order to limit the disruptions to our instructional day, all classroom visits will be limited to 20 minutes in length, and must be arranged ahead of time with the administration. In the interest of safety, we require all visitors and volunteers to report to the office to sign in. Visitors and volunteers will be issued a sticker to wear, indicating to the students and staff that they are authorized to be on campus. Please sign out in the office upon departure. (The principal or principal’s designee may refuse to allow a visit from anyone whose behavior or presence is deamed to be disruptive to the normal operation of the school, threatens the health and safety of students or staff, or causes property damage.)

All classroom volunteers must fill out a Saddleback Valley Unified School District Volunteer Form I. This form can be picked up in our office or from the classroom teacher.

**Playground Supervision:**

Playground supervision will begin at 7:45 a.m. After school supervision will end at 2:30 p.m. **Students should not arrive on campus prior to 7:45 a.m., or stay later than 2:30 p.m.** Students remaining on the sidewalks on Saddleback Ranch Rd. or Pendleton Rd. at 2:30 p.m. will be brought into the front office. All students should leave campus at dismissal or be participating in after school programs that provide non-school personnel adult supervision (such as our fee based TLC child care program). Please be advised that PHE cannot assume responsibility for children on campus during unsupervised times.

**The Learning Connection (TLC):**

TLC is a positive option for working parents in need of childcare. The Portola Hills Learning Connection is located in two portable buildings near the back of the school. Hours are from 7:00 AM until 6:00 PM. If you would like additional information, including fees, please call 768-0981 (Ext. 2).

**To and From School & Parking:**

The parking lot is extremely busy before and after school. Please observe the traffic flow pattern and observe the “BUSES ONLY” area. When using the parking lot, please park in designated **“GUEST”** spaces only. Students should be dropped off and picked up at the yellow curb which carries through the parking lot along the side and back of the parking lot. Students will NOT be allowed to walk through the parking lot without an adult. **Parking is not allowed along any red curb**, as these are fire lanes and will be needed in case of an emergency. **Parents may not leave their car next to any red curb, even for a short time**. To insure student safety, we ask that all parents use courtesy and caution when driving on or near our school campus. Remember, parents are role models and set examples that are followed by children.

**Textbooks / Library Books:**

Textbooks and library books are school property and are loaned to students. Students are responsible for their safekeeping. All hard cover textbooks must be covered. Students are responsible to pay for lost or damaged books.

**Homework:**

The intention of homework is provided to review the day’s lessons and practice important concepts, which have been introduced during class. Homework is to be assigned as stated in the School Board policy on the following basis:

Grade 1 10-20 Minutes Grade 2 20-30 Minutes

Grade 3 30-40 Minutes Grade 4-5 40-60 Minutes

Grade 6 60-90 Minutes

Homework is intended to be an independent activity. Parents are encouraged to contact their child’s teacher first if the average amount of time typically spent on homework differs significantly from the times above, or if your child requires a significant amount of assistance in order to complete his/her homework.

**Positive Recognition (P.B.I.S.):**

The PHE staff wants to publicly acknowledge positive student behavior and character development. Each teacher has his or her own method for encouraging positive student behavior within the classroom. In addition, yellow Tickets emphasizing Respect and Responsibility may be given out during the school day. Students may also be recognized at the monthly P.B.I.S. assemblies on the last Monday of the month by the principal for “Star behavior.”

**Behavior Management:**

The PHE staff believes that all children, with proper guidance and reinforcement, can behave appropriately at school. Our rules are based on our beliefs that:

* Character development is as important as intellectual development.
* Discipline is an act of love, and all children need boundaries in order to thrive.
* Self-control and self-discipline are learned behaviors. Thus, if a child violates a rule out of ignorance, it is our responsibility to teach the appropriate behavior. If a child violates a rule out of defiance, then it is our responsibility to give appropriate and timely consequences.
* Disciplining students should be done privately, whenever possible. We do not believe in practicing public humiliation.

**Portola Hills School Rules**

The PHE Rules, which are posted in every classroom, are based on safety and our core values of:

1. **S**trive to do your best.
2. **T**ake responsibility.
3. **A**lways work together.
4. **R**espect yourself and others.

Consequences for infractions of the PHE Rules can range from a simple word of caution to suspension from class or school. Though consequences are based on district policy, we make every effort to be reasonable, to take the circumstances into account, and to respond so that students learn from the experience.

**Dress Code:**

We have found that there is a correlation between a student’s behavior and attitude, and his/her manner of dress. There is a wide range of available clothing styles that reflect a positive attitude and personal appearance. We ask that students attending PHE wear clothing that is comfortable, clean, and appropriate for an elementary school. Because our instructional program includes active play, students must wear appropriate clothing. Items that students wear must not disrupt the educational process, create safety concerns, nor create any distractions. Many popular fashions may not be appropriate for an elementary school setting.

Inappropriate dress includes:

* Clothing that does not fit reasonably.
* Clothing with logos, slogans, words, or pictures promoting or depicting alcohol, tobacco, drugs, vandalism, bigotry, violence, sexual connotations, or profanity.
* Clothing that is revealing or immodest, or tops that expose a bare midriff or undergarments. Examples include halter tops, overly short shorts, bathing suits, sports bras, tube tops, tops with spaghetti straps, and low cut tops.
* Shorts and skirts must meet or be longer than the tip of the thumb when arms are extended down at the side of the body. They must not be torn or contain holes higher than the tip or the thumb or be inappropriate, unsafe, or distracting.
* Jewelry that dangles or could be snagged when playing.
* Any make-up or adornment that causes a distraction in the classroom or on the playground
* Hair that is dyed/bleached an unnatural color or extreme hairstyles (including Mohawks and spiked hair) except on approved spirit days.
* Shoes with open toes, excessive heels, or no heel straps. Please wear athletic shoes.

With the support and cooperation of our students, parents, and staff, PHE will be a positive and productive learning environment.

**Cell Phone Policy:**

Student possession and use of cell phones and watches on school grounds, at school sponsored activities, and while under the supervision of school district employees is permitted under the specific circumstances listed below:

* Students may use cell phones and watches before school (8:00 AM), or after school (2:15 PM) only. Otherwise these devices must be turned off and kept out of sight during the school day.
* Unauthorized use will result in confiscation of the device by the staff. Items will be returned to the student at the end of the day. Any subsequent offenses will require a parent to pick up the item from school.

**Bicycles, Skateboards, Rollerblades, and Things With Wheels:**

Children in grades **3-6** may ride their bicycles to school. Each bicycle must be in safe working order, be equipped with a lock, and be parked in the bike racks. California law requires that all school age bike riders wear safety helmets. Children are expected to follow all traffic safety laws when going to and from school. School rules include walking bicycles when they are on school grounds. Riding a bicycle to school is a “privilege” which may be taken away if safety rules are not followed. A **Bicycle Parent Consent Form** must be kept on file in the school office.

Students are not allowed to ride scooters, skateboards, “Heelies,” or roller blades to school or on the school grounds at any time. This includes before, during, or after school, or at school-sponsored events.

**Personal Toys and Electronic Devices:**

Personal play equipment, such as toys, balls, games, and electronic devices, such as iPods, MP3 players, iPads, hand held games, etc. should not be brought to school unless special permission has been granted by the teacher or principal. These items will be collected and held in the office until after school.

**Pets:**

Pets should not be on campus unless special permission has been granted by the administration. Once permission has been granted, all pets must remain in an appropriate cage or enclosure so that both the pets and our students are kept safe from injury or allergic reactions.

**Please be aware that DOGS ARE NOT TO BE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS AT ANY TIME, INCLUDING NON-SCHOOL HOURS.** (O. C. Ordinance 41.46) Should you choose to bring your dog when walking your child to and from school, please wait for your child off the school grounds.

**School Parties:**

Three parties are provided for each classroom each year. They may vary from year to year, but most generally the parties will be at typical holidays. In addition, activities that center on curriculum and included food may occur under the teacher's supervision and approval. **Please note that healthy snacks/foods/drinks are preferred.**

**School Site Council:**

The School Site Council (SSC) is an elected group of staff and parents from Portola Hills that acts in an advisory capacity to the Principal and staff. The Council's task is to develop, implement, and update a Single School Site Plan as outlined in Assembly Bill 65. The SSC serves as a communication link between the community and the school.