

San Joaquin Student/Parent Handbook

ABSENCES

Students are excused if they are absent because of illness or other justifiable cause. Children should not be sent to school when they are not feeling well and, particularly, when they have a fever. Any student who has a temperature of 100 degrees or over will be sent home

Students will be given ample opportunity to make up work that is missed. You may request homework on the day of absence, and it will be available for pick up between 2:00 PM and 3:30 PM in the school office. If a student becomes ill or is injured at school, you will be called to pick him/her up.

Each absence must be verified, preferably by a telephone call to the school attendance line on the day of the absence. This is the quickest and surest method of accounting for the whereabouts of our students. San Joaquin has a special telephone number for reporting student absences.

If your child is going to be absent, please call (949) 581-3450 and press #1 for the absence line. Please call before 9:00 AM on the day of absence.

The following absences are excused:

1. Student's illness.
2. Medical, dental, orthodontic, or optometric appointment.
3. 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 child.)
4. If you know in advance that your child will be absent for five or more days, the District will receive State funds if parents, teacher, and principal develop an ***Independent Student Contract***. This is a fairly simple procedure available to students. Please notify the office and the teacher ahead of time so the proper contract form can be prepared. It will require the signature of a parent, the student, and the teacher. Upon return from the absence, the teacher will verify that the work has been completed.

ABSENCE REPORTING

We all share responsibility for the health, safety, and welfare of the children attending school. For this reason, it is essential the school be notified of any absence before it occurs. If your child is to be absent or more than 15 minutes late, please telephone our attendance line **(949) 581-3450** at any time. A message will be played and the information recorded for our school office personnel. Please call each day your child is absent. If we have not been informed of your child's absence, we must assume that something is wrong and proceed as follows:

1. Call the student's home.
2. Call the parents' place of employment.
3. Call the neighbor or relative listed on the emergency card.

If a parent is not reached, we would appreciate a note stating the reason for the absence and the days absent when the child returns to school. You can save the office staff a considerable amount of time by

remembering to call the school each time your child is absent. We wish to thank you in advance for helping us with important safety procedures.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

In an effort to encourage academic excellence, District policy mandates that elementary students must maintain a 2.0 grade point average (C average) in order to participate in extracurricular activities (Chorus, Instrumental Music, Student Council, etc.) This grade point average is based on the achievement grades of English/Language Arts, Social Studies, Health, Science, and Math. In addition, an unsatisfactory (U) mark in either work habits or citizenship will result in a student being declared ineligible. Elementary students will earn grades each trimester and their eligibility for the next trimester will be based on the grades received.

ARRIVAL TIMES AND PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION

Playground supervision begins at 7:45 AM (15 minutes before school starts at 8:00 AM). There is no adult supervision on the playground before 7:45 AM daily. Some bus students arrive at 7:30 AM and must wait at the lunch table area by the Multi-Purpose Room (MPR). Adult supervision is available in that area from 7:30 AM to 7:45 AM. Kindergarten students will line up in the kindergarten area (outside their classroom door). **NO** students (K-6) are allowed to play on the kindergarten play equipment or the field area anytime between 7:30 AM-8:00 AM.

Please note also that supervision is not provided after school hours or on weekends. If you send your child back to the playground after school, it may be best to accompany him/her so you're assured that it is an appropriate place for unsupervised play. Children are also asked to stay away from the school buildings if they return to play after regular school hours. *Parents are asked to report to the Orange County Sheriff's Department any unusual or suspicious activity on school premises on non-school days.*

BICYCLES, SKATEBOARDS, AND SCOOTERS

Riding your bike is a privilege. Any students in grades 3rd thru 6th living in the Laguna Terrace, Laguna Village or Casa de Laguna areas may ride his/her bike to school. Each bicycle must be equipped with a lock and parked only in the bicycle racks. Bikes are not to be hung up on the bicycle compound fence. Children will be expected to abide by traffic safety laws when going to and from school. **Your child is required to wear a bike helmet to ensure their physical safety.** If your child does not wear a helmet, they will be asked to call home to inform you, and will then be asked to **walk** the bike home at the end of the school day. All bike riders **must** have their own lock to be used during school hours. We are **not** responsible for unlocked bicycles. A parent's permission slip is required for all students who wish to ride their bike to school. Any student not abiding by the school rules relating to bicycles will have their bicycle privileges suspended.

Skateboards and scooters are not allowed at school. Any skateboards or scooters will be confiscated and held in the office until a parent can pick them up. Remember that we are **not** responsible for loss or damage to these items.

BUS RIDERS

Bus transportation is provided at a cost to parents to those students residing in the Via Iglesia Community. Prices are prorated in accordance with the size of your family. If you have any questions

regarding bus passes, please email braaksmav@svusd.org. Students are required to have a bus pass in order to ride the bus to school and home. Please review with your child the brochure on “Bus Rules and Discipline Procedures” which you will receive with your bus pass.

CALLING FOR CHILDREN AT SCHOOL

We seek your cooperation and assistance in establishing in every classroom an atmosphere conducive to the development of good study habits and uninterrupted academic learning time. You can help us by:

1. Sending the teacher a note stating the time a child is to be dismissed from school early for a medical or dental appointment.
2. Drastically limiting the messages you wish us to deliver to your children after the school day has begun. **Please make every attempt to plan your child’s transportation *before* he/she arrives at school.** It is not always possible for the office staff to locate a child’s class and relay a message at the end of the day.
3. Establishing a system at home which helps eliminate forgotten lunches, homework, musical instruments, etc. This system might be a special spot for your child’s belongings to be placed the night before.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones may be brought to school but must be kept in backpacks in the OFF position during the school day (8:00 AM-2:00 PM). Cell phones are **NOT** allowed to be used during the school day. They may be used **after** school to call home for pick up or to retrieve any messages. If a student is caught using a phone in class or on the playground it will be taken away and returned to the parent. Some classrooms in the upper grades will collect phones in the morning and lock them up for safety. They are returned at the end of the day. Check with individual teachers on their classroom policy.

CHILD CARE

THE LEARNING CONNECTION (“TLC”), sponsored by the SVUSD Recreation Department, is available to interested parents for childcare. TLC is located on our campus. For more information call (949) 768-0981.

CLASSROOM PARTIES

Our school district has designated two classroom parties each year, a holiday party in December and an end-of-the-year party in June. Each classroom has a different way of celebrating a student’s birthday. However, our “Healthy Kids Act,” does not allow for treats. You may check with the teacher if you wish to donate a book to the classroom or an alternative to food. Please do not distribute birthday party invitations at school unless all students (boys or girls) are invited.

CONDUCT

Students are expected to follow the San Joaquin Rules, which are:

1. Use common sense.
2. Follow the direction of all adults.

3. Use only kind words towards others.
4. Keep your hands, feet and objects to yourself. No bullying, fighting, or harassing will be tolerated.
5. Remain in assigned areas.

And, above all, demonstrate respect for yourself, your school, and your education. You, as parents, as well as we, as educators, share the responsibility of teaching and reinforcing appropriate conduct. Students are also expected to follow the above rules while going to and from school.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)

- Is a systematic plan to prevent problems
- Teaches new social skills
- Responds effectively to positive and negative behaviors
- Research shows academic success is linked to PBIS
- At San Joaquin we follow the Cheetah Pride – students who demonstrate excellence choices in their behavior, pride, and self-respect, are rewarded positively. Students identified as showing cheetah pride are given the opportunity to invite their parents to school the following Friday to eat lunch with them on the grass.

PAWS – stands for **Play Fair, Act Responsibly, Work Hard, and Show Respect.**

DAILY SCHOOL DISMISSAL

We make every effort to insure your child's safe arrival at home after school. Please instruct your child to go directly home after school is dismissed. Students should be picked up as close to our 2:00 PM dismissal time as possible. **No supervision is available after 2:15 PM.** Any time a child's routine is to be different than usual (such as parents out of town, child to go home to a friend's or babysitter's house), please let us know via a note so we're ready to assist if circumstances arise. Be sure to discuss these plans with your child before school.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Due to the possibility of earthquakes here in California, it is always wise to be prepared. Our school has a plan, should a disaster occur during the school day. Please review the items listed below:

1. The principal and staff will be responsible for all children until a parent or authorized person arrives. Students will be signed out of each individual classroom.
2. Please **DO NOT CALL** the school.
3. Maintain a calm appearance and a positive attitude in the presence of children.
4. If the school is evacuated, a sign posted on the school grounds will inform community members of the evacuation center.

An emergency condition would exist if the school were directly damaged as a result of fire, flood, earthquake, fallen aircraft, etc. We anticipate that a "COMMUNICAITON PANIC" could be one of our concerns after a disaster. This possibility makes it clear to us that the EMERGENCY INFORMATION CARD in the office must be kept UP TO DATE!! Help us by doing the following:

1. Complete the Registration/Emergency Information Card carefully. This will be used in case of a

major emergency, as well as in the event your child becomes ill or is injured at school. In completing this card, please take into consideration the following:

- a) Please include local friends and neighbors who will be available. Remember, roads and freeways will be heavily clogged.
 - b) If the parents are not available during the school day, please indicate this on the card. If there is a young adult (such as a high school brother or sister) you wish to include, please be sure to list them.
 - c) Please notify the persons you are listing to be sure they are available and willing to assume the responsibility.
 - d) Please keep this information up to date by sending a note to the office when a change is made.
2. Discuss with your children the names on the emergency card. Explain to them why we can release them only to authorized persons. Review with them your “family emergency plan.”

DOCUMENTATION OF PARENT CUSTODY

If you have specific limitations related to the release of your child to a natural parent, please be aware that we must comply with various sections of the civil code relating to the dissolution of marriage. We must have documentation specifying which parent has official custody of the child. Therefore, we are requesting that you present us with a copy of the court order, which stipulates the conditions of custody. Please understand that if we do not have this on file, we have no other choice but to release your child to the other natural parent upon his/her request.

DRESS CODE / TOYS OR PERSONAL ITEMS

Dress is a form of personal expression that may affect a student’s behavior and self-image. A dress code policy is necessary in order to protect the health and safety of the school environment and to foster the student’s success in a positive manner.

Students are expected to show proper attention to personal cleanliness and to wear clothes that are suitable for school activities. Parents have the primary responsibility for student dress, and we appreciate your support and cooperation in ensuring that student dress does not present health and safety hazards or a distraction that may interfere with student learning at school.

- Clothing displaying language or logos, slogans, words, or pictures promoting or depicting alcohol, tobacco, drugs, profanity, violence, or sexual connotations are not permitted. Clothing which references or displays sexual references, sexist, racist, vulgar, or hate messages is also not permitted. Any derogatory message directed towards any person or group is prohibited.
- Shirts must have straps at least 1 inch wide, strapless shirts are not permitted. Shirts must completely cover undergarments and the midriff area. Undergarments should not be visible at anytime. Sheer or cutout tops may only be worn with another top underneath (the torso cannot be exposed).
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses must meet or be longer than the tip of the thumb when arms are extended down at the sides of the body.
- For safety reasons, all shoes must be appropriate for school activity. Sandals, high heels, and tennis shoes with wheels are not permitted.
- Hats with a brim may be permitted outside for sun/rain protection only. Baseball hats are to be worn with the bill forward. Hats and hoods may not be worn in the classroom.

- Sharp/pointed accessories or belts that are unsafe for student play, are not permitted at school.
- Clothing which displays gang insignia or which could reasonably be construed as gang-related, including but not limited to, initialized belt buckles, dangling belt below the waist level, trench coats, ponchos, pants not worn at waist level (or which are sagging or oversized), hairnets, doo-tags or bandanas, long shorts (i.e. shorts to the ankles), any color t-shirt that extends past the finger tips when the hands hand down to the sides, and pulled up socks are prohibited. Any combination of clothing which law enforcement agencies currently consider gang related is prohibited. Accessories, which could be considered weapons, such as spiked wrist or ankle bands, spiked rings, spiked belts, spiked gloves, oversized rings or chains of any size, and chains attached to wallets are prohibited. Spikes worn in eyebrows, ears, or any other body parts are not acceptable.
- Hair of unnatural color or extreme color, body piercing, and the use of make-up is prohibited as it disrupts the educational process.
- Mohawks or extreme haircuts that cause disruption.
- Fake tattoos need to be scrubbed off if seen at school; students should not mark on their arms or body parts with markers.
- Please do not send any toys, iPods or expensive Game Boys, etc. to school. The school cannot be responsible for lost or stolen personal property.

Students who are dressed inappropriately will be required to call parents to bring a change of clothes or may be asked to turn a shirt inside out if need be.

As trends change, administration reserves the right to amend the dress code policy as needed in order to keep a safe and orderly school environment, as long as it is consistent with this policy.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Each child attending school must have a current Registration-Emergency Information Card signed by a parent on file in the office. It is imperative that we maintain up-to-date information with each question answered completely. This includes vital information needed in case of illness, accidental injury, or an emergency at school

If at any time during the school year there should be a change in any of the information (i.e., work phone, cell phone, etc.), please notify the office immediately. Failure to keep the school office informed could mean loss of precious minutes in the event of an emergency.

HEALTH SERVICES

In case of an accident or illness at school, first aid will be administered by the office staff, or another qualified person, and parents will be notified. Except for first aid at the time of the injury, the school cannot treat injuries. In an emergency, 911 will be called.

If it is necessary for a student to go home because of an illness or injury, it will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian to pick up the child.

HOMEWORK

We believe homework is an important part of the educational process for two specific reasons: (1) children need to practice the skills they learn at school; and (2) children need to learn the discipline of accomplishing assigned work and being responsible for its completion.

1. Assignments will be related to class work, explained thoroughly, and will be reviewed in class.
2. Some kind of grade or credit will be given for each assignment. As a minimum, homework will be used in determining a student's final effort grade and may have a bearing on his/her final grade in a subject area.
3. Homework will be assigned Monday through Thursday. Exceptions would include absence from school, long-term projects, etc.
4. The following maximum time limits have been established to maintain continuity throughout the school and the School District:

Grades 1 - 3: 20 minutes to 1 hour per evening

Grades 4 - 6: 1 hour to 1 ½ hours per evening

When studying at home, conditions should be made as favorable as possible. A quiet area with good lighting is probably the most important of the physical conditions. When a separate room is not available, a study corner with an uncluttered desk and adequate lighting should be provided. Remember, television is a distraction.

Please talk to your child's teacher regarding any individual problems your child may have with homework. Our mutual cooperation on the common goal of developing independent study habits will pay dividends in the future. A reasonable homework policy expands teaching and learning beyond the classroom and allows parents to become involved in their child's schoolwork. We intend it to be a positive experience for everyone!

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Our school has a well-rounded program of instruction extending from kindergarten through sixth grade. Emphasis is also placed upon developing responsibility and positive attitudes in students, and in helping our students experience success at school.

Reading readiness activities are started in kindergarten when the child is ready. The readiness program may continue during the first part of first grade, depending on individual needs. Phonics and grammar instruction are provided through the English/Language Arts program.

Mathematics, written expression, spelling, science, and social sciences are included in each grade level according to the State Department of Education requirements and District guidelines. Music, art, computer science, and physical education are also important areas of the curriculum.

LUNCH

Hot lunches are provided daily for \$2.75. Students may bring money each day or parents can put money into a student's lunch account either online or by coming into the office. Please make checks payable to Saddleback Valley Unified School District or SVUSD. Milk or juice is available each day for \$.50. A monthly lunch menu is available online or is posted in the office.

MARKING CHILDREN'S POSSESSIONS

Please label clearly all lunch pails, sacks, personal books, records, articles of clothing, etc. with your child's name. Your help is needed in teaching children to care for their own belongings. Many items, often brand new, go unclaimed in the school's lost and found department in the Multi-Purpose Room. After the close of the school year, all unclaimed articles will be given to a charitable organization. Parents are welcome and encouraged to check the lost and found for missing items.

MEDICATION

The Education Code (Section 49423) allows school personnel to administer medication *only* if the following steps are taken:

1. A Parent/Guardian and Authorized Health Care Provider Request for medication form must be completed by the physician and parent and given to the office. This is required for both prescription and over-the-counter medications. Please contact the school for this form.
2. The original container of medicine must be labeled with the name of the child, name of the medicine, dosage requirements that match exactly with the instructions on the Physician's Request Form, and physician's name.
3. Medicine must be brought to school by a parent, not the student.

Students should not bring aspirin or any other medication to school to take on their own. There is the possibility of another child taking the medication and having a severe reaction to it. ALL medication, no matter how harmless it may appear to be, must be kept in the office during school hours.

OFFICE PHONE

Keeping the safety of your children in mind and to avoid confusion, children will be directed to make arrangements about "visiting friends after school" **prior** to coming to school and will be reminded of this rule if they come to the office to make such arrangements by phone.

PETS AT SCHOOL

No pets are allowed on the school grounds at any time. Please be sure your pet does not wander onto the playground or follow children to school. Although we make every effort to locate the owner, it is necessary to send stray pets to the animal shelter. Dogs may become excited by the children on the grounds, and we cannot take the risk of having children bitten. A parent must have prior approval from the classroom teacher before bringing a pet to school for a child to share with the class. The pet must be caged properly and have a clean bill of health from a veterinarian.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

Pupil progress reports are issued each trimester to parents. Reporting times this year are as follows:

October:	Parent/Teacher Conferences
November:	Report Cards
January:	Progress Reports Only
February:	Parent / Teacher Conferences

March: Report Cards
June: Report Cards

Individual parent-teacher conferences may be scheduled at any time during the school year. Please schedule conferences through the teacher so adequate time is available for the preparation of materials needed for discussion.

SAFETY RULES ON PLAYGROUND

Pupils are to report an accident on the playground to the adult on duty. Please encourage your child to let the teacher know if he/she is ill or injured, and to report any dangerous conditions which may be noticed.

STUDENTS LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY

Students must be picked up by an adult if it becomes necessary to leave school during the school day. This person must be listed on the student's emergency card on file in the office. A student must be signed out in the office by an adult.

STUDENTS WHO MOVE

If you are planning on moving from our school area, please let us know which day will be your child's last day of attendance.

TOYS

Students need to leave all toys at home. The school day is very full, and toys tend to be distracting to your child and others around them. If your child's teacher wishes your child to bring a toy to school for a special reason or activity, you will receive written verification. (Toys include MP3's, iPods, playing or trading cards, marbles, Fidgets, etc.)

TRAFFIC

Traffic around San Joaquin at dismissal time can be quite heavily congested. We appreciate your demonstrating concern for the safety of all students by:

1. Parking at the curb to wait for your child.
2. Having your child cross the street at the crosswalk.

We recognize that the heavy traffic causes delays. Please plan your time to allow for these delays. Selecting a meeting place away from the street provides your child with a place to safely wait until you arrive at the curb.

VANDALISM

Students and their parents shall be responsible for all damage to equipment or school property. This responsibility applies to books and supplies of all kinds, as well as equipment, the buildings, and grounds.

Whenever necessary, the administration shall require restitution for damaged school property. When appropriate, acts of vandalism will be reported to the Sheriff's Department.

VISITING THE SCHOOL

Parents are welcome to visit the school and individual classroom. All classrooms visitations are scheduled for 20 minutes. No matter what the length of your visit to San Joaquin, all visitors must check into the office, sign into the Visitor Book, and wear a visitor sticker. Please come into the office first to sign in, so that we are always aware of who is on the campus at all times. Parents interested in a particular subject area may wish to check with the teacher regarding the daily program. It is very difficult for teachers to conference with parents during school hours. We suggest that a conference be arranged with the teacher at a mutually convenient time.