

PINER-OLIVET UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
Our Vision: Inspiring Joyful and Innovative Learning
in an Ever-Changing World

Schaefer Charter School
Student & Parent Handbook

2023-2024



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Schaefer Charter School
Piner Olivet Union School District
www.pousd.org
1370 San Miguel Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
(707) 522-3015 FAX (707) 522- 3017

Attendance 522-8917 ext. 4

George R. Valenzuela - Principal

Amber Trafton- Office Manager

Resources & Links:

- Schaefer Website: <http://www.schaefer.pousd.org>
- District Website: <http://www.pousd.org>
- Schaefer Families Parent-Teacher Organization: schaeferfamilies@pousd.org
- Schaefer Families Facebook Page: @ Schaefer Families PTO

In this Handbook you will find General Information on the following and other subjects:

Attendance & Absences	Minimum Day Schedule
Bell Schedule	School Playground Rules
Complaint or Concern	Staffing
Dress Code	Tardies
Drop off & Pick up	Traffic Safety & Safety To and From School
Emergency Information	Behavior Expectations & Consequences
Health & Medication at School	Bullying & Harassment

SCHAEFER SCHOOL STAFF

Staff email: firstinitiallastname@pousd.org

example: gvalenzuela@pousd.org

George R. Valenzuela- Principal

Amber Trafton – Office Manager

Transitional Kindergarten

Monica Gutting Room 2

Kindergarten

Drue Rostel Room 1

Ms. Trang Room 1

Team Teaching

1st Grade

Ms. Gregorio Room 5

Mr. Rankin Room7

2nd Grade

Tiffany Lewis Room 10

2nd Grade

Lisa Palmer Room 4

3rd Grade

Tracy Henry Room 9
Karie Seliga Room 9
(Team Teaching)

3rd Grade

Niki Webb. Room 4

4th Grade

Tawnya Martin Room 20
Bill Janssen Room 21

5th Grade

Jeffrey Dreitzler Room 16
Cherie DeChaine. Room 16
(Team Teaching)

5th/6th Grade

Cindi Marsh Room 13

6th Grade

James Showalter-Garcia
Room 22

Music

Brittany Ross Room 26

Speech Teacher

TBD. (teletherapy) Room 19B

Instructional Coach

Liana Zavala Room 4

Counselor

Keystone Counselor Room 18
Keystone Counselor Room 12

Resource Specialist

Valerie Malvesti Room 17

Program Assistants (PA) & Yard Supervisors

Lee Saddler
Christine Oliver
Megan Sayre
Kristal Clare
Brenda Hernandez Banderas
Elvia Olvera
Brianna Wright
Teresa Diaz
Adela Banderas

Outreach Worker

Lourdes Singh Morales

Librarian

Georgiann Micallef

PE Technician

Chris Lee

Additional Support Staff

Lee Saddler - Health Technician
Ashley Brannon - Program Assistant - Speech & Language
Tessa Burns - School Nurse
Rahwa Mehari - Day Custodian
Tsinat Berhane - Afternoon Custodian
Marian Hersam - Supervisor of Food Service

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Welcome to a new school year at Schaefer Charter School! Schaefer is a school that thrives on the dedication of its teachers, staff, and parents to providing state-of-the-art education in a warm and nurturing environment. I look forward to working with every member of the Schaefer Learning Community to ensure that our school is a positive, learning-focused culture and environment. Thank you for your ongoing support.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information about programs and procedures at our school. Please keep this handbook for reference during the school year once you have returned the signed Confirmation of Review on the last page. It is our desire to engage in inclusive, transparent communication with all members of the community to promote understanding of our educational purpose, build support for our students, and encourage everyone's participation in their own personal learning. We look forward to seeing you throughout the year and welcome your participation wherever possible.

Sincerely,
George R. Valenzuela
Principal

Piner-Olivet Union School District Mission

As a community, we engage in authentic, dynamic, and relevant learning that develops each student's academic, emotional and social growth.

Piner-Olivet Union School District Student Outcomes

Mastery of the following competencies is the cornerstone of the Piner-Olivet District program. In addition to the knowledge described in the California Content Standards, these competencies are the foundation of our culture and academic goals. We believe that students proficient in these skills and behaviors will be successful on any path they choose.

Personal Integrity

Students handle themselves with confidence and act with honesty and courage. They commit to their developing beliefs and are willing to assume roles as inquiring observers, active participants, and dynamic leaders. They demonstrate positive working relationships across diverse groups, accept personal responsibility for their actions, and remain open to learning from the feedback and guidance of others.

Productive Collaboration

Students develop and use the skills necessary to plan and engage in group projects. They work to resolve social and logistical conflicts and devise solutions to meet diverse needs. They collectively set goals and develop strategies to meet those goals. They evaluate the effectiveness of their approach and constructively adapt to new understandings as they arise.

Critical and Creative Thinking

Students identify problems and pursue opportunities from multiple perspectives. They locate, organize, analyze, and apply key information in inventive and imaginative ways. They design, evaluate, and employ a variety of strategies, tools, and skills to achieve innovative results. Students are independent, creative, and critical thinkers who question and connect to the world around them from both big picture and focused perspectives.

Effective Communication

Students understand and practice effective communication using verbal and nonverbal language with intent, awareness, and accuracy. They are empathetic, emotionally intelligent, persuasive, and articulate. They are skillful self-advocates who effectively communicate their needs. Students internalize and present their understandings and ideas with confidence and clarity. Employing a variety of media, they use practical, academic, and artistic abilities to convey meaning in a clear and engaging fashion.

Reflective Learning

Students excel at making critical observations about their own learning and potential. They formulate meaningful and relevant questions that inspire and encourage further inquiry. Students consistently take charge of their education by reflecting upon and revising their own practices.

Citizenship and Global Responsibility

Students are engaged and informed citizens. They are empowered to create positive change in themselves, their communities, and the world. They are mindful and principled decision makers who understand the long and short-term effects of their actions on others and the environment. They practice compassionate, ethical, and active citizenship in local, global, and virtual settings. Students strive to achieve balance between their own needs and the needs of others.

Resiliency and Drive

Students are adept at taking intelligent risks and view mistakes as necessary steps toward learning and growth. They consciously identify their intentions and desires. They possess the tenacity and determination to work individually and collaboratively. They are self-motivated and self-regulated. Piner-Olivet students confront challenges and persevere through adversity.

The 12 Toolbox Tools: Creating a Positive School Climate and Culture

1. Breathing Tool: I can take a breath; I calm myself – Calming ourselves—checking in. When we breathe deliberately, it calms and slows us down, and brings our attention inward. We become more self-aware and reflective about our bodies, minds, emotions, and reactions. We are more likely to have the insight and time to act in our own best interests and in the best interests of others.

2. Quiet/Safe Place Tool: I remember my quiet/safe place – There is always my quiet/safe place. It is there for me. This is a place of rest and peace where we can gather ourselves together and feel safe and comforted. It can be an actual place, or a place that exists in our imaginations. In quietness, we can hear the soft, small voice in our hearts and minds, and allow creativity, imagination, and self-expression to emerge naturally.

3. Listening Tool: I listen with my ears, eyes and heart – When I listen as well as hear, I can really understand. When we listen with our ears, our eyes, and our hearts, we become deep listeners who can “hear between the lines.” Our ears bring us the words and intonation; our eyes bring us body language, gestures, and facial expressions; and our hearts bring us empathy—allowing us to walk in someone else’s shoes.

4. Empathy Tool: I care for others, I care for myself – When I walk in someone else’s shoes, it opens my heart. Empathy is the root of understanding, kindness, and forgiveness—both for others and for ourselves. When we empathize, we let go of our own perspective long enough to acknowledge the feelings, situation, and motives of others. Through this, we develop compassion, and learn to care.

5. Personal Space Tool: I have a right to my space and so do you – Whether we feel safe or threatened, secure or on our guard depends on how we experience others in relation to our personal boundaries. Every day, we experience the joy of sharing our personal space, as well as hurt or anger when that space is violated by unkind words or hurtful actions. By using this Tool, we come to appreciate the importance of respecting each other’s physical, emotional, and social boundaries.

6. Using Our Words Tool: I ask for what I want and need – The right words, at the right time, for the right reasons. Careful words encourage understanding, connection, and closeness. Careless words divide and offend. Once we understand and can

name our own and others' feelings, our words can resolve conflicts and mend relationships. Using the best words, in the best way, at the best time, for the best reasons, requires practice, practice, and more practice.

7. Garbage Can Tool: I let the little things go – Put it in the garbage can and walk on by. By discarding unkind words and actions instead of taking them into our personal spaces, we free ourselves to be actors—not re-actors—in our own lives. We take responsibility for our own well-being and what we do with other people's words and actions.

8. Taking Time Tool: I use time wisely – Time-in and time-away. Understanding that we can make choices about how we use time is empowering. Pushing the pause button and taking time-away to breath renews our strength and resolve. Taking time-in to reflect leads to better self-understanding and more empathy for others.

9. Please and Thank You Tool: I treat others with kindness and appreciation – Words that Open. These “magic words” work to appreciate, invite, and include others. Saying “Please” shows respect, and encourages others to want to be helpful and kind. “Thank you” lets people know we value them and their actions, and reminds us that we need each other.

10. Apology and Forgiveness Tool: I admit my mistakes and work to forgive yours – Words that transform and repair. Apology can restore trust. The act of sincere apology can resolve problems in relationships. This takes self-reflection and emotional strength. Forgiveness takes a willingness to let go of blame or resentment and move forward.

11. Patience Tool: I am strong enough to wait – Quiet waiting. With patience, we allow existing conditions to unfold as they will—physically, mentally and emotionally. Patience is the ability to let go of our need to control how and when things happen. This brings us peace, and reminds us that things usually work themselves out in their own time.

12. Courage Tool: I have the courage to do the right thing – Using your Tools when others are not using theirs. Courage from the Latin “cor” means heart, inner strength, bravery, and confidence. When we use courage, it empowers us to stand up for what we believe in. Courage is being willing to do the right thing even when it is difficult.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Regular School Day

TK/Kindergarten	8:20 am - 1:25 pm (Dismissal at 1:45pm effective 11/13/23)
Grades 1-6	8:20 am - 2:40 pm

Minimum Days

TK/Kindergarten	8:20 am - 11:20 am
Grades 1-6	8:20 am - 12:40 pm

For student safety and supervision, *it is best for students not to arrive at school prior to 8:05 am*. At the end of the school day, children are to go directly home unless attending an after-school program. *Students may not remain unsupervised on campus.*

If students need to leave school during school hours, parents pick students up at school by coming to the office and making the request, and must sign the student out at that time. Please wait until your arrival to ask that your student be sent to the office. This provides the least disruption to your student's and other students' learning.

BELL SCHEDULE - REGULAR DAY

8:05 a.m.	Yard Supervision Begins
8:20 a.m.	Classes Begin
10:00 - 10:20 a.m.	Snack and Recess, Kindergarten, Grades 4,5,6
10:30 - 10:50 am	Snack and Recess, Grades 1,2,3
12:00 - 12:40 p.m.	Lunch and Recess, TK/Kindergarten, Grades 4,5,6
12:50 - 1:30 p.m.	Lunch and Recess, Grades 1,2,3
1:25 p.m.	TK/Kindergarten Dismissal
2:40 p.m.	Grades 1 – 6 Dismissal

BELL SCHEDULE - SHORTENED WEDNESDAY

8:05 a.m.	Yard Supervision Begins
8:20 a.m.	Classes Begin
9:45-10:05 a.m.	Snack Recess TK/Kindergarten, 4 th , 5 th , 6 th Grades
10:15-10:35 am	Snack Recess 1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd Grades
11:40-12:20 pm	Lunch TK/Kindergarten, 4 th , 5 th , 6 th Grades
12:20-1:00 pm	Lunch 1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd Grades
1:00 p.m.	Grades TK – 6 Dismissal

BELL SCHEDULE - MINIMUM DAY

8:05 a.m.	Yard Supervision Begins
8:20 a.m.	Classes Begin
9:45-10:05 a.m.	Snack Recess K, 5, 6
10:10-10:30 a.m.	Snack Recess First, Second, Third, Fourth
11:20 a.m.	TK/Kindergarten Dismissal
12:40 p.m.	Grades 1 – 6 Dismissal

AFTER-SCHOOL CARE

The YMCA offers before and after school childcare for Schaefer students on the Schaefer campus at the Daycare Center. Parents can obtain information from the YMCA at 707-544-1829 or 707-578-1584 or scfymca.org

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES (Attendance Hotline 522-8917 press 4)

In order for your students to get the most out of school, they need to be present each day that school is in session. A child's absence not only negatively impacts her or his learning, but it also negatively impacts all other students. Your child's teacher plans carefully each day in order to introduce new ideas and concepts as well as build upon ideas and concepts which have been introduced earlier.

It is also true that funding for your child's education depends on his or her attendance and that schools are mandated **by law** to follow up on chronic absenteeism and patterns of negative attendance. Please make every effort to see that your child is in school unless he or she is ill. Please plan family vacations and trips around school breaks and holidays. If your child is absent, we need to know the reason for any absence. Please use the 24-hour absence hotline **707-522-8917 press 4** to report your child's absence. If you call in, a note is not necessary. If your child has an unavoidable sustained absence (5 or more days), please review the Independent Study procedure and guidelines, below. Also, please note information on Tardies, below.

BICYCLES, SKATEBOARDS, SCOOTERS

School Board Policy specifies that **elementary students in our district MAY NOT ride bicycles, skateboards and scooters to school.** The primary reason for this policy is the lack of safe sidewalks and bike paths. Our footpath is primarily for pedestrians.

CALENDARS

Monthly calendars are posted on the school website (schaefer.pousd.org) and district (pousd.org) websites. Please check them and take note of any school or district activities that interest you.

CELL PHONES AND OTHER DEVICES

We know that parents may expect students to be accessible by phone before or after school in order to update plans, coordinate pick-up or convey instructions. *Students may possess personal electronic devices such as cellphones, tablets and laptop computers on school campus but the devices must remain in student backpacks or book bags throughout the school day unless specific teacher consent is given for a specific academic purpose, like taking a picture of the homework assignment on the whiteboard.* Otherwise, devices may only be used outside of the classroom before or after school (before 8:20 am and after 2:40 pm), provided that such devices do not disrupt the educational program or school activity and are not used for illegal or unethical activities, including cyberbullying. Students may not borrow other people's digital devices. **Cell phones and other devices that are not used appropriately at any time will be confiscated by school personnel and returned to a parent when the parent can pick it up. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen devices at any time.**

During the school day, parents can contact students by calling the office. A message will be communicated based on emergency circumstances and/or appropriate timing. Students may request to use a school phone if they need to communicate with family.

COMPLAINT OR CONCERN

If a student or parent has a concern about a school policy or an employee, the following procedure should be followed in order to resolve the problem as quickly as possible:

1. Contact the person who you have a complaint about to discuss both sides of the story.
2. If the problem still exists, contact the principal.
3. If still unresolved, contact the office of the superintendent.
4. Finally, if unresolved, ask the superintendent to place the complaint on the following month's Governing Board's agenda for further discussion.

Copies of the Board Policy and Procedure for Complaints can be found on the district website or can be provided by the school or district office.

CAR DROP OFF & PICK UP

Our driveway is a one-way zone and is a single lane. Every student is safer and everything runs smoothly and quickly when traffic flows in the same, single direction, and students are dropped off and picked up in the designated passenger loading zone only. Parking in driveways, unmarked spaces or "Red Zones" creates blind spots. Student safety is compromised because, even though students may be accompanied by adults, students are difficult to see.

For all first through sixth graders, traffic flows in the same, single direction and all students are picked up in the same place you dropped them off in the morning, on the west side of campus. For afternoon kindergarten pickup, please park in a designated parking space and walk to the kindergarten release area.

In order to maintain traffic safety, all drivers need to follow the established student drop-off/pick-up procedures:

- **Do not drop off or pick up students in front of school. This area is for buses and school business only.**
- Please enter the WEST (second) driveway, driving to the designated student drop off area marked with a yellow curb on the west side of the campus.
- Please pull as far forward as possible so that all drivers are able to drop off their children in the loading zone.
- Please instruct students to exit on the curb side of the car whenever possible. If the student must exit on the driveway side, please remind them to look for cars before exiting the vehicle.
- Schaefer students wait in designated grade-level zones, with younger siblings waiting with older siblings. Adults will direct students to your car, regardless of where you pull up. You don't need to stop in front of your child's grade-level zone.
- After dropping students off or picking students up, please exit the school through the EAST driveway while watching for pedestrians.
- Do not stop or park in a "Red Zone" or other areas that are not designated parking places.
- If you plan to walk your child to class, speak with your child's teacher, or visit the office, please park in a designated visitor parking space in front of the school.
- Please do not park and let your child cross at random points in the parking lot. Students and adults must use the crosswalk by the flagpole.
- To ensure the safety of students, all students must walk with an adult if they are crossing or walking in a driveway or parking area.
- Do not drop off or pick up students at the dead-end on the west side of campus behind the gate. This is not a safe or designated school zone and drivers do not notice pedestrians in this area.

EARLY DISMISSAL

If a student is to be picked up early, please notify your child's teacher by sending a note which you have signed. The note should state who will pick up your student and the date and time you plan to have them leave school. The person picking your student up must sign the student out in the school office. To minimize disruption of learning for all students, your student will be called to the office once his or her ride arrives.

EARTHQUAKE & FIRE DRILLS

Earthquake, Fire, Bus and other Safety Drills will be conducted throughout the school year. Everyone will move in an orderly and silent manner to designated places where roll will be taken. A copy of our school safety plan may be reviewed by coming to the school office. It is a living document and is updated regularly.

ELAC

Our English Learner Advisory Committee is comprised of parents, community members, and school personnel with the purpose of advising the school and district regarding programs to support English Learners and their families. If you would like to be a part of our ELAC or attend meetings, please check our school calendar or call the school for dates. We meet almost every month.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Student emergency cards are sent home the first day of school. The school must have a current card on file for each student in case of illness or emergency. It is imperative that parents report any change of address or phone number to the office as soon as possible so that the emergency card will remain current. If custodial arrangements require special attention, custodial parents are responsible for turning in appropriate paperwork and informing the school. If someone other than the parent is picking up and they are not already on the emergency card, you must call ahead to let the office know.

FAMILY LIFE INSTRUCTION

Part of the fourth, fifth and sixth grade science curriculum includes teaching human reproduction. Students will study the functioning of male and female reproductive systems in a course provided by the classroom teacher and school nurse. (Education Code 51550) Whenever any part of the instruction in health or family life education conflicts with the religious training, beliefs or personal moral conviction of the student, the student shall be excused from such instruction upon written request of the parent or guardian (Education Code 51240). Parents will receive more specific information on family life curriculum, including an opportunity to view the curriculum and ask questions, prior to instruction in the spring.

FIELD TRIP CHAPERONES, DRIVERS & CAR CHECKS

We are most appreciative of all parent/guardian volunteers who give of their time and vehicle to help chaperone or transport our children on our school sanctioned field trips. We typically need one chaperone for each group of 10-12 students, so offering to chaperone is a great way to help!

There are strict laws and requirements related to driving students. If you plan to drive on a field trip, you **MUST** have a current driver form on file with our school. The form needs to be completed annually and at any time the information on the form changes and must be submitted **at least 48 hrs prior to driving on any field trip**. You can pick up the form at the school office. Car Check days are scheduled on one Wednesday a month because they require the time and attention of both the school office manager and principal. Please check the school calendar and plan ahead. **We cannot complete "rush" car checks, and this can have a significant impact on planned field trips, including trip cancellation.**

GUM, CANDY & SODA

Because gum ends up on furniture, floors and all over the grounds of our campus, we do not allow gum at school. Good nutrition is an important part of being able to focus and maintain our stamina throughout the school day. **Candy, "Taqis" and soda are not appropriate for lunch, snack or breakfast and should not be brought to school.** Sometimes we have special occasions, like birthdays, other parties or celebrations when teachers may allow special treats in the classroom. If you have a question about when candy or other treats are ok, please ask.

HEALTH & MEDICINE

Administering Medicines to Students:

Medications are rarely necessary for pupils during the school day. They are justified only in chronic health conditions or short-term acute health conditions. If, under exceptional circumstances, a student is required to take oral medication during school hours and the parent cannot be at school to administer medications, only the school nurse or the nurse's designee will administer the medication in compliance with the following regulations:

1. Written orders (required form is available in all school offices) from the student's physician must be on file in the school stating.
 - a. Student's name
 - b. Name of drug
 - c. Dosage
 - d. Purpose of the medication
 - e. Time of day medication is to be given and anticipated number of days it needs to be given.
 - f. Anticipated number of days it needs to be given
 - g. Possible side effects

2. The medication must be brought to school in the original container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician.
3. An individual record will be kept of prescription medication administered by school personnel.
4. Medication will be stored in a clean, locked cabinet or container. Any exceptions (asthma inhalers, etc.) to this provision must be specifically stated by the physician on the written form.

Unless these requirements can be met, medication will not be administered at school.

The school will not administer over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol to any student unless it is in a prescription container and follows the same rules that would apply to other prescription medications. Please do not ask the school to give your child Tylenol as we are not allowed to do so by State Education Code.

HOMEWORK

Homework is part of an effective, well planned instructional program. It serves a variety of purposes:

- Reinforcing and extending learning initiated in class
- Promoting responsible work and study habits
- Encouraging individual initiative and creativity
- Providing extra practice in fundamental skills
- Increasing home-school communication and collaboration

Students and parents have responsibilities to ensure that homework achieves these purposes. Students need to make sure that they understand the homework assignment and that they budget their time wisely. Parents can assist in supporting good study habits by showing interest in the student's work and checking to see if the work is completed. It is also helpful if parents provide a quiet place for children to work. **We recommend that all students spend at least 20 minutes reading each day.** Please check with your student's teacher for information on their specific expectations regarding homework.

HOT LUNCH

School lunches (including milk) are free to all students. Breakfast is also available before school and is also free. Students may get a breakfast before the morning bell, and eat it as their breakfast or save it for snack recess. We want every child to have the nutrition necessary to be healthy and able to focus on the work of learning and growing. For our records and regardless of income, please pick up a form for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program.

ILLNESS OR INJURY

If an illness or injury occurs after a student has arrived at school, he/she is to report to his/her teacher or a supervising adult, then go to the office. A nurse is on call and the school office personnel have first aid training and experience. A parent will be notified in the order provided on the emergency card. For this reason, please keep the office informed of phone number changes.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

The Independent Study process should be used when a student has an extended absence so that the student can continue to learn and can remain involved in classroom activities so that he or she is prepared upon returning.

Independent Study Process Steps

- Parent tells teacher that they need an Independent Study packet
- Parent or student is sent to front office for packet
- Office Manager initiates the paperwork, puts in dates, explains process, gets parent signature at this time
- Office Manager puts packet in the teacher's box to complete/attach work
- Packet comes back to the office for principal signature and for family pick up
- Office Manager lets family know that it is ready for pick up
- After absence, the packet is returned to teacher for assessment
- Teacher submits to office for credit and filing

INSURANCE

A private insurance company offers an accident policy that gives coverage for regular school and after school activities. Information on this policy is available in the school office. Parents are encouraged to purchase this insurance coverage.

LOST & FOUND ITEMS

Families are encouraged to clearly identify children's belongings by writing their names on everything. All lost articles

are on display on the “lost & found” rack in front of the office. If items such as keys or cell phones are lost, please also ask in the office in case someone has turned such items in. Please check lost and found frequently; unclaimed items are donated to charity twice a year. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled once a year. Please make every effort to attend, as this is one of the best opportunities to communicate with your child’s teacher about student progress and needs. If you wish to meet with teachers at other times during the year, please email the teacher to set up a meeting.

PETS AND ANIMALS AT SCHOOL

Due to School Board Policy, pets or other animals are not allowed on school property. When dropping off or picking up your child, please leave pets at home. Any stray animal found on campus will be turned over to Sonoma County Animal Care and Control.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

We consider parents a crucial ingredient to the success of our students! By working closely together we can be successful. Please see information in this handbook about Schaefer Families, our parent club, ELAC, our English Learner Advisory Committee, as well as information, below, about volunteers.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION: Schaefer FAMILIES

Schaefer Families sponsors many fun activities throughout the year and raise funds to help support Schaefer students. Meetings are held once a month and are on the school online calendar. If you are interested in participating, please talk to your child’s teacher or the office staff and join us for a meeting!

***Power of the Paw* - PARENT NEWSLETTER**

The parent newsletter is published every other month by the Schaefer office and is sent to all families via ParentSquare. It is also available online at the school website.

SCHOOL CLOSURE

In the event of weather so severe that there is a possibility schools may be closed, parents are asked to listen to following radio stations:

KSRO 1350 AM
KZST 100.1 FM
KRPQ 105 FM

Also, our district information hotline is updated regularly; the hotline number is: 522-8917 ext. 9.

SIGN-IN/SIGN-OUT

Please be sure to sign in at the office when visiting our campus, including dropping items off during the school day or at recess and lunch unless you are simply dropping off to the office. Visitors must wear a badge each time they come on campus and should return badges to the office when leaving so we know that the visitor is no longer on campus. This is an important part of school safety and is also critical in case of any emergency, when we would need to know who is on our site. Staff will stop visitors who are not wearing badges and redirect them to the office to sign in.

STUDENT SAFETY TO AND FROM SCHOOL

Please obey crosswalks and speed limits around the school and in the neighborhood. Our students need the care and attention of all of us to help ensure their safety, particularly because we are at the end of a road and have limited access and no true sidewalk. Please review your child’s after-school routine with her or him. It is important to remind them where to go after school, when you expect them to be there, stranger safety, and who to contact in case of an emergency.

The school remains responsible for student safety and behavior to and from school. The school will administer consequences for inappropriate or unsafe behavior on the walking path, pick up area, and other locations before and after school.

SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL

The School Site Council (SSC) meets monthly to work together on issues relating to school improvement. The Site Council participates in the development of the school plan and annually reviews and updates the plan and budget to

reflect changing needs and priorities within the school. In addition, the SSC provides a forum for ongoing issues and concerns. Our School Site Council meets the third Thursday during every school month and is composed of 5 parents, 3 teachers, the principal and 1 classified employee, an equal balance of both community members and staff.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

Children are expected to dress in an appropriate and safe manner for school that allows students to participate in school activities safely and without restriction, and in clothing that fits the school working environment. **Slip-on shoes and sandals may not be worn.** Beachwear or very short shorts, skirts or cropped tops may not be worn. Undergarments may not be showing. Items of clothing that have inappropriate messages or logos (guns, marijuana leaves, beer brands, etc.) may not be worn. If children arrive at school in any of the above items, parents will be called and a change of clothes or shoes will be requested.

As a guideline:

- Wear clean and properly fitting clothes – Not excessively baggy, ripped or tight.
- Wear shirts free from inappropriate words, brands or illustrations (such as beer brands, weapons/guns, marijuana leaves)
- Undergarments must be covered.
- Elementary students are not to wear make-up.
- Shoes should be safe for walking, running, and playing outdoors. Heels should not exceed one inch on shoes or boots. High heels are not appropriate or safe for school and may not be worn.
- Flip-flops or slip-on shoes are not allowed and should not be worn to school. Open toe shoes such as sandals are not safe for school.

TARDIES

When the educational process is interrupted by students arriving late to class, all students are impacted. **Every effort should be made to assure that your child arrives at school on time every day.** Students arriving late to school must report to the office and “Sign In” prior to reporting to class. If your child is tardy for 30 minutes or more, it will be considered an unverified absence. 3 or more unverified absences will result in a truancy. **BY LAW, a pattern of truancy will result in consequences that include Student Attendance Review Team meetings, Student Attendance Review Board meetings, engagement of the District Attorney, law enforcement, and the court system. It is the school’s legal obligation to follow up on chronic truancy and school attendance is mandatory by law.**

If there are particular reasons or circumstances that are preventing you from getting your child to school on time, please request a conference with your principal to discuss possible solutions. Communication with your child’s school is important and can be very beneficial.

VALUABLES AT SCHOOL

BE SMART! Leave your valuables at home. Students are responsible for their personal property. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged property. Please see specific details under Cell Phones and Other Devices, as well.

VOLUNTEERS & VISITORS AT SCHOOL

Parents, grandparents, family and friends are all welcome to visit and volunteer at school after signing in at the office. Please sign in each time you visit campus and wear a visitor’s badge, which the office provides, while on campus. Please return the badge to the office upon your departure. Visitor parking is located by the front office for your convenience.

Classroom and school-wide volunteering is welcomed and strongly encouraged. Some of the ways parents and community members can contribute to a safe and enriching learning environment are:

- Weekly classroom volunteering
- Becoming a room parent
- Working in the art room
- Working in the school gardens
- Volunteering with JLF to help with school-wide events

Contact your child’s teacher for more information or to sign up.

WALK TO LEARN

During Walk to Learn groups, students often move from one classroom to another and are blended in learning groups with students from other classes. Students may work with a teacher other than their own, or with a Program Assistant.

Students are expected to treat the instructor as they would their own teacher. Students are also expected to make the most of this time by minimizing transition time.

WHISTLE RULES: “STOP & DROP”

All students are required to freeze and touch down when the yard supervisors blow a double whistle. A short, single whistle is intended to get student attention on the spot but does not require a “drop”. The double whistle is used for transitions at recess and also emergencies. When a double whistle is used, students must touch down, remain silent and look to an adult for indication of next steps. Students should watch for a “wise wolf” hand signal and return the signal if it is used by an adult. Yard supervisors will give a verbal release when it is safe to line up.

REMEMBER - When the release signal is given:

- **Walk** to your class line.
- **Check** to see if you left something behind, such as a lunch bag, sweatshirt, coat or sweater.
- **Kneel or sit** in your line and wait for your teacher to pick your line up.

DISCIPLINE PRACTICES

The staff and community of Schaefer Elementary value a school where every student is free to learn and play in an environment that is safe, supportive, comfortable, and free from outside interference and harm. Our school uses the Toolbox Tools as a resource for dealing with difficult emotional and social experiences, and we encourage families to talk about and use the Toolbox tools at home. The tools are described on page 5 of this handbook.

School rules and discipline policies emphasize the development of empathy, communication, self-awareness, responsibility, and self-esteem. The school community works to reinforce and model positive and courteous behavior. We also work to administer consequences that are connected to the problem so that students understand cause and effect, build empathy, learn how to resolve conflicts and take appropriate measures to correct behavior or make amends to those who are hurt.

FIVE BASIC SCHOOL WIDE RULES

1. Behave in a way that promotes learning for all students in the classroom.
2. Treat children and adults with courtesy, kindness and respect.
3. Follow rules and instructions given by school adults.
4. Use common sense for what is safe and appropriate.
5. Treat all school and personal property with respect.

GENERAL RULES FOR SAFE PLAY

- Respect each other’s activities. Do not disrupt games, or hit or kick balls away from each other.
- Play in designated play areas only. Do not play in bathrooms or parking areas, go between buildings or into classrooms, or into the multi-purpose room/gym without an adult.
- Throw or kick balls only on the field unless playing an approved game such as basketball or an adult-supervised activity.
- Bounce balls on the wall ball wall and not on any other wall. This includes classroom walls before, during and after school.
- Keep rubber balls on the blacktop. Footballs, soccer balls, and softballs can be used only on the field.
- Balls may not be taken from a game.
- Games may not be locked except for full games.
- No grabbing, tackling, wrestling games, or other rough play.
- Freeze and look around when a single whistle is blown.
- Freeze and drop to touch down when a double whistle is blown.
- Students on the field should run to the edge of the blacktop and then freeze.
- When an “all clear” command is given, walk to the line and wait quietly for teachers.

SPECIFIC PLAYGROUND, BLACKTOP AND LUNCHTIME RULES

All Areas:

- Respect each other - students and adults.
- Do not hit, shove, push or throw things (food, paper, dangerous objects, etc.).
- Keep language appropriate for school - no cursing, name calling or rude language.
- Do not bring toys, balls, play equipment from home - including trading cards, fidgets or LEGOs.

- Do not deface school property - no writing, wet paper towels, or carving into things.
- Do not play in bathrooms.
- Walk on paths or sidewalks on the right side in a single file line, not grass or dirt.
- Do not chew gum at school.
- Teachers will determine if candy may be consumed in classrooms (birthdays and special events ONLY), but it is not appropriate at lunch, recess or after school.

Black Top:

- Keep games in designated areas only.
- Balls may not be taken from a game.
- No running unless it is part of a game that requires running.
- Kick/soccer balls only on the field and keep rubber balls on the blacktop.
- Games are open to all; there are no closed or locked games.
- No crossfire, dodge ball or tag games, or games that are made up and involve “bossing” each other around or excluding people.

Field:

- Football may only be played with a dedicated adult supervisor, such as a yard supervisor or a PE teacher.
- When played, football is allowed as a passing game only. No tackling, grabbing or other contact.
- Soccer is allowed with no slide tackling, tripping or shoving.
- Tag is not allowed. This includes variations, like Sharks and Minnows.
- Games that exclude people or involve one person making rules or being in charge are not allowed (Pet, Kingdom, etc.).
- Do not climb fences, building structures or trees. Ask for help if you hit a ball over a fence.
- The field is closed when wet and the field games do not move to the black top.
- Field Use is limited to the front half of the field, closest to the blacktop, at recess and lunch to allow for adequate supervision.
- Do not leave the fenced area of campus at any time during the school day; gates and fences indicate a school boundary.

Walking Path:

- The path is closed at recess and lunch.
- The path is for walking or running and students should not stop or “hang out” to visit, play, pick berries or olives.
- Do not pick up bottles or other objects that may be dangerous to touch. Let an adult know so that items can be removed.

Tables:

- Food is to be eaten at the tables only.
- Do not trade food or share food. This is a safety issue, as many students have allergies.
- During recess, snacks can be eaten at the tables nearest the playground; students should go to the play yard when finished.
- Sit at assigned class tables for lunch. Students may not move around from table to table or exclude others from class tables.
- When dismissed, pick up your own trash and any that may be near you.
- All students are responsible for cleaning up their tables.
- Ask permission to use the restroom during recess and lunch, and only use the bathrooms in the J wing at these times.
- Wait to be excused from the lunch tables.
- Never pop bags or cartons.
- Do not throw food at any time.

Big Toy:

- Do not run or play tag on or around Big Toy.
- Do not jump off of the Big Toy.
- Do not do flips, gymnastics or acrobatic acts on the Big Toy or any of the bars.
- Go down the slide only; do not climb up or jump off the side.
- Keep two hands on bars at all times, other than the monkey bars.
- Do not sit or stand on bars at any time.
- Do not climb on top of any structure; climb only on areas designed for climbing, like the rope net or ladders.
- Only go up ladders and spinning pole. Go down only on the fireman pole.
- One person on the rocking/bouncy platform at a time.

ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM RULES

Teachers and other staff establish specific guidelines, expectations and rules for their classrooms and work spaces, and communicate these to students in a variety of ways. One example might be that some teachers allow students to wear hats in class and others may not. When in a classroom, study group, library, music class, or other school setting, students should follow the specific rules established by that teacher or support provider.

CONSEQUENCES

Our school uses a progressive discipline system, and we strive to use positive reinforcement whenever we can to reinforce desired behaviors. Consequences are given when all efforts by the teacher or school personnel to correct behavior have been exhausted, or when the infraction is so serious that it warrants an immediate response. Consequences for breaking school rules will depend upon how serious the infraction is and/or if the infraction is repeated.

Possible Consequences:

- Time out from class
- Referral slip filled out
- Conference with principal
- Parent conferences
- Class suspension
- Assigned school service
- Letter or Refocus sheet sent home
- Loss of recess or lunch play
- Detention assigned
- Suspension/Expulsion

Note: Education Code Sections 48900 and 48915 outline specific infractions that require a school to suspend a student or refer a student for expulsion from the school district.

By law, school rules apply to all behavior related to school activity or school attendance, including but not limited to: (1) while on school grounds; (2) while going to or coming from school; (3) during, or while going to or from a school sponsored activity.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Schaefer is working on integrating a Restorative approach to responding to discipline issues and conflict. While sometimes it is necessary and legally required that we use traditional consequences to student discipline, we also focus on how to make things right again, heal the community, and restore students as members of the community, even when they make a mistake that hurts others.

Restorative Practices integrate developments from a variety of disciplines and fields, including [education](#), [psychology](#), [social work](#), [criminology](#), [sociology](#), [organizational development](#) and [leadership](#) — in order to build healthy communities, increase [social capital](#), decrease crime and antisocial behavior, repair harm and restore relationships.

Educators across the nation recognize the importance of fostering positive, healthy school climates and helping students learn from their mistakes. Increasingly, we are partnering with parents, students, district officials, community organizations, and policymakers to move away from harmful and counterproductive zero-tolerance discipline policies and toward proven restorative approaches to addressing conflict in schools.

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

Positive behavior and self-esteem are also supported by a variety of classroom and schoolwide strategies. The following acknowledgments are used to recognize cooperative, positive behavior both in the classroom and on the playground:

- Verbal reinforcement
- Schaefer Star Student awards
- Pizza with the Principal
- Class meetings and discussions
- Classroom recognition activities such as:
 - token systems
 - special classroom activities
 - preferred activity time
 - classroom certificates

SUSPENSION

Students may be sent to the office for a higher level of disciplinary actions, such as in-school or home suspension. A parent/principal conference will be requested by the school whenever suspension occurs. Parents will be contacted by phone for the following reasons:

- Behavior infractions of classroom rules when all efforts by the teacher have been exhausted
- Bullying and harassment
- Physical violence and fighting
- Possession of a dangerous object or weapon

BULLYING

Schaefer Elementary School strives to provide a safe school environment that protects students from physical and emotional harm. Student safety is our highest priority and the school shall not tolerate bullying of any student. Bullying is something that we take very seriously, but it is also a term that needs to be clearly understood and applied.

The definition of bullying is as follows:

The use of force, threat, or coercion to abuse, intimidate, or aggressively impose domination over others. The behavior is often repeated and habitual. One essential prerequisite, by the bully or others, is an imbalance of social or physical power. Behaviors used to assert such domination include verbal harassment or threat, physical assault or coercion, and such acts may be directed repeatedly towards particular targets.

No student or group of students shall, through physical, written, verbal, or other means, harass, sexually harass, threaten, intimidate, cyberbully, cause bodily injury to, or commit hate violence against any other student or school personnel. Cyberbullying includes the transmission of harassing communications, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images on the Internet, social media, or other technologies using a telephone, computer, or any wireless communication device. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity in order to damage that person. Any student who engages in bullying on school premises, or off campus in a manner that causes or is likely to cause a substantial disruption of a school activity or school attendance, shall be subject to discipline, which may include suspension or expulsion, in accordance with district policies and regulations.

While the following experiences and behaviors are things we strive to minimize and address, these incidents are NOT typically considered bullying (adapted from the <http://www.safefrombullies.com> website):

Not liking someone — It is very natural that people do not like everyone around them and, as unpleasant as it may be to know someone does not like you, verbal and nonverbal messages of "I don't like you" are not acts of bullying.

Being excluded — Again, it is very natural for people to gather around a group of friends and we cannot be friends with everyone, so it is acceptable that when kids have a party or play a game at the playground, they will include their friends and sometimes exclude others. It is very important to remind children that they do the same thing sometimes too and, although exclusion is unpleasant, it is not an act of bullying.

Accidentally bumping into someone — When people bump into others, the reaction depends mostly on the bumped person's mood. If they have had a bad day, they may think it was an act of aggressive behavior, but if they are in a good mood, they may smile back and attract an apology. This is also relevant for playing sports, like when kids throw the ball at each other and it hits someone on the head. It is very important for teachers and parents to explain that some accidents happen without any bad intention and it is important not to create a big conflict, because it was NOT an act of bullying.

Making other kids play things a certain way — Wanting things to be done our way is a normal human experience and is not an act of bullying. To make sure that children do not see it as an aggressive or "bossy" behavior, we need to teach assertiveness and self-advocacy. Again, although it is not fun or pleasant, this is not bullying.

A single act of telling a joke about someone — Making fun of other people is not fun for them and isn't compassionate or kind behavior, but the difference between humor and making fun of someone is very fine, and sometimes children don't understand the difference. It is important to teach that things we say as jokes should also be amusing for others and must not be at the expense of individuals or groups of people. If not, we need to tell each other and we need to stop. Unless it happens over and over again and is done deliberately to hurt someone, telling a joke about someone is not bullying.

Arguments — Arguments are heated disagreements between two (or more) people (or groups). It is natural that people have different interests and ideas. It is very understandable to have disagreements with others. An argument, itself, is not a form of bullying, although some people turn arguments into bullying. When we want to win an argument so much that we use every means to get what we want, including finding a weakness in the other person, abusing knowledge or trust we have gained and using it against the other person, we can turn into a bully. It is very important to distinguish between natural disagreements and bullying during an argument.

Expression of unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others — Communication requires at least two players. Although it may be unpleasant to hear what someone thinks about us, it is not a form of bullying. In every communication, there are disagreements and some form of judgment about each other's attitude and behavior. If someone says, "I think this was not a nice gesture" or "You insulted me when you said this," this is not bullying but an expression of thoughts and feelings.

Isolated acts of harassment, aggressive behavior, intimidation, or meanness — The definition of bullying states that there is repetition in the behavior. Bullying is a conscious, repeated, hostile, aggressive behavior of an individual or a group abusing their position with the intention to harm others or gain real or perceived power. Therefore, anything that happens once is not an act of bullying. As parents and caregivers, it is important that we all pay attention to what children are telling us and that we find out if things are happening more than once or if the behavior is reciprocal. A power imbalance is a key component of bullying behavior.

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT

All students have the right and responsibility to a public education free from discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, sex, gender, ethnic group, culture, heritage, national origin, sexual orientation, religion and physical or mental disability. Students shall have equal opportunities in admission and access to all District programs and activities.

Harassment includes written, verbal, physical, and/or visual contact of a harassing nature. Written examples include but are not limited to letters, notes, invitations, etc. Verbal examples include but are not limited to comments, innuendoes, slurs, jokes, epithets, etc. Physical examples include but are not limited to assault, touching, impeding, blocking movement, etc. Visual examples include but are not limited to leering, gestures, display of objects or pictures, cartoons or posters, etc.

Sexual Harassment

California law and School Board Policy prohibit sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and any other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature which negatively impacts a student's academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment in the school. Sexual harassment may also involve conduct, whether blatant or subtle, that discriminates against a person solely because of that person's gender. Students may be suspended or expelled from school for engaging in unlawful sexual harassment.

Types of conduct that are prohibited in the district and which may constitute sexual harassment include:

1. Unwelcome leering, sexual flirtations, or propositions.
2. Unwelcome sexual slurs, epithets, threats, verbal abuse, derogatory comments, or sexually degrading descriptions.
3. Graphic verbal comments about an individual's body or overly personal conversations.
4. Sexual jokes, stories, drawings, pictures, or gestures.
5. Spreading sexual rumors.
6. Teasing or sexual remarks about students enrolled in a predominantly single-sex class.
7. Touching an individual's body or clothes in a sexual way.
8. Purposefully limiting a student's access to educational tools.
9. Cornering or blocking of normal movements.
10. Displaying sexually suggestive objects in the educational or work environment.
11. An act of retaliation against an individual who reports a violation of the district's sexual harassment policy or who participates in the investigation of a sexual harassment complaint.
12. Classroom activities and projects that would disparage one gender's abilities.
13. "Pantsing".

A student is not required to handle a complaint informally before filing a formal complaint; however, *s/he* may directly ask the person doing the harassing to stop. A student may ask for help and advice by contacting the school counselor, any teacher or administrator, *and/or* any other school site employee. If the harassment is continuing, the student with

the help of parent/guardian or school personnel should file a written formal complaint. For any type of harassment, a complaint and the results of the investigation shall be confidential to the extent reasonably possible under the investigation process. Witnesses and those interviewed need to know that it is a violation of the policy to disclose the complaint or the nature of the investigation to others.

For complete copies of Board Adopted Policies and Administrative Regulations or Education Codes related to Nondiscrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Uniform Complaint Procedures, contact the school or District Office.

CONFIRMATION OF REVIEW

Dear Parents & Guardians:

We ask that you review this handbook with your child so that we know that families and students understand the expectations and guiding principles of our school. If you have questions, please feel free to call the office or talk with a staff member to clarify.

Please sign below and return only this page to your child's teacher no later than September 11, 2023.

My child _____ and I have reviewed and understand the policies, procedures, guidelines and Discipline Policy of Schaefer Charter School for the 2023-24 school year.

(Student Signature)

(Parent Signature)

(Teacher Name)

(Date)