



Student & Family Handbook

Pony Express Elementary
1250 56th Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95831
916-395-4690

<http://Ponyexpress.scusd.edu>

PONY EXPRESS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL VISION

“Our vision for success is an emotionally and physically safe school where all students are empowered to achieve high academic standards, be critical thinkers, be responsible citizens, and lifelong learners.”

PONY EXPRESS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MISSION

To accomplish our vision we will:

- Provide a rigorous, standards-based curriculum that enables all students to meet and exceed established measures of success,
- Employ effective, research-based teaching strategies that meet the needs of all students,
- Provide a balanced curriculum that develops the confidence and abilities needed to independent decision-making,
- Consistently involve all students, staff, parents and community members in decision-making to improve the achievement of all students
- Be a professional, reflective community engaging in active and open communication to support the needs of our students,

Pony Express Elementary School is deeply committed to ensuring that all students receive a rich and varied standards-aligned curriculum in a caring, positive, friendly, safe and supportive learning environment. To achieve this goal, we will ensure that all students, staff and families work together as a cohesive school community to develop mutual trust, strong character traits, and deep respect for our diverse, rich, multicultural heritage.

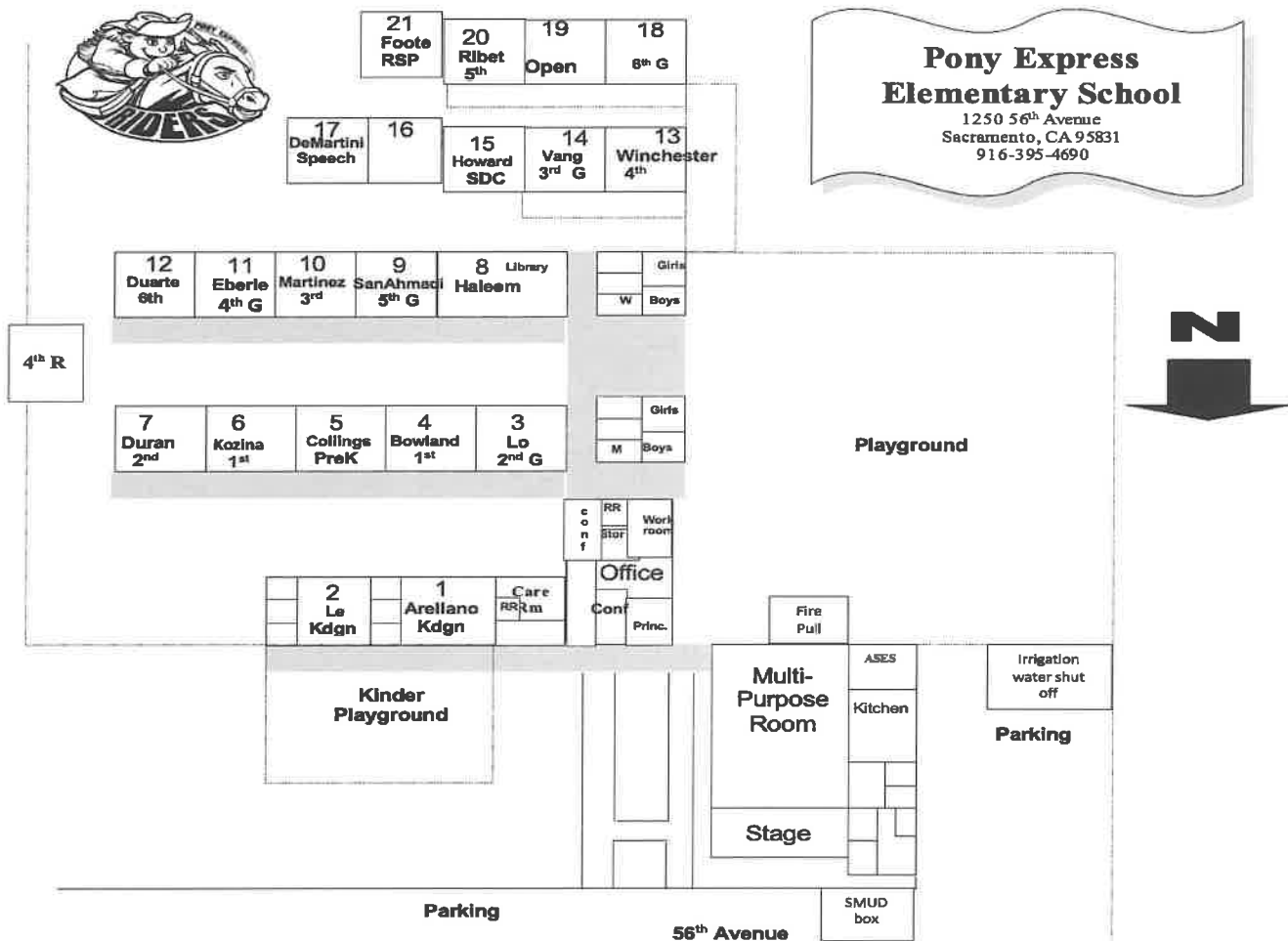
Pony Express 2023-2024 School Calendar

Orientation/Back to School Night	Tuesday, August 29, 2023
First Day of School	Thursday, August 31, 2023
Labor Day Holiday	Monday, September 4, 2023
Picture Day	TBD
Parent Teacher Conferences (shortened days)	October 13-20, 2023
Celebration of Art Event	Friday October 13, 2023
Harvest Festival	TBD
Veterans' Day Holiday (no school)	Friday, November 10, 2023
Thanksgiving Holiday (no school)	November 20-24, 2023
End of Trimester 1	Friday, December 1, 2023
Report Cards Sent Home	Friday, December 8, 2023
Pre-Winter Holiday Shortened Day	Friday, December 22, 2023
Winter Holidays (no school)	December 25-January 5, 2024
Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday (no school)	Monday, January 15, 2024
Sly Park	January 22-26, 2024
Lincoln Holiday (no school)	Monday, February 12, 2024
Washington Holiday (no school)	Monday, February 19, 2024
Parent Conferences (shortened days)	January 29 - February 2, 2024
End of Trimester 2	Friday, March 15, 2024
Report Cards Sent Home	Friday, March 22, 2024
Jogathon	TBD
Spring Holiday (no school)	March 25-29, 2024
Family Science Night	TBD
Memorial Day Holiday (no school)	Monday, May 27, 2024
Open House	Friday, May 31, 2024
Field Day	Monday, June 6, 2024
Kindergarten Promotion	Tuesday, June 11, 2024
6th Grade Promotion	Wednesday, June 12, 2024
Last Day of School (shortened day)	Thursday, June 13, 2024



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Pony Express Elementary

Bell Schedule

2023-2024

AM PreK		
<i>Mondays-Wednesdays & Fridays</i>	<i>Thursdays</i>	<i>Shortened Days</i>
8:50-9:00 Student arrival 9:00 Instruction begins 11:30 Dismissal	8:50-9:00 Student arrival 9:00 Instruction begins 11:30 Dismissal	8:50-9:00 Student arrival 9:00 Instruction begins 11:30 Dismissal
PM PreK		
<i>Mondays-Wednesdays & Fridays</i>	<i>Thursdays</i>	<i>Shortened Days</i>
12:15-12:20 Student arrival 12:20 Instruction begins 3:10 Dismissal	12:15-12:20 Student arrival 12:20 Instruction begins 2:10 Dismissal	12:15-12:20 Student arrival 12:20 Instruction begins 1:50 Dismissal

Kindergarten & TK		
<i>Mondays-Wednesdays & Fridays</i>	<i>Thursdays</i>	<i>Shortened Days</i>
8:30 Breakfast 8:45-8:55 Student Arrival 9:00 Instruction begins 10:20-10:40 Recess & snack 10:40-12:20 Instruction 12:20 Dismissal Bell	8:30 Breakfast 8:45-8:55 Student Arrival 9:00 Instruction begins 10:20-10:40 Recess & snack 10:40-12:20 Instruction 12:20 Dismissal Bell	8:30 Breakfast 8:45-8:55 Student Arrival 9:00 Instruction begins 10:20-10:40 Recess & snack 10:40-12:20 Instruction 12:20 Dismissal Bell

First & Second Grades		
<i>Mondays-Wednesdays & Fridays</i>	<i>Thursdays</i>	<i>Shortened Days</i>
8:30 Breakfast 8:45-8:58 Student Arrival/Walk Track 8:58 Line up 9:00-10:15 Instruction 10:15-10:30 Recess 10:30-11:30 Instruction 11:30-12:15 Lunch & Recess 12:15-1:20 Instruction 1:20-1:35 Recess 1:35-3:12 Instruction 3:12 Dismissal Bell	8:30 Breakfast 8:45-8:58 Student Arrival /Walk Track 8:58 Line up 9:00-10:15 Instruction 10:15-10:30 Recess 10:30-11:30 Instruction 11:30-12:15 Lunch & Recess 12:15-1:20 Instruction 1:20-1:35 Recess 1:35-2:12 Instruction 2:12 Dismissal Bell	8:30 Breakfast 8:45-8:58 Student Arrival/Walk Track 8:58 Line up 9:00-10:15 Instruction 10:15-10:30 Recess 10:30-11:30 Instruction 11:30-12:00 Lunch & Recess 12:00-1:20 Instruction 1:20-1:30 Recess 1:30-1:50 Instruction 1:50 Dismissal Bell

Third & Fourth Grades		
<i>Mondays-Wednesdays & Fridays</i>	<i>Thursdays</i>	<i>Shortened Days</i>
8:30 Breakfast 8:45-8:58 Student Arrival/Walk Track 8:58 Line up	8:30 Breakfast 8:45-8:58 Student Arrival/Walk Track 8:58 Line up	8:30 Breakfast 8:45-8:58 Student Arrival/Walk Track 8:58 Line up

9:00-10:35 Instruction 10:35-10:50 Recess (3rd grade only) 10:50-12:00 Instruction (3rd Grade only) 10:35-10:45 Recess (4th grade only) 10:45-12:00 (4th grade only) 12:00-12:45 Lunch & Recess 12:45-1:20 Instruction 1:20-1:35 Recess (3rd grade only) 1:35-3:12 Instruction 3:12 Dismissal Bell	9:00-10:35 Instruction 10:35-10:50 Recess (3rd grade only) 10:50-12:00 Instruction (3rd Grade only) 10:35-10:45 Recess (4th grade only) 10:45-12:00 (4th grade only) 12:00-12:45 Lunch & Recess 12:45-1:20 Instruction 1:20-1:35 Recess (3rd grade only) 1:35-2:12 Instruction 2:12 Dismissal Bell	9:00-10:35 Instruction 10:35-10:50 Recess (3rd grade only) 10:50-12:00 Instruction (3rd Grade only) 10:35-10:45 Recess (4th grade only) 10:45-12:00 (4th grade only) 12:00-12:30 Lunch & Recess 12:00-1:49 Instruction (4th grade) 12:30-1:20 Instruction (3rd grade) 1:20-1:30 Recess (3rd grade only) 1:30-1:50 Instruction (3rd grade) 1:49 Dismissal Bell (4th grade only) 1:50 Dismissal Bell (3rd grade only)
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Fifth & Sixth Grades		
<i>Mondays-Wednesdays & Fridays</i>	<i>Thursdays</i>	<i>Shortened Days</i>
8:30 Breakfast 8:45-8:58 Student Arrival/Walk Track 8:58 Line up 9:00-10:55 Instruction 10:55-11:05 Recess 11:05-12:30 Instruction 12:30-1:15 Lunch & Recess 1:15-3:12 Instruction 3:12 Dismissal Bell	8:30 Breakfast 8:45-8:58 Student Arrival/Walk Track 8:58 Line up 9:00-10:55 Instruction 10:55-11:05 Recess 11:05-12:30 Instruction 12:30-1:15 Lunch & Recess 1:15-2:12 Instruction 2:12 Dismissal Bell	8:30 Breakfast 8:45-8:58 Student Arrival/Walk Track 8:58 Line up 9:00-10:55 Instruction 10:55-11:05 Recess 11:05-12:30 Instruction 12:30-1:00 Lunch & Recess 1:00-1:49 Instruction 1:49 Dismissal Bell

COVID PROCEDURES

Health & Safety

SCUSD no longer provides health aides for individual campuses. If your student is not feeling well they will be sent to the office where the office staff will decide next steps.

Any student or staff member who tests positive for Covid-19 must stay home and contact their supervisor or principal. Supervisors must report immediately to Health Services via email to covidreport@scusd.edu for contact tracing.

STAY HOME IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting

YOU MAY RETURN TO SCHOOL AFTER:

- 5 days have passed, at least 24 hours fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms are improving
OR
- Present a negative COVID-19 test and at least 24 hours has passed since a fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms are improving
OR
- Present a note from a healthcare provider that confirms that current symptoms are from a chronic condition or other disease process.

Chronic conditions: Individuals with documented non-infectious chronic conditions can return to school when symptoms have improved. A doctor may diagnose an illness other than COVID-19 and provide a note for return to school earlier than 5 days. Individuals with unmanaged, new Covid-like symptoms (such as congestion, coughing, runny nose) may be sent home until symptoms have improved. If there are questions about individual cases, contact your school nurse or health services.

Allergy symptoms are the same as early COVID-19 symptoms. Many people who test positive for Covid remark, "I just thought it was my allergies." If a person has new or worsening allergy symptoms they should test to rule out COVID-19. If the test is negative and symptoms improve they can come to work or school.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL GUIDELINES

It is our goal that your children arrive at school and are picked up from school in a safe, timely, and orderly manner. We request that all adults bringing children to and from school obey traffic laws and follow our arrival and dismissal guidelines. Please assist us in providing a safe school environment.

Our parking lot is U shaped with a one way entrance and exit. It functions well for dropping off and picking up students. As tempting as it is to stop in front of the school entrance, please drive past the entrance and past the kindergarten classrooms before stopping. Drivers can also take advantage of the wide street in front of the school to park and use the crosswalk to arrive onto campus.

Please make sure your child comes to school after 8:45a.m. unless he or she attends ASES or is eating breakfast in the cafeteria, which opens at 8:30a.m. There is limited staff supervision of children in the yard until 8:45a.m. Children arriving before 8:45a.m. will be sent to the cafeteria and parents will be called to discuss arrival time. Students may not arrive before 8:45 if they are not eating breakfast, and not before 8:30a.m. if they are eating breakfast.

When students are released from the cafeteria at 8:45am, the expectation is that **ALL STUDENTS WILL WALK THE TRACK** from 8:45am until 9:00am. **Every Friday we invite families to join us as we walk the track.**

The Sacramento City Unified School District has adopted a schedule allowing teachers to collaborate during the school day. As a result, students will be dismissed Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 3:12p.m. and must be picked up by 3:27p.m. Students will be dismissed on Thursdays at 2:12p.m. and must be picked up by 2:27p.m. If you are late picking up your child, he or she will be sent to the office to wait and the office staff will contact you and your child's emergency contacts.

Children are not allowed to play on the school grounds outside school hours unless a parent or guardian is supervising them. Children who are on campus after school hours will be brought to the office and the parent/guardian will be called to pick them up. Repeated violations of this guideline may result in discipline.

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES

The first ten absences for illness must be verified by methods one, two, or three below. Absences that are not excused by one of these two methods will be considered UNEXCUSED and will begin the SART process. After a student has reached the limit of ten excused absences due to illness. Any additional absences must be verified by a note from your child's medical practitioner, otherwise they will be considered UNEXCUSED.

- Method 1: Click on "Report an Absence" on our school website at www.ponyexpress.edu
- Method 2: Written note from parent/guardian, or parent representative. The note should include your child's full name, grade/teacher, date of absence, reason for absence, and a parent or guardian signature
- Method 3: Conversation in person or by telephone between the verifying employee and the student's parent/guardian or parent representative.

If a student has three or more unexcused absences or three tardies of 30 minutes or more, he or she is considered TRUANT. SCUSD's truancy program includes a partnership with the District Attorney, Sacramento Police, Juvenile Probation, City of Sacramento, and several judges. The process involves letters sent home, a school site SART meeting and a district level SARB (Student Attendance Review Board) hearing.

SARB PROCEDURE AND PROCESS

- 1st Truancy Letter: Sent after three unexcused absences or tardies of 30 minutes or more
- 2nd Truancy Letter: Sent home after one additional unexcused absence or tardy
- 3rd Truancy Letter: Sent after one additional unexcused absence or tardy & SART appointment is scheduled
- SART (Student Attendance Review Team): Hearing and contracts completed and signed
- SARB (Student Attendance Review Board): Referral made after one additional unexcused absence or tardy. Referral may then be made to District Attorney's Office for prosecution.

It is our goal to make sure every student has the opportunity to receive a quality education, so we will do everything possible prior to a hearing to improve attendance. However, if attendance concerns continue, we are prepared to implement the SARB process to the fullest extent. Remember that school attendance is a key factor in school success, and every effort should be made to ensure that your child is in school every day.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Short Term Independent Study (STIS) is for anyone that needs it for up to 14 days or less, cumulative. Parents must submit a request to the principal via email at least two weeks in advance of the absence. The parent will then be given the Independent Study contract to complete and submit to the classroom teacher at least one week in advance of the absence. The teacher will then create assignments and provide them to the parent. The Independent Study contract and completed student work is due back to the classroom teacher within one week of the student's return to class.

Long Term Independent Study (LTIS), 15 days or more, will take place at Capitol City.

DISCIPLINE & SCHOOLWIDE EXPECTATIONS

Pony Express Elementary School prides itself on a discipline plan that is fair, restorative, and consistent. We feel that all students have a right to go to school in a safe environment. Each student also deserves the opportunity to learn in an atmosphere of respect, free from the influence of disruptive classmates. Each student and teacher has a responsibility to do their part in creating and maintaining a respectful, safe and stimulating learning environment. We realize that there will be times when students forget their responsibility or are temporarily unwilling to be cooperative. For this reason, we have developed a plan of positive discipline that restores a safe and stimulating environment and supports those who are negatively impacted by the misbehavior.

In alignment with positive behavior intervention supports we have created Expectations for our school. Each space (classroom, cafeteria, hallway, bathroom, office, outside) will have their own set of expectations based on three principles of being RESPONSIBLE, RESPECTFUL and SAFE. If students require support in keeping to our Expectations, the following process is in place:

Informal Process: Usual Constructive Reminders

Student is made aware of being off task or of their disruptive behavior with in-class reminders:

- Eye contact with student
- Teacher moves closer to student
- Students attention is redirected back to the lesson
- Teacher pauses to gain attention
- Student is offered a specific choice: follow School Wide Expectations (explain desired behavior) or accept specific consequence (move to another location, missed recess or preferred activity, time out, Teacher/Student Conference, Think Sheet, Parent Contact, Principal Referral, etc.).
- Student who modifies behavior with these reminders is encouraged and supported
- If the student does not modify his/her behavior, Formal Process begins

Formal Process:

Please note: There are times when a teacher or the principal will need to skip steps based on student behavior and response. As always, we will use our best professional judgment to determine the appropriate steps for correcting student behavior and restoring a safe environment.

Step 1: Reminder of Schoolwide Expectations

- Make student aware of their disruptive behavior
- Invite student to remember School Wide Expectations and ask if they plan to follow the agreements.
- Offer student a specific choice: follow School Wide Expectations (explain desired behavior) or accept specific consequence (move to another location, missed recess or preferred activity, time out, Teacher/Student Conference, Think Sheet, Parent Contact, Principal Referral, etc.)
- Encourage and support student who modifies behaviors
- If the student continues to refuse to cooperate proceed to Step 2

Step 2: Teacher/Student(s) Conference

- These conferences should take place outside of instructional time. Using a portion of recess or other preferred activity time in class is acceptable
- Discuss behavior and its impact on the classroom and/or school community. Student(s) and teacher each describe the problem, listening and summarizing each other
- Work with student to develop a plan for following School Wide Expectations

- Follow up to ensure the agreements are being kept
- Encourage and support student who modifies behavior with these reminders
- If the agreements are not kept, repeat Step 2 or proceed to Step 3

Step 3: Think Sheets

- Required for students who do not modify their behavior with Steps 1 & 2
- Students will be required to complete a Think Sheet in their own classroom, during recess, in another classroom, or in the office if necessary
- When Think Sheets are sent home for parent signature, the Time Out Record (on the back of the Think Sheet) will be completed in order to provide parents with additional information about the incident or behavior
- When students have completed the Think Sheet, they will be invited them to work with the teacher and any other involved students to fully resolve the conflict
- If a student refuses to complete the Think Sheet and resolve the problem cooperatively, proceed to Step 4.

Step 4: Principal Referral

- If a student refuses to complete the Think Sheet and resolve the problem cooperatively, student will be sent to the office with a Principal Referral
- If the principal is able to resolve the behavior with the student and the student agrees to keep the School Wide Expectations made and accept the determined consequence, the student will return to class and Principal Referral will be sent home for parent signature

Step 5: Cooperative Agreement

If the misbehavior is a serious concern, but not an immediate safety risk or if the student refuses to resolve the problem cooperatively with school personnel, the principal will contact parents to schedule a meeting. Parents are also contacted if a student has been involved in something that is a serious safety concern outside of the classroom. Parents are invited to help their child consider resolving the problem cooperatively with them present. The group writes and signs a Cooperative Agreement developed to resolve the problem. When a Cooperative Agreement is developed, follow-up meeting(s) are scheduled and convened until the problem is resolved. If a Cooperative Agreement is not developed or is violated, proceed to Step 5.

Step 6: CA Ed Code School Suspension

If a Cooperative Agreement has not been developed or signed or is violated, or if the California Education Code requires a specific action, the administration will take immediate action as required.

DRESS CODE

Board Policy #5132

The Governing Board believes that appropriate dress and grooming contribute to a productive learning environment. The Board expects students to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to wear clothes that are suitable for the school activities in which they participate. Students' clothing may not present a health or safety hazard or create a distraction which would interfere with the educational process.

- All clothing must be clean, suitable, and appropriate for school activities.
- All clothing must fit.
- **Shirts should be long enough to cover stomachs even when hands are raised. Shirts cannot be mesh, see-through, or have spaghetti straps.**

- Pants, shorts, and skirts must be fit around the waist; no sagging. Pants should not drag on the ground. Pants should not have not have excessively large holes that show more skin than cover. **Shorts and skirts should be longer than the fingertips with arms extended.**
- At no time should undergarments be visible. Pajamas and undershirts are not to be worn as outerwear.
- Shoes must be tie or strap-on and suitable for running and other recess or PE activities. No flip-flops, wheelies, or high heels.
- Jewelry should be age appropriate. Chains and other jewelry that could present a safety hazard are prohibited.
- All clothing should be free of “put downs” or other forms of language contrary to supporting academics and student success. Clothing that contains images of violence, is known by local law enforcement to be gang related, is distracting to the learning environment, or promotes or glorifies drugs or violence is strictly prohibited. Students wearing such clothing will be asked to call home for a change of clothes or required to change into clothing provided by the school.

Mr. Reyes

Physical Education

DRESS POLICY

- tennis shoes with socks
- proper dress for Physical Education
- water bottles
- Please make sure students are aware of what day they are having Physical Education, there will also be weeks in which students will receive an additional day of Physical Education.

CELL PHONES AND PERSONAL ITEMS

Students may not bring personal items to school. This includes but is not limited to toys, games, iPads, etc. The school is not responsible for any lost, damaged or stolen personal items brought from school.

While cell phones may be brought to school they may not interfere with the teaching and learning of the students in the classroom. Cell phones are to remain off and out of sight (in backpacks). We strongly discourage students from wearing Apple watches or smart watches at school. If a student needs to make a phone call during the instructional day they need to communicate that need to their teacher.

NEW SCUSD HEALTH & WELLNESS POLICY

“A Wellness Policy is an important tool for parents, educational agencies and school districts in promoting student wellness, preventing and reducing childhood obesity, and assuring that school meal nutrition guidelines meet the minimum federal school meal standards. It contains goals specifically for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school based activities that promote student wellness.” –USDA

Frequently Asked Questions:

Can I bring snacks for the class on my child’s birthday or general classroom celebration? Yes, as long as the snack meets state and federal regulations for food served during the school day, such as fresh fruit, 100% fruit juice and whole grain snacks. Most cupcakes/cakes do not meet these requirements. Other non-food related options are possible, including but not limited to pencils, erasers, or other small items.

Do these regulations apply to food items that students bring from home for their own personal consumption? No – Parents may decide what food items they want their *own child* to have.

May teachers give students candy/food as a reward for good behavior? No – BP 3050 Student Wellness Policy restricts the use of food for rewards. The district as a whole wants to limit access to unhealthy items during the school day that decay teeth and teach unhealthy lifelong habits.

Do these regulations apply to sports games and parent-sponsored events? Concessions sold at sporting events may begin 30 minutes after the school day ends at any grade level. The regulations do not apply to food sold to adults. These regulations do not apply to food sold at events held in the evenings or on weekends.

Classroom Celebration Ideas: SCUSD employees, parent organizations and outside organizations will not use any food or beverage as a reward, incentive or punishment for academic performance or good behavior. Schools can promote a positive learning environment by shifting the focus from food during classroom celebrations, and striving to have non-food celebrations or healthy non-allergenic food. Food must be compliant with Competitive Foods regulations.

Healthy snack options:

- Fresh fruit
- Smoothies
- Frozen bananas with shredded coconut
- Vegetables with a variety of healthy dips (hummus, guacamole, salad dressing)

Pony Express Elementary School recognizes that student birthdays are very special days.

Parent/Guardians may send a small gift bag (non-food items) for students to share with their class at a time determined by the classroom teacher (*arrange with teacher first*).

Per SCUSD Nutrition Policy, we are asking parents to not bring in treats as there are lots of students with allergies. Out of respect for all students and the educational process, items such as invitations, gifts, balloons, or flowers are not to be distributed at school.

Pony Express
Student & Family Handbook
2023-2024 Agreement
Please Sign and Return to Your Child's Teacher

Communication and positive relationships are critical aspects of bringing a school community together under a common vision for students. Therefore, you will receive a weekly phone message every Sunday evening. Teachers will send home regular communication, including unit newsletters, and we are all accessible by email if you have a question or want to set up a time to talk.

Please keep this Student & Family Condensed Handbook in an easy-to-find location throughout the year, as it is another vital communication tool. The **Complete Student & Family Handbook** can be found on our website www.ponyexpress.edu. There you will find information about our special programs, policies and procedures, and expectations for student behavior and safety.

Yes, my child and I have reviewed the 2022-23 Pony Express Student and Family Handbook, and we understand and agree to follow the Policies and Procedures established by the school.

Student Name _____

Student's Teacher _____

Parent Signature _____ **Date** _____