



HIGHGATE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Empowering all learners.

**13401 Pemberley Passage Ave.
Bakersfield, Ca 93311**

(661) 501-1617

PARENT HANDBOOK

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to Highgate Elementary School! We are pleased to have you as part of our school family. The staff at Highgate Elementary School is very proud to serve Highgate Students and will strive for the high standards in academics, athletics, and the arts that our District has stood for over the years.

The information contained in this handbook has been compiled to provide you with helpful information about Highgate Elementary School. The section regarding our school policies and procedures will answer many commonly asked questions. We hope you will read the handbook and keep it as a handy reference guide to use throughout the year.

We wish you success at Highgate Elementary and look forward to working with you. We have a wonderful Parent Club that works on behalf of our students, staff, and families, and we invite you to become involved.

We welcome your questions, comments, or concerns. Please feel free to contact the school office at (661) 501-1617. Our office hours are Monday through Friday from 7:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

We are looking forward to a great year!

Sincerely,

Morgan Hicks

Morgan Hicks
Principal



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Panama-Buena Vista Union School District
4200 Ashe Road
Bakersfield, California 93313
(661) 831-8331

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GENERAL INFORMATION

ACCIDENTS, ILLNESS, AND SAFETY

In the case of accidents, illness, or injury at school, children are given first aid and every effort is made to contact the parent. As such, it is very important that changes in telephone numbers and addresses be reported to the school promptly. In the event the parent cannot be reached, we will call the person named on the emergency card to act on your behalf.

We urge all children to use crosswalks and sidewalks, where available, coming to and from school. Please help your child choose the safest route possible.

ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

The Highgate Elementary School campus opens at 8:05 A.M. We ask that no students be at school before 8:05 A.M. so that we may be sure to provide appropriate supervision for them. Please be aware the school can not take responsibility for the supervision of students who arrive early. If your child arrives before 8:05 A.M. you will be contacted so other arrangements can be made.

ATTENDANCE

We ask for your cooperation in seeing that your child attends school each day. Any absence from school places a hardship on the student and hinders learning. By law, an absence may be excused only for the following reasons:

- Illness
- Doctor's appointment
- Death in the family

If your child is absent from school for ANY reason, please call the school at (661) 501-1617 to report the absence and the reason. If you are unable to call, please send a note to school regarding the absence, upon your child's return. Absences not cleared within 48 hours will automatically become "unexcused." After 10 excused absences throughout the year, a doctor's note is required to excuse absences.

If your child is late because of a doctor or dentist appointment, please bring in a note from the doctor or dentist.

California law requires children to attend school and to be on time every day. Absence from school for **three or more days per year** for unexcused reasons will result in a child being declared legally truant from school. Truant students are reported to the School Attendance Review Board and/or appropriate agencies such as Child Protective Services.

Unexcused absences, including family trips for pleasure/recreation and business purposes or failing to provide proper verification for an absence for more than 10 consecutive days can result in the student being dropped from the class and the risk of the student not returning to the same class or school.

If your child is absent and you would like to have homework provided, please call the school office and allow the teacher 24 hours to compile the work. Homework may be picked up in the office. Please do not interrupt the classroom to ask a teacher for work.

If your child will be absent for at least 3 consecutive days but no more than 14 days, you may request an Independent Study contract. An Independent Study contract request form can be obtained in the front office. Requests will be approved by the assistant principal. Signatures from both the parent and the student will be required to signify that both understand the student will complete all work sent home by the teacher as outlined on the

Independent Study Assignment Log. The work will be due to the teacher on the day the student returns. The teacher will determine if the work completed will receive credit based on its quality. If credit is granted, the student will receive full attendance for the days missed. Independent study can only be requested two times during a school year, and the total duration can not exceed 14 days.

AWARDS

Students in grades 4-6 have the opportunity to earn a school letter by participating in various school activities. Points are cumulative from the fourth grade and are given for such activities as student government, special activities, athletics, music, and scholastic achievement. Point totals are calculated by students and teachers at the end of each quarter of school.

Students in grades TK-6 can earn a Husky of the Quarter award for living the Husky Way (i.e. Being Safe, Respectful, and Responsible). This is determined by the student's teacher.

BEHAVIOR STANDARDS

All students at Highgate Elementary School are expected to behave in a proper manner at all times. You will be notified if your child exhibits unacceptable behavior. Communication, parental cooperation with the school, and support of school standards are the keys to solving many behavior problems.

Parents can view or obtain a copy of the *Parent Information Booklet* by visiting the Panama-Buena Vista USD website. Please take time to review these guidelines and discuss them with your student.

BICYCLES, SCOOTERS, SKATEBOARDS, AND ROLLERBLADES

Students in grades 3 - 6 may ride a bicycle, scooter, skateboard, or rollerblades to and from school. To do so, a student must have a [Bicycle, Scooter, Skateboard, and Rollerblade Permission Form](#) filled out and on file. These items may not be ridden on campus or on the sidewalks adjacent to the school. Bicycle riders should park their bicycles in the rack and lock them securely. Students must have permission from their teacher to store scooters, skateboards, or roller blades in the classroom. Otherwise, these items must be locked in the rack. By law, bicycle, scooter, skateboard, and rollerblade riders must wear an approved helmet at all times when riding. Students are to be responsible for the care and storage of their helmets.

Students should keep in mind that riding such items to school is a privilege. A student who fails to use good judgment when riding a bicycle, scooter, skateboard, or rollerblades may lose the privilege to ride them.

BIRTHDAYS

Each teacher acknowledges students' birthdays in the classroom, although parties are not held. While we understand the desire to bring treats to classrooms, we do not allow birthday food to be delivered to classrooms. This also includes birthday deliveries such as balloons and flowers. We try to avoid interruptions of the classroom routine which detract from the learning of all students. In place of bringing birthday snacks on campus, here are some healthy alternatives that do not interfere with instructional time.

- Donate a book to the Highgate Library in honor of your student's birthday.

- Make a donation to your student's teacher for a book or item she or he needs in the classroom in honor of your student's birthday.

CAFETERIA PROGRAM

Breakfast is served from 8:05 A.M. to 8:25 A.M. No breakfasts will be served after 8:25 A.M. so students have time to eat and can get to class on time.

Lunch is served during designated times (see Bell Schedule). All students can receive one breakfast and one lunch at no cost every weekday.

Students may have only one adult eat with them in the cafeteria per visit. Seating space in the cafeteria is based upon availability. Siblings who do not attend Highgate are not allowed in the cafeteria.

CLASSROOM PARTIES

Class parties may be held at the discretion of each teacher. Birthday parties are not held on campus (see BIRTHDAYS above).

CLASS PLACEMENT

Class lists are carefully developed each spring for the following year by the teachers and the principal. We attempt to form balanced classes in terms of the number of boys and girls, academic achievement, and behavioral needs.

Regretfully, it is not always possible to place students with the teachers of their parents' choice. If you, as a parent, feel your youngster has special needs, and your feelings can be educationally justified, please submit a letter or email to the principal before May 24, 2024. Final determination of class placements will be made by the principal.

CLASSROOM STANDARDS

Students learning on a safe and kind campus is the top priority at Highgate Elementary School. Rules of courtesy to fellow students and teachers shall be followed at all times. Each student should behave in a manner that does not disrupt the rights of other students to learn. School wide and classroom procedures that promote positive behavior, safety, and learning will be taught and reinforced consistently in each classroom.

SPIRIT WEEKS

In order to promote and maintain school spirit, we will have spirit weeks throughout the school year. These will usually take place in the fall, winter, spring and end of year. All Highgate students and staff are encouraged to participate.

COMMON CORE CURRICULUM (CCSS)

Highgate staff members teach the core curriculum to every student in the school. The core curriculum includes the state standards as well as the textbooks and materials adopted by the Panama-Buena Vista Union School District from the list approved by the State of California. Teachers are trained to effectively teach CCSS.

COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS

Please make every attempt to communicate with your children about appointments, after-school care, and other situations before the school day begins. Getting messages to students in the classrooms is difficult and interrupts the teaching and learning for all students.

Please send a note with your student to explain any change in the regular routine. Prior planning eliminates the need for “all call” intercom interruptions and student phone calls. Your cooperation will help us to focus on instruction and is greatly appreciated.

COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS

Good communication between parents and the teacher is an important part of your child’s education. Should you desire a conference with your child's teacher, please call the school office. The teacher will contact you to set up the date and time for the conference.

CORE CURRICULUM

Highgate staff members teach the core curriculum to every student in the school. The core curriculum includes the books and materials adopted by the Panama-Buena Vista Union School District from the list approved by the State of California. A description and explanation of the curriculum, the forms of assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet are detailed for parents at Back to School Night at the beginning of each school year. The district Grade Level Expectancies are distributed at this time.

DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL

Students are to exit the campus after being dismissed from the classroom. Students will be watched during the ten minute dismissal period, but after-school supervision is not provided. There are no provisions for primary students to wait on campus for older students, and no supervision is available on the playground. For your child’s safety, make sure he/she walks home, rides the bus, or is picked up promptly.

DRESS CODE

In order to promote a school atmosphere where all children are able to learn, Highgate students are expected to dress appropriately. As such, the following dress code will be enforced:

- Excessively large trousers, pants, and overalls may not be worn. All trousers and pants must be worn at the waist. Belt ends may not hang down.
- Overalls must be worn with both straps on the shoulders, not hanging loose.
- Commercial lettering or printing will be allowed on shirts and sweatshirts as long as it is acceptable for school attire. No clothing may be personalized other than with a student's given name. Jackets, backpacks, binders, etc. may bear the name of the owner in printed block letters. All other student writing on clothing, backpacks, binders, etc. is unacceptable as is writing on the hands or other parts of the body. Pants, shorts, or skirts with holes or heavy fraying above the knee are not acceptable.
- Clothing that is excessively revealing is unacceptable. "Excessively revealing" includes:
 - backless halter tops or dresses; tube tops; tank-top shirts or shirts cut low at the armpits or neckline
 - clothing that shows bare midribs
 - shorts worn shorter than mid-thigh
 - clothing that is transparent or revealing
 - excessively frayed pants
- Suggestive clothing or objects may not be worn which are libelous, obscene, or depicting illegal or gang-related activity. This includes buttons, arm bands, shirts, insignias, etc. Clothing with crude or vulgar printing or pictures depicting tobacco,

drugs, alcoholic beverages or clothing that is sexually suggestive or disruptive is not acceptable.

- No bare feet. No noisy, unsafe, or disruptive footwear shall be worn. Flip-flops/thongs are not permitted. Students must wear footwear that has a strap or is completely enclosed.
- Cosmetics to the face and hair that distract from the educational process such as spray painted hair, extreme painting of the face, glitter in the hair, etc. are unacceptable except on appropriate days declared by the administration.
- Hats and beanies are allowed while students are outside on campus (applies to boys and girls).
 - Hats must be worn forward.
 - Students must follow teachers' and staff members' rules regarding whether hats and beanies can be worn in classrooms and other campus buildings.
 - Hats and beanies can be worn inside on special occasions (e.g. Spirit Week).

The District Board and administration reserves the right to declare any mode of dress that in their estimation inhibits the educational process or threatens the safety and protection of students as unacceptable. If students are dressed in an unacceptable manner, parents will be notified and corrective measures must be taken before the student will be allowed to return to class or the playground.

EMERGENCIES/DISASTER/EVACUATION

Contingency plans and supplies are in place to deal with any emergency or disaster situation that may arise. Students regularly participate in emergency drills. In the event of a major disaster, students will be held at the school in a safe location until they are picked up by parents or other designated adults.

FIELD TRIPS

Teachers occasionally arrange field trips that are intended to extend and enhance the curriculum. You will be advised in advance of field trips. Your written permission will be required before your child will be allowed to participate. You are encouraged to return permission slips promptly as district policy will not allow us to accept verbal consent.

FOG DELAYS

In the event of fog, you are advised to tune to your local radio and television stations for information on fog delays. Local stations will broadcast the names of districts on a fog delay.

HOME TEACHING

Parents may request a home teacher if it has been determined by a physician that the student will be out of school for a period of three weeks or longer. A signed note from the physician is required before a home teacher can be assigned.

HOMEWORK

Homework offers a valuable opportunity for teachers to meet the individual needs of your child. Assignments vary by grade level and from class to class according to the interest, skills, and maturity level of the child. As a parent you can:

- Provide a regular study time on those days that homework is given;
- Provide a quiet place for study;

- Give help and encouragement when needed;
- Minimize interruptions.

HONOR ROLL AND PRINCIPAL'S LIST

Students in grades 4 - 6 are eligible for the Honor Roll. To qualify for the Honor Roll a Student must obtain a "B" (3.0) average in all grade level academic subjects for the quarter. A grade below "C" (D or F) in any subject will prevent a student from being on the Honor Roll regardless of the overall average. Receiving a "D" or "F" in conduct will also disqualify a student from the Honor Roll regardless of the grade average.

Principal's List recognition will be given to those students whose grades in the academic subjects are all either "A" or "A-".

LOST AND FOUND

Inquiries regarding lost articles may be made by our students during recesses, before school and after school. A "Lost and Found" box is maintained for articles of clothing that remain unclaimed. The box is usually located outside the cafeteria. Our goal is to empty the box and donate unclaimed items on the first Friday of each month.

To avoid confusion, coats, sweaters, hats, lunch boxes, etc. should be clearly marked with a student's first and last name.

Students, not the school, are responsible for the items they bring to school. Personal items, especially valuable ones, should not be brought to school.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

State laws and district policies govern the taking of medication by students while at school. Anytime prescription medication is to be given by school personnel it must be in a container with the pharmacist's label attached.

Before we can administer any medication (prescription and/or non-prescription), we must have on file a completed form, *Pupil Medication to be Administered at School*, which will give us the specific instructions regarding your child's medication. The form must be signed by the parent and the prescribing physician.

Students are not allowed to self-medicate. This includes headache remedies, cough drops, throat lozenges, and the like. However harmless these items may seem, they are still subject to the same procedures as above.

MUSIC AND SPORTS PROGRAMS

Vocal and instrumental music is an integral part of our curriculum. In the primary grades, music is taught by the classroom teacher and may, on occasion, be supplemented by the vocal music specialist. The specialist spends one period each week with each intermediate class. Students in grades five and six may participate in chorus. Interested fifth and sixth graders may also participate in our instrumental music program.

Students in grades five and six are eligible to participate in after-school sports. Students must meet certain academic and behavioral standards to be eligible.

PARENT CLUB

The Highgate Parent Club provides an opportunity for you to be more involved in your child's school. Several fund raising activities are sponsored by the Parent Club each year. All funds that are generated as a result of Parent Club activities directly benefit our students and

school. If you would like to become involved in the Highgate Parent Club, you may call the school office for more information.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Highgate Elementary School strives to support parental involvement in all school programs by continuing to emphasize and improve communication between the school and home. Special programs, notes, telephone calls, parent/teacher conferences, bulletins, and ParentSquare messages form the basis of communication between the school and parents. Parents are encouraged to present suggestions at meetings, on an individual basis, or by written communication. All suggestions are taken seriously and are responded to in a timely fashion. Parents are encouraged to be frequent visitors in the classroom, and teachers actively seek parent participation and assistance. Highgate Elementary School invites parents to attend assemblies, watch programs, and participate on field trips.

The staff at Highgate Elementary School works to provide a supportive learning environment and challenging curriculum for all students. We believe a successful educational experience results from parents, students, and staff working together for the benefit of each child.

Parent Committees and Councils:

- The Parent Club, a volunteer group of parents, raises funds and works to provide special materials, services, and opportunities for Highgate students and staff.
- The English Learner Advisory Council (ELAC) is composed of parents of English Learners.

PHONES AND SMART WATCHES

Students may bring phones to school, but the devices must remain off and in students' backpacks during the school day. Students may wear smart watches, but the sound for notifications must be turned off, and the watch cannot be a distraction during the school day. For purposes of this policy and procedure, the "school day" is defined as the moment a student enters the school grounds until the student exits the school grounds following the final dismissal bell.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be sent home quarterly. Parent/Teacher conferences take place at the end of the first grading period.

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT CARD (SARC)

The SARC, available in the office, provides information on school policies, practices, student test scores, and school and district demographics.

SPEECH SERVICES

Some children have speech difficulties (faulty articulation, stuttering, and voice disorders) that require special help. Students who appear to have speech disorders will be screened by our speech pathologist and possibly placed into speech therapy. You will be contacted if your child is a candidate for speech services, as your permission is required before therapy can begin.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Student progress in all academic areas will be monitored and assessed throughout the year. Conferences, report cards, progress reports, phone calls, written communication, and Student Success Team (SST) meetings provide parents with additional information about student progress.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Student Council is a program in which participants learn the elements of democratic process by discussing issues and ideas that come before the Council. The Student Council is made up of elected officers and representatives from each of the intermediate classes. The elected officers are: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Director of Safety, and Superintendent of Grounds. A teacher or the principal serves as the advisor to the Student Council.

VISITING CAMPUS

You are always welcome to visit our campus and your child's classroom. Please contact your teacher and call the office 48 hours before you would like to visit. Parental visits are limited to twice per month for a maximum of one hour per visit. Additional visits may be scheduled through the principal if more observation time is needed.

Whenever you arrive at Highgate (for a scheduled visit or other business), please check-in with the Raptor system at the office first. You will need to bring a government ID. We will give you a visitor tag to wear so you will not be questioned by our staff. We do our best to minimize interruptions and protect our students from unwanted visitors. Please help us by checking-in with the office first.

Highgate Family Matrix

“The Husky Way”



	Attendance	Arrival and Dismissal	Family Engagement
Be Safe	I will... Keep my child at home if he/she is showing contagious symptoms.	I will... Follow all safety protocols in place for buses, carpool, and walkers.	I will... Consistently encourage my child to adhere to all behavioral expectations.
Be Respectful	I will... Follow PBVUSD attendance protocols.	I will... Demonstrate common courtesy to those around me during drop-off and pick-up time.	I will... Reinforce Highgate's Husky Way and model it to students, other parents, and school staff.
Be Responsible	I will... Inform office when my child is absent with a written note, phone call or email.	I will... Drop my child off no sooner than 8:05 a.m. and pick my child up at the designated dismissal time.	I will... Support my child developing healthy habits that will prepare him/her for academic and social-emotional success at school.

BELL SCHEDULE 2023-2024

**Gates are open from 8:05 am- 8:25 am.
Instruction Begins at 8:28 am.

	<u>Start Time</u> Regular Day	<u>AM Recess</u> Start-End Time	Total Recess Minutes	<u>Lunch Time</u> Start-End Time	Total Lunch Minutes	<u>Dismissal Time</u>
TK	8:28	9:45-10:00	15	11:00-11:50	50	2:50
Kindergarten	8:28	10:00-10:15	15	11:30-12:20	50	2:50
1st Grade	8:28	10:15-10:30	15	12:00-12:50	50	2:50
2nd Grade	8:28	10:15-10:30	15	12:00-12:50	50	2:50
3rd Grade	8:28	10:30-10:45	15	12:30-1:20 *12:28-1:18	50	2:50
4th Grade	8:28	10:30-10:45	15	12:30-1:28	58	3:20
5th Grade	8:28	10:45-11:00	15	1:00-1:58 *12:50-1:48	58	3:20
6th Grade	8:28	10:45-11:00	15	1:00-1:58 *12:50-1:48	58	3:20

***EVERY WEDNESDAY IS A 90 MINUTE EARLY OUT FOR EACH GRADE LEVEL
(Wednesday Primary Dismissal is 1:20 P.M., and Wednesday Intermediate Dismissal is 1:50 P.M.)**

Panama-Buena Vista Union School District
HIGHGATE ELEMENTARY
CLASSROOM VISITATION PROCEDURES
(Observation of Instructional Program by Parents)
From Adopted District Administrative Procedures

Who May Visit: The right to observe a child's instructional program during classroom time resides solely with a child's parent, legal guardian, or foster parent and does not extend to grandparents, other interested close relatives, or caregivers as defined in Family Code Sections 6550-6552. A grandparent, close relative, or caregiver may schedule a classroom visit if a parent has provided written permission and the classroom teacher consents. Visits by grandparents, close relatives, or caregivers must be scheduled through the Principal rather than the classroom teacher.

Scheduling: Visits shall be scheduled by the classroom teacher for a time and date convenient to both the parent and the teacher. The parental observation date shall be within a reasonable time frame following the initial request. A request for a specific date must be made no less than 48 hours in advance.

Frequency and Duration: To minimize interruptions and distractions during valuable classroom time, parental classroom observations are limited to two visits per month per related student with a maximum duration of one hour per visit. If there is a need for more parental observation, additional visits may be scheduled through the Principal.

Parental Conduct During Classroom Visitation: Parents may enter and exit the classroom only once during each visit. Parents shall remain in the back of the classroom and may not interact with students or the teacher unless the interaction is initiated by the classroom teacher. Unnecessary noise and/or movement must be kept to a minimum.

The classroom teacher may direct a parent to leave the room if the parent's presence or conduct unduly interferes with the instructional program, and the parent must leave the classroom if directed to do so. Any concerns or complaints may be addressed directly to the classroom teacher after regular school hours or to the Principal.

Violation of Classroom Visitation Rules: A violation of the classroom visitation rules may be resolved by the classroom teacher through counseling of the offending parent privately. If this form of correction is not effective, the Principal may, as necessary, temporarily preclude a parent from visiting his/her child's classroom during regular school hours for a period of time not to exceed 14 continuous days.

When a parent has been precluded by the Principal from visiting his/her child's classroom, the parent may appeal the decision to the District's Assistant Superintendent in charge of Educational Services who will investigate and consider the matter in a timely fashion.

Notification of Classroom Visitation Procedures: Parents shall receive notification of classroom visitation procedures. The notification used should be substantially as follows:

"Parents are encouraged to visit their child's classroom and observe the instructional program. Visits must be scheduled directly with the classroom teacher and, generally, at least 48 hours in advance.

"Distractions and interruptions seriously impair the educational process. To minimize distractions during valuable classroom time, parental visits are limited to twice per month for a maximum of one hour per visit. Additional visits may be schedule through the Principal if more observation time is needed.

"While visiting, parents are generally required to remain quiet and in the back of the room in order to minimize the classroom interruption which a visitor's presence typically causes.

"Copies of the school's classroom observation procedures are available upon request."

REFERENCES:
Education Code Sections 32212, 35160, 49091.10, 51101
PBVUSD Board Policy 1250

PARENT HANDBOOK

The Highgate 2023-2024 Parent Handbook is available online through ParentSquare. Printed copies of the handbook are available at the school.

After your review, please sign and return the acknowledgement attached below, indicating you have received and reviewed these materials. Signed forms are to be returned to your child's teacher.

I have read the Highgate 23-24 Parent Handbook and will contact the office if there are any further questions.

Student Name

Teacher's Name

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature