

Message to Students from Mr. Vadeen and Mr. Ciancio

Welcome back to another school year at Sunset Ridge PK-8. We hope you are excited about the upcoming school year. Whether you are a returning student or joining us for the first time, we want to extend a warm welcome to each and every one of you.

Our dedicated team of teachers and staff is here to support and guide you along your educational journey at Sunset Ridge PK-8. As your principals, we want to assure you that our school is not just a place for learning, but also a community where you can feel safe, significant, and respected and related. We encourage everyone to share kindness with each other. It is everyone's job to help us create and maintain an inclusive environment where everyone feels like they are important and belong within our community of learners. Within this Student Handbook, you will find our 'Kindness Pledge' which we expect all students to sign. After signing your pledge, it is your responsibility to show kindness to others and gratefully receive kindness when it is shown to you.

At Sunset Ridge PK-8, we place great importance on learning and academics. Your #1 job at our school is TO LEARN! Our staff members are committed to providing you with a rigorous and engaging education. Each one of your teachers is a dedicated professional who is passionate about teaching. Your teachers will challenge you and they will work hard to inspire you. It is up to you to make the most of your educational opportunities. Our advice to you: Approach your education with a growth mindset; be curious; ask questions; and seek help when needed.

During the year, you will have numerous after-school opportunities to engage in academic and extracurricular activities. We encourage you to talk to your parents about how you can be part of various after-school activities. Join clubs, participate in sports, unleash your creativity in the arts, and take on leadership roles.

Throughout the school year, we hope that you will actively engage in discussions, work in teams, and build positive relationships with your peers and teachers. Together, we will create a learning environment where everyone feels safe and challenged to do their very best.

Your teachers are going to review the contents of this Student Handbook with you to ensure you know what we expect from you as a student of Sunset Ridge PK-8. Let's make this year an unforgettable one filled with growth, learning and memorable experiences.

Sincerely,
Mr. Vadeen (Principal)
Mr. Ciancio (Assistant Principal)

Quick Tips:

1. **Set Goals:** Start by setting clear and achievable goals for yourself. Whether it's improving a specific skill, or getting a good score on a test, or participating in extracurricular activities, having goals will give you a sense of direction and motivation.
2. **Stay Organized:** Develop good organizational habits by keeping your desk and the area around you clean and clutter-free. Use tools and resources to help you remember what you need to accomplish.
3. **Manage Your Time:** Create a schedule that balances your academics, extracurricular activities, and personal time. Prioritize your tasks and avoid putting off what needs to be accomplished.
4. **Build Strong Study Habits:** Find a quiet and comfortable place to do your homework. Take time to read every day.
5. **Seek Help When Needed:** Don't hesitate to ask for help when you're struggling and do not understand what to do. Reach out to your teachers, classmates, or even online resources. Remember, asking for assistance is a sign of strength, not weakness.
6. **Pay Attention in Class:** Actively participate and engage in the work of your class by asking questions, contributing to discussions, and listening carefully to what your teacher is teaching you. Do not get distracted by talking when you should be listening.
7. **Develop Strong Relationships:** Build positive relationships with your teachers, classmates, and school staff. Working well with others, being respectful, and showing kindness to everyone will contribute to your overall success.
8. **Take Care of Yourself:** Your well-being is essential for success. Each day it is important to get enough sleep, feed your body with nutritious meals, and engage in physical activity.
9. **Stay Positive and Work Hard, Even When it is Challenging:** School can be challenging at times, but maintaining a positive attitude and persevering through difficulties will help you have a good day at school.
10. **Attendance and Punctuality:** Attend school every day. Arrive to school on-time. School starts at 7:55 a.m. and you can get to school as early at 7:45 to participate in our walking program on the blacktop.

11. **Show Kindness and Respect:** Be respectful and responsible towards teachers, staff, and fellow students. This includes following school rules, treating others with kindness, and demonstrating good manners.
12. **Personal Responsibility:** Take responsibility for your actions. Apologize when you make a mistake. Keep track of your belongings. Complete your assignments and homework on time.

Sunset Ridge PK-8 Mission Statement



Shared Vision for Sunset Ridge PK-8

At Sunset Ridge it is important that we, as a community....

- Show respect and kindness to one another.
- Demonstrate a positive attitude and good effort.
- Have fun while working hard together.
- Take advantage of opportunities to reward learners and staff for their successes.

Kindness Pledge

This Kindness Pledge serves as a commitment that I am making to spread kindness and engage in random acts of kindness. By signing this pledge, I am acknowledging my intention to make the world a better place through simple acts of compassion and generosity.

I, _____pledge to actively participate in random acts of kindness and promote positivity in my daily life.

I will strive to show kindness to everyone, every day.

I will actively seek opportunities to spread positivity and uplift those around me. I will be mindful of my words and actions, ensuring my words and actions are respectful and kind.

I understand that acts of kindness can come in many forms, including:

- Treating others the way I want to be treated;
- Controlling what I do and say so not to hurt myself or others;
- Assisting or serving others in a kind way;
- Being reliable to do the things that are expected of me;
- Obeying rules and acting in a way that I know is right;
- Being thankful for what others do for me;
- Showing respect by listening to what others are saying;
- Being aware and trying to help when others are sick, sad or hurt.

I will hold myself accountable to this pledge and strive to be kind to everyone, every day!

By signing this Kindness Pledge, I commit to showing kindness to my teachers and my peers. I will encourage others to join me in being kind and being positive. Together, we make our school a safe place for everyone.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

General Guidelines for Behavior

- Follow instructions given by teachers and staff members.
- Use appropriate language and tone when communicating with others.
- Refrain from disruptive behavior that hinders the learning environment.
- Practice kindness (remember your Kindness Pledge).
- Adhere to the school's policy on bullying, harassment, and violence.

Anti-Bullying Policy

- Bullying of others is strictly prohibited.
- Immediately report situations where you feel unsafe.
- When someone is not nice to you or is bullying you, practice STOP/WALK/TALK.
 - Tell the other student, "Please **STOP**".
 - WALK** away from the situation.
 - TALK** to an adult if you need help.

Classroom Rules

- Follow instructions given by your teachers.
- Raise your hand before speaking or leaving your seat.
- Use classroom materials and technology responsibly.
- Keep your workspace/desk clean and organized.
- Show respect and consideration for other students' learning.

Academics

It is each student's responsibility to complete their own work

Cheating is included but not limited to.

- Copying, in part or whole, from another's quiz, test, paper, assignment, research or creative project, or the like and/or submitting as one's own work a quiz, test, assignment, research or creative project, information which has been purchased, borrowed, or stolen.
- Communicating with another student during a quiz or test.
- Copying the work or portions of the work of another (be it another student, published materials, or internet sources) without citing the source.
- Paraphrasing the work of another or taking an original idea of another and presenting it as one's own work without citing the source.

Digital Responsibilities

- Use technology responsibly and follow the school's acceptable use policy (Remember the Chromebook Agreement signed by you and your parents).
- Keep your hands off of someone else's Chromebook.
- Avoid cyberbullying, harassment, or inappropriate online behavior.
- Report any concerns or incidents to a trusted adult or school staff member.
- Use school-provided technology resources for educational purposes only.

- No personal electronic devices are allowed, unless given permission by teacher.
- Respect copyright laws when using technology.

Cell Phone Policy

- Students are permitted to bring a cell phone to school but it must be shut off during the school day and stored in a backpack. Students may turn their phones on after the end of the school day. Phones that are turned on will be taken by staff and parents will have to come to the school office to retrieve the phone. Continued violation of our cell phone policy will result in disciplinary actions and possible revocation of the privilege to bring a phone to school.

Searches of Desks and Backpacks

School desks and storage areas are school property, which the school has made available for student use for educational purposes. School officials have the right to inspect the desks and storage areas as deemed necessary. Student backpacks will be searched when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will result in the discovery of:

- substances prohibited by district/school policy and or prohibited by state law
- any material or item which presents a danger of physical harm to self or others
- materials not properly in the possession of the student (stolen items)
- any item that falls out of line of school policy (i.e. toys, gum, cell phones, electronic devices etc.)

Personal Belongings

Students should not bring valuables and/or toys to school. Items having value for one individual usually have an attractive appeal for others and unfortunately sometimes disappear. The school cannot be responsible for these items. Teachers may have a special celebration which allows students to bring in a favorite game, stuffed animal, etc. but please remember, at no time is it appropriate for students to bring toy guns, toy knives, or toy weapons of any kind.

Prohibited Items

Students are not allowed to bring any item to school that could cause harm to self or to others. Items that could scare another student are also prohibited from being brought to school. This includes anything sharp or anything that looks like any type of weapon. Any item used outside of its scope as a weapon, will be classified as a weapon for discipline purposes.

Students are not allowed to chew gum or chew on seeds. Electronic games, toys, cameras, trading cards (Digimon, Pokemon, etc.) are not allowed at school.

At Sunset Ridge PK-8, we furnish playground equipment for all grades (basketballs, 4-square balls, jump ropes, tetherball, soft footballs etc). Students are not to bring play items to school because we cannot be responsible for lost or stolen personal belongings.

Items/toys that are prohibited include:

- Toy weapons of any kind
- Footballs, soccer balls, basketballs etc. unless approved by Mr. Vadeen/Mr. Ciancio for recess use
- Games
- Fidget Spinners – see below for more on fidgets
- Trading cards
- Toy cell phones
- Make-up can be worn but cannot be applied/shared at school
- Electronic devices – i.e. - Game Boy/Nintendo, iPod

If students bring any of the above items to school, the items will be confiscated and **may or may not** be retrievable. Items may be kept until the end of day, end of week, or end of year.

Fidgets/Fidget Spinners: As a reminder, fidgets (e.g., slime, sand and spinners) are not allowed at school unless pre-approved and documented on a student’s specific learning plan (Individual Education Plan or 504 plan). At Sunset Ridge PK-8, we have a supply of school-approved fidgets that we can and do provide if your child needs help with focus and attention to tasks. We ask parents not to send any fidgets to school. If you feel your child can benefit from a fidget, please consult with your child’s teacher or with Mr. Vadeen/Mr. Ciancio.

Gum/Candy - Gum chewing is not allowed unless under the supervision and knowledge of a teacher. Normally, we discourage candy at school. There are times when a teacher may reward a student with candy. One piece of candy at lunch is acceptable.

Hallway Rules

- Walk on the right side of the hallway in an orderly manner.
- Use appropriate indoor voices.
- Keep the hallways clean and free from litter.
- Respect the personal space of others.
- Follow instructions from staff members.

- Public Displays of Affection: Students who are engaging in public displays of affection will be addressed by faculty. Failure to alter behavior or students exhibiting habitual public displays of affection will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the student code of conduct.

Cafeteria Rules

- Wait patiently in line and use appropriate table manners.
- Clean up after yourself and dispose of trash properly.
- Respect the cafeteria staff and their instructions.
- Use appropriate language and behavior.
- Follow any additional guidelines established by the school.

Library Rules

- Follow the instructions and guidelines provided by Mrs. Garcia.
- Handle books and library materials with care.
- Return borrowed items on time.

Playground Rules

- Engage in safe and inclusive play.
- Follow the instructions and guidelines set by the adults who are outside.
- Show respect for others and their personal space.
- Use playground equipment properly and responsibly.
- Report any accidents or unsafe situations to the staff members who are outside.
- STAY COMPLETELY AWAY FROM DOGS IN NEIGHBORING YARDS. SHOULD A DOG BE LOOSE ON THE SCHOOL GROUNDS, STAY COMPLETELY AWAY FROM THE DOG.

Playground equipment and balls are provided for student enjoyment at recess. Safety rules and procedures for proper care of equipment will be enforced.

The following activities are prohibited:

- Throwing rocks, gravel, snowballs, etc. at any time;
- Sitting on fences and climbing fences;
- Sliding on ice or snow;
- Pulling on other people's clothes;
- Running on the blacktop;
- Wrestling;
- Giving piggyback rides or lifting other children;
- Swinging other students around;
- Kicking, hitting, tripping or karate kicking
- TAG or any game that mimics tag regardless of what it may be called

Bus Rules

- Arrive at the bus stop on time and in an orderly manner.
- Follow the instructions of the bus driver.
- Remain seated and face forward during the bus ride.
- Use appropriate language and behavior.
- Keep the bus clean and free from damage.

Dress Code

- Students are expected to dress in a neat, clean, and modest manner.
- Clothing should be appropriate for a learning environment and promote safety. Clothing that displays or promotes alcohol, drugs, sexual innuendo, gang affiliation or violence is not allowed.
- Clothing and accessories that display offensive language, symbols, or images are not allowed.
- Dress appropriately for the weather conditions and any planned activities.
- Shirts and tops should cover the entire torso and shoulders. Tank tops, halter tops, and spaghetti straps are not permitted.
- Pants, shorts, skirts, and dresses should be worn at an appropriate length. They should reach mid-thigh or longer.
- No hats or hoods should be worn inside the school building. No headwear
- Footwear should be safe and appropriate for school activities.
- Shoes must be worn at all times, and they should be safe and appropriate for the school environment.
- Short shorts or mini skirts (middle thigh length is appropriate length for shorts/skirts). Rule of Thumb: If the student can touch skin when placing hands to their sides, the shorts are too short and students will be required to change clothes.
- Midriff shirts are not allowed and shirts will not be allowed to be tied in the back (belly must not be shown).
- Large amounts of skin cannot be exposed
- No see-through clothing
- No pajamas, no pajama pants, no slippers, robes, blankets.
- Bras or bra straps cannot be visible
- 2-finger rule for width of straps on shirts (no spaghetti straps)
- Clothing with suggestive pictures or words
- No sagging. All pants must cover undergarments, including shorts, and must rest no lower than the top of the hips.
- Other clothing that distracts from our learning environment
- Hairstyles that disrupt the learning environment of the classroom will be brought to the attention of parents and case by case decisions will be made by administration.
- No unnatural effects added (i.e. no face gems or unnatural face modifications)

Grooming Guidelines

- Maintain good personal hygiene and cleanliness.
- Extreme hairstyles or colors that disrupt the learning environment are not allowed.
- Makeup should be minimal and age-appropriate.
- Jewelry and accessories should be safe and non-distracting.

Dress Code Enforcement

- Any school staff can request a student change their attire if inappropriate, however, the administration will make the final determination if a student's attire is appropriate for school.
- Students found in violation of the dress code will be asked to make appropriate adjustments or change into provided clothing.
- Repeat offenses may result in disciplinary action.

Consequences for Misconduct

In the event of a violation of the school code of conduct, consequences may be imposed based on the severity of the infraction. Consequences may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Verbal warning
- Loss of privileges
- Parent/guardian notification
- Detention
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension/expulsion
- Referral to counseling or intervention programs
- Restitution for damages caused

Final Note:

Thank you for reviewing the Sunset Ridge PK-8 Student Handbook. By following the guidelines and expectations outlined in this Student Handbook, you are contributing to a positive and supportive school environment. Should you have any questions or concerns, please consult with a teacher, staff member, or the school administration. We wish you a successful and enjoyable academic year!