

LODI UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



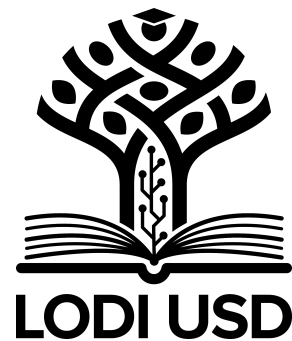
STUDENT HANDBOOK FOR  
STUDENTS, FAMILIES, AND STAFF

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## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

It is with great pride that I welcome both new and returning students to the 2024-2025 school year at Podesta Ranch, home of the Red Tailed Hawks. Your time at Podesta Ranch will provide many positive memories both academically and socially.

The staff and I want to prepare you to meet the responsibilities of the future.

This handbook/planner is just one tool that will help guide you, as a student, to reach your potential and become a successful individual. Important school policies and guidelines are also provided, along with areas for homework assignments and a calendar.

I hope that you will utilize the handbook/planner as a tool toward building successes at Podesta Ranch Elementary School. We look forward to welcoming back our students for an exciting new school year.

Podesta Ranch Red Tailed Hawks are **Responsible, Kind and Safe!** Our school **RockS!**

Sincerely,

Alyssa Barban, Principal, Podesta Ranch Elementary School

### **PODESTA RANCH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL VISION**

Podesta Ranch strives to create a safe and supportive, student centered environment for life-long learners, through rigorous and relevant academic focus. In partnership with parents and our community, we empower students to be socially responsible and productive citizens.



### **SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS:**

Monday- Friday 7:45 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

### **BEFORE SCHOOL:**

Children should not arrive at school before 8:00 a.m., unless they are attending a supervised enrichment program before school. If your child is eating breakfast at school, which is served from 7:45 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. they may arrive at 7:45 a.m. SDC students are to arrive between 8:00 and 8:15, breakfast will be eaten after arrival. The YMCA offers morning care. Information regarding the YMCA program can be obtained by calling (209) 472-9622 or picking up an information packet in the office. Start time is dependent on enrollment.

### **EMERGENCY CARDS:**

At the beginning of each school year, families need to update their **Data Confirmation ONLINE** in Aeries. This update yearly and confirmation of emergency contacts are extremely important for the safe care of your children. Each child must have an emergency card on file in Aeries. The information on this card is used to contact you or other friends and family you've listed. We would contact you if your child is ill or injured. Please make sure that the phone numbers you list are kept current. **Only individuals whose names appear on the Emergency Card may check a student out from school.** All adults are subject to proof of identification before we release a child from school. **Don't forget to notify the Office when there is a change in phone numbers or address.** To change an address, proof of new residence is required.



### **MEDICATIONS:**

We are happy to care for your child if medication is needed at school. However, all medication taken at school **MUST** be prescribed by a licensed health care provider (Physician). A **"Consent for Medication Administration"** form **MUST** be signed by the Physician **AND** a parent/guardian. This includes **ALL** medications including over-the-counter medication. Medication that is found at school without proper documentation will be confiscated. **"Consent for Medication Administration"** forms can be picked up at the Front Office. The signed form is good for one (1) school year.

## **IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

LUSD maintains a "No Shots/No School" policy. **Students not up to date with all immunizations as required by California Immunization Law AB-381 will not be enrolled or allowed to attend school.**

## **INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS**

Injuries and accidents should be reported immediately to the staff member on duty. All accidents will be recorded on an accident report form and a copy will be forwarded to the District Office. If a pupil is seriously injured, school personnel will attempt to telephone parents/guardians or family doctor. For a minor injury, first-aid will be given.

***Accident Insurance*** - Lodi Unified School district does not carry accident insurance on pupils. At the beginning of the school year, students receive an application for voluntary, reasonably priced student insurance, which provides protection in the event of an accident at school or on the way to and from school. Parents are encouraged to provide medical accident coverage for their children.

## **ATTENDANCE:**

State law requires every child between the ages of six and eighteen years of age to attend school when it is in session. Research has shown that a student's success in school is directly related to attendance. Please schedule students' medical, dental, or other appointments before or after school whenever possible.

***Arrival at School-*** Students are not permitted on campus until 7:45 a.m. when they can be supervised.

***Tardies-*** A Tardy is defined as not being seated in the classroom and ready to work at the designated time. Students arriving after the bell rings must report to the office for a tardy slip. A pupil tardy more than thirty minutes or more, for more than three days per year without valid permission, is truant and shall be reported to the Attendance Advisor.

### ***Officially Excused Absences-***

- ***Illness***
- ***Medical/dental/eye appointments***
- ***Funeral for immediate family member***
- ***Directed quarantine by health officer***

Class work/homework may be made up for excused absences. **A parent must verify an absence by phoning the school office each day of the absence (phone 953-8543). All absences must be cleared within 10 days of the date of absence.** After the 14<sup>th</sup> absence, a doctor's note is required for each absence thereafter. If calling is a problem, the student must bring an absence note signed by the parent to the office when returning to school.

***Early Dismissal-*** Podesta Ranch is a closed campus. This means that students may not leave the school grounds at any time during the school day without permission from the office. A student must be signed out in the office if it is necessary to leave school early. The school will release a student only to the legal parent/guardian or an adult over the age of eighteen listed on the student's emergency card. **Photo ID is required before a student is released.**

**INDEPENDENT STUDY (I.S.):** The school discourages vacations or trips taken during scheduled school time. When it is unavoidable to arrange an absence during vacation periods, please check with your child's teacher about obtaining school work while you are gone. Sufficient time is needed for preparation so please allow at least 15 working days of notice for our teachers. Note: For children to get I.S. credit, the minimum amount of time determined by the Board of Education is 5 days out of school.

### **VISITORS & VOLUNTEERS:**

Adult visitors/volunteers are welcome to visit the school, but must report to the office first to sign in. Once signed in, a visitor's pass will be issued. If you are working as a volunteer in your child's classroom on a regular basis, **you must be fingerprinted and have District clearance before volunteering. Please report to the classroom once you've signed in.** Remember our cafeteria is a "Student Only Zone", feel free to take a seat in front of the office if students and teacher are at recess/lunch.

### **STUDENT CELEBRATIONS:**

Our goal is to keep classroom disruptions to a minimum. If you have a student who is celebrating a birthday/etc. and you would like to bring anything to class, please check with your child's teacher in advance to make proper arrangements. **All food items must be individually wrapped.** **DUE TO FIRE HAZARDS / LEARNING DISRUPTIONS, PLEASE DO NOT BRING BALLOONS.**



### **BREAKFAST AND LUNCH INFORMATION:**

All students receive a meal card upon enrollment. Their meal cards allow them to eat breakfast and lunch. **All students eat breakfast and lunch free in Lodi Unified School District. Please be sure to complete the on-line data confirmation form as soon as possible. This information is critical so that we can continue to provide free meals to our students.**

### **CAFETERIA RULES:**

Cafeteria procedures are as follow:

1. Safe walking feet.
2. We share almost everything, but never food.
3. Clean your space.
4. Use kind words.
5. Voice Levels.

### **HOMEWORK:**

**Students should expect homework at least four nights a week.** The purpose of homework is to review skills learned in class, prepare for tests, while developing study habits. Types of homework include make-up work; voluntary work to raise class grades; work not completed in class; reading of library or textbooks, and class projects. Parents may request homework when a child is absent from school due to illness.

### **SCHOOL MATERIALS (TEXTBOOKS, CHROMEBOOKS, LIBRARY BOOKS, etc)**

Chromebooks, Textbooks, and Library books are issued free of charge to all students.

#### **DAMAGED OR LOST INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS/DEVICES:**

When materials/devices are lost or so damaged that they are no longer usable, it is the student's responsibility to reimburse the current replacement cost of the materials. If reimbursement is not paid by the student/parent-guardian, the district may initiate due process procedures as necessary, including; withholding grades, diplomas or transcripts.

**CHROMEBOOKS:** Students in K-6 use Chromebooks as an academic tool. When the device is lost or so damaged that it is no longer usable, it is the student's responsibility to reimburse the current replacement cost of the materials. If reimbursement is not paid by the student/parent-guardian, the district may initiate due process procedures as necessary. Insurance to defray the cost is available as the Chromebook Care Plan. See info at <https://www.lodiusd.net/parents/chromebook-care-plan>



### **REPORT CARD DATES:**

Parents can help students to be successful by reviewing homework and monitoring progress

reports. Progress Reports are issued mid-way through the first trimester, during parent conferences. Subsequent progress reports are utilized depending on teacher preference. Report cards are issued on the last Friday of each trimester. Parents are welcome to come and meet with the teacher or Principal. In order to guarantee the person you need to speak with is available, please call and make an appointment.

#### **STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM (SST):**

If you or your child's teacher is concerned about his/her progress in school, an Instructional Support Team (IST) meeting may be in order. This is a meeting to discuss the child's strengths and weaknesses and to share concerns. These concerns could be in academics, health, truancy, or anything else that may stand in the way of the child reaching their full potential. During this meeting, suggestions to help the child are made and implemented. Please get in touch with your child's teacher if you feel your child needs an IST.

#### **PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY:**

Students may be retained based on their performance of district assessments given in the spring. Throughout the year, students will be frequently assessed as they progress towards meeting grade level standards. All students are given profiles of 1, 2, 3 or 4. Only those with a 1 or 2 are at risk of being retained. If you have questions, please call the office, or ask an administrator or teacher about this policy.

#### **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS:**

Students attending Lodi Unified School District are required to follow and comply with school and District conduct rules. If a student chooses to break the rules, he/she will be subject to various disciplinary actions. Progressive discipline is used, unless the infraction is something that requires immediate suspension.

##### ***Disciplinary Referral***

When a student's behavior is disruptive to the instructional process or poses a danger to persons or property, staff will refer the student to the Principal or Administrative Designee.

##### ***On Campus Intervention***

A student may be assigned to an alternative classroom for the period of the suspension from class. This may range from the remainder of a class period to a full school day.

##### ***Suspension***

A student may be suspended from attending regular classes and prohibited from attending school when fighting, threats, intimidation, vandalism, theft, and other behaviors as dictated in the Lodi Unified School District K-12 Student Conduct Code occur. The teacher may require the student to complete any assignment(s) and test(s) missed during a home-suspension.

The teacher may but is not required to provide homework.

#### **EXPULSION:**

Typically, expulsion of a student is a last resort after other actions have been tried. In certain situations, however, expulsion is appropriate or may be required by law on the first offense as dictated in the *Lodi Unified School District K-12 Student Conduct Code*.

Teachers will review this handbook and the district conduct code with students.

#### **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY:**

**Our school community will not tolerate bullying behavior of any kind including unkind actions or remarks, verbal taunting and exclusion from groups.** Every student at Podesta Ranch has the right to enjoy learning, free from intimidation both in school and the surrounding community. This policy will be communicated throughout the school by the attitudes and actions of all members of the school community.

### **FIGHTING/INTIMIDATION/THREATS:**

**All forms of fighting, intimidation or threats to engage in fighting are strictly prohibited. "Hitting back" does not constitute self-defense. Violators will be subject to suspension/ expulsion for:**

- Fighting on any school grounds, school vehicle or school sponsored activity
- Fighting on the way to/from school
- Causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause physical injury to another person
- Harassing, intimidating, or threatening a student

### **HANDS-OFF POLICY:**

Students are to keep their hands and feet to themselves. Pushing, shoving, or hitting is not permitted. Horseplay, e.g., play-fighting, is also not allowed.



**CELL PHONES:** Cell phones are permitted on campus. However, student use of cell phones is limited. **Cell phones are not to be used during school hours and must be off for security reasons. If a staff member witnesses a cell phone being used at an inappropriate time, it will be confiscated for parent pick up.**



### **USE OF THE OFFICE TELEPHONE:**

Students may only use the office phone in an emergency with the permission of a staff member. Pupils should make arrangements before leaving home for pickup by parents during rainy weather or to stay late for after-school activities. This will eliminate unnecessary phone calls.

Students are expected to leave campus immediately after dismissal, except for appointments with teachers or participation in an after school activity.

### **PHONE MESSAGES:**

To preserve the integrity of the learning environment, class instruction will **not** be interrupted for routine matters. The office cannot deliver phone messages to students except for a family emergency. This not only disrupts instruction, but the learning environment for all. Please communicate necessary information to your child **before** he/she leaves for school.

### **PARKING LOT SAFETY REMINDERS:**

To maintain student, parent, and staff safety, please adhere to the following reminders:

- Please drive slowly and pay attention to students exiting and entering their cars.
- **The area immediately in front of the school (the Bus Loop) is for emergency vehicles and buses only. Personal vehicles are not permitted, even for student drop off, except for SPED (with appropriate parking pass displayed).**
- Please do not park your car in the student Drop Off/Pick Up area. **Unattended vehicles are subject to towing and/or ticketing.**
- Obey the crossing guards. Cross at crosswalk only.

Find a friend or family member to walk with, to and from school. Whenever possible, **do not walk alone.**

### **FIRE, EARTHQUAKE, ACTIVE SHOOTER, AND LOCKDOWN DRILLS:**

Fire drills are conducted each month. During fire drills, students and staff vacate buildings when the alarm sounds. Students and staff practice exiting buildings swiftly, calmly, and quietly. Building doors will be unlocked for emergency personnel access. Teachers instruct students in safe departure procedures, routes, assembly areas, and protocols for alerting emergency personnel. Students and staff will remain at their safe location until the all-clear announcement has been given.

**Lockdown Drills** are conducted monthly, and **Active Shooter Drills** are practiced on a regular basis. Staff will lock their doors, turn off lights and secure their rooms. Students are expected to remain silent, out of sight and away from windows and doors. All cell phones will be silenced. Should an actual active shooter event occur, all students, staff and administration will remain on lockdown status until notified by emergency personnel that the danger no longer exists.

**Earthquake Drills** are conducted every other month. The duck and cover method is utilized to ensure the safety of our students in the event of an earthquake.



#### **LOST AND FOUND:**

Students should mark clothing, books, equipment, etc. with identification. Each student is responsible for his/her personal property. **Lost and found items will be kept in the cafeteria.** All unclaimed items will be cleaned out quarterly and donated to charity.

#### **DANGEROUS/DISRUPTIVE ITEMS:**

Items which can become distractions and are disruptive or dangerous cannot be brought to school. Examples include:

- Laser lights- **Automatic Suspension**
- Electronic devices
- Spray containers of any kind
- Permanent markers
- Spray Deodorant, cologne, perfume, etc.
- Squirt guns, balloons
- Candy, gum, sunflower seeds, etc.
- Athletic equipment from home such as balls, bats, etc.
- Gaming devices or trading cards
- Joke and novelty items
- Dolls, stuffed animals, toys
- Caps, poppers, firecrackers, stink- bombs, etc.
- Multiple key chains, chain wallets or other chains

These and other unsafe or disruptive items will be confiscated to be claimed only by a parent. ANY ITEM confiscated during the school day **must be picked up by a parent** from the administration office **at the end of the school day**. **Lodi Unified School District and Podesta Ranch Elementary accept no responsibility for any item confiscated, lost, or stolen on school premises.**

#### **STUDENT SEARCH AND SEIZURE LUSD Policy 5145.12**

The Board of Education is committed to maintaining an environment for students and staff, which is safe and conducive, to learning and working. The Board of Education recognizes that incidents may occur which jeopardize the health, safety, and welfare of students and staff, which necessitate the search, and seizure of students and their property by school officials. School officials may search students and their property when there are reasonable grounds or suspicion that the search will uncover evidence that the student is violating the law or rules of the school. The Board of Education urges that discretion, good judgment, and common sense be exercised in all cases of search and seizure. Searches for the location of controlled substances (including substances represented as illegal substances), alcohol, beverages, intoxicants of any kind, firearms, knives, explosives, dangerous objects, drug paraphernalia, poisons, and stolen or missing properties are regarded as reasonable purposes for inspection by the school personnel. Inspections may be unannounced and may be made at the discretion of the Superintendent or a designee. Students and employees shall be informed of this policy at the beginning of each school year.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Occasionally, law enforcement officers will come to the school to talk with a student concerning matters, which may not have any connection with the school. **All school personnel are required by law to comply with a law enforcement officer's request to speak with a student or (at the officer's discretion) remove a student from school.** If an officer removes a student from school, the school will make reasonable effort to contact the legal parent or guardian. When a law enforcement officer at school interviews the student, a school representative may be present. The school administration will call upon law enforcement agencies when it is deemed necessary to maintain order and to protect the rights of all individuals.

## Lodi Unified School District POLICY ON GANG ACTIVITY\*

The Lodi Unified School District believes gang activity is dangerous and is in opposition to the health and safety of our children. Wearing or carrying any clothing or symbol that denotes gang activity is prohibited on school grounds and at school activities, both on and off campus. The principal shall apply this policy as the need arises at individual school sites.

## RACIAL, SEXUAL, ETHNIC, DISABILITY, RELIGIOUS, HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE (POLICY 5145.5)

**Lodi Unified does not tolerate any racial, sexual, disability, religious/ethnic harassment and/or violence under any circumstances. We firmly believe that all persons are to be tolerated under any circumstances. We firmly believe that all persons are to be treated with respect and dignity. Harassment and violent incidents will be responded to in a manner that effectively deters future incidents. Racial, sexual, disability, religious/ethnic harassment and violence refers to unwelcome and unwanted behavior related to sex, race, religion, or ethnic group that makes the recipient feel afraid, embarrassed, helpless, angry, or unsafe or upsets the recipient to the point that he/she cannot learn, cannot teach or be effective at school or at his/her job.**



### STUDENT DRESS CODE:

#### **DRESS CODE REMINDERS**

**Appropriately dressed students eliminate distractions to the learning environment. Please adhere to the following:**

#### **All undergarments must be covered**

- Tank top straps must be wider than 1 inch. No bare midriffs.
- Skirts and shorts must be longer than the mid-thigh.
- Pajama bottoms and sagging pants are not permitted.
- Clothing, hats, jewelry, and personal items including backpacks must be free of writing, pictures or any insignia that are crude, vulgar, profane, or sexually suggestive. No gang, drug, alcohol or Tobacco Company advertising, promotions, and likenesses, or racial, ethnic, or religious prejudice is allowed.
- Shoes must be worn at all times. **Crocs are NOT allowed at school as footwear on any day.** Sandals are permitted but MUST be close toed and have a back. Flip-flops are not permitted, and students must wear appropriate shoes for PE.

**Any student whose dress is offensive, distracting, or unsafe for self and others will be sent to the office to call home for a change of clothing.**

### HAT POLICY:

Senate Bill 310 provides for the wearing of hats outdoors or on school campuses to provide protection from the sun.

1. A hat is defined as a brimmed (baseball caps, visors, etc.) No non-brimmed (knit beanie-type hats).
2. Hats and caps **may not be worn indoors.** Any head covering that can be perceived as gang related will be confiscated for parent pick-up or returned at the end of the academic year.