

# **FAMILY HANDBOOK**



**FRANK VESSELS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

5900 Cathy Avenue, Cypress, CA 90630

(714) 220-6990

Principal: Mark Holman



## *Mission* \_\_\_\_\_

We inspire and empower . . .  
Every student,  
Every moment, for  
Every opportunity!

## *Vision* \_\_\_\_\_

Engaging in dynamic learning for success  
in an ever-changing world.

## *Core Values* \_\_\_\_\_

In the Cypress School District,

- We work with respect and integrity;
- We embrace innovation and diversity;
- We model compassion, resilience, and perseverance



# FRANK VESSELS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## 2025/26 Daily Schedule

GRADE	DAY	BREAKFAST	START	RECESS	LUNCH	RECESS	END
TK, K	M,T,W,F	7:45-8:15	8:20	9:40-10:00	10:55-11:40	1:05-1:20	2:50
	TH/Early Release	7:45-8:15	8:20	9:40-10:00	10:55-11:40		1:20
1, 2	M,T,W,F	7:45-8:15	8:20	10:00-10:20	11:25-12:10	1:25-1:40	2:55
	TH/Early Release	7:45-8:15	8:20	10:00-10:20	11:25-12:10		1:25
3	M,T,W,F	7:45-8:15	8:20	10:00-10:20	11:55-12:40	1:25-1:40	2:55
	TH/Early Release	7:45-8:15	8:20	10:00-10:20	11:55-12:40		1:25
4	M,T,W,F	7:45-8:15	8:20	10:25-10:40	11:55-12:40		2:55
	TH/Early Release	7:45-8:15	8:20	10:25-10:40	11:55-12:40		1:25
5, 6	M,T,W,F	7:45-8:15	8:20	10:25-10:40	12:20-1:05		2:55
	TH/Early Release	7:45-8:15	8:20	10:25-10:40	12:20-1:05		1:25

## Last Day of School

GRADE	BREAKFAST	START	NUTRITION/LUNCH	END
TK, K	7:45-8:15	8:20	10:45-11:15	12:50
1, 2, 3	7:45-8:15	8:20	11:20-11:50	12:50
4, 5, 6	7:45-8:15	8:20	12:00-12:30	12:50

## WELCOME TO VESSELS

It is our goal to provide a safe and orderly learning environment for all students. In order for us to achieve this goal, we need your help. Listed below are some important school policies and procedures. Please review these with your children to be sure they understand them. Your ongoing support of these policies will help keep our school a great place to learn!

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**BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL:** Supervision is provided in the morning starting at 8:10 a.m. Students are not to arrive before this time unless they are eating breakfast. Students eating breakfast may arrive between 7:45 and 8:15 a.m. and must go straight to the cafeteria.

After school, students are expected to be picked up or walk home immediately. Students may not remain on campus after school unless they are receiving assistance in the classroom or are attending an authorized afterschool activity. It is extremely important that you communicate with your child each morning about what they are to do after school (e.g., walk home, wait for you, etc.). We cannot interrupt classrooms to deliver messages to students unless it is an emergency, and we cannot guarantee that a message will be delivered to your child before dismissal. Therefore, be sure your child knows the plan each morning.

TK/Kindergarten students must remain with their parent or other supervising adult at all times until their teacher takes them into the classroom at 8:20 a.m. At dismissal time, students will be released to a parent or other designated adult at the classroom door. If the pick-up person is unknown to the teacher or substitute, photo identification will be required.

**PARKING LOT DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP:** If you plan to drive your child to and from school, please enter the parking lot safely and observe directional signs. Parking is allowed in marked stalls only. The yellow curb at the front of the school is for loading and unloading only. Please advance all the way forward through the lane as cars pull out to leave. This helps us efficiently unload and load cars and keep traffic moving. The yellow curb in the front of the school is the only place where unloading or loading may take place. If you plan to get out of the car to help your child, please park in a designated parking place. While we know that parents are often in a hurry, it is necessary to follow the school plan for dropping off and picking up to ensure that all students are safe. We appreciate your support of these procedures, as student safety is our primary concern.

**BICYCLES/SCOOTERS/SKATEBOARDS:** All students who ride a bicycle, scooter, or skateboard to school are required to wear a helmet and individually lock their items in the bike rack area. Students may not ride a bicycle, scooter, or skateboard on campus. It is not recommended that students in grades TK/K-2 ride to or from school without proper supervision. Cypress School District is not responsible for lost or stolen personal property brought to school.

**PICKING STUDENTS UP EARLY FROM SCHOOL:** If it is necessary to pick your child up before the end of the school day, you must report to the office first and sign your child out. Please note that students can only be released to those persons listed in their emergency contacts. Please make sure this information is kept up-to-date at all times. Anyone picking up a child is required to show valid identification. Please allow sufficient time for us to retrieve your child. It is helpful if you send a note with your child in the morning if you are planning to pick them up early. If you pick your child up during lunch, it is unlikely we will be able to retrieve any belongings or homework from the classroom. Also, we will not allow students to be signed out the last 15 minutes of the school day unless it has been prearranged with the teacher.

**CHILD CUSTODY:** If applicable, it is the parent's responsibility to provide the school with written documentation of any custody orders or changes to custody as they occur.

**ATTENDANCE:** Students who are the most successful have good attendance. When students are absent or tardy, they miss out on valuable instruction. We appreciate your assistance in helping your child develop good attendance habits. If your child is going to be absent, please phone the school at (714) 220-6990 and press “1” when prompted. Provide your child’s name, grade level, teacher’s name, and reason for absence.

Excused absences are established by Education Code and include:

- Illness
- Medical/dental appointment
- Funeral service for immediate family member (parent/guardian, sibling, grandparent, or any relative living in the student's household)
- Observation of religious ceremony/holiday
- Court appearance
- Immediate family member called to or on leave from active military duty in a combat zone

Documentation for excused absences may be required. Please note that per Education Code Section 48260, any student who has three or more unexcused absences or is tardy three times for more than 30 minutes, or any combination thereof, is considered truant and shall be reported to the attendance supervisor for the school district. While attendance is important, please keep your child home if he or she has experienced any of the following within the last 24 hours: fever, diarrhea, pink eye, excessive mucus, or vomiting.

**SCHOOL PARTICIPATION FOLLOWING INJURY/ILLNESS:** If your child requires a modification/accommodation to their school day due to an injury or illness (e.g. the use of an assisted device or recess or physical education participation limitations), please submit a [School Participation Following Injury/Illness](#) form.

**TARDY POLICY:** Please help your child arrive on time each day. Students are considered tardy when they arrive any time after the bell rings for the start of class. Students who are tardy to class are disruptive to the learning of others. In addition, they miss out on important information and instruction at the start of the school day. Tardy students need to sign in at the front office and pick up a tardy slip before being admitted to class. If your child is late due to a medical appointment, please bring an excuse from the doctor’s office. We can only consider it an excused tardy with a doctor’s note. After the third unexcused tardy per semester, parents may be requested to meet with the principal.

**HOMEWORK:** Meaningful homework assignments can be a valuable extension of student learning and assist in developing good study habits. Homework is assigned when necessary to support student learning and to fulfill academic goals. Homework assignments vary according to the grade level, the needs of the students, and the content area. Although it is a student’s responsibility to undertake assignments independently, parents may serve as a resource and are encouraged to ensure that their child’s homework assignments are completed. Completion of homework assignments is not included in a student’s academic achievement marks. It is reflected in the work and study habits portion of the report card.

**HOMEWORK REQUESTS:** If you wish to request homework on a day your child is absent, you must make your request prior to 10:00 a.m. in order for it to be ready at dismissal time on the same day. This may be done on the absence line when reporting your child’s absence.

**INDEPENDENT STUDY:** Short term independent study may be allowed for children who meet specific criteria. Short term independent study duration is for a minimum of five school days, but no more than fifteen cumulative days for the school year. For more information about independent study, please refer to Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 6158 – Independent Study.

For long term independent study options, please contact the Educational Services department.

**ITEMS LEFT AT HOME:** In order to preserve the integrity of the instructional program, we are unable to interrupt classrooms to deliver items that were left at home (e.g., homework, jackets, lunches, etc.). These items may be delivered to a designated place in our office where students can come at recess or lunchtime to check for their belongings.

**STUDENT NUTRITION:** School meals, which include breakfast and lunch, are provided free of charge to all students, regardless of family income. Meal Applications will no longer be required. We encourage all families to participate in our nutrition services program serving healthy made-from-scratch recipes and locally sourced fresh fruits and vegetables.

- **Breakfast:** Breakfast is available to all students before school at 7:45 a.m. Eating breakfast can help improve a child's attention and increase their math, reading, and overall school success. Breakfast menus are available [online](#), or you may pick up a paper copy from the school office.
- **Lunch:** Lunchtime is provided each day with the intent that all students will eat a nutritious lunch. Free lunches will be provided or students may bring their own lunch from home. School lunch menus are available [online](#), or you may pick up a paper copy from the school office.

Students who bring lunch from home are welcome to come through the lunch line and utilize the salad bar and milk as long as they take a minimum of three components (fruit, vegetable, and milk) to make a reimbursable meal. Single items such as milk, fruit, or vegetables selected by themselves are required to be charged the a la carte price on the student's account.

If your student brings lunch to school, please remember that glass bottles/containers are not allowed. Also, make sure your child is able to open the food and drink containers themselves. For health reasons, students may not share food with other students.

Students who forget their lunch should check the school office to see if their lunch has been dropped off. Please make sure to label the lunch with your child's name. Students who forget their lunch are able to receive one free of charge from the cafeteria.

- **Special Meal Accommodations:** If your child requires special meals or meal accommodations, please contact the Child Nutrition Services department by telephone (714) 220-6948 or [email](#).

**CELEBRATIONS AT SCHOOL:** No more than two school-identified celebrations/parties per classroom may be held each year. One party per class may be held during the final days of the school year. Special parties for birthdays or other reasons are not permitted. We do not take instructional minutes away from our students for celebrations. Any food dropped off or sent with students will be sent back home at the end of the day. Flowers and/or balloons will not be delivered to students, as this is disruptive to the instructional program. Some classrooms will acknowledge birthdays as part of the calendar and/or opening activities. If you would like to honor your child's birthday in some way, you may consider donating a book or other classroom item in their name. Please arrange any birthday acknowledgments in advance with your child's teacher. While we understand that birthdays are special to many young children, celebrations should take place outside of school.

**MEDICATION:** Medication, including over the counter remedies, may NOT be brought to school by students. If it is necessary for your child to receive medication at school, you must submit a [Request for Administration of Medication](#) form completed by both the parent and a physician. Medication must be in the original container and labeled with the student's name, dosage, etc. Please provide a medicine spoon/dropper if liquid medication is to be administered. All medications must be kept in the school office.

**DRESS AND GROOMING STANDARDS:** The district believes that appropriate dress and grooming contribute to a productive learning environment. Students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and wear clothing that is suitable for the school activities in which they participate. Students' clothing must not present a health or safety hazard or a distraction that would interfere with the educational process.

**LOST AND FOUND:** Items left on the playground or elsewhere on campus are placed in our Lost and Found, which is typically overflowing with jackets, lunch boxes, etc. If your child is missing something, please have them check the Lost and Found. Periodically during the year, unclaimed items are donated to charity.

**1:1 TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM:** K-6 students will be assigned their own district-owned technology device for school and home use. A separate Student Technology Handbook has been created to provide relevant information for this program. The district's Acceptable Use Agreement is included in the Student Technology Handbook and outlines the district's policy for student use of technology. The district makes a diligent effort to filter inappropriate or harmful matter accessible through the internet. In addition, students must take responsibility not to initiate access to inappropriate or harmful matter while using district technology. Violation of the Acceptable Use Agreement may result in disciplinary action, loss of privilege to use technology, and/or civil or criminal liability.

**CELL PHONES/CAMERAS/OTHER DEVICES:** The personal use of cell phones or other electronic devices by students while on campus or a school bus is prohibited. Such devices must be turned off, except when being used for a valid instructional or other school-related purpose as determined by the teacher or other district employee. If a student has a cell phone out or is using it without permission, it will be confiscated and returned only to the parent. Any device with a camera, video, or voice recording function shall not be used in a manner that infringes on the privacy rights of any other person. Cypress School District is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal property brought to school.

**ITEMS PROHIBITED AT SCHOOL:** Students are not permitted to bring weapons, toys, games, electronic games, sports equipment, gum, candy, or any other valuable or unnecessary item to school. These items are disruptive to the instructional program.

**FIREARMS/WEAPONS ON CAMPUS:** California's Gun-Free School Zone Act prohibits a person from possession or discharging a firearm in a school zone. An area is considered a school zone if it is within 1,000 feet of public or private school grounds. Under the California Gun-Free School Zone Act, a "firearm" means "any device, designed to be used as a weapon, from which is expelled through a barrel, a projectile by the force of any explosion or another form of combustion. If an individual meets the requirements of an exception to this Act, they are required to communicate with school administrator prior to accessing campus. Per Board Policy 3515.7, no students are allowed to have firearms or weapons on campus.

**VISITORS ON CAMPUS:** Cypress School District utilizes a Visitor Management System by Raptor Technologies to screen all visitors and volunteers on campus. During school hours, ALL visitors, including parent volunteers, must check in at the main office and present a valid government-issued identification. The system scans the ID, checks it against the Megan's Law Registry, and issues a personalized visitor or volunteer badge. When leaving campus, visitors and volunteers must check out and exit through the front office, not through the gates. All visits to campus during instructional time must be prearranged with a teacher or the principal and are usually limited to 30 minutes. Unannounced classroom visitors are not permitted. We appreciate your cooperation with this procedure to help us ensure the safety of all students.

**PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND VOLUNTEERING:** We value parent involvement and support in the educational process. There are many opportunities to become involved, including volunteering with our PTA, participating on our School Site Council, or helping out in your child's classroom. Please contact our PTA president, your child's teacher, or the school office to learn more about volunteer opportunities on campus. Regular volunteers on

campus must register and satisfy TB clearance requirements. Once registered, volunteers may check in and out each day using the self-help kiosk in the school office. For information on the registration process and TB clearance requirements, please visit the [Parent Involvement](#) page on the district website.

**MEDIA RELEASE:** District representatives will, from time to time, use still photography or videography for the purpose of highlighting student achievements or chronicling classroom/school activities. Those images may be used in informational newsletters, school brochures, class pictures/yearbooks, and other printed material; posted on the school and/or district websites or social media websites; or submitted to the news media for possible publication. To restrict the district from using your child's image, you must submit a request in writing.

**COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES:** The school and district utilize a variety of communication methods to provide information to families. These include district and school newsletters, websites, social media, email, U.S. Mail, recorded telephone messages or text messages, and notices sent home with students. Please make it a practice to check your child's backpack daily for information sent home from school. More information about how you will hear from our [school](#) and the [district](#) is available online. Non-district social media sites and other websites, such as GreatSchools, are not official or reliable sources of school information. If you have questions about something you have read on social media or other websites, we encourage you to contact the school directly to ensure you have the most accurate information.

If you have a question or concern regarding your child during the school year, please start by contacting your child's teacher directly via phone or email. If necessary, after you have communicated with the teacher, you may call the office to schedule an appointment with the principal at (714) 220-6990. Cypress School District promotes mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct. We encourage positive communication as we work together to educate and support all children at our school.

**STUDENT STUDY TEAM:** A Student Study Team (SST) is convened to assist students with academic and/or behavioral concerns that cannot be easily addressed by the classroom teacher alone. The team typically consists of the student's parent(s), classroom teacher, principal, and other support staff. During the meeting, team members share information and observations about the student, focusing on areas of strength as well as areas for growth and improvement. Once the student's specific needs have been fully identified by the team, an action plan is developed which details the strategies and interventions that will be used to resolve the concerns, including the person(s) responsible for providing them. It is important to keep in mind that the first step in addressing any student concern is always contacting your child's classroom teacher.

**SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES:** Services are available at all schools throughout the Cypress School District with a referral from the school psychologist and/or administrator. Students experiencing mental health disorders that impact their academic performance or school attendance may be eligible for services. Please contact your school psychologist or administrator for more information.

**LEARNING CENTER MODEL:** Our school strives to follow inclusive best practices. Students with disabilities are included in the general education setting to the greatest extent possible, and we use the Learning Center model to provide specialized academic instruction and other services based on unique needs. This model enables students with disabilities to access our educational program in the least restrictive environment while still receiving the support they need to be successful in school. Inclusive best practices also benefit typical students in the general education program by helping to develop compassion and an understanding of the challenges of others.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** Cypress School District believes in cultivating citizenship and integrity. Character matters every day, and we honor positive displays of character throughout the year. Students are required to demonstrate honesty and abide by ethical standards on class assignments, tests and quizzes, reports, and projects, both in and out of class. Academic progress should reflect the student's own work in the fairest possible

way. Academic dishonesty involves any attempt of a student to substitute the product of another, in whole or in part, as his or her own work. This includes, but is not limited to, theft, possession, or unauthorized use of any answer keys or model answers; forgery; and plagiarism. Instances of academic dishonesty may result in a reduction of the student's grade and disciplinary action.

**DISCIPLINE POLICY:** Our school is dedicated to an educational philosophy of shared responsibility for student behavior, which includes students, parents, and school staff. We recognize each student's right to learn and each teacher's right to teach in a safe and supportive environment.

The Vessels staff works diligently to develop the whole child. Simply put, we are a team that strives to provide rigorous academics while fostering a social-emotional foundation for a happy and healthy school career. As students engage in the curriculum, they are also taught valuable life skills such as how to best work with others, take turns, and regulate their behaviors when dealing with various social situations. Students are also provided with robust study and executive functioning skills to become productive, responsible citizens ready for junior high school's rigors.

#### School Highlights

- The prompts of depth and complexity are used in all classrooms to enhance discussions while developing critical thinking skills
- Grades 4-6 robotics
- Grades 4-6 school musical
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) schoolwide systems
- California Pivotal Practice Award recipient (2022)
- California PBIS Coalition Platinum PBIS Implementation Award recipient (2023 & 2024)

We pride ourselves on our robust Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) schoolwide systems that promote respect, responsibility, safety, and preparedness for learning. PBIS is an evidence-based, tiered framework for supporting students' behavioral, academic, social-emotional, and mental health needs. When implemented with fidelity, PBIS improves social-emotional competence, academic success, and school climate. PBIS is not a discipline policy but a decision-making framework that guides the selection, integration, and implementation of evidence-based academic and behavioral practices for improving important outcomes for all students.

The four pillars of behavioral expectations at Vessels are as follows:

- Respectful
- Responsible
- Safe
- Ready to Learn

The most successful students are those whose parents collaborate with the school to reinforce the importance of academics, behavioral expectations, and overall well-being. We welcome your partnership and invite you to volunteer, become a room parent, or join the PTA this school year! We know that with your collaboration, Vessels will continue to be an excellent place for kids to learn and grow!

Behavior expectations are posted throughout the school. Students are to abide by these expectations and follow directions of staff members at all times. Students have many opportunities to be recognized as good citizens both in the classroom and outside of the classroom. Students exhibiting inappropriate behaviors will receive consequences, such as a verbal or written warning, loss of free time, etc. Behavior referrals are issued when a child continues to violate school rules or is involved in a serious offense. Suspension or expulsion may result for persistent or serious offenses as outlined in Education Code, Section 48900. For more information about student discipline, please refer to Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5144 – Discipline.

**FREE PUBLIC EDUCATION & STUDENT FEES:** California law requires that public education be provided to all students free of charge unless a charge is specifically authorized by law for a particular program or activity. However, voluntary donations to support school activities or specific classroom needs are always greatly appreciated. Students will fully participate in all school programs and services, regardless of the family's desire or ability to make a voluntary donation.

**FIELD TRIPS:** Field trips may be scheduled throughout the year to reinforce and enrich the curriculum. Before a student is allowed to participate in a field trip, we MUST have a permission slip signed by the parent/guardian. Handwritten notes cannot be accepted. If a permission slip is not returned, your child will not be permitted to participate in the field trip.

**PLAY STRUCTURES:** Play structures are available for student use during supervised recess time. Because playground supervision is not provided before or after school, play structures are off limits during these times.

**STUDENT ACCIDENTS:** Student safety is one of our most important concerns. Even so, accidents do occur, and the resulting medical treatment (ambulance transport, treatment, surgery, hospitalization, etc.) can be very expensive. Cypress School District does not assume responsibility for these costs. However, as a service to you and your child, we do offer families access to low-cost, voluntary-purchase student accident/sickness insurance. Information regarding this coverage is available [online](#).

**SCHOOL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:** It is extremely important that your student's emergency contact information be kept up to date. In the case of an accident, injury, or other emergency, students will only be released to a person designated as an emergency contact. If an emergency contact person is unknown to staff, photo identification will be required.

During an emergency, you may not be able to reach the school by telephone as staff will be involved in caring for students. In the event of a school emergency or local disaster, you will receive notification from the school or district via telephone or text message. Information may also be provided on the district's website and/or social media sites. Non-district social media sites are not official or reliable sources of information.

Our school's comprehensive safety plan is available [online](#).

**AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILATOR (AED):** Two automated external defibrillators (AED) are available on site as needed for cardiac arrest events. One AED is located in the office. The second AED is located in the multi-purpose room. These units are portable and can be relocated to any location on the site where the event is occurring. Information on how to utilize the AED is provided with the unit and in the comprehensive school safety plan.

**SECURITY CAMERAS:** Security cameras are utilized in areas throughout the district to protect district property, facilities, and equipment from vandalism and theft. Cameras are not placed in areas where students have a reasonable expectation of privacy, and only specific district personnel have access to the video recordings. These recordings may be used in disciplinary proceedings or referred to local law enforcement as appropriate. In the event of an accident involving injury to persons or loss of property, a copy of the video recording will be preserved. Otherwise, recordings are allowed to expire. Unless otherwise required by law, requests for access to video recordings will be denied.

**VANDALISM:** Students/parents are financially responsible for damage to school property, whether it is an accident or malicious vandalism. This also includes damage to or loss of textbooks and library books checked out by students.