

SIERRA MADRE MIDDLE SCHOOL



160 N. CANON AVENUE
SIERRA MADRE, CA 91024
(626) 396-5910

School Hours:
Monday 8:15-1:25 p.m.
Tuesday-Friday 8:15 -3:05 p.m.

smms.pusd.us

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Core Values

Central to Sierra Madre Middle School's success are the guiding principles that define and support all actions and thoughts pertaining to the school's vision. These guiding principles are embodied by the following three Core Values:

**Academic Achievement
Creative Culture
Safe and Nurturing Environment**

Mission Statement

Sierra Madre Middle School is committed to providing a program that promotes academic, physical, emotional and social growth for all of our students within a safe and secure environment. Our goal is that these endeavors will foster high academic achievement and creative thinking among our students and staff. We pledge ourselves, as a school and staff, to work together in harmony with parents and the community for the good of all students.

Academic Program

Sierra Madre Middle School emphasizes a "hands-on" thinking, meaning-centered curriculum which includes basic academic skills and powerful learning experiences. Classroom activities are student-initiated, teacher-directed and child-centered. A variety of effective instructional methods are used.

To be successful in school, students are expected to:

- Come to school on time and be prepared to do your best.
- Follow all school and classroom rules.
- Return completed homework on time.
- Spend time at home reading and studying.
- Cooperate with everyone in the school.
- Respect yourself and the rights of others.
- Respect school property.

Parents are expected to:

- Promote high standards and regular study by providing a quiet, suitable place for completing homework.
- Support the school's homework, discipline and attendance policies.
- Make sure your child gets adequate sleep and has a healthy diet.
- Read all school-home communications and contact the school with questions and concerns.
- Listen to or read with your child every day.
- Establish a working relationship between yourself and your child's classroom teachers.
- Be responsible for textbooks and materials issued to your child.

Teachers are expected to:

- Create a safe, positive and healthy learning environment.
- Provide a challenging instructional program which follows the curriculum frameworks and grade level standards.
- Communicate with parents on a regular basis.

- Assign appropriate homework with clear instructions.
- Encourage students to read daily at school and at home.
- Participate in professional growth activities.

Attendance

Absence from school, regardless of the reason, limits your child's educational opportunities and can negatively affect his/her grades, academic achievement, promotion, graduation, self-esteem, and future employment.

Absences

With very few exceptions, the only necessary absence from school is due to illness. The State apportions money to the school district for each child's daily attendance. Parents are urged not to keep children out of school for any reason except for a family emergency. Regular attendance is most important for successful achievement in school. We investigate every absence, unless you have notified us concerning the reason your child is not in school.

Reporting an Absence

All absences from school should be reported to our attendance clerk within 5 days of the student's absence. If the absence is due to an appointment, we need documentation from the doctor with the student's name and the date of absence. These can be provided to us in person or via email. Our attendance clerk is Felicia Quintero. She can be reached by phone at 626-396-5910 ext. 52002 or email at quintero.felicia@pusd.us. If you must leave a voicemail, please make sure to include the student's name, the date of absence, and the reason for the absence.

Tardies

It is the responsibility of all students to be on time to their classes at the start of the school day and throughout each passing period. Students are considered tardy when arriving to school after 8:15 a.m. In addition, four minutes of passing period time is provided for students to pass from one class to another. If a student accumulates three or more tardies within a week, they will be assigned to Monday School Detention. We appreciate your help in encouraging daily and timely school attendance

Truancy

A student is considered truant after three absences or three tardies of more than 30 minutes each time or any combination thereof and the absences or tardies are unexcused. After a student has been reported as a truant three or more times in a school year and the district has made a conscientious effort to meet with the family, the student is considered a habitual truant. A student who is a habitual truant may be referred to a School Attendance Review Board (SARB) A student who is absent from school without a valid excuse for 10% or more of the school days in one school year, from the date of enrollment to the current date, is considered a chronic truant.

Withdrawing Students from the School Day

To withdraw your child from school during school hours you must sign out in the school office. Since teachers are not permitted to release children for any reason, parents must meet children in the office before departure. Once your child is in school, he or she is not to return home without permission from the office. If your child does arrive at home during school hours without notification from the office, please call us immediately. This is for your child's safety and to protect him or her from being taken from school by anyone except parents or guardians.

Bicycles, Skateboards, & Scooters

Bicycles, skateboards, scooters & rollerblades may be ridden to school. However, for safety reasons, they are prohibited on campus during school hours and must be secured in the designated areas. All riders must wear helmets, and the school does not assume responsibility for any stolen or damaged items.

Cafeteria

Nutrition and Lunch will be provided free of charge each day, and all students enrolled in the PUSD are eligible to participate.

Cell Phone & Electronic Device Policy

Students may not use their cell phone during the school day without the permission of an adult staff member. Each student has been issued a Chromebook to utilize in support of classroom instruction. Students may not use their Chromebook during non-instructional times. Electronic devices that are utilized inappropriately may be confiscated.

We understand that parents may provide students with cell phones to use for emergency purposes. However, please remember that cell phones and all electronic devices (i.e. iPods & video games) are brought to school at your own risk. **The school is not responsible for the damage or theft of any electronic device.**

Community Involvement

To support a partnership among school, parents and community, Sierra Madre Middle School provides many opportunities for involvement. Parents can participate in decisions relating to the education of their children through several collaborative teams on campus: the PTSA, School Site Council, and Annual Fund. If parents or community members wish to participate in any of these programs, please call the school at (626) 396-5910.

Discipline Program

Students and adults at Sierra Madre Middle School treat each other with respect. The administration, teachers, support staff, other school professionals and volunteers set a positive, nurturing tone for Sierra Madre Middle School students who are encouraged and guided toward responsible behavior. The following behaviors are expected of all Sierra Madre Middle School students:

All Students are Expected to Be Safe, Respectful, & Responsible

We make every effort to acknowledge students who demonstrate respect and responsibility. Incentives include special monthly Spotlight Awards, School Spirit Days, and our Hawk Buck program. Most importantly, each person is treated as an individual, worthy of respect and capable of making good choices. Beyond simply following a list of rules, it is our hope that each child will develop into a thinking caring and responsible adult.

Students who are unable to abide by the school-wide expectations and thereby, who interfere with the learning process and the orderly environment will receive an appropriate consequence, remediation, or intervention. The Guidance Team, under the supervision and direction of the Principal and Assistant Principal, will counsel students and notify parents of the steps taken to address the concern.

Dress Code

In accordance with the Pasadena Unified School District Uniform Dress Code Policy for Middle School Grades, Sierra Madre has adopted the following guidelines so that students may display pride through their attire.

Basic Presumptions:

- Health: Clothing must be clean and adequate to protect children from weather conditions.
- Safety: Clothing that puts the wearer or others at risk cannot be worn.
- Decency: Clothing must conform to societal norms in regard to modesty, and display respect for self and others.

The only acceptable “tops and/or outer wear” for middle years students are:

- Full cut standard t-shirts with regular sleeve or long sleeve -solids, stripes, and patterns
- Full-cut blouses or sport shirts with sleeves – solids, stripes, and patterns
- Polo shirts, regular or long sleeve – solids, stripes, and patterns
- Turtlenecks

The only acceptable “bottoms” for middle years students are:

- Shorts and skirts that are closer to the knee than the buttocks
- Shorts and long pants that are not excessively baggy or tight, and do not reveal underwear or skin at the waist or midriff.

The only acceptable “shoes” for middle years students are:

- Those that have no more elevation than a typical tennis shoes
- Those that are secured around the ankle some way – tie, buckle, strap, etc.

The following items are unacceptable at all grade levels

- Jewelry except for watches, rings, necklaces, earrings
- Wallet chains or any heavy gauge chain
- Clothing that depicts inappropriate language
- Flip-flops as shoes
- Caps, hats, or bandanas during the school day except for outdoor use.
- Torn, worn-out dirty clothes
- Sleeveless tops or halter-tops
- Gang-type attire
- Pajamas
- Blankets

Food Delivery

All students eat for free at SMMS. Parents may bring food items to the main office, but Students **are not** permitted to order food from outside food delivery services. Food deliveries dropped off from an outside food delivery service will be confiscated.

Gum

Students **are not** permitted to chew gum on campus.

Homework

Our philosophy is that homework shall support the achievement of the learning objectives and be used as a tool towards mastery. Therefore:

- Homework shall be reasonable, relevant, and something students can do on their own;
- Homework assignments shall be as carefully planned as classroom activities;
- Homework shall be assigned when needed to meet one or more of the following educational objectives:
 1. Provide an opportunity to practice and/or reinforce skills and knowledge learned in the classroom
 2. Extend and reflect on what was learned in the classroom
 3. Prepare students for future classroom activities
 4. Transfer knowledge and apply skills in content or subject matter previously learned in the classroom;
- Homework shall never be assigned as punishment;
- Teachers need flexibility to ensure that homework is differentiated and based on student needs in order to provide appropriate enrichment opportunities for all;
- Teachers shall take into consideration students' age, instructional and life experiences, student needs, instructional levels, and family resources;
- Homework shall count for no more than 10% of a student's grade at the secondary level;
- Homework shall not be assigned to students over Thanksgiving, winter recess, spring recess, or religious holy days;
- Each campus shall communicate with parents the purpose and policy regarding homework annually
- Feedback shall be given on homework assignments. This feedback may take a variety of forms (written, verbal, in small groups with students, etc.). We recognize that homework provides feedback not only for students, but through evaluation of homework, teachers receive feedback on the instructional objectives of the lesson, and will use the results of this evaluation to monitor understanding and modify teaching practices as appropriate.

Library

Sierra Madre Middle School's library, or the Athenaeum, is open from 8:00 A.M. – 3:30 P.M. daily, most days of the year. The library is a collaborative, safe space for staff and students to meet, create, research, and do homework. The library offers a diverse selection of books and authors for pleasure and informational reading. We also offer services to staff and students who require assistance with research resources and schedule library activities and brain breaks throughout the year.

The library catalog and district's on-line subscription databases are accessible through the library page of the school website or through the Clever app. They can be used on any computer. Students are encouraged to get a public library card.

All library books are checked out for a maximum of a two-week period. They may be renewed once for an additional two weeks. Late library books are subject to late fees not to exceed five dollars per book.

All textbooks are checked out to the student based on the schedule provided to the librarian. All textbooks are due at the end of the year unless requested earlier by the librarian. If the class is changed or the student transfers from the school all textbooks and technology checked out must be returned.

Students are expected to bring their chromebooks and chargers to school each day. There will be no loaner devices available. Students will be given the opportunity to call a parent/guardian to bring

their issued device. If a second charger is needed the student will be responsible for any fees associated with it. They may also purchase a second charger.

Students are empowered to keep their library accounts up-to-date. Student accounts that are not clear may result in unsuccessfully meeting eligibility requirements for end of the year activities.

Library Schedule

The SMMS library follows an open schedule. The library is open M-F from 8 am to 3:30 pm. Students may use the library during their free time during lunch, nutrition, before and after school. During class time students need to have a note from their teacher. All library space usage during school hours is scheduled through the librarian. Occasionally, the library will be closed for collaboration with students and other teachers. Please check back before or after school and during nutrition.

Library Expectations

While using the library space there are posted expectations for all students and staff. The expectations are:

- While using the library you must be doing something. examples are: Read, Create, Do, Learn, Inquire and/or Invent.
- Be respectful of the library space and those using it.
- No food or drink in the library
- All chromebooks are turned off in the library unless you are explicitly doing homework and or classwork.
- The Loft is a quiet study zone

Library Notices

The SMMS library utilizes a digital notification system. Please make sure your email address is current and checked regularly. Notices will be emailed out monthly to all students who have outstanding obligations. Notices will also be mailed out to all parent email addresses on file quarterly.

Instructional Materials Policy

The instructional materials policy for Pasadena Unified School District is in compliance with California Education Code, section 48904 and with the PUSD Board Policy 6162.2 regarding damaged or lost instructional materials. It is also in compliance with California Education Code, section 35186 (the California Williams Act). Pursuant to California Education Code Section 35186 "There should be sufficient textbooks and instructional materials. For there to be sufficient textbooks and instructional materials, each pupil, including English learners, must have a textbook or instructional material, or both, to use in class and to take home to complete required homework assignments." (Williams Act)

This instructional materials policy applies to textbook, library book, and electronics checkouts.

- All textbooks are checked out electronically to students, with a valid SMMS ID card, and are due at the end of the school year after final exams.
- Textbooks are checked out through the library.
- Library materials are checked out through the library.
- Students are responsible for all books and electronics issued to them during the school year.
- The book a student returns at the end of the year must be the exact book that was issued at the beginning of the year.
- Students are responsible for the exact copy of each book issued to them. Each book has a unique barcode.

- Students should write down the barcode numbers or take a picture of each textbook's barcode and save the information in a safe place to refer to later, if needed.
- For easy identification of textbooks, students should write their name once on the nameplate inside the front cover.
- Teachers will not be responsible for textbooks left in their classroom. Even if the teacher allows students to keep their books in the classroom, the student will be held responsible if someone else damages or loses it. Students leave their books in the classroom **AT THEIR OWN RISK!**
- Sharing textbooks is not recommended. Books "stolen" or misplaced while stored in someone else's possession are still the student's financial responsibility.
- Students should maintain the appearance and cleanliness of their books by covering each of them. Covering books helps protect them from excessive wear and tear, which may be subject to a fine when returned.
- Pre-Existing Damages – The library takes note of damages in the online catalog, but if a student finds any pre-existing damages in a textbook, this must be reported to the library by the end of August to prevent the possibility of being assessed for those damages. Librarian email: ruwe.jane@pusd.us
- Students must maintain the appearance and cleanliness of their assigned textbooks. Examples of damages to be mindful of are: writing, water damage, broken or torn pages and covers, and food or marker stains. Students should not lend assigned textbooks to others, unless they are willing to pay for any damages that may occur through their use.

Unreturned or Damaged Textbook and Library Book Fees

- **EDUCATION CODE SECTION 48904** authorizes the district to secure reimbursement from students or legal guardians for the cost of lost, stolen or damaged instructional materials.
- Students may make partial payments until the book has been paid for. Payments may be made in cash to the librarian.
- Failure to pay fines may result in the withholding of student records. This can include **report cards, transcripts, or diplomas**.
- This also includes any and all books still checked out from previous years (except consumable workbooks). All books must be returned to the library where they were issued and payment of any fines made to that school.
- **Students will be charged a fee for each book not returned or returned damaged, and for workbooks lost and needing to be replaced during the year.**

Itemized Book Fees:

- Missing barcode: \$5.00
- Late library materials: \$0.10 a day up to \$5 maximum
- Ripped/torn or written on pages: \$2.00 per page
- Missing book: cost of book or replacement
- Water/mold/food damage: cost of book or replacement
- Cover/spine damage: \$20.00 or replacement
- Replacement workbooks: cost of workbook

Itemized Electronic Fees:

- Lost Chromebook: cost of device
- Lost charger: \$50.00
- Stolen Chromebook: Must be reported to police and a copy of police report provided to District's ITS Department

- It is advised to wait several days before filing a report. Lost Chromebooks are reported to ITS and deactivated. They are often returned to the library once they cannot be used.
- Negligent damage to Chromebook: Cost of replacement

Refund Policy

- Parents may be eligible for a refund for up to one year from the date of the payment if the lost textbook is found and turned into the textbook room.
- Parents should keep a copy of the receipt to verify the date that it was paid. Receipt is needed for refund.
- The refund will be issued by the librarian.

Medical Insurance

Information regarding student accident insurance is sent home at the beginning of each school year. The school district does not carry insurance to cover students in the event of an emergency.

Medications At School

To protect all children and to conform to the State Education Code, no child may bring any medication without completing a Medication Form provided by the school. Your physician must write directions on the form. Medication must be delivered by a parent or guardian to the school nurse in the original labeled prescription bottle. Only under these conditions may any medicine be given at school. Please call the school if you have any questions regarding the administration of medications.

Parent Involvement Policy

Parent volunteers and visitors are always welcomed on campus, and we are grateful for your cooperation. Sierra Madre Middle School's policy regarding parents and visitors on campus is as follows:

- **Volunteers** should pre-arrange with the teacher, sign-in at the office, and may need to have a TB screening completed.
- **Conferences** should also be pre-arranged with the teacher so that adequate information may be gathered for the meeting.
- **Parent Classroom Visitations** should also be pre-arranged with the teacher and/or the administration. Be sure to sign in at the office, and we ask that you limit your visit to approximately 15 minutes.

Parent Portal

The Parent and Student Portals were created as a way for both parents and students to stay involved in the student's academic life. The PUSD Parent and Student Portals allow for better communication between parents, students and teachers.

Parent and Student Portals have up to date information on:

- Grades
- Assignments
- Attendance
- . . . and more

Progress Reports

Progress reports are mailed home to parents every five weeks. The teacher is the final authority on the awarding of grades. The purpose of the progress reports is two-fold. First and foremost, they are

intended to inform parents/guardians of their child's progress. There are three progress reports each semester, with a final cumulative grade assigned at the end of the semester. The second function of the progress reports is to serve as **FAILURE NOTICES** to parents. They are intended to communicate that a student is not meeting the minimum standard and may not be eligible for promotion from the eighth grade. Please be certain to carefully review each progress report and contact the teacher if you have any questions or concerns.

Promotion Requirements

Sixth grade is a transition year. It is however, an essential time that builds a foundation that will ensure success as students move on to the 7th and 8th grades. In order to promote to high school, a student must earn a minimum of 120 units in 7th and 8th grade. This includes the four core subjects each semester, along with physical education and enrichment. Each student has the opportunity of earning 30 units of study per semester towards promotion. **Students who have not earned 120 units by the end of 8th grade, will not be eligible to participate in the 8th grade promotion ceremony.**

Special Education Rights & Responsibilities

A Special Education Parent Handbook is available from the Office of Special Education or at school sites. This handbook describes the district's Special Education Services, the Student Support Team and the referral, evaluation and placement procedures.

Student Sales

Students **are not** permitted to sell any items on campus unless it is through a school approved student group and with the permission of the administration.