

# 2025 – 2026

**SPECIAL ISSUE:**

WELCOME TO THE  
2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR

**WHAT YOU  
NEED TO KNOW**

**SCHOOL MASCOT:**  
MEERKATS

# MANZANO MESA FAMILY HANDBOOK

*The purpose of a school is to help a family educate a child.*

*~ Dr. Don Edgar (OAM) ~*

A photograph of the exterior of Manzano Mesa Elementary School. The building is a large, modern structure with a curved facade. The words "MANZANO MESA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL" are prominently displayed in large, blue, three-dimensional letters across the upper part of the building. Below the main entrance, there are several windows and a set of double doors. The sky is clear and blue. A street sign is visible in the foreground on the left side.

MANZANO MESA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Office Hours Starting  
8:30 AM - 4:00 PM  
Bell Schedule  
9:15 a.m. - 4:00 pm  
Breakfast Time  
9:05 AM

Office: (505) 292-6707

Attendance Line Ext: 2

Health Office Ext: 3

Fax: (505) 292-6719

Cafeteria: (505) 253-9260

Bus Services: (505) 880-3989

**Website:** [manzanomesa.aps.edu](http://manzanomesa.aps.edu)

**Twitter:** @MeerkatN

**Instagram:** manzano\_mesa

**Facebook**

[Manzano Mesa Elementary PTA](#)

[Manzano Mesa ES Community](#)

# Home of the Meerkats



## PRINCIPAL

Shannon Dickson  
[dickson\\_s@aps.edu](mailto:dickson_s@aps.edu)

## ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Buckner Creel  
[buckner.creel@aps.edu](mailto:buckner.creel@aps.edu)

## SECRETARY

Debbie Phillips  
[debra.phillips@aps.edu](mailto:debra.phillips@aps.edu)

## CLERK

Carmen Maynes  
[carmen.maynes@aps.edu](mailto:carmen.maynes@aps.edu)

## TEACHING & LEARNING COACH

Angela Stoltenberg  
[angela.stoltenberg@aps.edu](mailto:angela.stoltenberg@aps.edu)

## COMMUNITY IMPACT COORDINATOR

Nicole Candelaria  
[nicole.candelaria@aps.edu](mailto:nicole.candelaria@aps.edu)

## NURSE

Angela Arnold  
[angela.arnold@aps.edu](mailto:angela.arnold@aps.edu)

## HEALTH ASSISTANT

Mariah Noyce  
[mariah.noyce@aps.edu](mailto:mariah.noyce@aps.edu)

## COUNSELOR

Monica Buddrius  
[monica.buddrius@aps.edu](mailto:monica.buddrius@aps.edu)

**About Manzano Mesa Elementary School..... 5**  
 What is a Community School?..... 6

**Abbreviated Schedule.....6**

**Attendance.....7**  
 Tips to Improve Your Child's Attendance.....7  
**Early Student Pick-Up.....7**  
 Late Arrival..... 8

**Behavior Expectations.....8**  
 Discipline & Accountability..... 8  
 The Six Pillars of Character..... 9  
 Restorative Discipline Plan..... 9  
 Guiding Principles..... 9  
 Progressive Support & Intervention Plan..... 10  
 Examples of Restorative Responses..... 10  
 Family Expectations.....10  
 Student Re-entry Process (after removal/suspension)..... 10

**Bus Safety & Behavior Expectations.....11**  
 Bus Disruptions.....11  
 Prepare Your Bus Rider.....11  
 Bus Safety Rules.....11  
 Consequences for Bus Disruptions.....11  
 Phones & Smartwatches.....12

**Communication.....12**  
 Starts with the Teacher.....12  
 Addressing Concerns and Complaints.....12  
 Family Communication.....13  
 Emergency Communication Protocols.....13  
 Supporting Work-Life Balance for Teachers.....14

**Celebrations.....14**

**Custody and Legal Documentation.....15**

**Disenrolling.....15**

**Our Homework Philosophy: Read Together, Grow Together.....16**

**Library Guidelines.....16**

**Lost & Found, Personal Belongings, and Valuables.....17**

**Make-Up Work Policy.....17**

**Class Placement & Change Process.....17**  
 Initial Placements.....17  
 20th-Day Redistribution Policy.....18  
 Requesting a Placement Change.....18

**Emergency Drills & Safety Preparedness.....18**  
 Drill Schedule.....18

**Snack & Water Guidelines.....19**

What Families Can Do:.....	19
Snack Time Expectations:.....	19
<b>Technology Use at Manzano Mesa.....</b>	<b>19</b>
What Students Learn.....	19
Technology Guidelines.....	19
Technology Tips for Families:.....	20
<b>Toys, Sports Equipment, and Personal Items.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Traffic - Drop Off &amp; Pick Up.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Visiting &amp; Volunteering.....</b>	<b>21</b>
Campus Visitors & Volunteers.....	22
Visiting the School.....	22
Classroom Observations by Parents/Guardians.....	22
<b>Ways You Can Volunteer at Manzano Mesa.....</b>	<b>23</b>
In the Classroom.....	23
Schoolwide Events & Programs.....	23
Field Trips.....	23
Around the School.....	23
At-Home Help.....	23
Get Started to Volunteer.....	23
Field Trip Chaperone Guidelines & Responsibilities.....	24
Chaperone Responsibilities.....	24
Get Started to Volunteer.....	25
👩🏫 Sick Day Guidelines: Quick Reference Flyer.....	25
<b>Before &amp; After School Programs.....</b>	<b>26</b>

**About Manzano Mesa Elementary School**

**We are Proud to Call Ourselves a Community School**



## **Mission**

At Manzano Mesa Elementary, we are dedicated to offering top-notch education in a secure, effective, and encouraging setting. Our students, families, faculty, and community collaborate to promote self-sufficiency and lifelong learning.

## **Vision**

Manzano Mesa is a strong and united community where every member is valued and supported.

## **What is a Community School?**

Manzano Mesa is more than just a school. It is a thriving community of partnerships that collaborate to offer students a comprehensive approach to academics, health, social services, youth, and community development. Through community involvement, this school enhances student learning, supports families, and fosters healthier communities. It is a friendly and inclusive space for everyone in the community.

## **Foundation**

Our Community School has a team of committed individuals who work together to ensure success for our students. Administration leads with dedication, while our full-time coordinator provides support and guidance. Our Community School Council makes decisions to ensure we meet our goals. We strongly emphasize utilizing data to inform our strategies and achieve the best possible outcomes for our students and school community.

## **Community School Council**

The Community School Council meets every other Wednesday morning, taking turns with the Instructional Council. The Council requests a representative from each grade level to join as a voting member, but all school community members are welcome to attend.

## **Community School Impact Coordinator**

Our Community School Impact Coordinator plays a key role in helping families thrive. They keep track of the services and programs offered, ensuring they are effective and meet student needs. Each year, they lead a process to understand what our school community needs most and what strengths we can build on.

Hosting regular Community School Council meetings brings together staff, families, and partners to ensure everyone has a voice. They also build strong partnerships with local organizations to connect families with helpful resources.

Most importantly, our coordinator is here to support student success by making sure services are well-integrated and families are actively engaged in school life.

## **Abbreviated Schedule**

The abbreviated day schedule is a shortened school day, which begins exactly two hours later than the regular schedule. The decision to institute an abbreviated day schedule will be made by 6:00 a.m. and will be announced through the news media. If the weather worsens and it becomes necessary to close the schools, an announcement will be made. Which means students will learn asynchronously. Teachers will provide more information on this.

General guidelines:

- Student Hours are 11:15 - 4:00
- Buses and the cafeteria operate.

**\*Ensure all contact information is up-to-date in ParentVue.**

## Attendance

The State of New Mexico requires that students between the ages of 5 and 18 attend a public or private school (including charter and alternative schools) or register with the Public Education Department if a parent is providing homeschooling or the student is in a state institution.

Student attendance in school is a critical component of the educational process. Students, families, and APS personnel must all work together to promote student success by promoting good attendance because every day matters!

### Tips to Improve Your Child's Attendance

Set a regular bedtime and morning routine.  
Lay out clothes and backpacks the night before.  
Don't let your child stay home unless they are truly sick. Remember that complaints of a stomach ache or headache can be a sign of anxiety and not a reason to stay home.  
Develop backup plans for getting to school if something happens. Call on a family member, a neighbor, or another parent.  
Volunteer at your child's school and get involved.  
Avoid medical appointments and extended trips when school is in session.

Attendance positively relates to student success. The APS Attendance Supports Unit works with school staff to ensure that students are not disciplined for having poor attendance. Our goal is to support students to succeed in school and life. The State of New Mexico requires that students between the ages of 5 and 18 attend a public or private school (including charter and alternative schools) or register with the Public Education Department if a parent provides homeschooling or the student is in a state institution.

Student attendance in school is a critical component of the educational process. Students, families, and APS personnel must all work together to promote student success by promoting good attendance because every day matters! Attendance positively relates to student success. The APS Attendance Supports Unit works

with school staff to ensure that students are not disciplined for having poor attendance. Our goal is to support students to succeed in school and life.

Absences may be excused for the following reasons with proper notification:

- Illness (including chronic illness documented on a health plan, IEP, or 504 plan)
- Limited family emergencies
- Family Deaths
- Medical, health, or legal appointments
- Religious commitments
- College visits
- Deployment of a military parent
- Limited extenuating circumstances as approved in advance by the school principal
- Tribal obligations

### Who should I contact when my child is sick and will be absent from school?

You can also enter an absence in [ParentVUE](#), or you may call the front office at **(505)292-6707 ext. 2**.

### Who do I contact when my child will be out of school for an extended period of time?

Contact your child's teacher and the front office **(505) 292-6707** to provide documentation for extended absences.

## Early Student Pick-Up

To help keep all students safe and ensure learning time is protected, please follow these important guidelines for early pick-up:

- **Authorized Adults Only**  
Students will only be released to adults listed in **ParentVUE**. A **photo ID** is required at the time of pick-up—every time.
- **Check-Out Process**  
Students will **not be called to the office** until the authorized adult has arrived and signed them out. This helps minimize missed instructional time.
- **Avoid End-of-Day Pick-Ups**  
The final **30 minutes** of the school day are very busy. Please **avoid picking up your child after 3:30 p.m.**, unless it's an emergency.

## Late Arrival

- **Enter Through the Front Office:**  
All students arriving after the final bell must be brought to the front office by a parent or guardian. For safety reasons, students may not enter through other doors.
- **Sign In Your Child:**  
Please sign your child in at the front desk. This ensures we have an accurate record of their attendance and helps keep our school safe.
- **Get a Tardy Slip:**  
The office will provide your child with a tardy slip. This slip lets the teacher know the child has been properly signed in and can head to class.
- **Share Any Relevant Info:**  
If there's a reason for the tardiness we should be aware of (e.g., a doctor's appointment), let the front office know so it can be properly noted. The doctor may also fax us a doctor's note (505) 292-6719.
- **Encourage a Positive Start:**  
A quick goodbye and a smile can help your child transition smoothly into the school day—even if it started a little late.

*We appreciate your support in scheduling appointments outside of the school day, which helps us keep students safe and focused on learning every day.*

## Behavior Expectations

At Manzano Mesa, we maintain high expectations for students, staff, and families to ensure a safe, respectful learning environment where everyone can thrive.

## Our Approach

We teach behavior like any other skill—through guidance, reflection, and support. Using restorative practices focused on relationships, responsibility, and repair, we help students learn from mistakes and make better choices. When needed, we involve families to work together in support of the child.

## Discipline & Accountability

We follow the **APS Student Behavior Handbook** and use restorative practices and progressive discipline to address behavior, promote positive change, and keep students engaged in learning. Intentional or repeated harm is taken seriously and requires family involvement. Families are responsible for restitution if property is stolen or damaged.

## Working Together

Positive behavior grows through strong school-family partnerships. We ask families to review the APS Student Code of Conduct with their child and help reinforce respectful, responsible behavior at home and school. Together, we can help every child succeed.

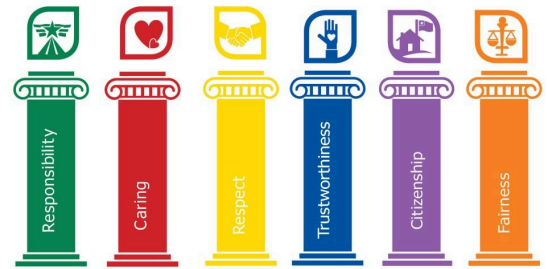
## The Six Pillars of Character

At Manzano Mesa, the Six Pillars of Character form the foundation of our school community. These core values are thoughtfully integrated into our social-emotional learning and restorative practices to help students grow into respectful, responsible, and compassionate individuals.

Each month, we focus on one pillar and hold a school-wide assembly to introduce it. We also celebrate students who have exemplified the previous month's trait through their actions and choices.

The Six Pillars of Character are:

- **Trustworthiness** – Be honest, reliable, and loyal.
- **Respect** – Treat others with kindness and follow the Golden Rule.
- **Responsibility** – Do your best, think before you act, and be accountable.
- **Fairness** – Play by the rules, share, and listen to others.
- **Caring** – Be kind, compassionate, and show you care.
- **Citizenship** – Do your part to help your school and community.



By practicing these values, our Meerkats learn how to contribute positively to their classrooms, families, and the world around them.

## Restorative Discipline Plan

### Purpose

To support a safe, inclusive learning environment by teaching students appropriate behavior through proactive, restorative, and developmentally appropriate approaches.

### Guiding Principles

- Behavior is learned and should be taught, just like academics.
- Restorative practices are used to build relationships, repair harm, and promote responsibility.
- Progressive discipline ensures fairness and allows for growth.
- Family partnership is essential to support behavior change.
- APS Student Behavior Handbook and NMSA 1978 Section 22-35-2(G) guide our decisions.

HOW IS RESTORATIVE THINKING DIFFERENT?	
Conventional Thinking:	Restorative Thinking:
Focused on the rules broken	Focused on the people harmed
Accountability equals punishment	Accountability means repairing the harm
Focus on Past	Focus on Future
Focused on offender	Focused on community
Offender defined by their crime	Offender seen holistically
Justice is focused on establishment of guilt/innocence	Justice is focused on needs and responsibilities of all involved
All behavior is motivated by punishments and rewards	All behavior is motivated by basic universal human needs
Challenging behavior is used to get things (e.g., attention) or escape / avoid things (e.g., work, responsibility).	Behind most challenging behavior is: a problem to be solved and skills to be trained.
Behavior is a matter of the child's will	Behavior is a matter of skills
Focused on "what" people are	Focused on "how" people are
Outside interventions (court, police)	Community interventions (people most affected by harm)
Focus on control/compliance	Focus on connection/influence/skills
Focused on behavior	Focused on problem-solving
Power over/under	Power-with
Based on moral judgments	Based on values judgments
External motivation	Internal motivation

©2016 Joe Brummer Consulting, LLC [www.joebrummer.com](http://www.joebrummer.com)

## **Progressive Support & Intervention Plan**

### **Tier 1: Proactive Classroom Supports**

- Clear expectations are taught and reinforced schoolwide
- Community-building circles and classroom agreements
- Positive behavior reinforcement
- Redirection and re-teaching
- Cool-down time or self-reflection opportunities
- Family contact for early concerns

### **Tier 2: Restorative Interventions**

- Restorative conversations and mediation with affected parties
- Reflection sheets or restorative think sheets
- Problem-solving or goal-setting conferences
- Check-in/check-out or behavior contracts
- Involvement of school counselor or MLSS team
- Increased communication with family

### **Tier 3: Progressive Discipline + Restorative Response**

- Office referral with investigation and documentation
- Restorative conference with student, staff, and family
- Detention, in-school suspension (ISS), or loss of privileges with re-entry reflection
- Behavior plan or Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA), if ongoing
- Referral to support services or outside resources (when appropriate)
- Parent/guardian required for re-entry after serious or repeated incidents

### **Examples of Restorative Responses**

- Harm caused to another student → Mediation and written/apology letter, plus a plan for change
- Disruption of learning → Reflective conversation, make-up academic work, family communication
- Destruction of property → Apology, restitution (repair or replacement), and behavior reflection
- Theft → Restitution, restorative conference with the impacted party, and reflection process
- Repeated behavior → Behavior plan with team and family, more intensive supports

### **Family Expectations**

- Partner with school to support behavior improvement
- Attend conferences or re-entry meetings when needed
- Follow up on restitution (if applicable)
- Review and reinforce behavior expectations at home

### **Student Re-entry Process (after removal/suspension)**

- Student meets with principal or counselor for a restorative check-in
- Family may be asked to attend (required after repeated offenses)
- A reflection plan or agreement is created
- Student is welcomed back into the classroom community

### **Our Focus: Repairing Harm, Restoring Relationships, and Supporting Growth**

We believe all students can learn from mistakes. By working together, we ensure students are held accountable in ways that build empathy, responsibility, and the skills they need to succeed—now and in the future.

## Bus Safety & Behavior Expectations

Riding the school bus is a **privilege**, not a right. To keep all students safe, appropriate behavior is required at all times on the bus, at bus stops, and in loading zones.

### Bus Disruptions

A **bus disruption** happens when a student:

- Interferes with the safe operation of the bus (whether it's moving or stopped)
- Behaves in a way that affects others or property on or near the bus
- Causes distractions or unsafe conditions at the bus stop or loading area

Students who cannot follow these expectations may be suspended from the bus. This **does not mean suspension from school**—families will need to arrange alternate transportation.

### Prepare Your Bus Rider

Please help your child by making sure they:

- Know their **bus number**
- Know where to **get on and off the bus**
- Have their **home address and phone number** memorized or written down



### Kindergarten Reminder:

Kindergartners will **not be left alone at a bus stop** unless prior written permission is given to APS and the bus company. A parent or approved adult must be present unless arrangements have been made for them to walk home or go with an older sibling.

### Bus Safety Rules

- Follow directions from the **bus driver**
- **Stay seated and face forward**
- **Keep hands and objects inside the bus**
- **Speak kindly and respectfully**—no foul language or gestures
- **Be respectful to others** and help keep the bus clean and safe

Working together, we can ensure all students have a safe and respectful ride to and from school each day.

### Consequences for Bus Disruptions

- 1st Violation - Written Warning
- 2nd Violation - Up to 5 days Suspension from the bus
- 3rd Violation - Up to 10 days Suspension from the bus
- 4th Violation - Suspension from the bus Up to the End of the Semester
- 5th Violation - Suspension from the bus Up to the Remainder of the Year

\*The parent/guardian is expected to discuss the incident with the student to help prevent a recurrence.

### Severe Disruption

The following **inappropriate and dangerous behavior** will result in the automatic suspension of transportation.

- Physical harm to other students or staff
- Physical damage to the bus (restitution may be required)

## Consequences/Disposition

- Physical harm to other students or staff
- Physical damage to the bus (restitution may be required)
  - 1st Violation - Up to 10 days Suspension from the bus
  - 2nd Violation - Suspension from the bus Up to End of the Semester
  - 3rd Violation - Suspension from the bus Up to the Remainder of the Year

*Refer for a Police Report\* Additional Required action for any Consequence to ensure Student Due Process.*

## Phones & Smartwatches

Students may use the office phone for emergencies only. Cell phones must stay off and in backpacks during the school day. Smartwatches may be worn for time/date only, not for communication or games.

If used inappropriately:

- 1st time: Held by the teacher
- 2nd time: Taken to principal; student picks it up after school
- 3rd time: Parent conference required
- 4th time or more: Device must be checked in daily or kept at home



The school is not responsible for lost or stolen devices.

## Communication

### Starts with the Teacher

Strong communication between school and home is essential for student success. Your child's teacher should always be your first point of contact when you have questions or concerns.

Teachers spend the most time with your children each day and are best equipped to provide insight into their learning, behavior, and social interactions. Working together, we can support your child's growth and well-being.



### Addressing Concerns and Complaints

At Manzano Mesa, we believe in open and respectful communication to support every student's success. If you have a concern about your child's education, learning environment, or social interactions, we encourage you to follow these steps:

#### 1. Start with the Teacher

Your child's teacher is the first and best point of contact. They work closely with your child and can often resolve concerns quickly.

#### 2. Contact Administration if Needed

If concerns remain unresolved, you may contact the Assistant Principal, followed by the Principal. For matters that cannot be settled at the school level, you may reach out to the **APS Student Service Center (505) 855-9040**.

We are here to listen and work with you to ensure the best possible experience for your child.

## **Family Communication**

Strong communication between school and home supports student success. Your first point of contact for concerns should always be the teacher. Our teachers spend more time with the children. Here's how we stay connected and how you can get involved:

### **ClassDojo & School Messenger**

These are our main tools for daily communication.

- Please keep your contact information updated.
- ClassDojo login details will be shared during the first week of school. Teachers will use this as their form of communication such as text messages and they will use the school phone or Google for phone calls.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Held twice a year to discuss:

- Academic progress
- Social-emotional development
- Goals for improvement
- If concerns arise before conferences, contact your child's teacher directly.

### **Timely Communication**

Staff aim to respond to messages within 24–72 hours during school days.

- Delays may occur on weekends or breaks.
- Our staff are not expected to respond outside of their duty hours. Please keep in mind they have families too and will get back to you as soon as they are available.
- If a teacher is on leave, contact the office for help.

### **Clarifying Miscommunication**

Tone can be misunderstood in messages—if confusion arises, we recommend a quick phone call to clarify and connect.

### **Family Engagement**

We value your voice! Participate through:

- PTA or Community School Council
- Volunteering at events or in classrooms
- Completing surveys to share your input

Working together, we can ensure a positive and inclusive school experience for all students.

### **Emergency Communication Protocols**

In the event of an emergency during the school day, Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) and Manzano Mesa Elementary will communicate updates using official channels like:

- [aps.edu](https://aps.edu)
- School websites and social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)
- School Messenger phone calls and emails (please make sure your contact info is up-to-date!)

Here's what you can expect:

- **Shelter-in-Place or Lockdown:** Notifications will be shared via [aps.edu](https://aps.edu), our school website, and social media. If you're signed up for School Messenger, you'll receive a phone call or email.
- **Ongoing Updates:** As new information is confirmed with law enforcement, we'll keep families informed through all available platforms.
- **Early Dismissal or Canceled Transportation:** Your child will stay on campus under adult supervision until arrangements are made. We'll notify you of any transportation changes or if students are permitted to walk home.
- **Evacuations:** If we must leave campus, you'll be notified and given details on where to reunite with your child. Students will only be released to legal guardians or people listed on the emergency card.

Once the situation is resolved, we'll send a follow-up message and a letter explaining what occurred. Every emergency is different, and while we aim to communicate quickly, your patience is appreciated. Above all, our top priority is the safety of our students and staff.

### Supporting Work-Life Balance for Teachers

At Manzano Mesa, we value the well-being of our teachers and recognize the importance of maintaining a healthy balance between work and personal life. To support this, our staff are encouraged to disconnect from work at a designated time each day so they can recharge and return refreshed, ready to give their best to your children.

Please note that the typical response time for non-urgent communication is up to 72 hours during the school week.

Thank you for understanding and supporting this initiative as we work together to create a positive and sustainable environment for our staff, students, and families.

### Celebrations

- To promote inclusivity while prioritizing instructional time, treats for special occasions will be shared during the last 15 minutes of the day or at lunchtime.
- If families would like to participate in their child's celebration, we ask that families arrange a separate time outside of school hours.
- Families may drop off cupcakes at the office, but must make arrangements outside of the school day for birthday celebrations.
- Please refrain from bringing ice cream, sheet cakes, and other similar treats. Additionally, birthday candles are not allowed due to fire code regulations. Popsicles should also be avoided unless the weather is nice, and they can be eaten outside.
- Other classroom celebrations should be inclusive, centered on learning, and avoid specific holidays that could be offensive, such as Christmas, Halloween, Kwanzaa, or Hanukkah, due to their religious aspects and the fact that not everyone acknowledges or celebrates them.



## **Custody and Legal Documentation**

To ensure student safety and proper communication, it is essential that families keep **both the school office and your child's teacher** informed of any custody arrangements that may affect school procedures.

If there are legal custody restrictions, parents/guardians must provide the school with **official court documents bearing a valid seal**. Without legal documentation on file, the school is **not legally permitted to prevent a parent from picking up their child**.

Please understand that Manzano Mesa staff will remain neutral in all domestic matters. Our role is to follow legal guidelines and maintain a safe, respectful environment for every student.

### **Reminder:**

Make sure your contact information is up to date in **ParentVUE** throughout the school year. This includes phone numbers, emergency contacts, and custody updates. Accurate information helps us keep your child safe and ensures you receive important school communications.

## **Disenrolling**

If your family is moving or your child will be transferring to another school, please follow these steps to help us ensure a smooth transition:

### **Before Your Child's Last Day**

- **Notify the Front Office and Teacher at Least 3 Days in Advance**  
This allows time to prepare transfer paperwork and gather necessary records.
- **Return All School Materials**  
This includes library books, classroom textbooks, technology devices (if applicable), and any borrowed supplies.
- **Settle Any Outstanding Balances**  
Fees must be paid in full for:
  - Library materials
  - Cafeteria accounts
  - Lost or damaged textbooks
- **Update Contact Information**  
Make sure we have your current phone number and forwarding address in case we need to reach you after your child's withdrawal.

### **On the Day of Withdrawal**

- Confirm that all belongings have been taken home.

We'll miss your family and wish you the very best in your next chapter!

### **Dress Code:**

Manzano Mesa follows APS's commitment to equitable and inclusive education. Our dress code supports a school environment that welcomes and affirms all students, regardless of race, culture, gender, orientation, religion, income, or body type.

### **Expectations:**

Students should dress in a way that is **respectful, safe, and appropriate** for learning. The dress code will be applied **fairly and consistently**.

### **Students may not wear clothing or accessories that:**

- Contain obscene, violent, or profane language/images
- Depict alcohol, drugs, or illegal activities
- Display racist or hateful content, pornography, or hate speech
- Include dangerous accessories or items that could be used as weapons

Our goal is to create a safe, comfortable space where all students can focus on learning.

### **Our Homework Philosophy: Read Together, Grow Together**

At Manzano Mesa, our Instructional Council has adopted a homework philosophy grounded in research by Douglas Fisher, author of *Visible Learning for Literacy* and *Visible Learning for Math*. His findings show that traditional homework has a **low impact on student learning outcomes**.

As a result, **teachers are not expected to assign homework**. Instead, we focus on what truly makes a difference: **reading with your child every night**.

Nightly reading supports literacy, vocabulary development, and a lifelong love of learning. Here are five simple ways to make reading at home meaningful:

- **Create a Reading Routine**  
Set aside a regular time each night for reading. This builds a consistent habit and shows your child that reading is important.
- **Make it Enjoyable**  
Let your child choose books that interest them. When kids are excited about what they read, they stay engaged.
- **Discuss the Story**  
After reading, talk about what happened.
- .
- Ask questions about the characters, the plot, and their favorite parts.
- **Read Aloud Together**  
Take turns reading aloud. This strengthens reading fluency and boosts your child's confidence.
- **Build a Reading-Friendly Space**  
Create a cozy nook with good lighting and a variety of books. A welcoming space makes reading time something to look forward to

By sharing the joy of reading each day, you're helping your child develop essential skills and a deeper connection to learning.

### **Library Guidelines**

All students at Manzano Mesa regularly visit the library and are encouraged to check out books to support their love of reading and learning.

### **Important Reminders for Families:**

- **Help your child return books on time.** Books are due one week after checkout but can be renewed if needed.
- **Checkout limits vary by grade level,** based on what's developmentally appropriate.
- **Lost or damaged books must be paid for** before your child can check out new ones or transfer to another school.

Thank you for helping your child develop responsibility and a lifelong love of reading!

### **Lost & Found, Personal Belongings, and Valuables**

To help students stay organized and keep our school safe and clutter-free, please review the following guidelines:

- **Only bring money when necessary** and have your child turn it in right away (e.g., for field trips or book fairs).
- **Label all personal items** like jackets, lunch boxes, and backpacks with your child's name.
- **Students are responsible for keeping their belongings with them** and should not leave items unattended.
- **Toys, personal playthings, and sports equipment from home are not allowed.** Our PTA and PE department provides playground equipment for students.
- **Students are responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged textbooks.**
- **Lost items** should be turned in to the front office. Please check the Lost & Found regularly for missing items.

Thank you for helping us keep our campus safe, organized, and focused on learning.

### **Make-Up Work Policy**

Students have the right to make up work for **all absences—excused or unexcused**—with one exception: In cases of **truancy**, the principal has the discretion to determine whether make-up work will be allowed.

#### **Key Guidelines:**

- It is the **student's responsibility to request** any missed assignments from their teacher.
- Teachers need **up to 24 hours** to gather and prepare the materials.
- Students will have the same number of days to complete their work as the number of days they were absent, unless a different timeline is agreed upon with the teacher.

We encourage families to support their child in staying on top of missed work so they can remain on track with their learning.

### **Class Placement & Change Process**

At Manzano Mesa, we work hard to create balanced classrooms that support the success of all students. Our goal is to place each child in a learning environment that best fits their academic and social-emotional needs.

#### **Initial Placements**

Each May, teachers thoughtfully consider students' needs to make classroom placements for the next school year. While families may not request a specific teacher, they may submit a written letter to the administration by **April** describing:

- Their child's learning style
- Teaching methods that best support their child

This input helps us make thoughtful, student-centered decisions.

## 20th-Day Redistribution Policy

Changes in enrollment may occur before or after the school year begins. If we need to open, close, or combine classrooms, we may redistribute students.

- Volunteers (families and students) will be invited to move first.
- Remaining students will be placed to maintain balanced, diverse classrooms.  
We understand this can be a difficult transition and do everything possible to minimize disruptions.

## Requesting a Placement Change

We believe learning to work with a variety of personalities helps students grow. We do not make changes based on social preferences, such as being with or away from specific students.

If you believe a placement change is necessary, please follow this process:

1. **Meet with the Teacher**  
Schedule a conference to discuss your concerns.
2. **Observe the Classroom**  
After week 6 of school, observe the classroom for **two 30-minute sessions over two weeks**.
3. **Parent-Teacher-Principal Conference**  
If concerns remain, a conference will be scheduled to create an action plan.
4. **Final Review**  
A follow-up meeting will determine whether a class change is in the best interest of the student and classmates.
  - **Placement changes are not guaranteed.**
  - No changes will be made if classes are at **maximum capacity**.
  - Families may not request a specific teacher.

We appreciate your partnership in helping us create positive, productive learning spaces for every student.

## Emergency Drills & Safety Preparedness

At Manzano Mesa, student safety is our top priority. To ensure everyone is prepared in the event of an emergency, we conduct regular safety drills throughout the school year.

### Drill Schedule

- **First Four Weeks of School:**
  - One **shelter-in-place drill** (includes active shooter preparedness)
  - One **evacuation drill**
  - Two **fire drills**
- **Rest of the School Year:**
  - At least **four additional drills**
  - At least **two of these will be fire drills**

These drills help students and staff practice how to stay safe and respond quickly in a variety of emergency situations. We approach all drills with care and age-appropriate explanations to ensure students feel safe and supported.

## Snack & Water Guidelines

With our later school hours, we know students may get hungry during the day. Healthy snacks are a great way to help them stay energized, focused, and ready to learn. We encourage families to send a snack with their child each day, as teachers will not be providing snacks in the classroom.

### What Families Can Do:

- Send a **nutritious snack** each day—fruits, veggies, whole grains, and other healthy options are encouraged.
- Pack a **refillable water bottle** that your child can keep at school. Students may also use the water fountains.

### Snack Time Expectations:

- Students will have a **designated time** during the day to enjoy their snack so it doesn't interfere with instruction.
- Snacks should remain in **backpacks** until it's time to eat.
- Any unfinished snacks will be either thrown away or returned to backpacks.

### Please Do Not Send:

- Sodas or sugary drinks
- Candy or highly processed/unhealthy snacks
- Snacks requiring storage or refrigeration—**teachers will not store food**

Thank you for helping us keep students nourished and focused throughout the school day!

## Technology Use at Manzano Mesa

At Manzano Mesa, students are loaned a **Chromebook** while at school. We do not send Chromebooks home. These tools are used during school hours to enhance classroom learning and help students build important technology skills they'll use in college, careers, and everyday life.

### What Students Learn

Students are taught to use technology for:

- Research and learning
- Sharing ideas
- Creating and presenting work

Technology use is guided by our school's **core values**:

**Trust • Respect • Responsibility • Citizenship**

### Technology Guidelines

- Treat all school devices with care and respect.
- Report any issues with the device or case to a staff member right away.
- **No gaming or music streaming** (YouTube, Spotify, etc.) during class time.
- Devices must only be used for **educational purposes**—not personal entertainment or messaging.
- Students may only use the devices and equipment assigned to them.

## Internet Safety & Use

APS and Manzano Mesa use internet filters to keep students safe. Students may **not**:

- Visit websites with inappropriate or explicit content
- Access non-educational sites during class
- Use chats or messaging for non-school purposes

## A Note for Parents

You play an important role in guiding your child's technology use at home. Responsible use at school and at home helps students build healthy digital habits.

### *Technology Tips for Families:*

1. **Set Screen Time Limits** – Balance device use with offline play, reading, and sleep.
2. **Talk About Online Safety** – Teach your child not to share personal information or talk to strangers online.
3. **Use Parental Controls** – Monitor websites, apps, and screen time with built-in tools or apps.
4. **Encourage Device-Free Time** – Family meals, car rides, and bedtime are great times to unplug.
5. **Stay Involved** – Ask your child what they're doing online and explore websites or projects together.
6. **Model Good Behavior** – Let your child see you using technology responsibly.

Together, we can help our students become respectful, responsible, and safe digital citizens—ready for the future!

## Toys, Sports Equipment, and Personal Items

To keep our school environment safe, focused, and free from distractions, **students may not bring personal toys, sports equipment, or playthings** to school.

These items can:

- Be easily lost, broken, or stolen
- Cause conflicts between students
- Distract from learning or even lead to injury

For everyone's safety, the following items are also **not allowed to be ridden on campus**:

- **Skateboards** (once on campus, please walk the skateboard)
- **Bicycles** (once on campus, please walk the bicycle)
- **Scoters** (once on campus, please walk the scooter)
- **Roller-shoes** (please remove the wheels before entering school grounds)

If personal items are brought to school, they may be **confiscated** and returned at the end of the day, or after a parent conference if repeated.

We appreciate your support in helping us create a safe, respectful, and focused learning environment for all students.

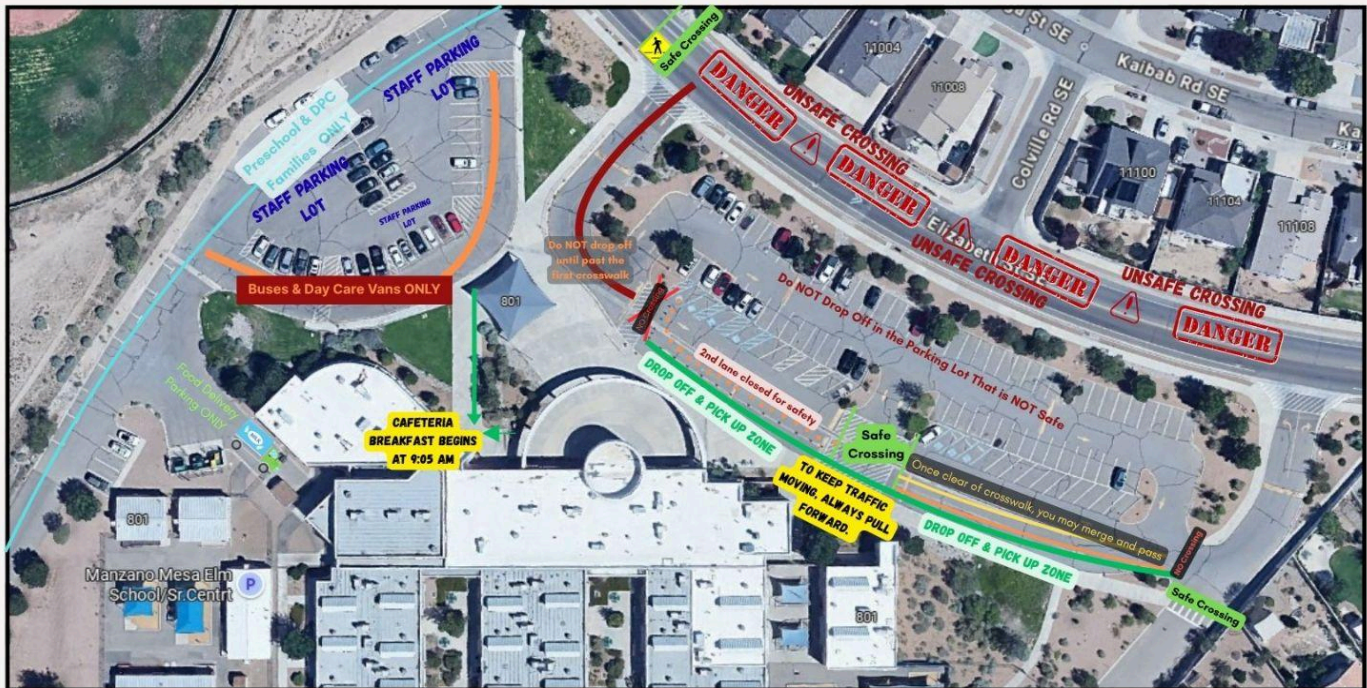


# DROP OFF & PICK UP



## DROP OFF LIKE A PRO: SLOW, STEADY, AND NO SURPRISES!

Please take a moment to study our drop-off and pick-up map before the first day.  
 Drop-off begins at 9:05 AM, Final Bell 9:15 AM. Dismissal is at 4:00 PM.  
 Knowing the procedures helps keep everyone safe, avoids confusion, and prevents traffic backups.



**TINY HUMANS, BIG RESPONSIBILITY.**  
**DRIVE LIKE THEY'RE YOURS!**

**Stay in designated areas**  
 Only use the drop-off/pick-up lane or approved parking spaces. Never stop in the middle of the road or block crosswalks.

**KIDS AREN'T DODGEBALLS—DON'T LET THEM DART INTO TRAFFIC!**

**Never let kids cross between cars**  
 Always use crosswalks and sidewalks.

**CAUTION: FUTURE WORLD CHANGERS CROSSING!**

**Follow staff directions**  
 They're there to keep everyone safe and the flow moving.

**EYES UP, PHONES DOWN—KIDS ARE ALL AROUND!**

**Stay alert and avoid distractions**  
 No texting, phone calls, or multitasking behind the wheel.

**Slow down**  
 Drive like every child is your own. Kids can be unpredictable.

**Be patient**  
 A few extra minutes of waiting is worth a child's safety.



**Stay in your car while in the drop-off lane**  
 If you need to walk your child in, park in a designated space.



**Arrive on time**  
 Rushed drivers make unsafe choices. Plan ahead to reduce stress for you and your child.

## DO YOUR PART

When everyone follows the plan, everything runs smoother, for kids, staff, and you!  
 Let's work together to be part of the solution.

## Campus Visitors & Volunteers

At Manzano Mesa, student safety is our top priority. For this reason, we have clear procedures in place for all visitors and volunteers. These guidelines are not just about convenience—they are about keeping everyone on campus safe.

### Visiting the School

- **Check-in Required:** All visitors must **check in at the front office**, provide **photo ID**, and wear a **“Visitor” badge** at all times while on campus.
- **Entry Process:** When arriving, ring the doorbell at the main entrance. An intercom will be used to confirm your purpose before you are buzzed in.
- **Approved Pickup Only:** Students will **only be released to individuals listed in Synergy** (our student information system). Even if we know you, a **photo ID is still required**.



### Classroom Observations by Parents/Guardians

At Manzano Mesa Elementary, we value strong family partnerships and support opportunities for parents/guardians to observe their child’s classroom environment. To ensure minimal disruption to learning while maintaining student privacy and safety, the following guidelines apply to all classroom observations, including in special education settings:

#### Purpose

- Observations must be for the purpose of viewing your own child in the classroom.

#### Scheduling

- An appointment is required and must be made at least two school days in advance.
- Observations are limited to one individual per appointment.
- The observing individual must have educational rights for the student being observed.

#### Time Limit

- Observations are limited to a maximum of 20 minutes per visit. 1

#### Conduct During Observation

- Photos and video recordings are not permitted to protect the privacy of all students.
- An administrator or designee will accompany the visitor for the duration of the observation.

We appreciate your cooperation in following these guidelines to maintain a safe, respectful, and focused learning environment for all students. If you would like to schedule an observation, please contact the front office.

### Volunteering at Manzano Mesa

We love and appreciate our volunteers! To ensure student safety, **all volunteers must complete a background check** as required by state law and APS policies.

There are two types of volunteer clearances:

1. **Supervised Volunteer** (~\$17, online)
  - Must remain in **line-of-sight** of an APS staff member (not including cafeteria staff)
  - Examples: classroom helper, field trip support, play day assistant
2. **Unsupervised Volunteer** (~\$44, in-person with fingerprinting)
  - Requires **administrative approval**
  - Full FBI background check
  - Examples: tutors or mentors working one-on-one with students

## Ways You Can Volunteer at Manzano Mesa

Family involvement makes a huge difference in our school community! Whether you have a little time or a lot, there are many ways to support our students and staff:

### In the Classroom

- Help with small group activities or classroom centers
- Assist with art projects, science experiments, or STEAM tasks
- Read aloud to students or listen to students read
- Prep materials for lessons (cutting, copying, organizing)

### Schoolwide Events & Programs

- Volunteer at school events (Festivals, Field Day, Book Fairs)
- Help plan or run family engagement nights or school celebrations
- Support student leadership programs (e.g., K-Kids)

### Field Trips

- Serve as a chaperone
- Help supervise students and ensure safety on the bus and at destinations

### Around the School

- Assist in the library with shelving and book checkouts
- Help in the Community School Room with teacher tasks
- Prepare materials for staff (laminating, sorting, organizing)
- Refill water bottles or help with snack distribution during special events

### Committees & Leadership

- Join the **PTA** to support fundraising, teacher appreciation, and more
- Join the **Community School Council** to help shape school goals
- Participate in school surveys and feedback opportunities

### At-Home Help

- Cut, sort, or prep materials for teachers
- Contact families to help with classroom activities
- Donate supplies or items for classrooms or events

### Get Started to Volunteer

All volunteers must complete the **APS background check** process.

Visit [aps.edu/community/volunteer-with-aps](https://aps.edu/community/volunteer-with-aps)

Need help? Contact our Community School Coordinator, **Nicole Candelaria** at

✉ [nicole.candelaria@aps.edu](mailto:nicole.candelaria@aps.edu)

## Field Trip Chaperone Guidelines & Responsibilities

Thank you for volunteering your time and support! Field trips are a valuable part of our students' learning experience, and your involvement helps make these opportunities possible. To ensure a safe, respectful, and rewarding experience for all, please review the following expectations for field trip chaperones.

### Chaperone Responsibilities

- **Follow School Rules and Procedures**

- All APS and school rules apply during field trips.
- Chaperones must follow directions from the coordinating teacher, work cooperatively with staff, and model respectful behavior at all times.
- Chaperones will follow the teacher's planned itinerary and **may ride the school bus** with students.

- **Supervision of Students**

Students must be supervised **at all times**.

- Chaperones should **never be alone** with a student (e.g., in a restroom). Always stay in group settings.
- Chaperones **may not separate from the group** or take their child off to do their own activity. The goal is to keep all students together and accounted for at all times.

- **Prohibited Substances**

- Chaperones **may not** possess or use alcohol, drugs, tobacco, vaping products, or weapons of any kind while on the trip.

- **Medications**

- Chaperones **may not administer medications** (prescription or over-the-counter) to students. Any exceptions must be cleared with the principal and school nurse in advance.

- **Cell Phone and Photography Policy**

Cell phone use should be limited to **emergencies or trip-related communication** only.

- Chaperones should be fully engaged while supervising students—please refrain from doing outside work or reading.
- Due to privacy policies, **do not take photos** of students other than your own child.

- **Meals and Snacks**

- Eating and drinking should only occur during **designated times and areas**.
- Eating or drinking is **not allowed on school buses**.
- Chaperones **may not take their child away from the group** for meals, snacks, or other side activities.

- **No Additional Guests**

- For safety and supervision reasons, **siblings or other family members are not allowed** to attend field trips.

- **Timely Volunteer Sign-Up Required**

- All field trip chaperones must complete the APS volunteer clearance process **and be submitted to the District in advance**.

- **Chaperones may not show up the day of the field trip** expecting to join. If you would like to attend, please **volunteer in a timely manner** to ensure your paperwork is processed and your name is on the approved list.

If you have any questions or need clarification, please speak with your child’s teacher or the school principal.

Before the trip, you will need to **sign and return the Field Trip Chaperone Agreement** prior to the trip.

We truly appreciate your support in making field trips safe and successful for all students!

**Get Started to Volunteer**

All volunteers must complete the APS background check process.

Visit [aps.edu/community/volunteer-with-aps](https://aps.edu/community/volunteer-with-aps)

Need help? Contact our Community School Coordinator, Nicole Candelaria at

 [nicole.candelaria@aps.edu](mailto:nicole.candelaria@aps.edu)

 **Sick Day Guidelines: Quick Reference Flyer**

Use this quick-reference guide to help decide when your child should stay home from school and when it's safe to return. Keeping your child home when they’re not feeling well helps protect everyone's health and keeps our school community safe.

Symptom	Should My Child Stay Home?	When Can They Return?
Fever (100.4°F or higher)	Yes	After 24 hours fever-free without medication
Vomiting	Yes	After 24 hours with no vomiting
Diarrhea (3+ times in 6 hours)	Yes	After 24 hours with no diarrhea
Cold, cough, runny nose	Yes, especially if unable to manage symptoms	Once symptoms improve and the child can participate comfortably
Extreme tiredness/loss of appetite	Yes	Once energy and appetite return
Undiagnosed or unknown rash	Yes	After seen and cleared by a healthcare provider
Any symptom + fever or chills	Yes	After 24 hours symptom-free and improving
Untreated skin condition	Yes	After treatment has started and symptoms are under control

On antibiotics	Yes (if recently started)	After 24 hours of medication (e.g., 3 full doses)
----------------	---------------------------	---

***Important Reminder:*** Students must be symptom-free for 24 hours without medication and be showing improvement before returning to school.

☎ Questions? Contact your healthcare provider or our school nurse.

Nurse: Angela

Health Assistant: Mariah

**(505) 292-6707 Ext #3**

### **Before & After School Programs**

Eastgate Kids Childcare

(505)294-5102

<https://eastgatekids.com/home>

Singing Arrow Community Center

(505) 291-6200

[www.cabq.gov/family/community-centers](http://www.cabq.gov/family/community-centers)

Manzano Mesa Community Center

(505) 275-8731

[www.cabq.gov/seniors/youth-programs](http://www.cabq.gov/seniors/youth-programs)

Southwest Childcare

(505) 294-2233

[www.southwestchildcare.com](http://www.southwestchildcare.com)

Avengers

[\(505\) 298-7800](tel:(505)298-7800)

