CHENOWETH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2025-2026

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

STRONG ROOTS, BOLD GROWTH, LASTING IMPACT

Chenoweth's Mission is to prepare all scholars to be respectful and successful global citizens with college and career mindsets.

Dear Chenoweth Families,

Welcome to the 2025–2026 school year! I am honored to serve as the new principal of Chenoweth Elementary School. As a proud member of this amazing community, I'm excited to partner with you in creating an environment where every student can thrive.

This year marks my 26th in education within the **Merced City School District**, where I spent 17 years as a teacher before becoming an administrator. Most recently, I served as principal of **Tenaya Middle School**. I'm thrilled to bring that experience to Chenoweth and continue supporting student success in a new way.

I'm also excited to introduce **Nancy Moradi**, our new **Learning Director**. Nancy joins us from **Cruickshank Middle School**, where she also served as Learning Director. Nancy and I have had the privilege of working together in the past at the middle school level, and we are thrilled to reunite as Chenoweth's new administrative team for the 2025–2026 school year.

Together, Nancy and I are here to serve **our students and their families**. We are committed to building strong relationships and fostering open communication. Please take a moment to note and save our email addresses for future reference. As this is an elementary school, we spend the majority of our day out and about—visiting classrooms, supporting students, and staying actively involved on campus. Because of this, we kindly ask for your patience and allow **at least 24 hours** for email responses. If your concern involves an urgent safety matter, please call the front office directly at **(209) 385-6620** so it can be addressed promptly.

At Chenoweth, our work is guided by **The Chenoweth Way: Strong Roots. Bold Growth. Lasting Impact.** We nurture deep academic foundations, encourage bold, creative thinking, and support one another so our students flourish. As an **AVID** (Advancement Via Individual Determination) and **PBIS** (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) school, we are committed to preparing college- and career-ready learners while promoting respectful, responsible, and safe behavior. We believe that teaching appropriate behavior goes hand in hand with academic success—and we rely on your partnership to bring this vision to life.

We are fortunate to have a strong support team at Chenoweth. Our campus is home to a **full-time school counselor**, a **school psychologist**, and one of the district's **Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA)**. These dedicated professionals work alongside our staff to ensure students' academic, emotional, and behavioral needs are met.

We also believe in **fair and consistent discipline** that helps students take responsibility, learn from their mistakes, and build strong character. Our goal is to foster a **safe, inclusive environment** where kindness, integrity, and respect for differences are deeply valued.

Your child's school experience and academic achievement are directly influenced by your involvement. When children know their family is engaged in their learning, they experience fewer challenges and greater long-term success. A few powerful ways to stay involved include:

- Ensuring your child is well-rested, nourished (or takes advantage of our free breakfast), and present at school every day
- Talking with them about their day and what they're learning
- Reading together daily—or letting your child teach you a math concept, quiz you on math facts, or explain what they've learned. Playing the teacher is a great way to reinforce understanding
- Staying in consistent communication with teachers and staff. Be sure to sign up for **ParentSquare**, our primary tool for school-to-home communication

As one of the largest elementary schools in our district, we are proud of the diversity and vibrancy of our campus. However, our size does come with logistical challenges, especially during arrival and dismissal. We ask for your patience and full cooperation with parking lot procedures. When families and staff work together to follow these systems, we help ensure the safety and well-being of every student.

Communication between families, students, and school staff is essential to a successful year. When we consistently show interest, set clear expectations, and stay connected, our students thrive—and their school experience becomes truly memorable.

Thank you for trusting us with your child's educational journey. Mrs. Moradi and I are honored to serve this incredible community and look forward to a year filled with strong roots, bold growth, and lasting impact.

Yours in partnership,

Amber Hall

Amber Hall, Principal
Chenoweth Elementary School

Ms. Hall: ahall@mcsd.k12.ca.us

Mrs. Moradi: nmoradi@mcsd.k12.ca.us

Chenoweth Daily Schedule

Regular Instructional School Hours:

8:30 AM – 2:55 PM

Early Dismissal (Wednesdays):

2:05 PM

Morning Schedule
Breakfast in Cafe/MPR: 8:00-8:20 AM
Gates Open: 8:00 AM
Warning Bell: 8:25 AM
Instruction Begins: 8:30 AM

Students are considered tardy if they are not in their classroom seat by 8:30 AM. If your child arrives late, they must report to the office for a tardy slip before going to class.

Attendance Reminder
Children learn best when they come to school every day and on time. You can help by ensuring your child arrives before the warning bell at 8:25 AM. Consistent attendance builds responsibility, supports academic success, and helps your child start the day confidently and prepared.

Allow time for busy parking lots and traffic

Please be patient and plan ahead—our parking lots can be very busy during arrival and dismissal times. Some students are legally required to ride in car seats or may need extra assistance getting in and out of vehicles. You can help keep the drop-off line moving smoothly by saying goodbyes in advance and having backpacks ready before your child exits the car.

Special Dismissal Times

Parent-Teacher Conferences: Dismissal at 1:50 PM

Last Day Before Winter Break: Dismissal at 1:00 PM

Last Day of School in June: Dismissal at 1:00 PM

Arrival & Parking Lot Guidelines – Please Read Carefully

Chenoweth is proud to be one of the largest elementary schools in the district. **Due to our size, curbside drop-off can take time—please plan ahead.**

"We were in the line in the parking lot" is not an accepted excuse for a tardy. Please allow plenty of time in the morning to ensure your child arrives on campus before the bell. The "Parson's Loop" will take time. Finding parking on the street can also be challenging.

Teak Parking Lot – Important Change for 2025-2026

No Curbside Drop-Off or Pick Up at the Teak Lot

The Teak Parking Lot is designated for **staff parking** and **school buses only**, **no parent cars.**

The gate will remain open for foot traffic; families are welcome to park on the street and walk in.

Walkers may continue to enter/exit through the Teak gate.

No parent vehicles will be allowed into the Teak lot for arrival or dismissal

Parsons Parking Lot – Drop-Off Instructions

The Parsons Lot features our traditional drop-off loop.

Parents may use the loop for curbside drop-off.

Students must **remain in the vehicle** until they are near the MPR Gate (cafeteria).

At that point, they may exit the car and enter the Gate to begin their school day. Our 6th Grade Safety Patrol Students and a Staff Member will be at the gate to assist.

TK & Kinder Drop Off and Pick Up are Unique

Our amazing teachers will communicate important information directly to families regarding drop off and pick up of our TK and Kindergarden students, as well as bus tags. Depending on our enrollment numbers and the number of bus riders teachers may need to make changes after the school year begins. Please ensure you are enrolled in ParentSquare. General information is below:

TK: We have a special entrance and exit for *TK Only*. The gate by the flagpole, near the front office is the entrance and exit for TK. TK students who ride the bus will be escored by student helpers or staff.

Kindergarten Drop-Off: All kindergarten students are encouraged to use the Parsons entrance for morning drop-off. Upon arrival, they will wait in the cafeteria (MPR) under the supervision of a dedicated staff member until their teachers pick them up at 8:25 AM.

Kindergarten bus riders will be escorted from the bus to the cafeteria by a 6th Grade Safety Patrol member or a staff member.

Kindergarten dismissal locations vary by classroom. Teachers will communicate specific dismissal details

directly with families.

For Students Who Ride Bicycles, Scooters, or Other Wheeled Transportation to and from School

To ensure the safety of our students and align with Merced City Code, we ask all families to review the following guidelines:

- **Helmets are strongly recommended** for all students who ride a bicycle, scooter, skateboard, or similar device to and from school. Helmets should be worn at all times while riding.
- Our goal is to protect our students and reinforce child safety laws in our community.

California State Law – Youth Bicycle Helmets (Vehicle Code 21212):

A person under 18 years of age **must wear a properly fitted and fastened helmet** when operating or riding as a passenger on a bicycle, nonmotorized scooter, skateboard, or when using in-line or roller skates in public areas such as streets, bikeways, or trails. Helmets must meet standards set by the ASTM or CPSC.

Violations are considered an infraction and may result in a fine of up to **$25**, for which the **parent or legal guardian** may be held responsible.

At School:

- Students seen riding without a helmet will be reminded of the law and safety expectations. A phone call home *may* be made to encourage helmet use.
- In certain cases, it may be necessary to keep the bicycle or other transportation device at school until a helmet is provided. Families will be contacted by the office if this step becomes necessary. If your family needs help purchasing a helmet, reach out to administration so we can connect you with resources and ensure your student has was they need.

We appreciate your partnership in keeping all Chenoweth students safe.

Chenoweth Office Hours

7:30 AM- 4:30 PM

School Office: 209-385-6620, Fax: 209-385-6386

Office Manager: Linda Arroyo, 209-385-4670

Attendance Clerk: Maira Cortez, 209-385-4671

Clerk Typist: Maggie Adams

Health Assistant: Lori Salas lsalas@mcsd.k12.ca.us

Nurse, R.N.: Samanda Guerrero, sguerrero@mcsd.k12.ca.us.

APPOINTMENTS & AFTER-SCHOOL CARE

Please make after-school plans with your child before the school day begins to minimize classroom disruptions. Whenever possible, schedule medical or other appointments outside of school hours to reduce missed instructional time.

Important: Parents attempting to sign students out during snack or lunch recess should expect delays as

staff locate the student and assist them in gathering their belongings.

Gum, Candy, Etc.: At Chenoweth, we are very proud of our clean, neat grounds.

- Sunflower seeds, and nuts in the shell are **not** allowed on campus.
- NO GUM
- NO outside drinks other than those secured in a flask, thermos or otherwise sealable container are allowed on campus; water preferred
- NO Energy Drinks are allowed on campus
- If students eat on campus, they are expected to eat in designated areas and dispose of trash in the garbage cans located around campus.

Bringing Lunch to Student:

- Parents wishing to bring lunch for their child must bring it into the office. *Anyone dropping off lunch or other items should be on the student's Emergency Contact List in Aeries/School Registration.* To ensure student safety, students are not allowed in front of the school at lunch time and are not permitted to retrieve food or other items from individuals in cars. Class will not be disrupted and the lunch will not be delivered. A note will be sent to the classroom and the student shall come pick up the lunch in the office. *Parents should take note of the bell schedule and allow adequate time. *A minimum of 30 minutes should be allowed for getting lunch messages to classrooms.*
- **Food from delivery services will not be accepted.**

Medications: ALL MEDICATIONS MUST BE KEPT IN THE NURSE'S OFFICE. For exceptions and information about the procedures for keeping medication at school, or self-carry inhalers, contact the school office at 385-6620 and speak with our Health Assistant Ms. Salas, or contact Nurse Guerrero at sguerrero@mcsd.k12.ca.us. .

Attendance Regular attendance is essential for student success. Children learn best when they attend school **every day** and arrive **on time**.

- The **first bell rings at 8:25 a.m.**
- Students are considered **tardy after 8:30 a.m.** if they are not in their classroom and seated.
- Tardy students must report to the office to receive a **tardy slip** before going to class.

When to Keep Your Child Home Illness does happen. Please keep your child home if they are:

- Running a **fever**
- **Vomiting**
- Showing signs of contagious illness

If you're unsure whether your child should attend, feel free to call the school office for guidance. To report an absence, please call the office at **(209) 385-6620** each day your child is absent so the absence can be properly recorded.

Attendance Monitoring and Policies

- Families will receive **notifications** after **3 or more tardies or absences** (excused or unexcused).
- **Chronic absenteeism** is reviewed by the **School Attendance Review Board (SARB)**.
- **Tardy and early pick-up data** is included in attendance records.
- According to California Department of Education guidelines:
    - **Five tardies** are equivalent to **one full day of absence**
    - **More than 10 absences per school year** is considered **excessive**

Your support in promoting strong attendance habits is critical to your child's academic success.

**If you have specific attendance questions, please contact our Attendance Clerk, Ms. Cortez at 209-385-4671*

INDEPENDENT STUDY:

Independent study contracts may be requested when students will be absent for an extended period of time. Independent study can prevent an absence from being 'Unexcused". A request for an Independent Study Contract must be given to the classroom teacher in advance, no less than 5 school days prior to the absence. The process for independent study is as follows:

Step 1: Parents Request Independent Study Contract through the Attendance Clerk or Learning Director (5 days prior to absence)

Step 2: Parents receive independent work packet

Step 3: Student completes assigned work during their absence.

Step 4: Completed packet is returned for evaluation the first day the student returns to school.

Please speak with Ms. Cortez (Attendance) or Mrs. Moradi (Learning Director) regarding Independent Study.

HEAD LICE Students will be checked for lice periodically throughout the year. If live lice are found, the student will be sent home for treatment. The student may return the next day only after treatment and removal of all live lice

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ASSETS and M.A.R.S:

Chenoweth has an ASSETS program for afterschool care for grades 1st through 6th, and the MARS program for TK and Kindergarten students. The ASSETS program is sponsored by the Merced County Office of Education, while the MARS program is run by MCSD. For information regarding applications, please contact the school office or come by.

FIELD TRIPS

Teachers will send home a notice and permission slip prior to any field trip. The permission slip **must** be signed and returned before a student may participate. Students without signed permission will not be allowed to attend. Teachers may exclude students from a field trip if there are concerns about behavior.

Parents may be invited to serve as chaperones. To ensure student safety and effective supervision, **younger siblings may not attend**. Chaperones are expected to ride the bus with the class and are responsible for the safety and supervision of all students assigned to their group. Field trips are considered school-sponsored educational events, and appropriate behavior is expected from all participants.

FIRST GRADE PHYSICAL (CHDP)

All first grade students must have a **First Grade Physical (CHDP)** on file before the start of the school year. Kindergarten parents are encouraged to schedule this physical during the school year to avoid delays or last-minute appointments.

6th GRADE TDAP REQUIREMENT

Before entering 7th grade, students must provide proof of the **Tdap (whooping cough booster)** immunization. Documentation may be submitted to the school office through the end of May.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT:

Chenoweth Elementary values and encourages parent involvement both at home and at school. A strong partnership between families and educators enhances student success.

Ways parents can participate include:

- Supporting your child with homework and academic goals
- Participating in school events and programs, or on a school committee
- Attending parent/teacher conferences

If you wish to visit a classroom, volunteer, or schedule a conference with a teacher, please contact your child's teacher **at least 24 hours in advance** so they can plan accordingly. Volunteer request forms are available in the front office.

To volunteer for recess supervision, please contact the school office to arrange for required training prior to beginning service.

Volunteering in the classroom helps parents better understand instructional goals; however, volunteers are expected to maintain a focused, disruption-free environment. For this reason:

- **Younger siblings and pets may not accompany volunteers**
- **Cell phones and cameras may not be used to take photos on campus**
- Volunteers must **check in at the front office**, obtain a visitor's pass, and wear it while on campus
- Volunteers should use **designated adult restrooms**, not student facilities

Chenoweth Elementary offers several opportunities for parents to get involved through school committees, including ELAC (English Learner Advisory Committee), SSC (School Site Council), PTC (Parent-Teacher Club), and others.

If you are interested in serving on a committee or would like more information, please contact our Clerk Typist, **Maggie Adams**, at the school office.

SCHOOL/HOME COMMUNICATION

Strong communication between school and home is essential for student success. Parents are encouraged to reach out to teachers and staff through the following methods:

- **Phone:** Call the school office at **(209) 385-6620** to leave a message for your child's teacher.
- **ParentSquare:** Communicate directly with teachers and receive important school updates.
- **Email/Voicemail:** Teachers check their school email and voicemail regularly.

Please note: **Classrooms will not be interrupted during instructional time unless it is an emergency.** Office staff will deliver messages at an appropriate time.

Reminders for Parents:

- Notify the office immediately if your **address or phone number changes**.
- Schedule an **appointment** in advance when you need to meet with a teacher to ensure they can prepare for your visit.
- Address concerns respectfully with the teacher first, followed by the Learning Director or Principal if needed.

Each Sunday evening, families will receive an **automated ParentSquare** highlighting important events for the upcoming week.

If you are **not receiving these messages**, please contact the office so we can update your contact information.

HERE is a link for how to get ParentSquare, or https://www.mercedcsd.org/studentsfamilies/parentsquare

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Chenoweth Dress Code

Chenoweth students are expected to Dress for Success! The purpose of the dress code is to encourage students to come to school properly attired to participate in the educational process and school-sponsored activities. A student shall not attend school, nor participate in school related activities dressed in a manner which:

- Creates a safety hazard
- Constitutes a distraction to the learning process
- Conflicts with District Board Policy and Regulations regarding the prevention of substance abuse and gang activity.
- Displays or promotes controlled substances for minors (alcohol, marijuana, nicotine, etc) guns/weapons. *This includes items with *Cookies* or any other connection to a controlled substance.

Only non-modified school hats, bills worn forward, specific to Chenoweth are allowed. Other hats, caps, or other types of head coverings may not be worn indoors, except for special dress-up days, school-related hats or caps, or for religious cultural observance. Students may wear sun-protective clothing outdoors during the school day. (Education Code 35183.5)

Hoodies must be worn "down" at all times while on campus. No Stocking Caps or Beanies may be worn with the exception of *outside only* during the winter/cold season typically defined as after Thanksgiving Vacation (late November) through Presidentś Week Vacation (end of February).

Pants must be worn at the waist and cannot sag or bag. (Board Policy 5132)

The following are NOT permitted:

- Colors that promote or reference gang activity (EC35183)
  NO Excessive SOLID RED or BLUE, Shirts (long or short sleeved), Sweatshirts, Blouses, Jackets, Hats/Beanies or Shoes, Shoe laces of any kind
- **Attire which does not cover both male and female students' undergarments, buttocks, breasts, stomachs, midriffs, back, shoulders or sides, is NOT allowed.**
- Outer garments, such as shorts and skirts must reach at least mid-thigh (3 in inseam)
- All professional and college sports jerseys, accessories, shirts, lanyards, key holders etc. (with the exception of College and Career Wednesdays where college attire is allowed)
- Bandanas or clothing that resembles a bandana regardless of color.
- **Pajama tops or bottoms**
- Shower shoes, slippers, sock-like footwear, shoes with wheels, or flip-flops *All shoes must have a backstrap. Crocs must have the strap across the heel.
- All clothing, pants, shorts, skirts and shirts must be clean, and not more than one size larger than the students' actual size. Pants must be worn at the waist and cannot sag or bag. Shorts, skirts and dresses shorter than mid-thigh are prohibited.

Students who arrive at school dressed inappropriately may be asked to change or contact home for a change of clothes. Our goal is to maintain a learning environment where all students can be comfortable, safe, and focused. See the following page for additional dresscode guidelines from Merced City School District Board Policy (BP).

Merced City School District follows a "Standardized Student Dress".

Standardized Student Dress guidelines as outlined in Board Policy 5132 and Administrative Regulations 5132 are as follows:

1. Only non-modified school hats, bill worn forward, specific to that campus site are allowed. Other hats, caps, or other types of head coverings may not be worn indoors. Students may wear sun-protective clothing, including hats, outdoors during the day. (Education Code 35183.5)
2. Wearing apparel, accessories or colors that advocate, promote or reference gang activity or is perceived to be a threat to students or staff is not allowed. Gang related apparel may include, but is not limited to, jewelry, belts, buckles, bandanas, insignias, body writings, drawings, decals and pictures. (Education Code 32282)
3. Attire that is worn or altered in such a way as to identify students with gangs is not allowed.
4. Attire, which does not cover both male and female students' undergarments, buttocks, breasts, stomachs, midriffs, backs, shoulders or sides, is not allowed. Sleeveless shirts or tops are not permitted.
5. Attire that advocates or advertises any type of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, profanity, violence, is of a sexual nature, defames any ethnic or religious groups, or is disruptive to the learning environment is not allowed.
6. Shoes must be worn at all times. Flip-flops, slippers, or sock-like footwear are a safety factor and are not appropriate for school. All footwear must have a back strap.
7. Only prescription glasses shall be worn at school. A valid medical note, on file in the office, is required for wearing prescription sunglasses.
8. All clothing, pants, shorts, skirts and shirts must be clean, and not more than one size larger than the students' actual size. Pants must be worn at the waist and cannot sag or bag. Shorts, skirts and dresses shorter than mid-thigh are prohibited.

In case of questionable dress and grooming situations not covered by these guidelines, the site administrator will determine the appropriateness and make the final decision.

Please contact the School Principal with any concerns.

Chenoweth Library Media Center

Policies and Procedures

Philosophy

The Chenoweth Library Media Center is an essential part of our educational program. Our mission is to provide students with high-quality reading materials while teaching them to use the library respectfully and responsibly.

Circulation Policies

Students may check out books according to the following grade-level guidelines:

- **Kindergarten & First Grade** – 1 book
- **Second & Third Grade** – 2 books
- **Fourth, Fifth & Sixth Grade** – 3 books

Kindergarten students will begin checking out books as a class after several weeks of library instruction and once a signed parent permission slip is returned.

All books may be kept for **two weeks (10 school days)**. Students are encouraged to check out at least one book that is at their Lexile or AR reading level.

Book Care

Students are responsible for any materials checked out under their name until they are returned to the library.

Book Care Tips:

- Keep books in a **safe, dry place**, away from pets and small children
- **Do not carry water bottles** in the same backpack compartment as library books
- **Avoid eating or drinking** while reading
- Turn pages carefully to avoid tears
- Always use a **bookmark or paper** to mark your place—**never use bulky items** like pencils
- If a book is damaged, **return it to the library** for repair—**do not attempt to fix it at home**, as we use special materials for mending

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Lost and Overdue Books

Students are expected to **pay for lost or damaged books**. Checkout privileges will be suspended if a student has any overdue books, and will be restored once the book is returned or paid for.

If you make a payment, **keep the receipt** in case the book is later found. If the book is returned **within one month of payment** and is still in circulation condition, a refund request will be submitted to the **Merced City School District Fiscal Department** by the Chenoweth Library Media Assistant.

Please thoroughly check desks, classrooms, after-school programs, and home spaces (especially bedrooms) when searching for lost library books.

MEALS: 2024-2025 CAFETERIA INFORMATION AND POLICIES

Mission Statement

To offer all students nutritionally adequate and attractively presented school meals and snacks within an educational environment that teaches and models healthy choices. To achieve this mission statement, the School Nutrition Services Department (SNS Department) participates in a variety of federally assisted meal programs to offer breakfast, lunch, super snacks, and summer meals to the students in Merced City School District (MCSD). All meals are carefully planned to meet demanding federal, state, and local standards for meal quality, safety, and nutrient contribution. Our staff is committed to continually upgrading nutrition and food service skills to better meet the needs of our students and the school community.

Meal Application

- All meals will be FREE for all students during the 2025/2026 school year due to Universal Meals Free For All Students. Therefore, a meal application is not required this year.
    - À la carte and additional entrées/meals will be available for purchase.
    - Refund requests for withdrawn or graduating students or students with a positive balance can be issued by submitting a request to the Nutrition Services office.
        - Requests must be made within one school year since the last date of attendance.
    - Adults will not be allowed to charge any meals or à la carte items causing their meal account to go into a deficit balance.

Even though meals are free, we are encouraging families to complete an Alternate Income Survey. The information collected will be used to help determine P-EBT payments as well as assist in funding for additional resources for our students such as sports and intramurals, mental health resources, field trips, enrichment programs and school supplies. The survey is located on the Aeries Parent Portal and is confidential, quick and easy. Please contact your school office for more information.

Meals

- What is a reimbursable meal?

For a meal to qualify for federal reimbursement, regulations state that meals served to students, whether breakfast, lunch or snack, must offer all components of the meal.

Offer versus Serve (OVS) is a provision of our programs that allow students to decline some of the food offered. The goals of OVS are to reduce food waste in the school meals programs while permitting students to decline foods they do not intend to eat.

- What are the requirements for breakfast?

Breakfast is made up of 4 food items: milk, fruit/vegetable, 2 grains (or 1 grain and 1 meat/meat alternate; both considered 2 items). Students must select at least 3 of these items for a complete meal (1 of which must be a vegetable or fruit).

- What are the requirements for lunch and super snack?

Lunch is made up of 5 basic food components: milk, meat or meat alternate, vegetable, fruit, and grain. Students must select at least 3 of these components for a complete meal (1 of which must be a vegetable or fruit).

Merced City School District School Wellness Policy Summary

Effective August 2018

Preamble The Merced City School District, hereinafter referred to as the "District", recognizes the link between student health and learning, and desires to provide a comprehensive program promoting healthy eating and physical activity for district students and staff. This Policy is aligned with, and does not exceed, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and California Department of Education (CDE) regulations. (42 USC 1751 Note)

School Meals The District is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and zero grams' trans-fat per serving; and to meet the nutrition needs of school children with their calorie requirements.

Fundraising Activities Fundraisers do not include afterschool sporting events or activities. Non-compliant food-related fundraisers are prohibited on school campuses from midnight to one half-hour after school.

To support student health and school nutrition education efforts and to eliminate junk food in schools:

1. Schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. (2017)
2. Ideas include: detailed in full policy
3. Each school is allowed one food-related fundraiser per year that does not meet nutrition and portion-size standards for foods and beverages that are sold individually (i.e. junk food). (By 2019): Ideas detailed in full policy.

Rewards / Incentives

Any District Staff rewarding/incentivizing students (teachers providing food rewards; custodians providing candy bars; bus drivers providing lollipops and candy, etc.) will be prohibited.

In order to provide a culture that does not provide food as a reward, or physical activity to be used as a punishment, efforts will be made in the following areas:

1. Non-compliant food items and beverages will not be used as rewards for academic performance or good behavior at any school site or district entity. If used, will meet nutrition and portion size standards. Compliant foods can be purchased through the School Nutrition Services (SNS).
    1. In special circumstances, to address specific student needs, administration may approve non-compliant rewards to be used for a period of time and faded out.
2. Food or beverages (including food served through school meals) will not be withheld as punishment at any school site.
3. Creative school reward ideas (not limited to): stickers, pencils, passes, certificates, positive phone calls home, sitting by your friends, longer recess, free times, send home a positive postcard, Lunch Bunch: eat with teacher in class and watch a cartoon or play games.

Parties / Celebrations

1. It is recommended that all foods provided during parties/celebrations, etc. be purchased through the SNS Department (pizza parties, lunch with principal for attendance, student birthdays, holiday celebrations, student achievements, etc.).
2. Parties/celebrations will be limited to one time per month per classroom.
3. To the greatest extend possible, celebrations will be held after lunch.
4. Parties/celebrations will make every attempt to include physical activity and foods which, at a minimum, meet California Nutrition Standards (References: Education Code sections 49430, 49431, 49431.5, 49431.7; California Code of Regulations sections 15500, 15575, 15577, 15578).

*The full policy is available on the District's website: http://www.mcsd.k12.ca.us/District/Department/13-Pupil-Services. You can also obtain a copy by contacting MCSD Pupil Services at (209) 385-6647

Yondr Bags: Cell Phones and Earbuds Board Policy 5131 and Ed Code 48901.5

MCSD desires for its students to Focus on Learning while on campus. School staff and many families agree that student use of cellular phones, applications, and other electronic signaling devices - including wireless earbuds - distract students all too often during the school day. On Tuesday, March 26, 2024 the Merced City School District Board of Education approved updates to its Board Policy (BP), 5131. Administrative Regulation (AR) has also been created to support the effective implementation of the BP. Impactful elements of the policy include:

“Cellular telephones or other mobile communication devices including, but not limited to, MP3 players, wireless earbuds, smartwatches, and/or any other device capable of transmitting and/or receiving data in the form of a voice, text message, and/or capable of accessing the Internet Such devices shall be turned off and stored away while on campus.”

“Cellular telephones or other mobile communication devices may instead be placed into locked and sealed bags provided by a school if the school adopts usage of such a program to control and deter device usage during the school day.”

MCSD Administration has worked together to create protocols and frequently asked questions so that we can clearly and intentionally inform families and students of our plan. Progressive Discipline If a student violates the district’s cellular phone or other mobile communication device policy in the classroom, the consequences are:

Violation 1

- Staff gives the student a warning to turn off their device and put their device in their Yondr bag.
- Staff will document the violation in AERIES.

Violation 2

- Student will take their device to the school office to turn it into the administrator or designee.
- Staff will document the violation in AERIES.
- Student can pick up their device at the end of the school day.

Violation 3

- Student and device will be escorted to the front office by Staff. Office staff will hold the device until the end of the school day
- The administration will speak with the student and impose additional consequences;
- Staff will attempt to make parent contact and document the violation in AERIES.
- The administrator will add the student to the check-in list at the beginning of the school day.
- The administrator will use their discretion regarding who picks up the device

Violation 4

- Student and device will be escorted to the front office by Staff. Office staff will hold the device until the end of the school day
- **ONLY the parent/guardian can pick up the device.**
- **If the parent/guardian cannot pick up the phone at the end of the school day, they can pick it up anytime the next day during office hours.**
- The administration will speak with the student and impose additional consequences;
- Staff will make parent contact and document the violation in AERIES.
- The administrator will require the student to check the device into the office for a set period as determined by the site

Confiscation Procedures

- The device is brought into the school office.
- Staff will log the student's name, time, date, and the general condition of the device.

- Staff will place the device in the school office lockbox.
- Staff or designee will release the device to the appropriate recipient.
- Staff or designee will indicate the person and time the device was released.

Ingress Procedures

- Students are responsible for ensuring that their devices are locked in the Yondr pouch before they enter school gates.
- Teachers or gate/yard duty supervisors may verify the Yondr pouch has been locked when students enter campus..
- Students who are on a “Check In/Check Out” should report to the front office to check in their devices.

Egress Procedures

- Students on a Check In/Check Out will go to the school office to pick up their devices.
- Students will unlock the Yondr bag at exterior gates when exiting the school campus.
- Students are subject to disciplinary action if their cell phone is out of the locked Yondr bag when on campus.

Emergency Protocols

In the event of an emergency the principal or designee will communicate with the command center to gather information regarding the situation. Parents/Guardians will be updated with relevant information as much as possible during the incident. **Parents/Guardians are strongly encouraged to be signed up for ParentSquare as this will be the main source of communication in the event of an emergency.**

When authorized by the command center, the principal will inform staff of relevant information and when to unlock Yondr bags. The principal or designee will ensure that Yondr Unlocking Devices are at key locations in case of emergency. Age appropriate information will be shared with students as much as possible. Following the emergency, a summary of the incident including relevant information to parents/guardians, staff and students will be provided by the principal or district designee.

Lost, Damaged, or Stolen Yondr Pouches

Lost, damaged or stolen Yondr pouches will require replacement. The cost for a replacement Yondr Bag is estimated to be $35 for the 25-26 school year.

Selfies and Other Social Media Related Issues

Students need to exercise extreme caution in sharing any photos of themselves with other students. If another student asks a student to send or share a nude or partially clothed photo of them they need to be aware that those photos are often shared with other students and to social media. It is dangerous and harmful to a student’s self-image when this type of situation occurs. Please discuss this and other internet safety practices with your student.

Video Recording or Social Media Posting of Physical Altercations

It is absolutely against school policy to video a physical altercation on campus or receive it on a device. Being in possession of a physical altercation video violates the rights of the students involved. Students who video or receive video of a physical altercation may face Ed Code Violations subject to suspension and/or automatically be placed on a Check In/Check Out Device Plan. EC 48900a, 48900k

Behavior Expectations:

The staff at Chenoweth has a Positive Behavior Support Plan in place that promotes high expectations for behavior. Desired behaviors are explicitly taught at the beginning of each school year and are used as a tool to support the expectation that….

"To be my **P**ersonal best, I will **A**ct responsibly, **W**ork and play safely, **S**how respect

To be my **P**ersonal best, I will ...	Learning Environment LEVEL 1 3	Transition Spaces LEVEL 1	Bathroom LEVEL 1	Cafeteria LEVEL 1 2	Playground LEVEL 3 4	Technology LEVEL 1 2
Act Responsibly	• Active Listene • Be prepared • Think first	• Go directly to your destina	• Use bathroom quickly • Report problems to adult	• Know your lunch number • Safe sitting until dismissed • Clean up after yourself	• Follow equipment • Stay in designated areas • Freeze • Return equipment	• Honor network agreement • Transport safely • Stay on assigned tasl • Use as educational tool
Work and play safely	• Hands & feet to self • Go safely	• Walk on yellow line • Be aware	• Flush the toilet • Food free zone	• Walk	• Go safely • Report Problems • Hands and feet to self • Eat in snack zone	• protect personal information • Use phone zones • Report problems • Camera free
Show Respect	• Be kind • Follow rules • Respect property	• Move quietly • Obey adults & saftey patrol	• Wait your turn • Respect other's privacy and space	• Good manners	• Be kind • Obey adults	• Be kind • Respect other's privacy & dignity • School appropriate images

Chenoweth is an engaging and respectful community of learners, creating a challenging and safe learning environment where students are inspired to achieve and develop into independent scholars.

Positive Behavior Recognition: Regal Beagle Badges

Students who consistently show their PAWS have the opportunity to earn **Regal Beagle Badges** daily. Each badge is placed randomly on a large grid displayed in the school office.

- Students whose badges form a **10-in-a-row (BINGO) configuration** receive a **Mystery Prize**.
- This system builds a culture of recognition and encourages daily commitment to positive behavior.

Behavior Expectations and Progressive Discipline

Chenoweth uses a **progressive discipline approach**—students are supported through increasing levels of intervention and consequence based on behavior patterns.

Classroom Behavior

- Minor misbehaviors are monitored and addressed by the **classroom teacher** using established routines and consequences.
- Teachers apply interventions such as redirection, parent contact, behavior reflection, or loss of privilege.
- If behavior **persists despite these interventions**, students may be **referred to the office** for administrative support.

Office Referrals

- An office referral may result in a **documented conversation and reteaching** for a first offense (e.g., a minor recess incident).
- Students with **multiple referrals or documented interventions** may receive more **severe consequences**, including:
    - Behavior Contracts or Plans
    - Assignment to PAWS Academy (Grades 3–6)
    - Suspension (in cases of severe or repeated infractions)

⚠️ **Severe behavior or violations of any section of Ed Code 48900 or 48915** may result in **immediate suspension** ro recommendation for expulsion, even on a first offense.

Our Comitment

We are committed to:

- Meeting individual student needs with empathy and appropriate support.
- Ensuring that **all students have the right to learn in a safe and respectful environment**.
- Holding students accountable while protecting the learning of every child.

Tier II Behavioral Supports

Students needing extra support may receive:

- **Check-In/Check-Out forms**
- **Targeted social-emotional lessons**
- **Limited unstructured time**
- **Behavior Contracts**
- **Restorative practices and parent meetings**

P.A.W.S. Academy (Grades 3–6)

Students exhibiting Tier II behaviors may attend **P.A.W.S. Academy** as a consequence and learning opportunity.
This program includes:

- Reteaching of expectations
- Reflection activities
- Supportive coaching from staff

CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE ON BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

*Students who display inappropriate behavior may be subject to suspension as outlined in the **California State Education Code 48900 and 48915**. A student may be suspended or expelled for acts which are related to school activities.*

EDUCATION CODE, SECTION 48900:

(a) (1) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
(2) Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.
(b) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished a firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object.
(c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of, a controlled substance.
(d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell a controlled substance.
(e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
(f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
(g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
(h) Possessed or used tobacco, or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel.
(i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
(j) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell drug paraphernalia.
(k) (1) Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
(l) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
(m) Possessed an imitation firearm. As used in this section, "imitation firearm" means a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
(n) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Section 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a, or 289 of the Penal Code or committed a sexual battery as defined in Section 243.4 of the Penal Code.
(o) Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a pupil who is a complaining witness or a witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for purposes of either preventing that pupil from being a witness or retaliating against that pupil for being a witness, or both.
(p) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
(q) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing.
(r) Engaged in an act of bullying. For purposes of this subdivision, the following terms have the following meanings:
(1) "Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a pupil or group of pupils as defined in Section 48900.2, 48900.3, or 48900.4, directed toward one or more pupils that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:
(A) Placing a reasonable pupil or pupils in fear of harm to that pupil's or those pupils' person or property.
(B) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
(C) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
(D) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.
(2) (A) "Electronic act" means the creation and transmission originated on or off the school site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
(i) A message, text, sound, or image.
(ii) A post on a social network Internet Web site, including, but not limited to:
(I) Posting to or creating a burn page. "Burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1).
(II) Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1). "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
(III) Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1). "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
(3) "Reasonable pupil" means a pupil, including, but not limited to, an exceptional needs pupil, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with his or her exceptional needs.
(s) A pupil shall not be suspended or expelled for any of the acts enumerated in this section unless the act is related to a school activity or school attendance occurring within a school under the jurisdiction of the superintendent of the school district or principal or occurring within any other school district. A pupil may be suspended or expelled for acts that are enumerated in this section and related to a school activity or school attendance that occur at any time, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
(1) While on school grounds.
(2) While going to or coming from school.
(3) During the lunch period whether on or off the campus.
(4) During, or while going to or coming from, a school-sponsored activity.

Mandatory Recommendation for Expulsion per CA Ed Code

MANDATORY RECOMMENDATION FOR EXPULSION PER CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE 48915C

- Possessing, selling or furnishing a firearm.
- Brandishing a knife at another person.
- Unlawfully selling a controlled substance.
- Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery.
- Possession of a destructive Device.

CONSEQUENCES:

- Parent Contact and Pick Up
- 5 Day Suspension
- RECOMMENDATION FOR EXPULSION

CHENOWETH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PARENT-SCHOOL COMPACT

At Chenoweth, we believe that student success is rooted in strong partnerships between families and the school. This compact reflects our shared commitment to supporting each child's academic and personal growth. By signing below, both parent and student acknowledge they have reviewed the Parent/Student Handbook—including, but not limited to, Parking Lot Procedures, the Yondr Bag/Cell Phone and Earbud Policy, the California Education Code (including Mandatory Recommendations for Expulsion), and the Dress Code.

As partners, we pledge the following:

Staff Pledge

I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- Provide rigorous, engaging lessons that promote student achievement.
- Inspire students to recognize their potential and believe in their success.
- Maintain high expectations while nurturing a love of learning.
- Communicate regularly with families about student progress.
- Create a safe, welcoming, and respectful learning environment.
- Assign meaningful homework that reinforces classroom learning.
- Pursue ongoing professional growth and collaboration with colleagues, families, and the community.
- Demonstrate respect for students, families, and fellow staff.

Student Pledge

I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- Come to school prepared, on time, and ready to learn.
- Bring materials and complete all assignments and homework.
- Follow school and classroom expectations.
- Talk openly with my parents and teachers about my learning.
- Make time to study and read each day after school.
- Limit screen time and stay physically active.
- Respect my school, classmates, staff, and family.
- Represent "The Chenoweth Way" through my actions and words.
- Show my **P.A.W.S.**: Be my **Personal Best**, **Act Responsibly**, **Work and Play Safely**, and **Show Respect**.

Family/Parent Pledge

I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- Encourage independence, self-confidence, and responsibility.
- Provide a quiet space for homework and limit screen time.
- Read with or encourage my child to read daily.
- Communicate promptly with teachers or school staff when I have questions or concerns.
- Ensure my child attends school regularly, gets adequate sleep, medical care, and nutrition.
- Monitor my child's academic progress.
- Participate in school life through volunteering, decision-making, and parent-teacher conferences.
- Reinforce the importance of education and lifelong learning.
  Show respect for the school, its staff, students, and fellow families.

Parent Signature: _____Date_____ **Student Signature:** _____Date_____

Staff Signature: _____ Date_____