El Puente School

Student/Parent
Handbook 2026-2027

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WELCOME TO EL PUENTE SCHOOL

El Puente is a school that continues to evolve and to meet the changing needs of the students of the Salinas Union High School District. We strive to be a school that offers choice and flexibility so that students can find the educational environment that best matches them.

At El Puente School, you will find a compassionate staff that works diligently to make sure that our students feel comfortable and supported. We know that students come to alternative education because traditional school did not work for them in some way. We hope to fill that void and provide students with a path forward in their educational journey. Whether one is an in-person or online student, El Puente is a place for everyone.

To make sure that you take advantage of all of our programs, it is important to stay involved and attend regularly. Unlike at traditional schools, attendance at our site is based on how much work you complete. It is not enough to simply come to class; you must also finish the work assigned to you by your teachers. While our flexible model allows students to attend online or complete work at different times of the day, that flexibility means there will be no one standing next to you making sure you get your work done. To be successful, build a schedule for yourself that you can follow each day.

In addition, stay connected to our social media, website, and announcements. We offer social events, field trips, and other fun ways to stay connected to your school community. Connecting activities are a great way to meet other students and be part of the EPS community.

Thank you for choosing to attend El Puente!



ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Our alternative school of choice petition was the result of a collaborative effort among various parents, teachers, and community members in Salinas. The purpose was to create a school that promotes academic success with a mastery of the “basics”.

We have worked hard to create an environment conducive to meaningful intellectual stimulation via independent studies. Our learning program is built on the belief that all students can and innately desire to learn—including those students without a history of academic success.

We believe that all students do not learn in the same way, and students are gifted in various ways, and those gifts need to be encouraged. Reading assessment and targeted instruction are hallmarks of this school, raising the confidence level and academic output of traditionally labeled “low achievers,” while challenging the gifted learner to further explore areas of interest. We believe that real learning takes place when active participants make personal connections to the skills and knowledge imparted in the classroom.

Having created El Puente School under this model, we know that our program is a vital and integral part of our community. Our goal is to be a model school, offering successful educational opportunities and innovations to the students and parents that we serve. We seek to make education a community commitment.

SCHOOL HOURS AND LOCATION

We are open Monday-Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM and are located in the Salinas Education Center at 20 Sherwood Place, Salinas, CA 93906

You may call us at (831) 796-7770.

DIRECTORY

For the most up-to-date phone directory, please visit our website at eps.salinasuhsd.org.

BELL SCHEDULE

Our bell schedule can also be found on our website at eps.salinasuhsd.org.

MISSION STATEMENT

El Puente students will learn to be self-directed learners, effective communicators, organized learners, and socially responsible citizens. They will participate in a high-quality, rigorous independent studies curriculum that gives students the opportunity to learn on their own schedule. Students are expected to finish a course within 30 school days.

VISION

Our purpose is to offer an additional educational option with the freedom to implement innovative strategies to achieve individual student academic success. Our learning program is built on the belief that all students can learn, including those students without a history of academic success.

El Puente School Schoolwide Learner Outcomes

View the updated student handbook at eps.is/PBIShandbook

El Puente Students are:

Purposeful learners who:

- Plan and achieve personal learning goals
- Produce high-quality work
- Pursue career and educational goals

Adept communicators who:

- Apply oral language and literacy skills effectively
- Adopt technology and media to enhance communication
- Actively listen and share responsibilities to reach common goals

Coordinated organizers who:

- Cultivate systems of time management and personal organization
- Contribute by being accountable for their actions

Kind-hearted citizens who:

- Keep cooperative relationships across personal and cultural differences
- Know how to utilize resources to make rational decisions

PARENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

El Puente's Parent Engagement Policy seeks to provide the tools to support the parental role in student learning, both at home and at school. The school strives to design programs that build on the strengths of its population, seek opportunities to invite parent and community participation in school activities, and create partnerships between those involved in fostering student success. These partnerships create relationships that contribute to student achievement and that respond to the unique needs of continuation high school students and their families.

- Parents as Advocates, Advisors, and Decision Makers
    A. Parents are recruited to participate in school governance and advocacy committees such as the School Site Council or English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC)

- School-Home Communication
    B. El Puente utilizes parent letters, district phone message system – text messages, flyers, school website, and student handbook to disseminate vital information to students and parents.
    C. Home visits related to student/family needs are made by school staff.

- Meetings are held throughout the year to assist families with issues related to student attendance and achievement.
    D. Parent/family orientations are held in English/Spanish on topics related to parent participation in their student's education at home and school.
    E. Annual Open House/Back-to-School Night, where parents meet teachers and learn about opportunities to become more involved in their child's education.
    F. Parent/teacher conferences are regularly scheduled and occur as needed. During conferences, the progress of the student, grade level expectations, and other concerns are discussed and explained.

Community Resources

Specialized community personnel act as resources to parents, students, principals, and teachers.

ParentVUE

ParentVUE allows you to see your student's grades, assignments, attendance, and discipline in real time using the Internet. To access ParentVUE, you will need to:
Go to https://www.salinasuhsd.org

Click on the portal link/ParentVUE link
Click on “I am a parent”
You will need to enter your username and password.

Usernames and passwords are unique to each parent. Your personal information will be given to you at the beginning of the school year. We are excited to offer our parents the opportunity to follow their students' progress at El Puente.

SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL:

Each school that receives federal funds must have a School Site Council (SSC). The SSC includes parents/guardians, school staff, and the principal and serves as a decision-making group that develops and approves the School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) and guides the use of categorical funds.

Members are elected by their peers, serve one- or two-year terms, and meet monthly. Meetings are open to the public. Contact the Main Office for meeting dates and details.

English Language Learners Advisory Committee (ELAC)

The ELAC committee consists of parents of English Learners. They meet monthly to discuss and support their student's academic progress. During these meetings, the committee monitors and reviews the services offered by school programs to ensure they meet the needs of English Learners.

HOW CAN EL PUENTE SCHOOL HELP YOU GRADUATE?

- You earn a high school diploma or a high school equivalency when you meet the requirements for our school.
- We help you get caught up on credits so you can return to your home school if you so choose.
- We assist you with dual enrollment at Hartnell Community College or Graduation Plus at the Salinas Education Center, as well as additional classes on our campus if you need to accelerate your credit progress.
- We enroll you in an ROP class of your choice through the ROP counselor on our campus, in order to help you learn a work skill or get career exposure.
- We enroll you in the Retail Co-Op course to earn credits if you have a job.
- We allow you to change schedules as needed to maximize your potential credit earning.
- We offer you infant care if you need it for your child while you continue your education.
- We help you develop a life plan with you for after graduation.

OUR FOCUS ON LEARNING AND CURRICULUM

- El Puente School believes all students deserve a challenging, motivating, and relevant education. Curriculum is focused on essential standards and aligned to the California State Standards.
- El Puente School is focused on providing high-quality and current textbooks and curriculum materials that are aligned to the California State standards and adopted by the Salinas Union High School District.
- Each teacher is expected to establish an environment that encourages and supports instructional consistency. Parents are encouraged to meet with teachers if they have specific questions about the curriculum.

MASTER AGREEMENT

Upon enrollment at El Puente School, students and their parents are to attend an in-person orientation. The students will be given instructions on how to drop out of their home school. The families will then be directed to the registrar to complete the registration process for El Puente. Once registered, the counselor will create a schedule and the master agreement. The master agreement will be created and then emailed for signatures. It is a requirement of the State of California to have a signed master agreement that allows the district to offer you the option to study independently. The student will not be allowed to enroll at El Puente without a signed master agreement. Then they will be directed to the registrar for the required paperwork. The Master Agreement is the legal document that allows the district to offer you the option to study independently.

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLAN & FUTURE GOAL SETTING

The counselors work with each student to develop an Individual Learning Plan, which will be reviewed with parents. The plan will serve as a guide for students. Students are expected to follow the plan so that they can meet their requirements to graduate on their targeted date. The plan is updated during the year. The plan also contains goals and objectives to be attained after graduation.

The counseling team offers step-by-step guidance for students interested in applying to 2-year colleges, 4-year colleges/universities, or trade schools. Counselors also support students seeking employment during high school or after graduation.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Students are placed in a class after their transcripts have been reviewed, and the course(s) needed to complete are identified. The expectation for the student is to earn 1 credit every 3 days. The student is expected to attend no less than 70 minutes each day, Monday- Friday, and work independently for 5-6 hours daily.

Once a student completes one course, a schedule change will be made. There are other reasons why a student's schedule may be changed. Some changes are

made to take an elective class, R.O.P., or other special circumstances.

Class changes will only be made by the counselor. Some changes will require authorization by the Principal.

Students are expected to complete at least three classes each semester (30 credits). Students who need extra support to learn English or have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) may have to take additional support classes.

PARENT-STUDENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

One of the best ways that we can partner together is through Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences. These conferences are mandatory for students who are not progressing. Students are expected to complete 30 credits per semester.

DESIGN OF THE INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSEWORK

We view all our programs as Personalized Learning. Independent study is not for all students at the middle school and high school level; independent study requires a high level of commitment, motivation, organizational skills, and self-direction, not unlike the level required by college students.

Students are enrolled in one subject at a time and are to attend five days per week. All assigned work by each credentialed teacher is to be completed by the student in order for the work to be considered for credit. The teacher reviews all completed assigned work from the student and grades the assignments. From the completed work, samples are pulled to showcase student mastery of academics. An independent auditor may review these work samples annually. The teacher assigns a time value to the completed work, which is translated into average daily attendance (ADA) to support school funding.

All students are required to attend daily, either virtually or in person, until they complete the subject assigned. Once the class is completed, the teacher issues final grades and credits and submits a request to the counselor so that the new course can be promptly added.

COURSES OF STUDY

The Salinas Union High School District requires 220 credits for graduation from El Puente School. We offer a full course of study to complete the requirements. The following are the requirements for graduation:

220 total credits are required

1) English 40 credits are required
2) History/Social Studies: 35 credits are required (including ethnic studies)

3) World History/Geography: 10 credits are required
4) American History: 10 credits are required
5) American Government: 5 credits are required
6) Economics 5 credits are required
7) Ethnic Studies: 5 credits are required
8) Science: 20 credits of laboratory/applied science are required
    a. Physical Science 10 credits are required
    b. Biological Science: 10 credits are required
9) Physical Education: 20 credits are required
10) Health Education: 5 credits are required
11) Foreign Language: 20 credits are required for the same language
12) VAPA 20 credits or 10 credits of Vocational Education or
    10 credits of VAPA and 10 credits of Vocational Education
13) Elective classes: 30 credits of classes

We encourage El Puente School students to enroll in ROP courses to learn valuable job skills and to earn additional credits toward graduation. Students may take training in a number of professions. Advanced Culinary Arts, Auto Service, Dental Careers, Engine Maintenance & Repair, Health Occupations/Physical Therapy, Industrial Welding, Foundations of Nursing, Medical Assisting, EMR/EMT, Fire Technology, and Careers in Education. Transportation to and from Mission Trails ROP is provided. Make an appointment with the ROP counselor for details.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

All students must complete 40 hours of community service to graduate. Students must complete at least 10 hours per year for a total of 40 hours. Students may begin earning hours the summer before 9th grade. Summer hours must be submitted to the Career Center on the first day back from summer break. Hours may be completed with a Non-Profit, Educational Entity, or Career Development experience. The organization must be listed on the district's Pre-Approved Non-Profit and Educational Entities List. If it is not listed, students must receive prior approval from the site Work Experience Coordinator (WEC) before starting. Approval typically takes 24 hours.

Pre-Approved List of Organizations & Activities

Completed logs must be submitted at eps.is/communityservice.

****District's Community Service requirement of 40 hours**

COURSES AVAILABLE

(this list is not exhaustive)
*Also see ROP class

ENGLISH
MS English 7
MS English 8
English 9
English 10
English 11
English 12
English Language Dev.

MATH
Math 1
Math 2
Math 3
Math 1A/1B
Consumer Math

SOCIAL STUDIES
MS Social Studies 7
MS Social Studies 8
World History & Geography
Ethnic Studies
U. S. History
American Government
Economics

SP. PROGRAM CLASSES CTE
R.O.P.
Special Education
Work Experience

SCIENCE
NGSS Biology
NGSS Chemistry
Health
Physics

FOREIGN LANGUAGE
Spanish 1
Spanish 2
Spanish 3

FINE ARTS
MS Art
Art 1-2
Art 3-4

MUSIC
Guitar 1-2
Guitar 3-4

OTHER ELECTIVES *
Child Development 1-2
Physical Education
Business Tech 1-2
Psychology 1-2
Online Learning-Edgenuity

ASSESSMENT

All students enrolled at El Puente School are expected to participate in all required testing and assessments administered and/or created by El Puente School. If parents do not have their students participate in state testing, parents jeopardize the ability of El Puente School to operate as a public school of choice. We value testing opportunities for students and encourage each and every parent to have their student participate annually in the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP).

Each year, students participate in examinations in the areas of English Language

Arts, Math, and Science, depending on the grade in which they are enrolled. It is important to note that the state is not interested in your student's individual test scores, but rather the school-wide aggregated student test data. The CAASPP testing program is only one of several tools used to evaluate your child's growth and development. The employees of El Puente School never evaluate your student based on one test alone. Practice tests and study materials are available to help your family feel comfortable with the process. Please discuss any questions or concerns that you may have with your student's counselor.

GRADUATION

El Puente School is a school within the Salinas Union High School District. This means we issue high school diplomas the same as any of our other high schools. We have a graduation ceremony that takes place on the last day of school. All students who complete graduation requirements before the school year ends may withdraw early from El Puente School as graduates, but are expected to return for the graduation ceremony.

FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIPS

California law requires all graduating high school students to submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the California Dream Act Application (CADAA) to support funding their education at a 2-year college, 4-year university, or trade school. Students and parents/guardians who do not wish to submit an application must fill out an opt-out form. Scholarships are also available to high school students who plan to continue their education. We will assist students in identifying scholarships and completing applications for scholarships and financial aid. Questions about college scholarships and financial aid should be directed to our Counseling Team.

GENERAL RULES & GUIDELINES

In addition to their effort and attendance, good behavior and character are key for students to be successful. El Puente School expects our students to demonstrate good character. We expect El Puente School students to treat each other and all adults with consideration and thoughtfulness. The following are El Puente's rules, in addition to those you will find in your copy of the Salinas Union School District

Student Behavior Manual. The El Puente School reserves the right to add additional rules or restrictions at any time to ensure a safe learning environment for its students and staff.

- Students must comply with the directions of all staff members.
- Students must meet academic goals. Every student must come to school prepared with the required materials for learning.
- The parking lot is part of the campus, and all school rules apply there. Vehicles may be searched. Students are not allowed to gather in the parking lot or to

sit in the cars before school, during school, or after school. The parking lot is provided by the District as a convenience. The District or school is not responsible for thefts, accidents, etc., which may occur in the parking lot.
- Students are to adhere to the dress code described in this handbook.
- Students are not allowed to use cell phones during class time. They may use them outside of class before school, during lunch, or after school.
- Students may only use the vending machines during break period, lunch, and before and after school. Students are not to stop at machines during class time.
- During class time, students are to have a pass or staff permission to be outside the classroom.
- To enter another class during class time, students are to ask the permission of their teacher.

Positive Behavior Intervention & Support (PBIS)

As part of our district initiative, we work with students to promote positive behavior school-wide. Students have the opportunity to earn incentives and specific praise for their positive behaviors. Teachers and staff are always on the lookout to acknowledge students positively for appropriate behaviors.

PBIS is a proactive approach to establishing the behavioral support and social culture needed for all students in a school to achieve social, emotional, and academic success.

PBIS emphasizes teaching behavioral expectations in the same manner as any core curriculum subject. It focuses on preventing inappropriate behavior through clear expectations, teaching, and positive reinforcement. The goal of PBIS is to create a positive school climate where all students can thrive and succeed.

At EPS, we believe in students working towards being PACK: Persistent, Accountable, Courteous, and Kind.

GRADING

Teachers will award credits based on student achievement of an “A”, “B”, “C”, or “D” letter grade according to the grading board policy. Students have an opportunity to earn as many credits as they can every week.

Grades will be given once the student completes a course. Teachers will base their grades on the quality and quantity of work according to the following scale:

A 90-100% Excellent work is complete and accurate
B 80-89% Above Average work is complete and mostly accurate
C 70-79% Average work is mostly complete and somewhat accurate
D 60-69% Below Average, somewhat complete and somewhat accurate

State Seal of Bi-Literacy

The State Seal of Biliteracy will be awarded to graduating seniors in the Salinas Union High School District who have demonstrated proficiency in both standard academic English and at least one other language. The District will present the State Seal of Biliteracy to each graduating high school student who has attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English. To be eligible for the State Seal of Biliteracy, students must fulfill the criteria as required by the State of California.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is essential for student success, ensuring consistency in instruction, access to support, and the ability to earn course credits. Students must obtain permission to be absent from class at any time during the school day. Whenever possible, we strongly encourage scheduling appointments outside of school hours. *Absent students are still expected to complete their coursework in order to earn Satisfactory Educational Progress (SEP).*

CLEARING ABSENCES

Parents or guardians must contact the attendance office to verify an absence. The school's voicemail system is available 24/7 to record messages.

When reporting an absence, parents should provide the following information:

- Student's full name
- Date of absence
- Reason for absence
- Expected return date

Alternatively, a signed note containing the same information may be submitted.

Excessive Excused Absences

Excessive excused absences may require a parent conference. Students with a pattern of chronic absenteeism due to illness may need to provide verification of absences (AR 5113). Those who are frequently absent and fail to make satisfactory academic progress will be referred to the attendance truancy process.

A doctor's note is required for long-term absences.

Board Policy requires that a student maintain at least 85% attendance for the days enrolled each year of high school to graduate and receive a diploma.

Checking out from Campus During the School Day

Students who need to leave campus during school hours must submit a note from a parent or guardian to the attendance office in the morning. A pass will then be issued, and a note will be documented on the attendance profile.

All schools are CLOSED CAMPUSES during the entire school day. A student must receive a Permit to leave at any time during the school day from the Attendance Office, or the absence may be marked invalid.

Parents/Guardians who need to pick up their child during school hours must be present (in person) at the attendance office, prepared to show their Picture ID to pull a student out of class.

We strongly encourage appointments to be made during non-school hours if possible.

TRUANCY

A student is considered truant if they miss four full school days without a valid excuse and do not earn satisfactory educational progress (SEP).

- Being tardy or missing more than 30 minutes of a class is considered an absence.
- Truant absences accumulate throughout the school year.
- If a student transfers within the district, their truancy record will follow them.
- Disciplinary action for cutting class, skipping school, habitual tardiness, or truancy will follow district policy.

Truancy Absence Review Process

First Notification:

- A letter is sent to the parent/guardian informing them that the student has missed four school days and has not met SEP requirements.
- The letter serves as a reminder that continued enrollment at EPS is contingent on meeting attendance and academic expectations.

Second Notification:

- A second letter is sent if the student has missed eight days and has not made satisfactory educational progress.
- The letter includes a scheduled attendance and SEP review conference with the Intervention Specialist.

Lone Wolf Referral

Students referred to the Lone Wolf (LW) process will meet with the Intervention Specialist to create an improvement plan. A referral may be based on one or more of the following criteria:

- Inconsistent class attendance
- Failure to earn satisfactory educational progress in coursework
- Non-compliance with credit completion pacing in the master agreement
- Not adhering to Hybrid learning expectations

Attendance Contact Information

- Phone: (831)799-7770 ext. 1358

BEING ON TIME

Students are expected to be on time to school and to each class.

STUDENT DEPARTURE

Students will leave campus following their last appointment or workshop. Exceptions will be made for students attending a campus activity or with permission from staff. Students should not be wandering on campus at any given time.

BUS POLICY

Students are expected to behave in accordance with district policy on all school buses. Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. Failure to abide by rules and show a lack of courtesy and cooperation may result in one of the following:

- Removal from the bus
- Disciplinary action (Suspension / Expulsion)
- Bus privilege revoked for a specific period of time / the remainder of the year

Students are required to have an ID to ride the bus and are allowed to only use the bus for their designated home area.

STUDENT IDS

Students will be given a picture ID once enrolled at the school. The ID card must be carried at all times while on school grounds. ID is required to check out textbooks, Chromebooks, and to ride the school bus.

EL PUENTE PARKING LOT RULES

- All California State Vehicle Code Sections apply to all drivers.
- All District & school rules extend and apply to the parking lots.
- Park only in designated parking sections.
- Any object considered a weapon in accordance with National/California State Law and/or the Student-Parent Handbook is strictly prohibited on school premises, even inside a vehicle.
- All vehicles are subject to searches by the Proactive K-9s and the school administration.
- Permits must be mounted or visible to be considered valid.
- Students parked in non-spaces will lose driving privileges.

EL PUENTE SCHOOL DRESS CODE

To provide an environment that is safe, non-disruptive, and promotes learning, El Puente School students are to abide by the dress code, which is based on the District policy and can be found on our District website. eps.is/dresscode

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

Student involvement in extracurricular activities promotes school success. Students are encouraged to participate in many of the activities that occur on campus, such as helping with “Back to School Night”, Wednesday Wellness events, and graduation.

MASCOT

El Puente School’s mascot is the wolf. The official color is purple.

ATHLETICS

El Puente School permits athletes to participate with their home school team if in compliance with CIF rules of participation. See the school counselor for guidance if you were or are participating with your prior school’s team and would like to continue participating with the team.

BREAKFAST & LUNCH

Breakfast, Lunch, and Snacks are available to all enrolled students at no cost, regardless of income, under the Community Eligibility Provision. Students will receive one serving per meal; any second meal will be charged to the student's account.

Food Service provides free breakfast every morning to all students from 8:00 to 8:30 a.m. Free Lunch is served every day from 12:13 to 12:56 p.m. Students may

NOT use another student's ID card!

- Students are encouraged to carry their ID card!
- Form lines in a single file.
- Put trash in the trash containers.
- Students should treat others with respect.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips provide students with an alternative learning experience, an extension to learning in the classroom, and an incentive to achieve.

1. Students will complete all necessary forms prior to departure and must meet eligibility requirements.
2. During the trip, students will follow directions and cooperate with staff and other students.
3. All school and district rules will be in effect.
4. Vehicle safety rules must be observed.
5. All students will travel and return by the transportation provided by the school.

Students can apply to fieldtrips at eps.is/fieldtrips

LOST BOOKS & DEBTS

Textbooks, Chromebooks, and materials are expensive and valuable. If you lose it, you must pay for it. If you have any books from your previous school, you are to return them to that school or turn them in at El Puente. If you owe any debts at any school, you must clear your debts. Lost or damaged Chromebooks will result in a fine of $300.00. You can pay your debts at El Puente. Students who have not cleared debts or returned books may not participate in the graduation ceremony.

LANGUAGE

The SUHSD is committed to recognizing, addressing, and eradicating all forms of racism, gender discrimination, and ethnic oppression.

We condemn racism, discrimination, and bigotry in all forms. All members of the SUHSD community—students, staff, faculty, administration, trustees, alumni, and families—will use non-discriminatory language. This includes all forms of the N-word, as described in Board Policy 5145.9: Hate-Motivated Behavior. Those not in compliance with our language norms will be addressed and instructed on our language norms. Students using unacceptable language will be disciplined according to our school board policies and the California Education Code, resulting in a loss of privileges.

WELLNESS CENTER

The Wellness Center provides prevention and short-term intervention for all students facing social and emotional challenges that impact academic performance, attendance, and behavior at school. They are safe, supportive environments on the school campuses where students can go to discuss a variety of concerns. Through both on-campus programming and community-based partnerships, students receive coordinated health education, assessment, counseling, and other support services to maximize student engagement and success.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

With the help of El Puente's Community Human Services Counselor, students can strengthen their ability to make choices that protect their well-being and pave the way for a future free from substance interference. Students are encouraged to participate in group sessions voluntarily. Students who break school rules regarding drugs or alcohol may be assigned to participate in a counseling program.

RESTROOMS

El Puente School provides restrooms that are clean and intended for student use. Students going to the restroom during class time must have a pass from their teacher.

STUDENT CLUBS

Throughout the school year, students will have the opportunity to join various clubs that may meet on campus. All clubs are organized and supervised by school faculty/staff or parent volunteers. See the front office staff for a current schedule of meetings.

ELECTRONIC SIGNALING AND MEDIA DEVICES

In accordance with California's "Phone-Free School Act" (AB 3216), all public schools and charter schools must implement policies limiting or prohibiting student cell phone use by July 1, 2026.

At El Puente, students are permitted to use their cell phones before school, during lunch, and after school. Additionally, students may use their devices during class when expressly allowed by the teacher for educational purposes. Students are expected to follow their teachers' instructions regarding cell phone use during class at all times. Unauthorized use during instructional time may result in disciplinary actions. It is important to use cell phones responsibly and respectfully to maintain a positive learning environment.

HEALTH SERVICES

Students are not permitted to have medication on campus without a signed order from a healthcare provider. The form to use is below:

Order for Administration of Medications at School:

Order for Administration of Medications at School

IMMUNIZATIONS

Students must meet state immunization requirements when enrolling in transitional kindergarten (TK) through 12th grade. Parents must show their child's immunization record as proof of immunization. Students who don't meet the immunization requirements may be excluded from school until the parent or guardian provides documentation of compliance with the requirements.

WORK EXPERIENCE & WORK PERMITS

California law requires that all persons under 18 years of age who are employed must have a work permit. See the Work-Experience Coordinator for more information. Work permit applications are available on our website or in the main office. Students must have good attendance and be progressing toward graduation to obtain a work permit. A permit will be revoked if a student is not meeting these requirements. If students have a job and a valid work permit, they may enroll in the Retail Co-Op Course and earn up to 10 credits per year.

EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

The Salinas Union High School District has other educational options for students offered through the Salinas Education Center. The Salinas Education Center comprises the Salinas Adult School, El Puente School, and Out of School Youth, Parent Education, Pupil Personnel Services, and the SPED transitions program. An after-school program available to you for credit recovery.

MOUNT TORO HIGH SCHOOL (CONTINUATION SCHOOL)

Mount Toro High School is a high school diploma program. Your students attend for five hours daily. Students earn a regular high school diploma and graduate from Mount Toro High School. Upon earning the required credits to be on track for graduation, students may petition to return to their original school. To graduate from their original school, they must enroll at the start of the second semester and have the minimum number of credits required at the comprehensive high school to be considered on track.

HiSET PREPARATION (BEL or BSL/ROP)

Some students choose to obtain a High School Equivalency or HiSET, also known as an alternative to the GED, a General Education Diploma. The HiSET exam demonstrates that a test taker has attained the academic knowledge and proficiency equivalent to that of a high school graduate. Information from the exam helps identify the areas where test takers are career and college ready, as well as areas where they may need additional preparation. Test takers are tested in five core areas: Language Arts – Reading, Language Arts – Writing, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Test content is aligned with current practice in all states and jurisdictions. Test takers can use existing prep courses and materials to prepare for the HiSET exam. Test takers are given scores in all core areas, as well as a total score. Students passing the tests confirm that they have high school-level academic skills and are able to pass the tests that are given to high school diploma graduates in California. If students pass all tests with the required scores, they will be issued a certificate, the High School Equivalency Test certificate, by the State of California.

To enroll in any El Puente HiSET program, students must be 17 years and 6 months old at the time of enrollment. To enroll in the Salinas Adult School HiSET program, students must be at least 18 years old. Students must have an official government identification card with their picture on it: California Driver's License, California I.D., military I.D., or Matricula Consular. Testing takes place at the Salinas Education Center.

It is expected that students will attend daily and study diligently. Students should take no more than twenty days to take and pass each test. Students who pass all HiSET tests before the school year is over can withdraw from school early. They are dropped and return at the end of the year to participate in the graduation ceremony.

MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAM

The Mission Trails Regional Occupational Program (ROP) is a vocational training program for Monterey County. It operates under the Salinas Union High School District. Courses are held year-round, both part-time and full-time courses, during the day or in the evenings. Courses are free of charge and are open to high school students and out-of-school youth over 16 years of age and to adults. First priority will be given to high school students. High school students under 16 years of age may be admitted with the approval of the Principal.

ROP training develops marketable skills, abilities, attitudes, and work habits so students may secure jobs, work part-time, prepare for advanced training, or upgrade and enhance vocational skills. Credits applicable toward high school graduation will be awarded by the ROP each semester. Usually, 10 credits per semester are awarded for each two-hour daily class. ROP courses meet the Salinas Union High School District graduation requirement for vocational

education.

We encourage El Puente School students to enroll in ROP courses to learn valuable job skills and to earn additional credits toward graduation. Students may take training in a number of professions: Advanced Culinary Arts, Auto Service, Dental Careers, Engine Maintenance & Repair, Health Occupations/Physical Therapy, Industrial Welding, Foundations of Nursing, Medical Assisting, EMR/EMT, Fire Technology, and Careers in Education. Transportation to and from Mission Trails ROP is provided. Make an appointment with the College & Career Counselor for details.

TEEN PARENT CENTER

We offer child care free of cost to any teen parent enrolled at El Puente on a space-available basis.

DISTRICT CALENDAR

Please consult the school district's website to view the most up-to-date academic calendar – www.salinasuhsd.org