Principal's Welcome Message

Dear Sahuaro Eagle Families,

Welcome to Sahuaro Elementary School!

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to teach your children. We know you trust us with those most important to you, and we do not take that lightly. At Sahuaro, we are dedicated to providing the best education possible for your children.

Included in this handbook is information concerning procedures and policies of Sahuaro Elementary School that you may find helpful.

If we can be of assistance or answer any questions, please do not hesitate to call us at 602-896-6200 or stop by to see us in the office. I can also be reached by email at crystal.bustamante@wesdschools.org

Sincerely,

Crystal Bustamante
Principal

General School Information

Address: 12835 N. 33rd Avenue, Phoenix, 85029
School Web Site: http://sahuaro.wesdschools.org

School Facebook:
https://www.facebook.com/sahuaroelementary

School Instagram:
https://www.instagram.com/sahuaro_wesd/

Daily Schedule

Kindergarten through 6th Grade:

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
  7:25 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
- Wednesdays
  7:25 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Office Hours

The school office is open from 7:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, and 7:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. on Wednesdays.

Phone and Voice Mailbox Extensions

School Office	602-896-6200
Health Office	602-896-6210
Attendance	602-896-6211
KidSpace Program	602-896-6265

Sahuaro's Mission Statement

Sahuaro Elementary School's mission is to educate all students so they will become lifelong learners and productive members of society. Every child will learn and show academic growth, as measured by the Arizona State Standards. Our school will involve families and staff in a systematic intervention process to ensure student success.

Sahuaro's Vision

Inspiring each other to achieve excellence

Sahuaro School's Value Statements

- We ensure academic success for all students.
- We commit to ongoing collaboration and professional learning.
- We use effective strategies to engage all students.
- We analyze and use data to plan and instruct our students.
- We foster school, family and community relationships through ongoing communication and participation.
- We consistently use Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports to provide a safe environment where all are respected.
- We provide quality art, music, and physical education instruction for all students.

School Improvement Process

The school improvement process involves analyzing current practices at Sahuaro. Based on the data and input from parents, staff, the Sahuaro Site Council, Leadership Team, Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) Team, and our Community Engagement Team, we identify the areas of greatest need. An action plan and professional development plan are created to guide improvement efforts, and copies of these plans are available in the school office by request. Currently, Sahuaro's goal is to improve student achievement in math, reading, writing, and behavior, as well as build capacity with students to set academic and personal goals. As a staff, we will be goal-setting this year along with our students.

Breakfast and Lunch Information

Breakfast and lunch are served free of charge to students. Breakfast is served in the classroom at 7:30 a.m. daily. Lunches are served at the following times:

- 10:35-10:55 – Kindergarten
- 10:55-11:15 – 1st Grade
- 11:15-11:35 – 2nd Grade
- 11:35-11:55 – 3rd Grade
- 11:55-12:15 – Gifted Learning Center

- 12:15-12:35 – 4th Grade
- 12:20-12:40 – 5th Grade
- 12:35-12:55 – 6th Grade

Attendance Matters

Good attendance is an essential part of a successful school experience!

Regular attendance at school plays a major part in a child's achievement. We encourage your child to be in attendance and on time to school each school day.

To promote excellent student attendance, we will be celebrating students this school year for their excellent attendance habits. Students with 95-100% attendance rates will be recognized at our quarterly achievement awards ceremony.

Reporting Student Absences

Arizona law states it is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to notify the school if a child is going to be absent. Please call the attendance office at 602-896-6211 by 8:00 a.m. to report an absence. For your convenience and to help you meet this responsibility, messages may be left on voicemail during non-school hours. Absences not reported on or before the day of the absence will be considered unexcused.

Please refer to the district portion of this handbook for more specific information on reporting your child's absence.

Sahuaro Tardy Policy

Students who have not entered the gate by the 7:30 a.m. bell are considered tardy. Tardies are considered "excused" if they are due to doctor/dentist appointments or family emergencies. All other tardies are considered "unexcused." Parents must notify the school attendance technician concerning excused tardies in writing, in person or by calling 602-896-6211.

Truancy

In order to assure students are successful and meet current state legislation, which requires all students to attend at least 90% of the school year, WESD has an Attendance Unit (AU). The AU will work with the City Justice Courts to identify students who are chronically absent or truant.

When a student reaches five total absences (excused, unexcused and/or unverified), families will receive an attendance notification letter. When a student reaches **10 unverified, unexcused, and excusedff absences**, families will receive an attendance warning letter and a referral to the AU for appropriate actions (see District guidelines). In order to avoid this eventuality, there are several precautions to take: (1) reinforce being on time and having good attendance, (2) call the school each time a student will be late or absent, (3) present any medical documentation to the health technician and/or attendance clerk if illness will be a consistent, foreseeable issue.

An attendance letter will be sent by the school to the families of students who are approaching or passing the midway point for unexcused absences, excused absences and tardies. Parent cooperation is of the utmost importance in assuring student success.

Student Arrival/Dismissal

Children **SHOULD NOT** arrive at Sahuaro School before 7:10 a.m., and **SHOULD** arrive on campus by 7:25 a.m. The final tardy bell rings at 7:30 a.m. If parents' obligations so require, arrangements for early supervision prior to 7:10 a.m. should be made with neighbors, daycare facilities or KidSpace (WESD's fee-based childcare program). Please see the District Website for information regarding KidSpace for all families.

Students should leave campus or be picked up by parents promptly at dismissal times. The school does not have the means to supervise children after dismissal times. Any parent picking up a child after 2:45 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, or 1:15 p.m. on Wednesdays, must park, come into the front office, show identification, and sign their child out. Please note that WESD Governing Board policy requires schools to notify the Department of Child Safety when a child is not picked up after school for one hour or more following dismissal.
In order to minimize interruptions to the classrooms at the end of the school day, students will not be checked out any later than 2:15 p.m. on regular days and 12:45 p.m. on early release days. This time is reserved for announcements, homework assignments, end-of-day instructions, and transitions around campus.

When checking out a student prior to dismissal, the parent, guardian, or approved emergency contact, must be present to show ID before the student will be called to the office. Please note that picking up a student during their scheduled lunch or recess time may take longer than normal.

Student Drop Off/Pick Up

Vehicle Pickup & Drop-Off Lane: Vehicles in the car lane for both drop-off and pick-up should continue to pull forward, closing gaps between vehicles, to keep traffic flowing. The car drop-off/pickup lane is a no-parking zone, and parents should remain in their vehicles at all times.

- Morning Drop Off: Students who are being dropped off in this lane should remain in their vehicle until the 7:10 a.m. bell. When dropping off in the morning, students should not exit vehicles until their car has passed the front office crosswalk and has come to a complete stop. Students should exit vehicles from the passenger side of the vehicle only. Vehicles dropping off after 7:30 a.m. should stop near the office and direct their child to the front office for a late pass.
- Afternoon Pick Up: Afternoon vehicle loading at dismissal should only take place in the car loading zone near the end of the car line where teachers are available to assist, not near the front office. Please do not load or unload students along the sidewalks bordering the school.

Visitor Parking Lot: For parents wishing to assist their child in exiting or entering a vehicle, or for those that would like to walk with their child, please park in the Visitor Parking Lot along Sweetwater. Students may not be dropped off or picked up in this parking lot unless a parent/guardian is going to escort them through the parking lot.

Kindergarten and First Grade Pick-Up: All kindergarten students must be picked up at the front gate by a guardian or older sibling. Guardians of kindergarten students must park in the front Visitor Parking Lot, then walk up to the gate to retrieve their child. First grade students may be picked up at the front gate, or they may wait in the car pickup area to be loaded into vehicles.

The Staff Parking Lot is for staff parking only.

Please note that vehicles may be towed or issued a citation for parking in no parking zones, including within the school zone.

Multi-Tiered System of Support

Our school uses a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to make sure all students have what they need to learn and grow. MTSS helps us support students in their academics as well as their social-emotional well-being. All students receive strong, school-wide support, but some may benefit from more targeted help. This might include additional instruction, small group time to practice skills, or more individualized plans. Teachers and staff regularly check how students are doing and adjust supports as needed. Our goal is to work as a team with families to help all students do their best by using data to provide the right kind of support for both academic success and social-emotional growth.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Sahuaro Elementary utilizes a school-wide behavior expectations framework that includes **P**ositive **B**ehavioral **I**nterventions and **S**upports (PBIS). PBIS is designed to maximize instructional time, maintain a positive classroom, and promote a school environment conducive to learning. PBIS emphasizes respect for others, problem solving, accountability and cooperation.

Our school-wide behavior expectations give a positive framework for staff and students to know that Sahuaro R.O.C.K.S.! At Sahuaro, we pride ourselves in being...
~RESPONSIBLE~OPTIMISTIC~CARING~KIND~SAFE~

Sahuaro Elementary is a 'KYHFOOTY' school! This means that we are working on our motto of "Keep Your Hands Feet & Other Objects to Yourself." Parents are encouraged to remind their child each day of the expectation for KYHFOOTY.

PBIS Recognition:

Sahuaro students are recognized for their R.O.C.K.S. behavior by receiving GREEN Eagle Pride Tickets daily. Students enter their Eagle Pride tickets into weekly drawings for fun prizes. In addition, when a grade level fills their entire ticket bucket, the entire grade level earns free choice seating for one day in the cafeteria.

Sahuaro classrooms are recognized when a whole class is following R.O.C.K.S. expectations by receiving a GOLD Eagle Pride ticket. When a class obtains 15 Gold Eagle Prides tickets, they get a spin on our school prize wheel.

Teachers and staff will nominate one student from each homeroom monthly for a reward trip to the game room for students who are following PBIS expectations. Student names will be announced on morning announcements to celebrate their accomplishments.

Beginning in September, the Principal will host a

monthly "R.O.C.K.S. Star of the Month Breakfast" for students demonstrating excellent behavior and following the Responsible, Optimistic, Caring, Kind and Safe (R.O.C.K.S.) characteristics from our PBIS school-wide expectations. Students will be honored on a school bulletin board for all to see, and award certificates with a message from their teacher about why they were selected will be given at the breakfast celebration.

Please visit our school website for more information regarding PBIS.

Sahuaro E.A.G.L.E.S. House System

The Sahuaro E.A.G.L.E.S. House System is a dynamic, exciting, and proven way to create a positive climate and culture for students and staff. Through this system, we build character, relationships, and school spirit. All students and staff are divided into six different houses, named as follows for six of the 13 languages spoken by students on our campus:

- Espejo – Spanish – Mirror - looking inside yourself to be the best version of you.
- Amani – Swahili – Peace and Tranquility
- Gushikama – Kinyarwanda - Tenacious
- Latif – Arabic – Kind & Gentle
- Ehsan – Dari – Generosity & Kindness
- Senpati – Haitian – Empathetic

Through the house system, students are celebrated for their efforts through a process that builds character, empowers academic excellence, fosters school spirit, enhances relationships, and promotes a culture of belonging for all.

Through our house system, students will begin to establish positive relationships with mixed age groups from preschool through sixth grade. Each house will compete for points based on positive behavior and achievements around campus, building a sense of community and shared responsibilities.

We are so excited to see where our house system will take us this school year! **Discipline Referral Process**

At Sahuaro, we follow a student discipline flowchart that identifies Minor versus Major Behavior violations on campus. Minor violations will often be handled by the classroom teachers, and parents will be contacted by the teacher. For chronic Minor Behaviors and for Major Behaviors, students may receive a formal Office Discipline Referral. Once a formal Office Discipline Referral is completed, parents will be notified by the Behavior Support Advocate, Achievement Interventionist, or Principal to discuss the student's actions and consequences.

Personal Technology & Cell Phone Usage

No student may have their cell phone or personal technology device, including smart watches, on their person at any time.

- All students' personal electronic devices, including cell phones and smart watches, should be turned off at all times while on campus. At dismissal, students may power on their device once they have crossed the office crosswalk into the bike rack area.
- Students who bring a cell phone or other personal electronic device to school must turn in their phone to the front office or to their teacher for safe keeping throughout the school day.
- Phones and other personal electronic devices are brought to school at the owners' own risk. The school and school staff are not responsible for lost or stolen phones or technology devices.
- Students found using a personal electronic device, including, but not limited to, cell phones, game systems, headphones, ear buds, and smart watches while on campus will have their device confiscated, will receive a discipline referral, and a parent or legal guardian must pick up the phone or device from the front office during regular business hours.
- Students staying on campus for after-school programs should not be using their personal electronic devices until they have left campus following their scheduled after-school activity.

Dress Code

Sahuaro students must adhere to the WESD Dress Code at all times. Please refer to the district portion of this handbook for a full description of dress code expectations.

The dress code is part of the high expectations and standards that Sahuaro has set for our students. A standard of dress is instituted to establish an atmosphere conducive to learning and is a constant reminder to the students that their purpose in coming to school is to learn.

Student IDs

All Sahuaro students are required to wear IDs while on the school campus. Students will be provided a picture ID at the beginning of the school year at no cost. Students will be checked for compliance throughout the school day. If a student does not comply with the school dress code in wearing his or her ID card, a Minor Behavior Infraction will be documented. Following four documented Minor Behavior Infractions, the student will receive an Office Discipline Referral with consequences.

Student IDs must be visible at all times while on campus, at district events, or on district buses. Student IDs must display the student's picture, and the picture must not be covered by stickers or drawings. If students deface, destroy, render their ID unreadable or lose their ID, they will be required to purchase a replacement ID for $2.00. Replacement lanyards and pouches are 50 cents.

Prohibited Items

Any article that disrupts the rights, safety or learning of others is prohibited at school. Examples of such items might include weapons/dangerous instruments, illegal substances, dangerous drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vapes, sports equipment and toys, including clip-on toys attached to backpacks and lanyards. It is also recommended that costly items such as expensive jewelry, collectibles or large amounts of money be left at home as Sahuaro Elementary is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Any of these items found in the student's possession will either be turned into the office for parent pick-up or will be processed as a formal Office Discipline Referral.

Please note that make-up, hairspray, perfume, combs, and brushes are not to be used in the classrooms or cafeteria. Please keep these items at home.

Any student who mistakenly transports a prohibited item onto campus is encouraged to bring it directly to Principal upon discovery. All efforts will be made to rectify the situation fairly.

Personal Belongings & Sports Equipment

Students should not bring personal belongings to school unless they have special permission from their teacher for a certain item or the item is a school supply necessary for learning. Please note that all playground equipment, including ballsand other outdoor items are provided by Sahuaro School. Students may NOT bring personal sports equipment (basketballs, footballs, etc.) to school. Personal belongings include, but are not limited to, items such as stuffed animals, toys, gaming devices, etc. Please be aware that we are not responsible for lost or stolen personal items that students bring to school.

Students attending organized sports practice or games after-school may not use their after-school equipment, including shoes such as cleats during the school day.

Lost and Found

The lost and found center is maintained outside the school cafeteria where its contents are periodically displayed for identification and claiming.

Articles of significant value, such as watches, wallets, glasses, jewelry, and money are turned into the office to be identified and claimed there.

Lost or Damaged Chromebooks, Textbooks and Library Books

Each student at Sahuaro is provided a school Chromebook for instructional use throughout the school year. Students are also provided with all textbooks needed for each subject. Textbooks and Chromebooks are issued each fall, and they are collected at the end of each year and evaluated for damage. Students will be charged a fee for lost or damaged Chromebooks or textbooks.

Students will also have the opportunity each week to check out library books of their choice. Students may choose to keep library books at school or to bring them home. Students are responsible for keeping all library books safe and returning them by their due date. Students will be charged a fee for lost or damaged library books.

Special Area Classes

Physical Education Excuses: A written parental excuse is required if your child cannot participate in PE class for up to five consecutive days. A written doctor's excuse is required for students to miss more than five consecutive days.

Fine Arts: Students receive instruction in General Music and Visual Art. Band and Strings classes are available to all 5th-6th General Education Students and 3rd-6th Grade GLC students. We also offer an Introduction to the Orchestra for all 4th Grade General Education Students.

Parent/Teacher Association (PTA)

Sahuaro has an AMAZING Parent Teacher Association (PTA) that regularly supports our students and teachers. Parents interested in joining our Sahuaro PTA can sign-up at the following link:

https://www.sahuaropta.org/. For additional information, our PTA may be contacted by e-mailing: info@sahuaropta.org.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Incentive Field Trips

- At times during the year, Sahuaro may offer quarterly incentive field trips. Unless otherwise specified, the standard criteria for attending an incentive trip are as follows:
- No Fs or Us on the most recent school report card or midterm report;
- No In-School Suspension or Out-of-School Suspensions in the period of time leading up to the field trip (determined by administration); and
- Attendance rate of at least 90% for the most recent quarter with three or less unexcused tardies to school or to classes.

After-school Activities

The Parent/Student Handbook rules and procedures apply to all after-school activities.

Students not scheduled to attend an after-school program, including siblings of a registered participant, may not stay on campus to wait for their sibling or friend during sports practices and other after-school activities.

The following guidelines outline our procedures for determining student eligibility for any extracurricular activities:

Sports Participation

Eligibility for competition will be determined by quarter report cards and midterm reports. An academic grade of "F" or conduct grade of "U" in any subject on a District report card or a District midterm report will make a student ineligible for competition.

A student may regain eligibility status:

1. At the next reporting period (a District report card or District midterm report). This is defined as no "Fs" in any academic subject or "Us"' in conduct or effort.

Or

2. After a minimum of two weeks from the onset of the ineligibility, the athlete can prove that his or her deficiency has been corrected and all other grades and conduct marks are still in good standing. The athlete must present proof to the coach and administration. The "two-week petition" may only be used to make an athlete eligible.

Other After-school Activities

Students receiving a grade of an "F" or a "U" in behavior may be determined ineligible at the end of each nine-week grading period. Ineligibility applies to all activities that occur outside the realm of a normal school day and have no grade or credit attached to student participation.

1. Ineligible students may, at the discretion of the sponsor, practice with teams or organizations that require it. These students may not represent the school by dressing in uniform or actual participation in the event or contest.

2. Activities affected by these standards include clubs, activities, athletics, and school dances.

3. Coaches and sponsors are responsible for checking each member of their activity for eligibility to participate and subsequently informing them of their status.

4. A student must be in attendance for at least half of the school day to be eligible to participate in any school-sponsored activity or event. Half of the school day is three and a half hours.

Students involved in after-school activities are not allowed to participate if they are serving in-school or out-of-school suspension during the day of activity.

Student Government

Students are elected as Student Council representatives/officers by their classmates each year. Student Council activities include service projects, sponsorship of special events, and fundraising. Please call the school office for more details.

Student Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are special times for students! Parents who wish to provide a treat for their child's class to share should contact the teacher in advance. Although cupcakes are a desirable treat for celebrations, we encourage families to bring a healthy, store-bought treat, as suggested by our WESD Nutrition Department. Remember, all food items must be store bought, and it is highly recommended that they are individually wrapped. **Please note that candy, balloons, flowers and other party items are not permitted on campus at any time, with the exception**

of birthday balloons purchased directly from PTA. Parents will only be allowed to join the class for birthday celebrations by pre-arranged appointment with the teacher.

Outside Food/Drinks on Campus

Students may bring only water to drink in a sealed water bottle. In addition, no outside drinks may be consumed on campus (i.e. Starbucks, soda, etc.). Energy drinks are strictly prohibited.

All food brought to school by students to share with their class for snack times or scheduled celebrations must be store-bought, and it is preferred that food items are individually wrapped. The WESD Nutrition department has provided a list of healthy options that are most appropriate for schools that can be accessed on our district website.

Students who choose to bring a packed lunch from home may not share their food items with classmates in the cafeteria. Students may not bring food to the playground during recess and should only eat their personal snack during designated class snack times, at the discretion of the teacher.

At no time should food be shared between students unless it is a coordinated class snack or pre-scheduled birthday celebration.

Preschool/Extended Day Programs

Sahuaro has a full-day Head Start class and a Special Needs Preschool on site. Students must qualify for these preschool programs. Please contact the school office for additional details.

Quality childcare is provided on site for school age children enrolled at Sahuaro through our KidSpace program. Space is limited, so early registration is important. Call 602-896--6265 for details and rates.

Academic Achievement Celebrations

Each quarter, we celebrate academic achievement and growth at a quarterly awards ceremony.

Attendance Awards will be given to third through sixth grade students who achieve 95%-100% attendance each quarter.

Academic Excellence Awards will be given to 3rd-6th grade students who maintain a 4.0 GPA each quarter with no N's or U's on their report card.

Principal's List Awards will be given to 3rd-6th grade students who maintain a 3.5-3.9 GPA each quarter, with no N's or U's on their report card.

Honor Roll Awards will be given to 3rd-6th grade students with a 3.0-3.4 GPA, with N's or U's on their report card.

Please note that when calculating Principal's List and Honor Roll, the three Special Areas grades for Music, Art, and P.E. will be averaged as one grade to count toward the overall GPA.

K-6 students who have shown significant growth but may not otherwise qualify for Academic Excellence, Principal's List or Honor Roll, will also be recognized at our award ceremonies.

When possible, K-2 students will be recognized for academic achievement based on teacher selection and other assessment measures.

Bicycles, Skateboards, and Non-Electric Scooters

Students in grades K--6 are allowed to ride bicycles, skateboards, or non-electric scooters to school. Bicycles, skateboards, and non-electric scooters must be individually locked in the bike racks provided. Sahuaro Elementary is not responsible for lost or stolen bicycles, skateboards, or scooters.

Roller Skates, Heelys, Inline Skates, Electric Scooters, Electric Bikes, and Hoverboards

Per district policy and city ordinance, Roller skates, Heelys, inline skates, electric scooters, electric bikes, and hoverboards **are not** allowed on campus.

Parent Volunteers

We welcome and encourage our parents and families to volunteer. All volunteers must complete the Four-Step WESD Volunteer Training, located at the following link:
https://www.wesdschools.org/community/volunteer-opportunities

1. Read the Volunteer Handbook
2. View the 2026-2027 Training Slideshow
3. Complete the Volunteer Application
4. Print and sign the Volunteer Agreement Form and drop it by the school office, or stop by the school office to sign a copy of the form in person.

An on-site orientation for anyone interested will be provided to support your efforts with copying and using our equipment in the workroom. Please contact the front office for additional details.