PRINCIPAL'S LETTER

The entire Sweetwater staff and I would like to welcome you to the 20262027 school year! It is an honor to serve as the principal of this amazing school.

We are all looking forward to a wonderful year with your children. It is our goal to foster a community that builds a safe, inviting environment where everyone thrives and can be successful at school. We encourage you to participate in your child's school experience and value the home to school partnerships that support your child's achievement.

Thank you for trusting us with your precious children. . Please know my door is open for us to communicate and collaborate for your child's success at Sweetwater. Please watch for a parent update in a weekly email to stay informed of the many activities and events at Sweetwater. You are always welcome to call, email, or come to the front office.

Here's to an amazing school year together!

Sincerely,

Susie Smith, Principal

MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY

Sweetwater Mission Statement

Everyone accepting challenges with high expectations, creating the leaders of today and tomorrow.

Leader In Me

Sweetwater is a **Leader In Me** school, teaching and modeling the *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, by Stephen Covey. Our students learn to apply the *7 Habits* to their daily lives, both at school and at home. We believe that every child can be a leader in his or her own life. We are very proud of the fact that we are a Lighthouse School in the Leader in Me organization.

Habit #1: Be Proactive

I am a responsible person. I take initiative. I choose my actions, attitudes and moods. I do not blame others for my wrong actions. I do the right thing without being asked, even when no one is looking.

Habit #2: Begin with the End in Mind

I plan ahead and set goals. I do things that have meaning and make a difference. I am an important part of my classroom and contribute to my school's mission and vision. I look for ways to be a good citizen.

Habit #3: Put First Things First

I spend my time on things that are most important. This means I say no to things I know I should not do. I set priorities, make a schedule, and follow my plan. I am disciplined and organized.

Habit #4: Think Win-Win

I balance courage for getting what I want with consideration for what others want. I make deposits in others' "Emotional Bank Accounts." When conflicts arise, I look for third alternatives.

Habit #5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood

I listen to other people's feelings. I try to see things from their viewpoints. I listen to others without interrupting. I am confident in voicing my ideas. I look people in the eyes when talking.

Habit #6: Synergize

I value other people's strengths and learn from them. I get along well with others, even people who are different than me. I work well in groups. I seek out other people's ideas to solve problems because I know that by teaming with others, we can create better solutions than any one of us alone. I am humble.

Habit #7: Sharpen the Saw

I take care of my body by eating right, exercising and getting sleep. I spend time with family and friends. I learn in lots of ways and lots of places, not just at school. I take time to find meaningful ways to help others.

Habit #8: Find Your Voice

I will find something that I am good at and really like doing. Then I use my expertise to help and inspire others.

Be a Leader Today, the Sweetwater Way!

Sweetwater 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.

DAILY SCHEDULE

School Hours:

7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

7:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Early Release Wednesdays

Office Hours:

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

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

Address: 4602 West Sweetwater Avenue

School Web Site: http://sweetwater.wesdschools.org

Sweetwater Facebook Page: Sweetwater School (Look for the blue Mustang)

Important Telephone Numbers:

Office	602-896-6500
Attendance	602-896-6511
Health Office	602-896-6510
KidSpace	602-896-6515

Reporting Absences

Parents of students who are absent should call the attendance office at 602-896-6511 before 8:30 a.m. to report the absence. If a student is absent three or more days, class work may be requested by calling the office. Please refer to the District portion of this handbook for more specific information on reporting your child's absence.

Please refer to the District Handbook for more information regarding our attendance policy.

Leaving School Prior to Dismissal

Students leaving school before dismissal must be excused through the office. Parents/guardians must complete the sign out sheet. We will call for your student when you arrive to pick up your student during school hours. Fifteen minutes before dismissal is the cut-off time for picking students up early. Leaving early is counted as a tardy on the student attendance record.

Attendance, Truancy and Tardy Policy

Attendance:

It is important that a parent or guardian calls the attendance office to report student absences before 8:30 a.m. on the day of the absence. All absences not verified on or before the day of the absence by parental or administrative authorization will remain unexcused. If a student is absent three or more days, please request absent work by calling the homeroom teacher or the office so as to keep your child current on his or her academics.

Truancy:

In order to assure students are successful and meet current state legislation, which requires all students to attend 90% of the school year, WESD has an Attendance Unit (AU). The AU will work in conjunction with the City Justice Courts to identify student and parents of students who are chronically absent or are 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 excused 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 good attendance, (2) call the school each time a student will be late or absent, (3) present any medical documentation to the nurse and/or attendance clerk if illness will be a consistent, foreseeable issue.

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

Tardiness:

Students are expected to be in class on time. Students who arrive to their homeroom class after 7:30 a.m. are tardy. Punctuality is an important life skill. Should a tardy result from a medical appointment, a written note from the doctor's office will be necessary in order to excuse the tardy.

When a student is tardy, we request that a parent do one of the following:

- Accompany his or her child to the office
- Phone the office

Cafeteria Procedures

Free breakfast is served in all classrooms each day. Free lunch is served in the cafeteria each day. If a student needs to keep his or her lunch cold, please send the lunch in an insulated lunch container with an ice pack.

Private Property

Students are reminded that homes and lawns bordering the school are private property and must be regarded as such. Walking on lawns, roughhousing or throwing items

around neighborhood homes reflects upon the entire student body when actually it is the mischief of a few inconsiderate individuals. Sweetwater expects all students to display personal leadership by respecting themselves, our school and our neighborhood.

COMMUNICATION

Parent Lighthouse Team

The Sweetwater Parent Lighthouse Team is composed of parents and teachers. This organization functions as our PTO. The Parent Lighthouse Team mission is to develop our community by:

- Fundraising to Assist Our School
- Providing Family Events
- Supporting All Stakeholders

The Parent Lighthouse Team meets regularly. All parents and teachers are invited to be a part of this group.

Communication with Teachers

Sweetwater teachers welcome the opportunity to confer and to partner with parents and guardians. If you have questions or concerns, please make an attempt to speak directly with the teacher first. Please leave a message in the teacher's voice mailbox or email the teacher. It is helpful if you have the following information when you call:

1. Name of parent/guardian.
2. First and last name of the student.
3. Phone number(s) and time available.
4. A brief statement of question, concern or compliment.

We encourage parents to visit our school/classrooms. Please be respectful of our emphasis on teaching/learning by:

- Making appointments when you plan to visit. No classroom visitors are allowed unless prior arrangements have been made with the teacher.
- Leaving items that need to be delivered to your child at the office. This will minimize class disruptions.
- Limiting deliveries for birthdays/special occasions. Any items brought to school need to be delivered to the office.

Teachers are generally available to receive and to return calls and email after 2:45 p.m.

School Newsletter

A school newsletter will be posted in ParentSquare quarterly. Weekly updates are provided by emails.

Student Telephone Usage

Students should develop responsibility for making sure that they bring all items to school that are required for that day. Any student needing to use the telephone, after arrival at school, **must** have the approval of his or her teacher. Students are not allowed to use cell phones during the school day. All cell phones of kindergarten through eighth grade students are to be turned off during the school day. **Teachers have the option of keeping phones locked up during the school day or letting students keep them in their backpack.** If a student has a phone out during the day, it will be taken by a staff person and held in the office until the end of the day. If a second incident occurs, the phone will be held in the office until a parent can pick it up.

Students will not be allowed to use the telephone to make after school plans. These types of arrangements need to be made prior to leaving home and a note or phone call from the parent should accompany any unusual plans. Your child's safety and well-being are our major concern.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Bicycles and Skateboards

We provide an enclosed space/bike rack for bicycles. There is a separate container that skateboards and scooters need to be stored in before entering the school. The school is not responsible for the loss, theft or damage to bicycles or skateboards. Bicycles, skateboards and scooters must be walked once a student gets on the sidewalks on our school grounds, including the parking lot area. In addition, for the safety of our bicycle riders and walkers, all bikes need to be walked on the sidewalk on Sweetwater Avenue between 45th and 47th Avenues. This is for the safety of bicycle riders and pedestrians due to the high volume of traffic on Sweetwater.

Items Prohibited at School

The following items are prohibited at Sweetwater School:

- Rollerblades/skates
- Perfume/cologne/hair spray

Video games, Apple watches, CD players, iPods, MP3s (any other electronics)

- Toys and other items which may disrupt the educational environment
- Cell phones are discouraged. However, if a student needs a cell phone for walking to and from school for safety, it must be powered off upon entering campus and kept in the backpack or locked up with the teacher during the school day

- Other items as designated by administration on an "as needed" basis due to safety issues or classroom distractions

Prohibited items will be taken away by the teacher or administration and held until a parent can pick them up.

Student Dress Code – Refer to District Portion of Handbook for Details

Students are required to wear student IDs at all times. Students will need to pay $2.00 for a new ID. Students who repeatedly lose their ID will have additional consequences as determined by the administration.

Bullying

There are procedures in place for students to report bullying to school staff members. Students will be instructed to fill out a written incident report. This report will be reviewed by the teacher or our behavior support advocate, depending on the level of the behavior reported. All reports are taken seriously and acted on according to school and District discipline policies.

Parking Lot Procedures

All parking lot signs and procedures need to be followed at all times to preserve and protect the safety of students, parents and staff. Please drive slowly and safely in the parking lot at all times. For the safety of our students, parents and staff, we are requesting that you follow a few guidelines when dropping off and picking up your children before and after school.

**PLEASE WAIT until you get to the blue painted line on the sidewalk to drop off or pick up your children.

**DO NOT BLOCK THE HANDICAPPED/RESERVED PARKING SPOTS. Parents with handicap plates or signs use these spaces to drop off and pick up their children.

**THE LEFT LANE IS FOR THROUGH TRAFFIC ONLY. Children or adults are not to be dropped off or picked up in this lane. This lane is not to be used to cut in front of others who have been waiting their turn to pick up or drop off their children.

**CHILDREN ARE NOT ALLOWED TO WALK ACROSS THE PARKING LOT WITHOUT AN ADULT PRESENT.

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