

McKinley Elementary Family Handbook 2026-2027



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General School Information

About McKinley

McKinley Elementary School is a diverse neighborhood school serving approximately 375 students in PreK–5. McKinley has been recognized as a three-time California Title I Academic Achievement Award recipient (2006, 2007, and 2011), a California Distinguished School (2010), a California Pivotal Practice Award recipient (2022), and an Educational Results Partnership Honor Roll school (2025).

At McKinley, diversity is valued, collaboration is the norm, and student learning is our highest priority. We are committed to supporting the whole child, achieving strong outcomes for every student, and addressing persistent opportunity and achievement gaps. Our PRIDE philosophy guides all aspects of school life: **Peaceful, Respectful, Intelligent, Diverse, and Enthusiastic**.

Our vision is to develop learners who collaborate, communicate effectively, think critically and creatively, demonstrate strong character, and practice responsible citizenship in their local and global communities.

Our approach begins with **inclusive design**. McKinley teachers use California State Standards, research-based practices, student data, and ongoing professional learning to provide rigorous instruction tailored to each child. Teaching builds on students' cultures, experiences, interests, and individual ways of learning. Our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) helps us identify students' academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs and provide appropriate instruction, intervention, and enrichment.

Teaching and learning at McKinley are also grounded in **authentic learning**. Students ask meaningful questions, investigate real-world issues, and apply their knowledge accordingly. Every grade level participates in project-based learning connected to community or global topics that students care about. Inquiry-based mathematics, literacy with student voice and choice, foundational skills, and the Social Justice Standards help students understand their world and build the confidence to contribute to it.

We are equally committed to developing the **whole child**. We expose students to a wide range of experiences so they can discover interests, develop curiosity, and find passions they can pursue throughout their years at McKinley and beyond. We also place a premium on social-emotional growth and believe these skills must be explicitly taught, practiced, and reinforced—just like academic skills. Through restorative practices, community meetings, mindfulness, and social-emotional instruction, students learn to build relationships, manage emotions, resolve conflicts, and take responsibility. Music, visual art, theater, dance, science, garden, makerspace, physical education, and student clubs help children develop creativity, confidence, and a sense of belonging.

Above all, McKinley has a **collaborative culture** because we believe learning is a social act. Students learn through collaborative conversations, partnerships, group work, buddy classrooms, and shared problem-solving. Staff work together through professional learning communities, flexible student groupings, committees, and ongoing professional development. Families are also essential partners in our students' success. School events, regular communication, volunteer opportunities, committees, and leadership groups provide many ways for families to connect, contribute, and help create a positive school culture.

McKinley is a wonderful place, and we welcome you to our pride!

SMMUSD and McKinley Goals

Extraordinary achievement for all students while simultaneously [closing the achievement gap](#)

1. All students will be college and career ready through socially just pathways rooted in curiosity, belonging and empowerment.
2. Multilingual Learners will become proficient in English while engaging in a rigorous, culturally and linguistically responsive, standards-aligned core curriculum.
3. All students and families feel connected and informed, engaging in safe, well-maintained, and culturally responsive schools that support future-ready learning.

School Site Focus

Collaborative Conversations

This year, McKinley's focus is on collaborative conversations—structured opportunities for students to talk with each other and their teachers to explain thinking, justify reasoning, use evidence, and make connections. We chose this focus both to address assessment data showing a need in listening and speaking, and to respond to a growing trend: more behind-the-screen communication and fewer face-to-face interactions. In an age of “text-talk” and multitasking, students need explicit practice in active listening, building on others' ideas, and speaking with clarity and respect—skills that today's college- and career-ready standards require.

Some of the benefits of collaborative conversations include:

- Strengthens listening and speaking skills while deepening understanding of concepts.
- Develops higher-order thinking, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills transferable across subjects.
- Increases student engagement.
- Promotes a positive school culture by fostering relationship-building.
- Rapidly develops academic language for English Learners.
- Aligns directly with District, LCAP, SPSA, and McKinley goals.

McKinley Philosophy

The PRIDE philosophy guides all aspects of life at McKinley. McKinley students, staff, and parents work together as a community in service of this core belief.

We are: **Peaceful**, **Respectful**, **Intelligent**, **Diverse**, and **Enthusiastic**

School Schedules

Office Hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 8:00am-4:00pm, and Wednesday/Minimum days 8:00am-2:30pm.

Bell Schedules

Click here for our [26-27 Bell Schedule](#). Wednesdays are early dismissal days for staff professional development. All SMMUSD schools have one Banked Time day each week so teachers can participate in on-going professional development. During this time staff meet together as a professional learning community, plan and reflect on instruction, and learn new skills to help provide a rigorous and high-quality program for our students. Please do not ask for a meeting with your child's teacher on Wednesday afternoons, as teachers are attending staff development meetings.

In addition, 10 days each year are designated as Minimum Days with early dismissal. These are shared on the bottom of the Bell Schedule.

School Accountability Report Card (SARC) and School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA)

The SARC is available for viewing on the school website under the About Us>[School Accountability tab](#), and a hard copy is available in the front office for viewing upon request.

A hard copy of the SPSA is available for viewing in the front office upon request.

Home School Communication

Home School Communication Methods

School-home communication is a priority at McKinley School because we view parents as partners in their child's education.

We have multiple ways in which we communicate school, class, and student information with parents and families such as:

- School Website- <https://mckinley.smmusd.org/>
- Twitter- @McKinleyLions
- Instagram @mckinleylions
- Weekly Lion's Roar on Smore- principal newsletter eblasted on Sundays and on the school website
- Eblasts, Robocalls and Texts from McKinley's Parentsquare App
- Postings on the Marquee
- Postings on the School Fences
- Flyers on the Bulletin Boards and Rounders
- Emails from McKinley Staff
- Individual Calls Home from Staff
- Digital platforms used by Teachers such as Seesaw, Class Dojo, and Google Classroom
- In-Person Conferences (Parent/Teacher Conferences, SSTs, IEP Meetings, other meetings as needed)
- First Day Packet (Shared on Aeries)
- McKinley Handbook
- [Volunteer Handbook](#)
- School Information Events- Back to School Night, Open House, K Roundup etc.

The PTA also communicates school and PTA related information:

- PTA Website- mckinleypta.com
- PTA Meetings
- Committee Meetings- AASG, ELAC, SBC etc.
- Room Parents
- PTA Facebook Page
- Eblasts from PTA

Who to Contact

If you have a question or concern regarding your child, it is important to communicate with the school right away so that we can help.

Contact your child's teacher first. Please email your child's teacher to arrange a meeting. Teachers will be unable to accommodate pop-in meetings, as they are busy preparing lessons for the class or teaching. Please inform the teacher of the reason for the meeting, so they can prepare materials and information. As teachers are

teaching during the school day so emails may not be responded to during the school day. Response time to emails is approximately 48 hours.

After meeting with the teacher, if you still have a question or concern, contact an administrator to schedule a follow-up meeting with both the teacher and an administrator. You may email an administrator directly, or schedule a meeting with the Administrative Assistant. You will be asked if you have already met with the teacher, and if so to describe the question or concern so that the administrator can be prepared for the meeting. If the parent has not yet met with the teacher, they will be referred back to the teacher.

For questions about community resources, please contact our Community Liaison in the front office.

Please contact our front office with questions about enrollment or attendance.

Please refer to the staff roster on our website for staff contact information: www.mckinley.smmusd.org

Custody Matters and Communication

The staff, school, and district do not get involved in custody matters. The school will focus fully on your child, and will work to ensure their well-being and success at school. If parents have shared custody and both parents wish to attend a meeting, please plan to attend one meeting so that both parents can hear the same information at once.

Email Protocol

Professional, productive, and efficient communication is important for all members of the SMMUSD community. This email communication protocol is designed to strengthen communication by establishing professional expectations. It will also ensure teachers have time to focus on instruction, while being able to respond to questions and concerns in a helpful and timely manner.

We ask that parents follow these professional guidelines when emailing McKinley staff:

- Maintain professional tone and language at all times.
- Keep messages brief and to the point.
- Use the subject line to indicate the audience, content, and purpose.
- State the response expectations.
- Use group distribution lists sparingly.
- Use Reply All sparingly, and only when a response to all recipients is necessary.
- Forward emails only when appropriate.
- Make personal contact, face-to-face or voice-to-voice a priority over email; especially when issues are sensitive.

When writing emails, McKinley adults assume good intentions, model our PRIDE Philosophy, and communicate with collaboration and kids-first in mind. The school's Civility Policy applies to email communication as well as zoom, phone, and in-person communication.

Employees will check emails at a minimum of one time per day, but not during the instructional time, so responses will likely be before or after school on business days. Employees will respond within 48 hours on business days.

Class Email Lists

At the start of the school year Room Parents will receive a class roster of emails to share with their class so parents can arrange playdates and for school-related communication. These emails are to be kept confidential, and not shared with other classes, people, or outside organizations. Emails should only be used to communicate school and classroom information as provided by the school or teacher, and as such are intended to engage parents in school, facilitate school-home communication, and to promote a positive school climate. Email communication is not to be used for personal or political information, viewpoints, or other matters. The school's Civility Policy applies to email communication as well as in-person, zoom, and phone communication. Those using these emails are expected to uphold the SMMUSD Email Communication Protocol by maintaining professional tone and language at all times, keeping the number of emails to a minimum, keeping communications brief and to the point, using the "reply all" sparingly and just when a response to all recipients is necessary, and forwarding emails only when appropriate.

Parents may choose to opt out of having their email shared to the Room Parents and class list by informing the office at the start of the school year.

Back to School Night

Back to School Nights are held the 2nd week of school for TK-2nd grade and the 3rd Week of school for 3-5th grade. Information about grade level standards, classroom rules, expectations about homework and the academic program for a grade level is provided during classroom meetings. This is an excellent opportunity to open lines of communication with your child's teacher and meet the other families in your child's class. Please note Back to School Night is for adults only; please make arrangements for childcare. Students are not permitted on the playground during this event.

Parent Conferences

Information on individual student progress is shared with parents formally during Fall Parent/Teacher Conferences. Conferences with teachers may also be arranged at any time during the year by contacting the teacher.

Progress Report/Report Cards

A progress report is given in November during Parent/Teacher Conferences that describes how a student is progressing academically at that point in the year. Formal Report Cards are given in February and the last day of school in June. The Report Cards provide comprehensive feedback on student progress relative to state standards in key areas. A document called "Understanding your Child's Report Card" is available on the district website.

Open House

Open House is scheduled each Spring. This is a special night when children can show their parents the classroom and the work the class has been doing. It is an informal time to visit and look at the classroom and campus facilities. Open House is open to the public.

School Safety

Visitor/Volunteer Procedures for Entering/Exiting Campus

1. Enter via the main office.
 2. Office staff will ask the reason for the visit. Visitors must have a previously arranged, and administrator/designee approved reason, for being on campus. Surprise/drop-in attempts to volunteer or visit classrooms are not permitted. The office will call the teacher to notify them of the visitor's arrival and confirm the visit/volunteering.
 3. The office will ask the visitor for their driver's license (or other government issued identification), and the Verkada computer system will scan the ID. A sticker badge will be printed showing the ID picture, date, time, school name, and campus location of the visit.
 4. Visitors will place the sticker badge on their body in a visible location. Students have been taught to let a teacher know if they see someone without a badge. If adults see someone without a badge (all staff wear a badge as well) they should immediately inform the office. Badges must be worn at all times during a visit.
 5. The office will buzz in the visitor.
 6. Visitors must go directly to the volunteer classroom/location, and upon finishing return directly to the office. Visitors are not permitted to go to other locations on campus if it has not been previously arranged.
 7. When leaving campus the sticker badge may be returned to the office and the office staff will sign the visitor out via the Raptor system. Exit campus through the main office. It is important to check out with the office staff so the office is aware of all individuals on campus in the case of an emergency.
- Even if the office knows the parent or visitor, all individuals visiting or volunteering must follow these procedures for the safety of the campus.
 - When volunteering first thing in the morning, please drop off your child at the gate and then go to the office to follow these procedures. Do not go straight to the classroom; volunteers need to sign in and get a sticker badge.
 - Volunteering: Parents must attend a Volunteer Orientation and complete the required Volunteer Application to be permitted to volunteer. The Volunteer Application is downloadable from the school website and may be turned in to the office. Applications are approved by the nurse and administration, and cleared applications are valid for 4 years.

The Verkada badge system is used for campus safety so that we know who, when, where, and why everyone is on campus. The registered sex offender database is the only official database checked by the Verkada system, and in the event of a match Verkada notifies designated school officials. No other data from the ID is gathered and no data will be shared with any outside company or organization.

For large schoolwide events, and events open to the public, a paper check-in system may be used if the Verkada system creates an excessive delay.

Thank you for your assistance in helping to keep our campus safe.

Arrival/Drop Off Procedures

Please consider walking, biking and scooting to and from school! As a neighborhood school, we encourage families to travel to campus on foot or wheels whenever possible. It's a great way to ease congestion and enjoy connecting with friends and neighbors along the way.

We have assigned gates depending on grade level. Please see a detailed arrival map [here](#).

Morning Childcare: Enrolled families will receive a key card for campus access beginning at 7:00 AM. Childcare is located in the Preschool Building. Use the key card reader at the PreK/TK/K Gate.

Breakfast: Students eating breakfast may enter through the Arizona Gate from 8:00–8:15 AM and go directly to the cafeteria. Do not drop off students before 8:00 AM unless they are enrolled in morning childcare, as supervision is otherwise unavailable.

Regular Arrival: Gates open at 8:15 AM and close promptly at 8:30 AM.

- Students in grades 1–5 who walk, bike, or scooter enter through the Arizona Gate.
- TK and kindergarten students enter on Chelsea Avenue via the PreK/K/TK Gate.
- TK-5 students coming by car may use the Chelsea Avenue drop-off lane from 8:15–8:30 AM.
- Families say goodbye at the gate, and students enter campus independently.

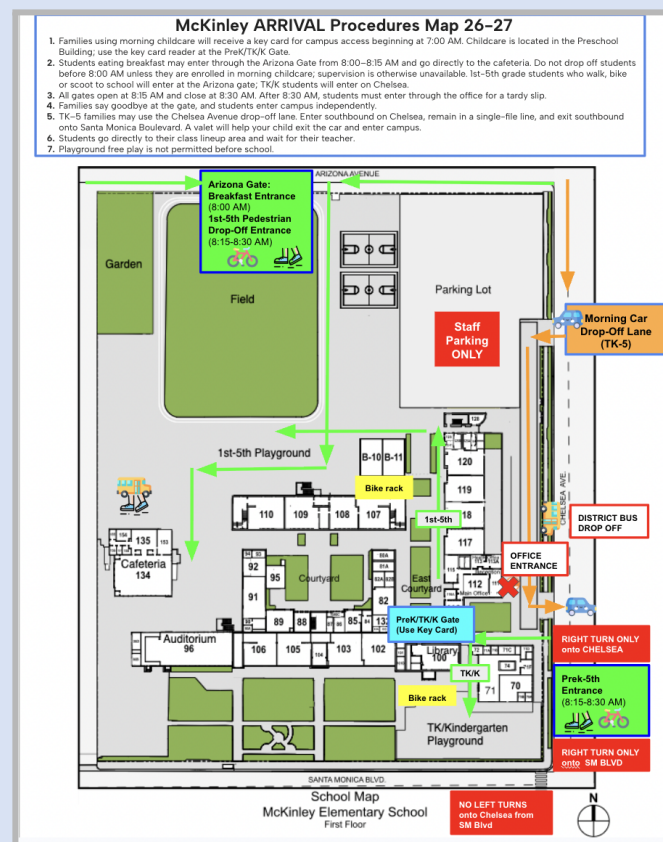
Before School: Students go directly to their class lineup area and wait for their teacher. Playground free play is not permitted before school.

Supervision: McKinley staff supervise the cafeteria beginning at 8:00 AM and the gates and yards from 8:15–8:30 AM.

Tardy Arrival: Gates close at 8:30 AM, when instruction begins. Students arriving after 8:30 AM must enter through the main office and receive a tardy slip.

Adult Visitors: Adults coming onto campus for volunteering, parent teacher conferences, group/committee meetings, school events, follow the SMMUSD Visitor Policy.

Special/Alternate Morning Procedures may occur for special events or schoolwide functions such as the first day of school, jog-a-thon, sing-a-long, graduation etc. The school will provide information to parents in such situations with this information.



Grade	Arrival Time	Arrival Gate	Where students go once on campus
PreK	8:45 am/ 9:00 am	PreK/TK/K Gate (next to Main Office)	Parents accompany students to classroom
TK-5 for Breakfast	8:00-8:15 am	Arizona Gate	Cafeteria
TK/K	8:30 am	Chelsea Drop Off Lane (Drivers) PreK/TK/K Gate (Walkers, Bikers)	Kinder yard
1-5	8:30 am	Chelsea Drop Off Lane (Drivers) Arizona Gate (Walkers, Bikers)	Big Yard

Dismissal/Pick-Up Procedures

The gates open promptly at the end-of-school day bell and remain open for 10 minutes for pick-up.

McKinley has implemented a staggered dismissal to benefit the flow of traffic, and to increase student safety. Parents with students in multiple grade levels must make arrangements to pick up their children at their assigned dismissal times; there is not supervision for siblings between dismissal times.

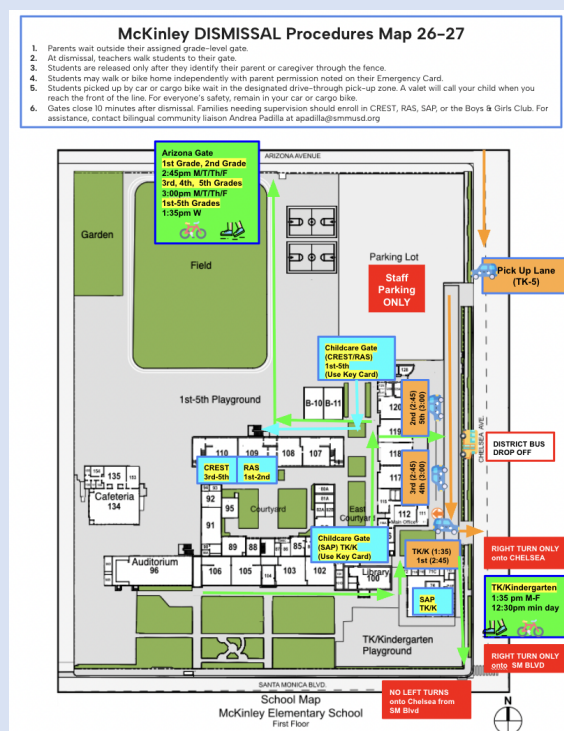
Assigned gates by grade level are also utilized so that staff can better see who each student is being dismissed to, and to reduce crowding at individual gates, for student safety.

Students who walk or bike home will exit through the Arizona Gate (1st-5th) and the PreK/TK/K Gate (TK/Kindergarten). Students who drive home will be picked up in our Pick-up Lane on Chelsea Avenue. Preschool students must be signed out by their parents. Please see a detailed dismissal map [here](#).

Any students on campus after school must be enrolled in one of the after school programs with CREST, SAP, Boys and Girls Club, or the school. The students enrolled in these programs go directly there at the end-of-day bell and sign-in to the program. TK/K students are picked up by their program.

The after school programs and their staff are in charge of the supervision, safety, and learning of the students in their programs after school. If you have any questions or concerns with things that occur after school during one of these programs, please contact that program directly as they are separate from the school.

Parents picking up from after school programs will be provided a key card at the parking lot or or PreK/TK/K Gate. Please do not share your key cards with children, or other adults. Families are responsible for replacing key cards if lost. Also, please do not hold open the gate for others; all people entering the gate must have and use the code for student safety.



Students not enrolled in after school programs cannot play on the playground even if their parents are present. Parents who would like their child to have access to the playground after school, may sign them up for an after school program. The school playground is also open to the public on weekends and local parks are open daily.

Parents may choose to let their child walk/bike home on their own; parents should note this on the Emergency Card.

Once a student exits the campus at the end of the school day, they may not return to campus. If they leave after school to visit local vendors or businesses or visit other friends' homes, they will not be readmitted to campus. Please make sure that your child understands that once on campus, they should not leave without formal permission either during or after school.

DISMISSAL	Preschool	TK/K	1st/2nd	3rd/4th/5th
Regular Days	11:45 AM/12:00 PM	1:35 PM	2:45 PM	3:00 PM
Wednesdays	11:45 AM/12:00 PM	1:35 PM	1:35 PM	1:35 PM
Minimum Days	11:45 AM/12:00 PM	12:30 PM	1:35 PM	1:35 PM

Car Drive-Through Drop-Off and Pick-Up

To make morning drop off easier, McKinley offers a drive through drop-off and pick-up lane on Chelsea Avenue from 8:15-8:30am in the morning and from 1:35-1:50 (TK/K), 2:45-3:10 (1st-5th) in the afternoon.

1. Drive slowly and look out for children. Obey stop signs and staff directions.
2. Pull up to the front of the lane before stopping your car.
3. Stay in the car. Staff will open the door to let out students and will close the car door after they get out. Students should be ready with their backpack, lunch, and other items so they can depart the car quickly.
4. Please watch to ensure your child enters the gate.
5. Drive carefully when leaving.
6. Cars may only exit right out of the drive through lane and again on SM Blvd.
7. Please model respect and appropriate behavior in the presence of children and understand we are all working towards maintaining safety for all. The crossing guards are trained to stop traffic and to cross our children at busy intersections. Please do not coax your child, with a horn honk or a yell, to cross the street at any illegal point.

Parking Lot and Drop-Off/Pick-Up Safety Reminders

The parking lot is for staff only; there is no parking for volunteers or visitors before or during the school day. There is limited parking around the school, so please plan enough time to locate parking and read street signs carefully.

Any cars that are double parked, illegally blocking fire lanes, or illegally parked in handicapped spots will be towed at the owner's expense. Any cars not identified as staff cars parked in the lot will be towed at the owner's expense. The only exception is temporarily during construction, because there is no pick-up lane, cars may park for 10 minutes at dismissal time only. Cars parked before or during the school day will be towed. For special school events there may be parking on the playground.

The following Parking Lot Policies and Expectations are shared with parents:

The purpose of these policies is to help ensure students entering and exiting campus are safe. Thank you for supporting vehicular safety during drop-off and pick-up.

- Parking in the staff parking lot is for staff only before and during school.
- Parents who want to park and walk their child to school must park in the neighborhood.
- There is no parking in the staff parking lot for parent volunteers or visitors.
- We have approximately 100 staff members and all spots in the staff parking lot are reserved for staff. Some staff arrive at different times of the day, and the spots are reserved for them so that staff can attend campus to instruct our students.
- Non-staff cars temporarily parking and reversing in the lot during drop-off is dangerous for those students walking to campus through the lot, holds up traffic, and impedes school staff from arriving to campus on-time to instruct our students.
- Cars without a staff permit that are parked in the lot, or cars that are left unattended, will be ticketed and/or towed.
- For after school evening program pick-up (CREST, RAS Boys and Girls Club, SAP) parents may park in the staff parking lot and use their key cards to pick-up their child.
- For some evening events parking may be available in the staff parking lot (refer to the school communications regarding the event).
- For special events, parking may be available on the big yard, and/or parking restrictions in the surrounding neighborhood may be lifted.
- The parking lot before and during school is for staff parking only. Before and during the school day visitors and volunteers may park in the surrounding neighborhood.
- Non-staff parked in the staff lot at any time before/during the school day will be ticketed/towed.
- 1st-5th students walking to school may use the Arizona Gate. TK/K students walking to school may enter via the PreK/TK/K Gate near the front office.
- Please walk bikes, scooters, and skateboards when in the parking lot and on campus. Students should bring locks to lock their items to the bike stalls.
- Use appropriate and positive language and behavior when interacting with the staff, other parents, and students. The SMMUSD Code of Conduct and McKinley Civility Policy applies during drop-off and pick-up as well as during the school day and at school events.

Staff will provide reminders of these policies. Thank you for your understanding and support.

Bicycle, Skateboard & Scooter Policy

Helmets are mandatory for children riding their bikes, skateboards or scooters to school. We have bike racks located by both playgrounds. Locks are required and students must lock their own bikes, skateboards or scooters to the rack; they cannot be left in the classrooms, hallways or school office. Always walk bicycles, skateboards or scooters on school grounds.

Dogs on Campus

Dogs are not allowed on campus at any time, even when they are being held or on a leash. Tying dogs to school perimeter fences whether attended or unattended is also not permitted.

Heat Days, Rainy Days, and Fire/Smoke Days

When the outdoor temperature is very high, 82-92 degrees and above, we implement inclement weather protocol. All campus facilities have HVAC, air conditioning and heat. However other strategies are also implemented as needed:

- Open windows upon arrival.
- Utilize portable, ceiling and other installed fans.
- Keep classroom lights off, and heat generating appliances off.
- Share cool spaces with colleagues.
- Utilize cooler indoor campus spaces such as libraries, multi-purpose rooms and other common spaces as alternate locations for outdoor activities.
- Encourage students to wear cool clothing.
- Encourage students to bring water bottles to school.
- Ensure student access to water and encourage students stay hydrated.
- Monitor students and watch for adverse effects from the heat and seek help from the school nurse or health office specialist for students or staff members who display symptoms of dehydration, heat exhaustion or other health concerns.
- Minimize exerting activities and ensure that there is a post PE cool down period of at least ten (10) minutes prior to returning to the classroom following any strenuous activity in the warm weather. PE activities will be indoors, and will minimize the amount of movement appropriately for the temperature and space.
- Recess and lunch will be indoors.
- All instruction continues as normal.

On extremely hot days SMMUSD will blast information about whether or not a minimum day is going to be called, or if school will be canceled. It is always at the parents' discretion as to whether or not to pick up their child from school, or keep them home, in the case of an inclement weather day. However, the absences will be marked Unexcused unless noted by SMMUSD that they will be marked as Excused.

On rainy days, students have recess and lunch indoors. PE activities will be indoors, and activities will be modified appropriately for the space. All instruction continues as normal. We recommend that your child wear rain boots, and bring an umbrella, as they may walk outside for brief periods of time to go to the restroom or transition between classes. Similarly, please ensure that on rainy or cold days students dress appropriately with a coat or other cold-weather attire. Please be aware that there is not a grace period on rainy days; students who arrive after 8:30am are marked tardy so please plan accordingly.

On days where there is poor air quality due to smoke from a fire or other reason, students have recess and lunch indoors. PE activities will be indoors, and activities will be modified appropriately for the space. All instruction continues as normal. In extreme cases the district and/or school will inform you if it will be a minimum day or if school is canceled.

Aeries Parent Portal

SMMUSD uses Aeries as our Student Information System (SIS). At the elementary school level, the Aeries Parent Portal provides access to your student's data such as student attendance and state assessment test results. You can also check contact phone numbers and emails used for regular communications and in case of an emergency.

Assessments include:

- California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)
- English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC)

The following tutorial documents and videos are provided to guide access for the Aeries Parent Portal

Aeries Parent Portal: [Logging on and Attendance \(Video\)](#)

Aeries Parent Portal: [Accessing state test scores \(Video\)](#)

[Aeries Parent Portal Guide \(Document\)](#)

Link to the Aeries Parent Portal: <https://santamonicamalibu.aeries.net/Student/LoginParent.aspx>

Access the [Aeries Parent Portal](#) using your **parent email address**, not your child's account. If you have never accessed the portal or have forgotten your password, select "**Forgot Password,**" enter the parent email address on file, and follow the instructions.

Please contact the office if you have questions or challenges accessing the Aeries Parent Portal.

Emergency Information

Each year, families must complete **Data Confirmation through the Aeries Parent Portal**. This online process replaces the former First Day Packet and emergency card. It is the only way to confirm your contact information and provide the school with current emergency contacts and authorized pickup information for the school year. Please complete Data Confirmation as soon as it becomes available.

Please review your information carefully and update it whenever an address, telephone number, email address, emergency contact, or authorized pickup person changes. If you need assistance accessing your account or updating your information, contact the school office.

Please make sure the contact information is accurate and kept current throughout the year. It is also important that families list several other emergency contacts who are authorized to communicate with the school and/or pick up the child in the case of an emergency. Advise the office immediately if your addresses or phone numbers change.

Please note: Any custody agreements or orders that affect who may pick up your child must be on file at the school office.

Emergency Drills

Drills are conducted monthly during the school year so that students and staff are prepared to deal effectively

with emergencies. These include:

- Fire- A fire alarm or announcement over the loud speaker will occur. Evacuate to the assembly area on the grass or other safe place. Wait for all clear from emergency services and admin. Pick-up protocol may go into effect.
- Earthquake- Drop, cover, and hold. When the ground stops shaking quickly exit the building and take a safe route to the grass assembly area or other safe meeting location. Search and rescue and pick-up protocol may go into effect.
- Shelter-in-place- A Shelter-in-Place is when the threat is outside of the campus, so we stay inside but talking and instruction can continue. Follow all staff directions and wait for all clear from emergency services and admin.
- Lockdown- A Lockdown is when there is an unsafe threat on campus, so we immediately get inside, hide, and stay quiet, or escape from a threat to a safe location. Follow all staff directions and wait for all clear from emergency services and admin. Pick-up protocol goes into effect.

If parents or visitors are on campus during an emergency drill, they are expected to evacuate along with the students; staff must account for all persons on campus.

The school has a Comprehensive School Safety Plan (CSSP) that is updated and adopted annually by the School Site Council. The CSSP helps staff know their roles and the procedures for a variety of emergencies. The CSSP is available for viewing in the office. SMMUSD also has a CSSP that is available for viewing at our school and district websites. McKinley has emergency supplies for emergency situations located in the nurse's office, red backpacks in classrooms and all buildings where children may be sheltered, and in a large emergency supplies bin on the playground.

Emergency Communication

In the case of an emergency we will blast information via voice, email, and/or push notification.

SMMUSD uses **ParentSquare** as its primary communication platform for district, school, and classroom messages. Families can receive announcements, emergency alerts, attendance notices, schedule changes, teacher updates, event information, forms, and permission slips through email, text message, or the ParentSquare mobile app.

Please remain subscribed to ParentSquare so you do not miss important or time-sensitive information. If you prefer fewer messages, adjust your notification settings to receive non-urgent communications instantly or as a daily digest rather than unsubscribing. Emergency alerts may be sent through all available channels, including email, text, app notification, and telephone.

ParentSquare is connected to your **Aeries Parent Portal** account. Families should keep their telephone numbers, email addresses, emergency contacts, and authorized pickup information current in Aeries. If you need help accessing Aeries or updating your email address, please contact the school office.

We strongly recommend downloading the free **ParentSquare mobile app** from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store. The app allows families to receive push notifications, read messages, communicate directly with teachers and staff, sign forms, view events, and select a preferred language.

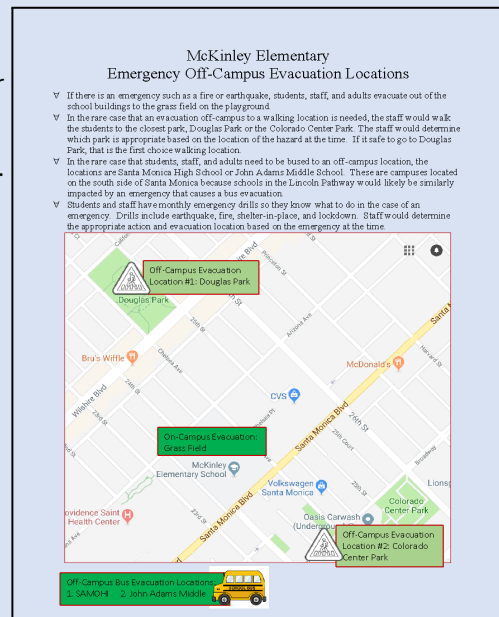
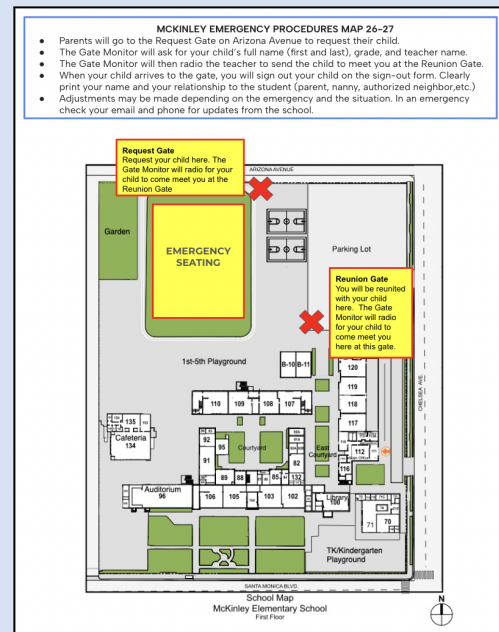
You may access ParentSquare through the Aeries Parent Portal or log in through the app using the email address associated with your Aeries account.

Emergency Pick-Up Protocol

In the case of an actual emergency, emergency pick-up protocol will go into effect in order to ensure the safe dismissal and pick-up of students. Please follow the following procedures:

1. After an emergency, students will be escorted to the emergency assembly area, located on the grass field.
2. Please do not come to the campus until directed to do so via phone blast, email blast, or other emergency communication. It is important parents stay safe, until emergency services have authorized dismissal procedures.
3. Stay off the telephone. Communicating with the school via telephone after a disaster may prove difficult and could delay emergency communications.
4. When arriving at school, parents or other designated adults should report to the Request Gates at the Arizona Gate, where you will request your child from staff. All other gates/entrances will be locked. Have your photo ID ready. Children will only be released to people authorized on the emergency card and who have their ID.
5. If the parent/guardian/designee is unable to pick up their child following the emergency disaster, the student will remain at school under the supervision of school staff until their arrival.

Please be calm and patient during the pick-up process, as we work together to ensure the safety of our children. The school has ample emergency supplies, and the students and staff have practiced so everyone knows what to do in an emergency.



Other General Policies and Procedures

Student Class Placement

Planning for fall student classroom assignments is done by school staff beginning in the previous spring. Class formation is a complex and thoughtful process. Our primary goal is to create academically and socially balanced classes that meet the requirements of gender equity, ethnic diversity, behavior needs, leadership, special needs and parental support while providing a nurturing classroom community where your child can grow academically and socially. All McKinley teachers are highly qualified excellent educators.

A parent input form is sent home in the spring. Parents are invited to complete this form and share information about their child. When completing a Parent Input Form, please keep in mind that requests for specific teachers are not permitted. All McKinley teachers are highly qualified and can meet the needs of all students. If an older sibling had a teacher, and the family would prefer to not have that teacher again, this will be considered by the administration. The same courtesy is extended to teaching staff. Siblings are not guaranteed to have their sibling's previous teacher.

Requests for changes in class placement will not be accepted. If you have any concerns about your child within the first three weeks of school, please do not call the office and ask for a change of placement or a meeting with an administrator. Please contact your child's teacher directly to set up a parent teacher conference to try and resolve your concerns. Once three weeks have passed, and you have had a parent/ teacher conference, if you still have concerns, you may contact an administrator to arrange a meeting with administration, yourself, and your child's teacher to discuss the matter further. Most initial concerns work themselves out as children make friends and develop relationships with their new teachers.

Messages and Deliveries to Students

Every effort is made not to interrupt instructional time. Phone calls are not transferred to classrooms during the school day. If it is an emergency please contact the office and staff will relay the message. Lunch deliveries for children should be dropped off at the office where they can be picked up by the child at an appropriate time.

Musical Instruments

Students must remember to bring their instrument to school. Students will not be permitted to call home to request an instrument be dropped off, and forgotten instruments are not accepted for delivery. This is because 4th/5th grade students are learning responsibility and forgetting their instrument will give them the opportunity to learn from their mistake and remember it next time.

Requesting Items from Classrooms

If students leave behind clothing, lunchboxes, instruments, or other items in classroom, the students may pick it up the next school day. School staff will not go after school to retrieve items for children. Classrooms are locked at dismissal time, and teachers are utilizing the time to meet and plan and staff are doing their professional duties. Like with musical instruments, children may take this as a learning opportunity to remember their items next time.

Siblings in Performances

Children are not permitted to be removed from class to attend siblings' school performances during school hours. If performances are after school hours, they are open for all to attend.

Lost and Found

Please be sure to label all of your child's belongings. Unclaimed items are gathered and put outside of the Main Office. Unclaimed items are donated to local charities at the end of every month. The custodians and office staff will not unlock classroom doors if items are left in the classroom. Students will need to retrieve any forgotten items the next school day during class-time.

Items Brought from Home

Children should not bring valuable personal items to school. This includes money. If a child needs to bring money for lunch, pictures, the book fair, or some other obligation, we suggest that it be sealed in an envelope marked with the child's name, room number, the amount and the purpose. Most teachers, especially in the primary grades, will hold the envelopes for children until they are needed.

Toys, electronic games, trading cards, yo-yos, sports balls, dangerous objects, matches, lighters, toy guns, toy knives or any other look-alike weapons are not allowed at school. "Sharpies" permanent markers are not allowed at school. They are not considered a "school supply." These items may be confiscated.

Weapons of any kind are prohibited. Action will be taken for possession or use of weapons according to the SMMUSD Board Policy and Ed Code, which includes police notification and suspension.

Cell Phones and Electronics

Students are not permitted to have cell phones on campus. If it is an emergency, students can go to the main office and call home. Other personal electronics from home such as smart-watches, iPads, Kindles etc. are not permitted on campus. McKinley is not responsible for lost or stolen items. If a student uses their cell phone or smartwatch during school hours, it will be confiscated and held until the end of the school day and must be picked up by a parent. In no event or circumstance, will the district or its staff be held responsible or liable for the loss, theft or damage to any such device.

Invitation Policy (Birthdays/Non-school related events)

Please take care of invitations for birthday parties, play dates, etc., outside of school (even if the whole class is invited). We are unable to send them home in student folders or student cubbies. When having a large birthday we encourage students to invite the whole class to parties so individual students are not left out.

The infographic is titled "SMMUSD" with the full name "SANTA MONICA MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT" below it. The main heading is "Mobile Communication Devices" with a sub-heading "Implementation starting on Nov.3, 2025". It is divided into three sections: "Elementary K-5", "Middle School (6-8)", and "High School (Grades 9-12)". Each section contains rules about when devices can or cannot be used, accompanied by icons of the devices. The High School section includes a list of circumstances where device use is permitted.

SMMUSD
SANTA MONICA MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mobile Communication Devices
Implementation starting on Nov.3, 2025

Elementary K-5

May NOT use cell phones, smartphones, smart watches, or other mobile communication devices on campus.

Devices must be turned off and placed in students' bag packs during the school day. Students may use phones located in the school office.

Middle School (6-8)

May NOT use cell phones, smartphones, smart watches, or other mobile communication devices on campus.

Devices must be turned off and placed in pouches during the school day. Students may use phones located in the school office.

High School (Grades 9-12)

Mobile communication devices must be turned off during instructional time.

Students may use a mobile communication device in the following circumstances:

- In case of an emergency, or response to a perceived threat of danger.
- When a teacher or administrator grants permission.
- When an authorized licensed physician determines that the possession or use is necessary.
- When the possession or use is required by the student's individualized education program.

Smartphones and other mobile communication devices shall not be used in any manner which infringes on the privacy rights of any other person.

Celebrating Birthdays at School

Parents who want to drop off a treat for their child to celebrate their birthday with their class, may do so during the last 15 minutes of the school day so as to not disrupt instruction. We also encourage non-food related treats such as a read aloud, or gift of a book.

Private School Recommendations

Some of our students choose to attend private school at different stages in their school career. We wish them the best in their new academic setting, but school staff do not provide recommendations. We are confident that over the years the schools' admissions committees have developed an effective screening process that allows them to identify students with characteristics that best fit their educational philosophy and academic standards. Our office can provide you or the school with any needed school records.

Dress Code

The purpose of McKinley's dress code is to support a safe, inclusive learning environment. Students should wear clothing and footwear that allow them to participate safely and comfortably in classroom activities, recess, and physical education.

Clothing, jewelry, and accessories may not:

- Promote profanity, violence, drugs, alcohol, hate, discrimination, or harassment
- Demean or target a person or group based on identity
- Reveal private areas of the body
- Create a safety concern or substantially disrupt learning

Headwear is permitted unless it interferes with safety, identification, or instruction. Religious and culturally significant clothing and headwear are always permitted. These expectations will be applied consistently and without regard to a student's gender, gender identity, gender expression, body type, race, culture, religion, or disability.

For safety, shoes must fully enclose the heel, toe, and sides and must be worn at all times on campus. Flip-flops, house slippers, sandals, shoes with retractable wheels, and motorized footwear are not permitted. If a student arrives without safe footwear, the family will be contacted to provide appropriate shoes. Reasonable accommodations will be made for medical, disability-related, religious, or cultural needs.

Free School Guarantee

General Statement

Students enrolled in *McKinley Elementary* are not required to pay any fee, deposit, or other charge for participation in an educational activity offered by the school or the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, except as authorized by law and consistent with the California constitution and *Hartzell v. Connell* (1984) 35 Cal.3d 899. Donations are sought and accepted for various activities and supplies, and are at times critical to the continued success of classes and activities, but donations are always voluntary, and no child will be denied the right to fully and meaningfully participate in any activity because he/she has not donated money or supplies. For more information, go to <http://www.smmusd.org>.

Donations of Supplies and Classroom Wish Lists

State law requires us to provide a public education free of charge. Subject to certain limited exceptions, the right to a free public education means we cannot require students or their families to purchase supplies or pay a security deposit for access to supplies. *McKinley Elementary* will provide all necessary supplies for your child to have a quality educational experience. However, many parents/guardians choose the option of purchasing their own supplies, not only for use at home, but for their child to use in the classroom. These supplies are not required, and full participation in the course does not require the purchase of any of these materials.

Additionally, teachers are often asked whether parents/guardians may donate supplies and other items for use in the classroom, and the answer is yes – we are always appreciative of donations, but donations are always voluntary, and no child will be denied the right to fully and meaningfully participate in any activity because he/she has not donated money or supplies. You may choose to assist the class by purchasing from among the following supplies for use in the classroom. Any donations are greatly appreciated. For more information, go to <http://www.smmusd.org>.

Field Trips

The PTA donates funds to cover the cost of some field trip buses for each grade level. At times parents may be asked to donate to cover the cost of the field trip. Payment for the trip must be submitted under the field trip permission form by the due date written on the form. Under state law and SMMUSD policy, a field trip is not authorized if any student would be excluded from participation because of a lack of sufficient funds. Consistent with the “free school guarantee” and applicable law, no child will be denied participation in the field trip because of an inability to pay the cost of the field trip. If not enough funds are raised to cover the cost of a trip, then the trip will not occur and donations will be refunded. If parents have any questions or concerns about the cost of/payment of a trip, please feel free to contact me immediately.

Behavior Policies and Standards

At McKinley, every student, staff member, and family has the right to feel safe, valued, respected, and included. We work together to create a caring community where students can learn, build positive relationships, make mistakes, repair harm, and grow.

We do not tolerate bullying, harassment, discrimination, threats, intimidation, physical aggression, or language and behavior that demean others. This includes conduct related to a person's race or ethnicity, nationality, religion, language, immigration status, family structure, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, physical appearance, body size, disability, neurodiversity, academic or athletic ability, or any other personal characteristic.

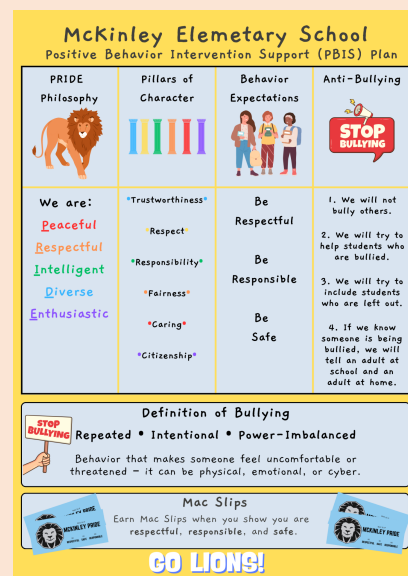
Students are encouraged to seek help whenever they feel unsafe, are worried about someone else, or are unable to resolve a problem. They may speak with a teacher, administrator, counselor, campus supervisor, or any trusted adult at school. Families should also contact the classroom teacher or school administration when they have a concern.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

At McKinley, we believe behavior is learned and that every student can grow with clear expectations, explicit teaching, positive relationships, and appropriate support. Students, staff, and families all have the right to a safe, welcoming, and inclusive learning environment where they feel valued and experience a strong sense of belonging.

Our staff members model and teach schoolwide expectations, recognize students' strengths and growth, and respond to behavioral needs with developmentally appropriate, restorative, and supportive practices. Our goal is to help students build self-awareness, make responsible choices, repair harm, and contribute positively to their community.

This chart of our behavior plan and expectations posted throughout the school.



PRIDE Philosophy

McKinley's PRIDE philosophy guides how students and adults learn, work, and care for one another:

- **Peaceful:** Act safely and kindly and consider the well-being of others.
- **Respectful:** Show respect for yourself, other people, and property.
- **Intelligent:** Be prepared, curious, and focused on learning.
- **Diverse:** Value and celebrate the cultures, identities, strengths, experiences, and perspectives within our community.
- **Enthusiastic:** Participate fully and give your best effort in learning and behavior.

These expectations are explicitly taught, modeled, practiced, and reviewed throughout the year in classrooms, common areas, community meetings, assemblies, and school communications.

Pillars of Character

McKinley uses six character pillars—**trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship**—to help students reflect on their choices, strengthen relationships, and contribute positively to their communities. Each month, the school focuses on one pillar through classroom conversations and our Schoolwide Shared Reading Experience. Every class reads and reflects on a book connected to the month's pillar and considers how the value can guide students' actions at school, at home, and in the broader community. At the end of the month, a grade level leads a schoolwide assembly where students teach their peers, staff, and families about the featured pillar.

Behavior Expectations

McKinley has three schoolwide behavior expectations that support a safe, inclusive, and productive learning environment:

- **Be Safe**
- **Be Respectful**
- **Be Responsible**

These expectations are explicitly taught, modeled, practiced, and reinforced throughout the year. They apply in classrooms, shared spaces, on the playground, during school activities, and in students' interactions with others.

Bullying Prevention

McKinley uses a schoolwide approach to prevent bullying and create a safe, positive environment where students can learn.

The goals of our bullying-prevention efforts are to:

- Reduce bullying
- Prevent bullying from occurring
- Strengthen relationships among students

All adults at McKinley share responsibility for supervising students and intervening when they suspect or witness bullying. Our approach supports all students, including students who experience bullying, students who engage in bullying behavior, and students who witness it.

McKinley classrooms conduct Morning and Community Meetings. During these circle discussions, students build relationships and reflect on the Social Justice Standards, social-emotional skills, and topics of importance or concern.

Bullying is harmful behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance and is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. It may be physical, verbal, social, emotional, or electronic. An isolated or accidental incident may not meet the definition of bullying, but it is still taken seriously and addressed.

It is important to understand the difference between rude, mean, and bullying behavior:

Rude: Someone says or does something unintentionally hurtful.

Mean: Someone says or does something intentionally hurtful.

Bullying: Someone repeatedly engages in harmful behavior—or the behavior has the potential to be repeated—and there is a real or perceived imbalance of power.

McKinley's anti-bullying expectations are:

1. We will not bully others.
2. We will help students who are being bullied.
3. We will include students who are being left out.
4. If we know someone is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

Positive Reinforcement

MAC Slips- Student positive behavior is reinforced with MAC slips. Whenever students are modeling appropriate behavior, the pillars of character, or the PRIDE philosophy, they will be awarded a MAC slip. Students will then enter their MAC slip into a drawing. One winner will be selected from each grade level and have their name announced on the loud speaker each Friday, or at the school wide assembly. These students will have their picture taken and posted in the main office, and will receive a prize.

School wide Assemblies- Schoolwide assemblies are generally held on the last Friday of each month at 8:30 a.m. on the kindergarten yard. Families are welcome to attend. Assemblies build community, celebrate student learning and leadership, reinforce our shared values, promote school spirit, and provide important school updates.

Classroom positive reinforcement systems. Teachers use developmentally appropriate practices to recognize students' effort, growth, positive choices, and contributions to the classroom community. Teachers will share their classroom expectations and support systems with families at Back-to-School Night.

Spirit- McKinley's colors are blue and gold, and our mascot is Mac the Lion. Every Friday is Spirit Day. Students are invited to show their McKinley PRIDE by wearing McKinley spirit wear or blue and gold.

Social-Emotional Learning

McKinley supports the whole child by explicitly teaching the social-emotional and behavioral skills students need to understand themselves, build healthy relationships, manage challenges, and contribute positively to their communities.

Responsive Classroom: Responsive Classroom is a student-centered, research-based approach that helps create safe, joyful, and engaging learning communities. Teachers use Morning and Community Meetings, positive teacher language, interactive modeling, reflection, and logical consequences to build relationships and support student learning.

Second Step: McKinley uses the Second Step social-emotional learning curriculum schoolwide. Through developmentally appropriate lessons, students learn skills related to empathy, emotional regulation, problem-solving, communication, and healthy relationships.

Restorative Practices: Restorative practices focus on building community, strengthening relationships, and repairing harm. Practices range from informal conversations and community-building circles to facilitated restorative conferences. When appropriate, students are supported in understanding the impact of their actions, listening to the perspectives of others, taking responsibility, and identifying meaningful ways to repair harm. Participation in a restorative conversation will not be required when it would be unsafe, inappropriate, or unwelcome to the person harmed.

Mindfulness and Regulation: Students learn to recognize their thoughts, feelings, and physical responses and practice strategies for managing strong emotions safely. Every classroom has a calming corner or regulation space where students can use developmentally appropriate tools and strategies to regain regulation and return to learning. These spaces are supportive—not punitive—and help students build independence and self-awareness.

Social Justice Standards: Classroom conversations and learning experiences help students develop a positive sense of identity, appreciate diversity, recognize unfairness, and take action to create a more inclusive and equitable community.

Additional Resources

- [Responsive Classroom](#)
- [Restorative Justice Video from PBS](#)

Progressive Discipline System

Multi-Tiered System of Support

McKinley uses a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to provide increasing levels of behavioral and social-emotional support based on each student's needs.

Tier 1: Support for All Students

All students receive clear expectations, explicit teaching, positive recognition, and opportunities to develop social-emotional skills. Tier 1 practices include:

- teaching, modeling, and practicing schoolwide and classroom expectations;
- Morning and Community Meetings;
- social-emotional learning and mindfulness;
- Responsive Classroom practices and regulation spaces;
- restorative conversations and community-building circles;
- MAC slips and other forms of positive recognition; and
- schoolwide activities that promote belonging, inclusion, leadership, and community.

Tier 2: Targeted Support

Some students benefit from additional, short-term support focused on a particular skill or need. Tier 2 support may include:

- increased check-ins, prompting, visual supports, or transition assistance;
- Check-In/Check-Out with a designated staff member;
- a counseling or social-skills group;
- targeted instruction in communication, coping, problem-solving, or emotional regulation;
- consultation with the counselor, psychologist, case manager, occupational therapist, or another support provider;
- a targeted behavior-support plan;
- restorative circles or facilitated problem-solving when appropriate; and
- increased communication and collaboration with the family.

Tier 3: Individualized Support

A smaller number of students may need intensive, individualized, and coordinated support. Tier 3 support may include:

- an individualized behavior-intervention or safety plan;
- frequent monitoring and adjustment of supports;
- coordinated planning among the family, teacher, administrator, counselor, psychologist, special education staff, and other service providers;
- a Student Success Team meeting;
- consideration of an evaluation for an IEP or Section 504 Plan when appropriate; and
- individualized behavioral, counseling, mental-health, or community-based services.

Responding to Behavioral Incidents

When a behavioral incident occurs, staff gather information from the students and adults involved and consider the broader context. The response is based on the student's age and individual needs, the nature and severity of the behavior, its impact on others, prior incidents, and the supports already provided.

The purpose of a response or consequence is to protect safety, stop harmful behavior, teach needed skills, repair harm, and reduce the likelihood that the behavior will happen again. Responses may include reteaching expectations, a student reflection or conference, a brief break to regain regulation, a restorative conversation, family communication, increased support, a logical consequence connected to the behavior, or disciplinary action consistent with district policy and California law.

Teachers and administrators protect student privacy and cannot share another child's disciplinary information, services, or consequences with other families.

Communicating Expectations

McKinley's expectations are taught and reinforced throughout the year. They are:

- introduced and reviewed by teachers and administrators;
- posted in classrooms and shared spaces;
- reinforced during announcements, Morning and Community Meetings, and schoolwide assemblies; and
- included in the Family Handbook so families can review them with their children.

Elementary students are continually learning and growing. We appreciate families partnering with us to reinforce school expectations, encourage children to seek help, and support students in reflecting, repairing harm, and moving forward successfully.

Suspensions and Expulsions

McKinley's behavior-support system helps students resolve most concerns before they reach the point of suspension from a classroom or from school. Whenever possible, we use positive behavioral supports, restorative practices, counseling, family collaboration, and other interventions that allow students to remain in school and continue learning.

However, serious behaviors identified in California Education Code 48900 may result in suspension from school by an administrator or from a classroom by a teacher. Depending on the student's age, the seriousness of the incident, and the circumstances, suspension may occur after other interventions have been attempted or, in serious situations, after a first offense. Disruption or willful defiance is not grounds for suspension from school or expulsion.

Before determining whether a suspension is appropriate, an administrator investigates the incident, gives the student an opportunity to explain what happened, and considers the student's needs, the impact of the behavior, prior incidents, and supports already provided. The school contacts the family, explains the reason and length of the suspension, and holds a conference when required or appropriate. During an out-of-school

suspension, the student may not return to campus or participate in school activities unless authorized by the administration. Families may request assignments when a suspension lasts two or more school days.

When the student returns, staff help the student reconnect with the school community, repair harm when appropriate, and identify strategies for moving forward successfully. Students with IEPs or Section 504 Plans receive all protections required by law and district policy.

Expulsion is reserved for the most serious circumstances. A principal may recommend expulsion, but it is a district-level decision that may occur only through the required due-process procedures. Complete information is available in SMMUSD Administrative Regulations 5144, 5144.1, and 5144.2.

Disruption/ Civility Policy

Adults are role models for students, and the manner in which we interact with one another is critical to cultivating and maintaining a mutually respectful and effective intellectual environment that is safe, civil, and free from disruptions. All adult members of the school community (parents, visitors, and staff) are expected to uphold the same policies and procedures as the students. McKinley Elementary encourages positive communication and prohibits volatile, hostile, or aggressive actions. It is expected that communication in all forms, and at all times, whether verbal, non-verbal, or written (including email), will be in a professional and courteous manner. This policy is not intended to deprive any person of their right to freedom of expression; the intent is to maintain, to the extent possible and reasonable, a safe, harassment-free workplace for our students and staff, and a safe, harassment-free environment in which parents and community members can participate in school functions.

Any individual who disrupts or threatens to disrupt school/office operations; threatens the health and safety of others; willfully causes property damage; uses loud and/or offensive language which could provoke a violent reaction; harasses with frequent and abusive emails; or who has otherwise established a continued pattern of unauthorized entry on school property, will be directed by the Principal or designee to cease the behavior and the offending person may be directed to leave the campus promptly. (Ed Code 44811, Penal Codes 415.5 and 626.7, and BP 3515.2)

This policy promotes mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct among school employees, parents and the public. Thank you for your support and cooperation in this matter.

SMMUSD Code of Conduct

Santa Monica–Malibu Unified School District is committed to ensuring a safe, secure, and respectful environment for everyone—students, employees, families, and visitors. It is our expectation that all individuals will demonstrate civil and responsible behavior while on our premises.

We expressly prohibit:

- Abusive language, including threats and slurs
- Sexual harassment
- Physical assault
- Weapons

To maintain a safe, secure, and respectful environment for all, we reserve the right to take appropriate measures to address abusive, disruptive, inappropriate, or aggressive behavior.

Technology Use and Honor Code

Students are expected to uphold the SMMUSD Technology policy (Board Policy 6163.4). The Board of Education intends that technological resources provided by the district be used in a safe, responsible, and proper manner in support of the instructional program and for the advancement of student learning. Please review and uphold the Technology Use Agreement which can be found at <https://www.smmusd.org/Page/3921>

Violation of the Technology Use Agreement, school policies, or behavior expectations may result in possible consequences ranging from a discussion with the student, parent/teacher conference, redoing of an assignment, lower grade on an assignment, referral to an administrator, revocation of technology privileges, and/or suspension.

While at school, all district computers with internet access utilize network security measures and filtering that meet the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requirements to block inappropriate content. While the district provided Chromebooks do go through our filtering even from home, at home families are using their own internet, so additional protection measures may not be in place. Please monitor your child's internet usage to ensure that students do not engage in unauthorized or unlawful online activities. McKinley staff will monitor usage of district student emails and postings and chats on instructional platforms.

Student use of district computers to access social networking sites is prohibited. School emails are also only to be used for school purposes (not for chats or personal communication).

McKinley is Digital Common Sense School Certified. Teachers will provide age-appropriate instruction regarding safe and appropriate behavior on technology devices. Such instruction shall include, but not be limited to, the dangers of posting personal information online, how to report inappropriate or offensive content or threats, and behaviors that constitute cyberbullying.

Gender Identity Inclusivity

California and federal law require schools to afford students equal opportunity and access to the school's facilities, activities, and programs, in a manner that is consistent with each student's gender identity, irrespective of whether the student's gender identity matches the student's assigned sex at birth. Education Code Section 210.7 defines "gender" to include "a person's gender-related appearance and behavior whether or not stereotypically associated with the person's assigned sex at birth."

McKinley has a nondiscriminatory dress code pursuant to district policy. Students shall have the right to dress in accordance with their gender identity, within the constraints of the dress code (see dress code in the Handbook).

Also per Ed Code, a school may maintain separate restroom facilities for male and female students. However, students shall have access to the restroom that corresponds to their gender identity asserted at school. As an alternative, a private "gender neutral" restroom is available in the health office and may be used by any student who desires increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason. The use of such a "gender neutral" restroom or private changing area shall be a matter of choice for a student and no student shall be compelled to use such restroom or changing area.

Students and/or parents may share their pronouns and name that correspond with their gender identity with the teacher and/or office staff so that they may be utilized.

More information about AB 1266 and Education Code sections 220, 234.1; 42 U.S.C. sections 2000d-2000e-17, 2000h-2000h-6 can be found here <https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/di/eo/faqs.asp> and <https://www.glsen.org/blog/ab1266-californias-trans-student-equality-law>

McKinley promotes a safe and inclusive school environment for our LGBTQIA+ students. McKinley staff participate in trainings such as the Out for Safe Schools training and trainings from the PRISM Institute. Staff wear Out for Safe School badges to identify themselves as allies and safe adults to speak with. Themes of LGBTQIA+ and gender inclusivity are discussed using specially designed, developmentally appropriate guided lessons during Olweus Anti-bullying lessons, Morning Meetings, schoolwide Shared Reading Books of the Month, and more. One of our several supplemental enrichment clubs is the 4th/5th Grade Rainbow Club, which is a safe and supportive space for LGBTQ+ students and allies to connect and hold space for each other to create community. More information about Rainbow Clubs can be found at: <https://www.genderinclassrooms.com/rainbow-club>.

In addition to promoting a safe and inclusive climate, we keep in mind that elementary-age children are continuously learning; mistakes are made and children can learn from them and grow and improve. When situations arise we follow our progressive discipline (see Behavior Policies and Standards in the Handbook) and use them as teachable moments so students can discuss, reflect, and grow.

Academics

Library

Teaching library and research skills is a part of the McKinley program. Students have weekly or bi-monthly time in the library with their teachers. A large number of books and other materials are available for student use and are cataloged on a computerized library system. The library checks out reading books, research materials, and textbooks to students at no charge. However, families are responsible for paying for lost or damaged books.

Music

Funded by the school, at McKinley TK-2nd students receive music classes provided by Music Rhapsody. Beautiful diverse songs, singable phrases, repetition with variety, the use of instruments, puppets and visuals all foster the love of music in an exciting and creative environment. It is a program that acknowledges and values the input and creativity of each and every child. Students learn about rhythm, melody, harmony, form and expressive qualities. To reach curriculum goals in these areas, the music teachers use singing, playing, moving, reading, writing, and creating.

3rd-5th grade music instruction is provided by SMMUSD. 3rd grade students are taught General Music once a week for 40 minutes and learn to use Recorders. All 4th and 5th graders choose either choir, string instruments, brass, or wind instruments (Violin, Viola, Cello, Flute, Clarinet, Trumpet, or Trombone) and are taught 40 minute classes twice a week during school hours. The elementary music teachers are credentialed. SMMEF, the Gail Dorin Music Foundation, and the Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation fund the Dream Strings, Dream Winds and Dream Voice programs at our Title I school to support students whose families cannot afford additional music instruction. 4th and 5th students perform at Winter and Spring Concerts, and selected students perform in Honors Choir, Orchestra, and Band at "Stairway of the Stars" concerts. 3rd graders have class performances in

the Spring. Students receive grades in music as they do in other subject areas and behavior expectations are the same in music classes. Parents can help their child remember their instrument and encourage their child to practice at home.

For more information please see our SMMUSD website: <http://www.smmusd.org/vapa/music.html>

Visual Arts

Funded through the Ed Foundation, PS Arts provides visual arts instruction TK-5.

P.S. Arts programs make use of what Howard Gardner calls our multiple intelligences – to stimulate critical thinking, problem solving and higher cognitive processes in arts and academic disciplines. Instruction is tied to the State Visual and Performing Arts Standards. P.S. Arts programs increase classroom teacher's capacity and confidence in the arts, relating to their curriculum, building a wider constituency for the arts in schools and community.

Performing Arts- Theater

Budgeted by the school, PS Arts provides theater instruction TK-5. Lessons are tied to both Performing Arts Standards and ELA and Social Studies Standards, and foster students' listening and speaking skills while developing self-esteem and confidence.

P.S. Arts programs are designed to be inclusive, providing access to the broadest possible range of learners, including English learners, and students with special needs. Above all, P.S. Arts programs aim to foster students' development of knowledge and skills related to school, career, and life success in the 21st century, including creativity, critical thinking, flexibility, accountability, information literacy, the ability to collaborate, and global-mindedness.

To learn more about P.S. Arts, please visit their website:

[P.S. Arts](#)

Science

Students TK-5th receive supplemental STEM instruction from P.S. Science. STEM instruction utilizes the district adopted science curriculum, Amplify, that incorporates hands-on project-based collaborative and experiential learning. The new STEM Lab enhances the science teaching and learning experience.

For more information please see the P.S. Science website:

[P.S. Science](#)

Maker Space Education

TK- 5 students participate in a 15-week series of maker space lessons, guided by the expert facilitators from the Rediscover Center, an arts forward. This collaboration provides hands-on, creative education to our students, allowing them to explore sustainable materials, engage in problem-solving, and develop engineering skills through art and design projects. Aligned with Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards, this program is designed to nurture creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration in a safe and supportive environment.

For more information please see the Rediscover Center website:

[Rediscover Center](#)

Garden Education

McKinley's vibrant Learning Garden is a living classroom where students connect with nature, science, creativity, and themselves. Through hands-on experiences, students develop their senses, plant, tend, and harvest food, observe the cycles of life, and build respect for all living things and responsibility for caring for our planet. TK and kindergarten students participate in weekly garden lessons, while students in grades 1–5 participate every other week. Lessons connect with students' learning in the STEM Lab, science, social studies, and visual arts. Students also participate in garden-inspired art experiences, including observational drawing, nature printing, sculpture, and creating art with natural or recycled materials. More than a place for academic learning, the garden is a peaceful space where students can relax, reflect, read, and experience the beauty of nature.

Physical Education Program

Students in 1st–5th grade receive 125 minutes of physical education a week provided by our Physical Education Teacher and Physical Activities Specialist (PE Coaches). The PE curriculum reflects the California State Physical Education Standards for each grade level. The SPARK Curriculum is used district-wide as a research based physical fitness program tied to the state standards. Below please find a brief list of the games, sports and skills that your child will be experiencing at his or her grade level:

1st and 2nd grade: Tag and aerobic games, muscle strengthening and stretches, dribbling and kicking, dribbling and passing, hula hoop, jump rope, parachute, handball, Frisbee, flag games, striking and volleying, and throwing and catching. 3rd–5th grade: aerobic and cardio games, muscle strengthening and endurance, flexibility, eating smart, personal hygiene, fitness and sports challenges, basketball, hockey, lacrosse, cricket, football, parachute, soccer, softball/baseball, volleyball, handball, dodge ball games, and flag games.

At all grade levels we emphasize sportsmanship, team spirit, accepting personal responsibility, setting and meeting personal goals for fitness, honoring differences, collaboration and cooperation. For more information about the California Physical Education Standards, please visit the CA Department of Education website at: <https://www2.cde.ca.gov/cacs/pe>

Proper Dress Attire

Please see the school's dress code. Students should wear closed toed shoes and appropriate attire so they can participate safely in physical education. All students must wear comfortable athletic shoes that provide foot and/or ankle support. If a student forgets to wear or bring athletic shoes, PE coaches will ask the student to refrain from the active physical education exercises, and instead participate in an alternate activity. Should this occur, a note will be sent home to remind students of proper dress attire.

Sick Notes

All students are expected to participate in PE. If a child needs to sit out from PE and recess due to illness or injury, a sick note from the parents/doctor should be turned in to the nurse's office and to the PE coaches detailing the injury and when they can return to physical activity.

Dance Program

At McKinley, all TK–5 students participate in dance as part of our commitment to educating the whole child. TK–3 students enjoy 10 weeks of instruction with our partners at Soul of Cali Dance, while 4th–5th graders work with the Santa Monica College Dance Department. Dance education supports creativity, self-expression, cultural awareness, and physical well-being, while also fostering collaboration and confidence—skills that serve students far beyond the stage. This year, students will be invited to share their learning and talent by performing at our Multicultural Fair in April.

Technology

Every classroom has a variety of technology for students to use. Two interactive whiteboards, a document camera, and sound system are available in all classrooms. Students in grades 1st-5th have one-to-one Chromebooks, and TK/K have ipads. All TK/Kindergarten-5th grade teachers participate in ongoing professional development in technology integration. Every teacher has a laptop. We also have a 3D Printer for STEM lessons and student projects.

SMMUSD has policies for student use of the Internet and of school technology resources. All students and parents must review and sign this policy annually and failure to respect technology use guidelines may result in suspension of a student's privileges to use school technology resources. The Internet is a valuable educational tool and is used for instructional purposes only at school, always in a purposeful, guided and supervised manner. Unsupervised "surfing", checking e-mail, or checking personal pages in on-line communities are not allowed. A privacy filter is installed on the internet district-wide.

Assessments

Students at McKinley are assessed regularly in a variety of ways to determine their progress towards grade level standards. Assessments help teachers to identify strengths and areas of need, and use the data to guide their instruction. Some assessments include STAR, Fountas and Pinnell Reading Assessments, Interim Assessments, ELPAC for English Learners, Unit Tests, Quizzes, informal observations, rubrics etc.

In the spring of each year, students in grades 3-5 also participate in the required state-testing program the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP). Information is available at CAASPP.org and a practice test is available on this site so parents and students can see the style and format of the test. This end-of-year assessment will assess students' knowledge of the grade level standards, as well as critical thinking skills. Please check the school calendar for testing dates and information. Testing usually occurs in May. Please avoid absences during this time. Individual results on these assessments are mailed home at the end of summer, and school-wide results are posted at caaspp.cde.ca.gov and at caschooldashboard.org

Student Success Team Meetings

McKinley holds regular SST meetings to address parent or teacher concerns regarding a student's academic achievement, social-emotional learning/behavior, and/or attendance. An SST meeting would occur after a parent/teacher conference has already occurred, multiple interventions have been tried, and data has been collected. SSTs are more in-depth parent/teacher conferences with a team utilized to tap into different expertise to support the student. The SST is typically composed of the parent, teacher, another teacher, Literacy Language Interventionist, Special Ed Teacher, School Psychologist, Counselor, and an Administrator. At these meetings the team discusses the student's areas of strengths, areas of growth, student data, strategies/interventions that have been implemented and their effectiveness, and then brainstorms next steps and strategies to support the student. Next steps may include classroom accommodations/modifications, behavior plan, counseling referral, Tier III intervention, referral for assessments etc. Parents or teachers may request an SST by contacting and administrator.

Special Education

Our special education staff includes a School Psychologist, Speech Language Pathologist (SLP), Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, Specialized Academic Instruction (SAI) teachers, and Special Education Day Class Teachers. SMMUSD also has additional special education staff who provide support at multiple sites such as an Adapted PE Specialist and Visual Specialist. Students who qualify for special education services via assessments have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) with specific goals targeted to their areas of need; special education services are tied to those needs and support students in achieving their IEP goals. We have a K-3 SAI teacher and 3-5 SAI teacher who provide individual and small group pull-out instruction or push-in instruction for portions of the day. We also have self-contained special education classroom such as our Life Skills classrooms for students who are working on adaptive living skills, and two Intensive Classrooms with students who are working on more intensive academic instruction. Our special education team collaborates with our general education teachers to support students with special needs as well as all students. If you have questions about special education contact our School Psychologist or your child's teacher.

Counseling Services

McKinley has counseling services available to help parents and children deal with a wide range of behavioral and family situations such as new siblings in the family, divorce, loss of employment, loss of a loved one and many other experienced life changing events. The counseling staff helps with these changes by providing individual and family therapy, consult during high-need or crisis situations, group sessions, and teacher and parent consultations. Teachers may refer children, or parents may request assistance in completing a referral for counseling by calling the office. Counseling services are determined by the counselor(s) and require parent consent. McKinley has a full time school counselor as well as counseling partnerships with St Johns Hospital, Social Emotional Wellness Initiative (SEWI), and local Universities (counseling interns).

The McKinley School Psychologist, Psych Interns, Counselors, and Counseling Interns also support student learning and the climate as a whole with class presentations, parent workshops, and staff Professional Development. They also lead "Lunch Bunch" which are social skills groups during lunchtime where they help to facilitate friendships and play.

English Language Development

McKinley teaches the California State ELD Standards. ELD instruction is both integrated and designated, and embedded within instruction throughout the school day. Teachers utilize specific ELD lessons within the curriculum as well as effective EL instructional strategies. Multilingual Learners take the ELPAC exam annually to measure academic progress. 4th and 5th graders who are considered Long Term English Learners (LTELs) who have not made adequate yearly progress, receive targeted ELD instruction from our Literacy Language Interventionist. McKinley also offers sessions of vocabulary instruction after school for 2nd and 3rd graders with a program called Academic Vocabulary Toolkit.

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

McKinley uses a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to address students' academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs. MTSS is grounded in equity: students receive the level and type of support they need to access learning and thrive.

Teachers use classroom observations, student work, assessments, and other data to identify students' strengths and needs, adjust instruction, and monitor progress. Academic support is organized into three tiers:

Tier 1: Core Instruction for All Students

All students receive high-quality, standards-aligned instruction. Teachers differentiate lessons, materials, groupings, and assignments to respond to students' individual strengths, learning needs, cultures, experiences, and ways of learning.

Tier 2: Targeted Support

Students who need additional academic support may receive targeted, small-group intervention from our part-time Intervention Teacher, Literacy and Language Interventionist, classroom teacher, or another support provider. Intervention may occur during the school day or through a before- or after-school program. Research-based programs and practices, including SIPPS, LLI, and AVT, may be used based on students' identified needs. Progress is monitored regularly so instruction and support can be adjusted.

Tier 3: Intensive Support

Students with more significant or persistent needs may receive frequent, individualized intervention using research-based instructional practices and programs. A collaborative team may develop and monitor an intervention plan with the student's family. When appropriate, the team may consider additional assessments or an evaluation for an IEP or Section 504 Plan.

Families are important members of the support team. Parents and guardians are encouraged to contact their child's teacher with questions about academic progress, differentiation, interventions, or additional support.

High Achievers

Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) is no longer a separately funded categorical program in California. Funding and decisions about services for advanced learners are now determined locally through the Local Control Funding Formula. More information is available from the [California Department of Education](#).

McKinley recognizes that every student has individual strengths, interests, and areas of potential. Advanced learning needs can be found among students of every background, including multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and students who may not demonstrate their abilities through traditional assessments. Our teachers work to recognize students' strengths and provide appropriate challenge, depth, complexity, and opportunities for growth.

Within the classroom, teachers differentiate instruction for students who are ready for additional challenge. This may include:

- extending or modifying assignments to provide greater depth and complexity;

- engaging students in project-based and service-learning experiences;
- providing leadership opportunities;
- encouraging students to make connections across subjects;
- supporting independent inquiry, creativity, and problem-solving; and
- providing opportunities for students to share, explain, and teach their learning to others.

McKinley also provides enrichment in STEM, theater, visual arts, music, physical education, and the Learning Garden. Extracurricular opportunities may include the school newspaper, Dance Team, Green Team, Student Council, and other interest-based clubs and leadership experiences.

Our goal is to ensure that every student—including those who are ready for advanced learning—is appropriately challenged, supported, and encouraged to continue growing.

Site Leadership Team

The SLT is a group of teacher leaders who work together with administration to review data and determine a school focus and develop a site plan. This format of leadership and decision-making taps into teachers' expertise and gives the school the autonomy to make decisions about what works best for our students. Every school has a different site plan based on their own needs. The SLT helps to determine staff Professional Development, and facilitates the use of effective instructional practices. Here at McKinley we have 11 members, who are elected by their colleagues.

- 1 rep from each grade level TK-5
- Teaching and Learning Council (district committee) Leader
- 1 rep from Special Ed
- 1 administrator
- 1 instructional coach

Our School Leadership Team selected Collaborative Conversations as our school focus. See the "About McKinley" section of this handbook for more information about Collaborative Conversations

McKinley staff also have teacher leader resources on campus throughout the school day such as our Math Teacher Leader, Educational Technology Jedi, Union Representatives. Teachers may also serve on a variety of school site staff committees.

In order to grow as life-long learners and ensure exceptional instruction for our students, McKinley teachers receive regular professional development during early-out Wednesdays and on additional days throughout the year. Teachers participate in Faculty Meetings, whole-group Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), grade level PLCs, and professional time.

Homework Policy

Homework is any activity or assignment directed by the teacher to be performed outside the classroom that may include practicing skills learned in class, reading, studying, projects, or completion of assignments. The purpose of homework is to provide students with an opportunity to practice a skill or concept independently, that they have already learned, in order to solidify their understanding.

Homework will be:

- Activities or assignments that students can complete independently.
- Connected to grade level or subject matter curriculum.
- Connected to class instruction.
- Engaging, purposeful and relevant.
- Focused on quality over quantity.
- Carefully constructed as to be completed within a reasonable time allotment.
- Teachers and students should reasonably believe that every student has equal opportunity to complete homework successfully.

Elementary school homework may be given Monday through Thursday. Weekends and holidays are primarily reserved for family time. Students may elect to use the weekends to review materials, make up work, complete projects, and enjoy recreational reading. Per SMMUSD policy, the length of time for homework for each grade level is approximately:

- Kindergarten – 10 minutes daily or 40 minutes per week
- First – 20 minutes daily or 80 minutes per week
- Second – 30 minutes daily or 120 minutes per week
- Third – 40 minutes daily or 160 minutes per week
- Fourth – 50 minutes daily or 200 minutes per week
- Fifth – 60 minutes daily or 240 minutes per week

In addition to the prescribed homework minutes at each grade level, students are expected to read independently or with an adult in any language:

- K-2nd: for a minimum 20 minutes
- 3rd-5th: for a minimum 30 minutes

Teacher Guidelines

- Review and discuss homework in a timely manner.
- Explain homework assignments to the students prior to the assignment. Teachers shall communicate homework assignments in at least one of the following ways: send a packet home, write an assignment on the board, require students to record it, and/or make available through emails, websites or hotlines. The use of a variety of strategies is encouraged.
- Teach techniques that can help students allocate their time wisely, meet their deadlines, and develop good personal study habits.
- Identify the access that students will have to materials for projects and other homework assignments – taking into account affordability, resource materials from the library media center, assistance and tutoring opportunities, and technology resources.
- Communicate with parents to inform them about homework expectations, policies, and procedures.
- Communicate ways in which parents can best assist their children in doing homework independently.
- Communicate with parents at the earliest possible opportunity once the student has demonstrated consistent inability to complete homework.

Parent Guidelines

- Provide a quiet space and basic materials for homework completion.
- Teach techniques that can help children allocate their time wisely, meet their deadlines, and develop good personal study habits.
- Monitor time management and productivity.
- Communicate with teachers at the earliest possible opportunity once the child has demonstrated consistent inability to complete homework. If necessary, parents shall attempt to reach accommodation with their child's teachers regarding homework.

Student Guidelines

- Complete homework as assigned.
- Record homework when assigned in class by the teacher.
- Seek clarification from teachers when unclear about homework.
- Use class time provided for completing class work and/or starting homework.
- Seek assistance from teachers when demonstrating an inability to complete homework.

Teachers and parents shall communicate with each other at the earliest possible opportunity once the student has demonstrated consistent inability to complete homework. Children who demonstrate quality effort and spend sufficient time attempting to complete homework should be stopped when a parent observes that continuing is detrimental to the child's well-being or when the required amount of time is reached (see above). In such cases, parents should draw a line where the student stopped, and sign the paper.

If a child is consistently unable to complete assigned work, the parent should contact the teacher for support and accommodations as necessary. Teachers should also contact parents if a child consistently is unable to complete the assigned work.

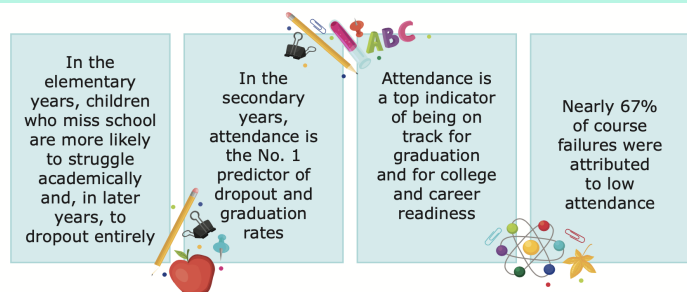
Attendance

Importance of Attendance

- We feel that to get the most out of school, and maximize learning time and learning potential, children need to be in school every day on time.
- Children can make up an assignment but they can't recover what is most valuable: the questions, the activities, the explanations from the teacher and the interactions that bring learning to life.
- Research shows that attendance has an immense impact on student achievement and success.
- Students who attend school are more likely to get better grades, have higher self-esteem, have more friends, and are more likely to attend college and earn higher salaries.
- Students with high rates of absenteeism often have lower grades, miss lessons and fall behind, struggle in classes and need intervention, and are more likely to drop out of school.

- o There are only 180 school days, and 185 non-school days during the year, so each and every school day is crucial.

Please make every effort to ensure that your child attends school each day. Avoid scheduling family trips or scheduling appointments while school is in session. If taking your child for a medical, dental, court appointment etc. please do not keep them out of school all day; bring your child in late or pick them up early so that they can receive some partial instruction.



Although there are times when your child should stay home from school, it's important to keep in mind that missing just a couple of days of school a month can have a severe impact on your child's success. If there are issues preventing your child from regular school attendance, please reach out to your teacher, principal or school staff to discuss any concerns so we can help.

Together we are making a difference!

Absences

If your child is absent, please email mckinley-absence@smmusd.org, or call the absence line (not the teacher) at 310-828-5011 ext. 65121 and leave a message stating:

- Student Name
- Teacher Name
- Date of Absence
- Reason for Absence (be specific and detailed)
- Parent Name

Reasons for absences must be provided within 3 days of the absence; calls or emails after that time will not be accepted, and the absence will be marked as Unexcused. Absences that are not explained by a call or email from a parent or guardian are considered Unexcused Absences. Absences of five or more days due to illness require a doctor's note for re-admission.

Excused Absences are: Illness, medical/dental appointments with a note, religious holidays, and/or bereavement (1 day).

Unexcused Absences are: Unverified absences (no note turned in or no email to the office), vacations, personal days, and/or suspensions.

If your child is absent and you wish to pick up school assignments, call the office before 9:30am to request the assignments. The child's homework may be picked up in the office after school that same day. This applies to classes where assignments are given on a daily basis. Students should have an outside reading book(s) with them each day so that they do not miss independent reading homework. Also, for the upper grades, make sure your child has at least two "study buddies" that they can call for assignments.

Independent Study

If a student is going to be absent for 3+ consecutive days, the student might qualify for Independent Study (IS). Independent Study essentially means that the student will be learning/studying independently; i.e the student will need to complete the same amount of work that the student would have been doing if the student were at school receiving instruction. Therefore, a student would have about 6 hours of classwork/independent-learning for each day absent. So 3 days X 6 hours daily= 18 hours of classwork to be completed for 3 days of IS.

- The parent must request IS from the teacher at least 2 weeks before the absences.
- It is completely at the school's discretion as to whether or not to approve an IS request. Students with poor attendance or behavior or academic concerns will not qualify for IS.
- If the teacher and Principal approves the IS, the parent must pick up an IS Contract/Agreement Form from the office, complete it, and submit it to the teacher at least 1 week before the start of the absences.
- Assigned IS work is due to the teacher by 8:30am the day of the student's return to school. If the work is not turned in at this time, the IS Contract/Agreement will be deemed void, and the absences will be considered "Unexcused."
- If the work is not completed in its entirety, then the student will not receive full credit for the days missed. For example, if a student only completed 2 days of work, the rest of the IS days will be considered "Unexcused Absences."

Please be aware that it is at the school's discretion as to whether or not to approve an IS request. Typically IS is only granted for families who have a catastrophic family situation, emergency, severe health issue, or other emergency or special circumstance. We encourage parents to take vacations or other long trips during Thanksgiving, Winter, Spring, and Summer breaks.

Tardies and Early Outs

- The warning bell to line up is at 8:28am.
- Instruction begins at the 2nd bell at 8:30am.
- Any students arriving after 8:30am will be marked Tardy.
- Three Tardies (or early outs) equals an absence.

It is essential to your child's success that they arrive at school on time. It is disruptive to your child, the teacher, and the rest of the class when a child arrives late. We use every available minute for instruction and late students miss valuable information. Arriving late also prevents students from comfortably settling into the routine of the school day, and it can negatively impact behavior and learning for the rest of the day. Please be considerate of the other students and the teacher, and help your own child get a good start to the day, by being at the line up area by 8:28am.

Students arriving after 8:30am, must come to the office, sign the tardy book, and receive a tardy slip to be admitted to class. This needs to be done before going to their classroom.

When students have appointments and need to leave early, parents should come to the office to pickup and sign out their child. The office will call students down to the office once the parent arrives; students should not wait in the office to be picked up, and similarly parents will not be permitted to go to the classroom.

District Notices, SART, and SARB

SMMUSD and McKinley regularly informs parents about their child's attendance, and expresses the importance of attendance. Attendance and tardy information will be listed on students' report cards, emails will go home asking for reasons for absences, and parents will receive letters from the District and Principal and conferences will occur as needed (see below). Unexcused absences, excessive absences, and excessive tardies/early-outs violate the state's compulsory attendance laws for school-age children. You will receive letters notifying you that you are not in compliance. Failure to demonstrate improved attendance will result in a possible referral to the Student Attendance Review Board (SARB). For families on permit this may mean revocation of an inter-district permit.

Unexcused Absences

- Letter 1: 3+ Unexcused (considered Truant)
- Letter 2: 6+ Unexcused (referred to the Assistant Principal and Attendance Office Specialist for a Student Attendance Review Team (SART) Conference to discuss attendance)
- Letter 3: 9+ Unexcused (considered Habitual Truant- referred to the Student Attendance Review Board (SARB) for a meeting at the SMMUSD office with school district personnel and a Santa Monica District Attorney)

Excused Absences

- Letter 1: 7+ Excused (considered Excessively Excused)
- Letter 2: 14+ Excused (may be referred for a SART and/or SARB conference)

What Parents Can Do to Help Improve Student Attendance

- o Discuss with your child the importance of going to school every day and on time
- o Develop a daily schedule with your child (like going to bed 10 minutes earlier and waking up 10 minutes earlier)
- o Encourage and help your child prepare for school each evening (choose clothes, prepare lunch etc.) so the morning is less stressful
- o Teach your child to set and use their own alarm clock
- o When your child is ready for school on time, remember to let him or her know how much this helps the whole family
- o Don't plan family vacations and non-emergency doctor/dentist appointments for times when your child should be in school

Health and Wellness

Health Office

The Health Office is staffed with a Health Office Specialist daily. A registered Nurse is shared by different school sites, and is on campus at varying times. Our office staff also assists in the Health Office as needed. To reach the Health Office call 310-828-5011 ext. 65113. For more information on Health Services please visit their web site: <https://www.smmusd.org/departments/health-services/school-health-services>

Whenever students are sent to the Health Office, students will have a Teacher-Nurse Referral Form with them. Once care is administered, students are sent back to class or home if necessary. A copy of the Teacher-Nurse Referral Form is sent home with the student. For more serious injuries or illness, parents will receive a call from the Health Office.

Communicable Disease/Illness

If your child will be out of school because of a communicable disease, notify the school immediately. When returning after recovery from a communicable disease, for example, measles, mumps, chicken pox, or strep throat, the child must bring a release slip from a doctor. All children with any communicable disease must be checked through the nurse's office before returning to the classroom. All cases of head lice should be reported to the school nurse. The school nurse or designee will approve your child's return to school after appropriate treatment for head lice. If your child was sent home from school because of a fever, he or she must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Please do not send your child to school if they are experiencing illness symptoms. It is important that students rest, and that we prevent the spread of illness. Absences for illness will be excused.

Immunizations Physical & Dental Exams

When enrolling, the Enrollment Specialist will provide updated information about required immunizations and exams.

Injuries

If a child sustains any type of major injury, e.g. a broken bone, a note from a doctor is required before the child returns to school. Students needing any supportive appliances (crutches, cast, wheelchair, etc.) must also have a written order from the prescribing physician.

Medication

If a child must take medication prescribed by a physician during the regular school day, they will be assisted by the school nurse or other designated school personnel. This includes over the counter medications. Medication will be administered only if there is a written Medication Authorization form completed and signed by the prescribing physician and legal guardian. Medications must be in their original containers with the pharmacy label including the child's name, dosage and frequency. All medications must be kept in the Health office. Students may not have any medications (including over the counter medications, cough drops etc.) in their possession (backpacks included) unless we have written authorization from the doctor and has been provided to our school nurse. Contact the school nurse if there are any adjustments in medications throughout the school year.

If your child has a food allergy and needs an epi-pen, or has other emergency medication such as an inhaler or seizure medication, please provide enough of the medication so that it can be stored in various locations on campus such as the teacher's emergency backpack, child's lunchbox, and the nurse's office.

Cafeteria and Food Policy

Breakfast is served in the school cafeteria from 8:00am to 8:20 am. Lunch is served at specific times for each grade level during the school day. A monthly menu for breakfast and lunch is on McKinley's website.

Breakfast and lunch are free to all students.

Breakfast is a very important meal and all children are welcome to participate in the breakfast program – either regularly or on an as needed basis. This is a valuable time saving option for working families, especially if there is a commute to work involved.

Hot lunch is provided by the cafeteria. McKinley's cafeteria also offers a “fresh from the Farmer's Market salad bar” with the hot lunches. There is also a vegetarian lunch option available; parents wanting this option should contact the teacher who can inform the Cafeteria to save a vegetarian lunch for the child. Milk is available. In case of milk allergy, substitutes are available with a written request from your doctor.

Because of food allergies, and for health reasons, we do not allow children to share food.

Lunches and Snacks from Home

Children may bring their lunches from home. Students may also bring a snack for recess. Please pack appropriate, nutritious foods. Candy, chips, dessert items, “juice” drinks that are less than 50% juice, energy drinks, coffee/caffeine-drinks, and soda drinks are not allowed.

We encourage the use of reusable containers & lunch sacks. Please write the child's name on lunch boxes/bags and bottle in case they are misplaced.

Very occasionally, a parent may deliver lunch to school for their child. Please save this for special occasions and understand that we will not interrupt instructional time to deliver the lunch. The child may pick it up on the way to lunch.

Nut Allergies

Some students may have severe nut allergies. While we cannot prohibit students from bringing nut items to school, we ask that if there is a child with a nut allergy in your child's class, families please avoid packing items with nuts. Also, for any class events, please avoid bringing potluck food items with nuts.

Birthday Celebrations

While many parents like to bring in treats for the class to celebrate their child's birthday, such observances must be coordinated with the classroom teacher and should occur at the end of the school day. If you wish to bring food in for birthday celebrations, please consider bringing healthier food options that meet the SMMUSD Wellness Policy, or consider bringing a non-food item such as a ball for the classroom, art supplies, or a book for the class library.

Before and After School Care

Childcare is run by the District's Child Development Services (CDS) office, by the City of Santa Monica (CREST), and by Boys and Girls Club. For more detailed information and to enroll, please contact these programs directly.

School Age Programs (TK/K students)

The TK-K childcare program is run by the SMMUSD Child Development Services (CDS) Office and offers school site childcare called School Age Programs (SAP). The daily routine includes homework assistance, outdoor and indoor play activities such as organized sports, arts and crafts, storytelling, music, cooking, theme-based projects and a variety of enrichment classes.

School-Age Programs Include:

- Full Time Childcare: Includes before-school care from 7:00 a.m. until the regular school day begins at the first bell, and continues from school dismissal until 6:00 p.m.
- AM Care: Parents who need to drop off their children at school beginning at 7:00 a.m. may choose a morning-only program option. Activities include preparation for the school day, arts and crafts, board games and opportunities for playtime with friends.

To enroll in SAP go to <http://www.smmusd.org/CDS/CREST.html>

Right at School (RAS) (1st and 2nd grade students):

Beginning in 2026-2027 McKinley is offering Right At School as a new after-school program for students in grades 1–2. Right At School provides a play-based enrichment program led by qualified local staff.

Students receive a snack and dedicated homework time while participating in fitness activities and hands-on experiences in STEM, team building, community service, and leadership development. The thematic curriculum is aligned with district standards and designed to keep students active, engaged, and supported while developing the whole child.

To enroll in RAS, go to <https://www.rightatschool.com/districts/santa-monica-malibu-ca/>

CREST (3rd, 4th and 5th grade students):

The City of Santa Monica (CREST) operates the after school childcare program for children in third, fourth, and fifth grade. With adult guidance and supervision, older elementary children exercise more independent judgment in planning and choosing their activities, which include sports, homework assistance and enrichment classes. For more information regarding the Upper CREST program, call the City Youth Office at (310) 458-8540 or 310-828-5011 or <https://www.santamonica.gov/programs/crest>

CREST Enrichment Classes

The City of Santa Monica (CREST) program provides enrichment classes throughout the year on school campuses. Programs vary by school site and season. For more information regarding CREST Enrichment classes, please call the city Youth Office at (310) 458-8540 or <https://www.santamonica.gov/programs/crest>

Boys and Girls Club Sports

The Boys and Girls Club offers sports teams on campus after school. Registration flyers are blasted out in The Lion's Roar, or information can be found at <https://www.smbgc.org>

Playground Club

Santa Monica Boys & Girls Club (SMBGC) Playground Club (formerly Playground Access) is offering on-site supervision after school where students play on the playground from dismissal until 4:30pm M-F for 1st-5th graders. Playground Club will operate at a 25:1 ratio (student:staff). More information can be found at <https://www.smbgc.org/lincoln-main-branch/>

Before/After School Program Procedures

Any students on campus after school must be enrolled in one of the after school programs with CREST, RAS, SAP, Boys and Girls Club, or the school. The students enrolled in these programs go directly there at the end-of-day bell and sign-in to the program. TK/K students are picked up from their classrooms, and 1st-5th walk to their assigned locations. Parents who pick-up from after school programs enter through the coded gates; codes will be provided to parents of those enrolled in the programs.

That program and their staff are in charge of the after school program supervision, safety, and student learning. The programs are run separately from the school, and have different administrative staff. If parents have any questions or concerns with things that occur after school during one of these programs, please contact that program directly.

Parent Involvement

Volunteering

Volunteer Application Process

Before parents can begin volunteering, they must first attend a Volunteer Training. This training is held at the Back to School Nights in the Cafeteria, prior to the start of BTSN. After the training parents will be provided with a Volunteer Application, or they may download it from the website. The completed application must be returned to the office, and clearance given by the school nurse and school administration, prior to volunteering.

In the Volunteer Application is a TB Risk Assessment, which will determine if a TB test is required. The school nurse will contact you if that is the case. The Volunteer Application must be completed every four years.

All volunteers will be cleared through the Megan's Law website.

In order to volunteer at McKinley, parents must have an approved Volunteer Application. Approved applications are valid for 4 years.

Volunteer Policies

All volunteer must follow the SMMUSD Visitor Policy. Volunteers must have prearranged volunteering with the teacher and/or administration, sign in at the main office, and wear a badge at all times. Students have been told to notify staff when they see an adult without a badge. When the volunteer shift ends, volunteers must sign out in the office. This is so we can maintain a safe campus, and so we know who is on campus in the case of an emergency.

Younger siblings are not allowed during volunteer time, field trips, or class parties due to liability issues and so the volunteer can focus fully on volunteer duties.

Cellular phones and other electronic devices should be silenced or turned off when volunteering in the classroom to prevent disruptions to the learning environment.

Volunteering is not time for parent/teacher conferences. If a volunteer needs to speak with the teacher regarding their child, please conclude the volunteering, and later schedule an appointment with the teacher.

Any information heard or seen regarding other students or staff while volunteering is confidential. If you have a concern you may let the teacher know, and they will contact the appropriate people.

The staff parking lot is for staff only. Parents coming to volunteer must find other parking, take public transportation, carpool, or walk to school.

Volunteer Opportunities

Parent help is greatly needed and appreciated. Volunteering supports your child and our school and helps families get to know other.

Parents can volunteer in their child's classroom. Depending on the teacher and grade, teachers may have parent volunteers work with small groups of students, assist with bulletin boards, help with copying, or chaperone field trips. Your child's teacher will have information at Back to School Night about classroom volunteer options.

Also volunteers are crucial to the success of many of our school events. We have numerous family and community events during the school year, and PTA volunteers work with the school to help bring these wonderful events to our students. PTA works with administration to ensure that our school family/community events are:

- Inclusive: Event includes staff, parents/families, and students
- Equitable: Event is accessible to families from all backgrounds and socioeconomic status
- Safe: Event is safe, well-organized, and has supervision
- Purposeful: Event is relevant and meaningful, and ties into student learning and school goals
- Attended: Event has large attendance
- Considerate: Event is understanding and respectful of time involved for those coordinating the event as well as those attending
- Sustainable: Event is sustainable over time

Some of the many events you can get involved in are:

- Back to School Picnic
- Bike it Walk it Days
- Harvest Festival
- Reflections Art Competition
- Campus Beautification Days
- Multicultural Day
- STEM Fair
- Literacy and Art Nights
- Staff Appreciation Week
- 5th Grade Party and Culmination
- Jog-a-thon
- Restaurant Nights and other small fundraisers
- And more!

Classroom Observation Procedures

District Board Policy #1250 has been established to facilitate classroom observations while minimizing distractions and interruptions to learning. The following are the policies and procedures for observations:

- A written request must be submitted to your child's teacher with detailed information regarding the date and time of your requested observation and why you want to observe.
- The above request must be given to the teacher at least 48 hours prior to the requested observation. The teacher will respond within 48 hours to state if the observation request has been approved and to schedule the observation.
- Observations will be scheduled at a time and day which will ensure minimum interruption of the instructional program.
- Observations will be scheduled when an administrator can be present during the observation. An administrator must be present during any observations to ensure student confidentiality and to be available to answer questions.
- Classroom observations are limited to a maximum of 20 minutes.
- No electronic listening or recording device may be used by students or visitors in a classroom without the teacher and Principal's permission.
- If a conference is desired after the observation, an appointment should be set with the teacher during non-instructional time.

McKinley Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

The McKinley Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a great way for parents to get involved in the school community. Parents are a part of McKinley's PRIDE philosophy which guides all aspects of life at McKinley. Just like our students, McKinley parents and staff are: We are: **Peaceful**, **Respectful**, **Intelligent**, **Diverse**, and **Enthusiastic**. McKinley parents and staff work together as a community in service of this core belief. McKinley's Parent Teacher Association (PTA) members are proud to model PRIDE for our students, and are proud to promote a positive school culture and climate for our children through their positive involvement and volunteerism.

The PTA is a non-partisan organization devoted to improving the educational opportunities for all children. The McKinley PTA provides community building events, volunteer assistance and financial support to McKinley school. The McKinley PTA organizes and coordinates events and activities throughout the year, from festivals

and fundraisers to parent education. The McKinley PTA also supports McKinley kids by raising money to fund teacher grants, classroom supplies, field trips, library needs, technology, school beautification, and other needs identified collaboratively by the school administration, PTA Board, and PTA membership. In addition, the McKinley PTA works with other PTAs in our school district to support the Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation, which provides critical funding for staffing, training, and arts instruction at every elementary school in our district.

In addition to a focus on fun and fundraising, McKinley PTA is a strong advocate for every child and a voice at the School Board, the State Legislature and in Washington. All McKinley families are urged to become members of the PTA. Annual dues are very modest and a portion of dues go to our Council, District, State and National PTAs to support legislative efforts to improve- the lives of children and families. The PTA is the oldest and largest child advocacy organization in the United States.

Association meetings are generally held monthly. Topics discussed are matters of importance to all parents. All PTA members have a vote at the meetings and are also eligible to serve on the PTA Executive Board. Please check the school calendar or PTA website calendar for current meeting dates, times, and topics.

For more information see the PTA website at <https://mckinleypta.com/>. You can also sign up for the PTA eblast, and make donations on the website. Thank you for making a positive difference at McKinley and in your child's educational experience!

African-American Family Association (AAFA)

The African-American Family Association (AAFA) is a school-family-community partnership designed to support McKinley's African American students and families. At meetings, parents come together with administration to discuss ways parents can get involved in school, and ways to support our students' learning and school experience. AAFA also assists at school events such as Multicultural Day, and during Black History Month, in order to promote our school philosophy of PRIDE and our valuing of diversity. Please contact our Community Liaison for more information, and view our school calendar for meeting dates.

Special Ed Resource Group

This focus of this group is to provide support to parents of neurodiverse students with IEPs. Parent education topics related to special education will be discussed, and special education staff may be available to answer questions. Please check the school calendar for meeting dates and times, and topics or themes.

English Learners Advisory Council (ELAC)

This group of parents and staff work with the principal and faculty on matters affecting the school's program related to the education of students who are learning English as their second language -- English Language Learners (ELL). Parent education is often featured at the group's meetings. All parents are welcome to attend; the meetings are generally conducted in English and Spanish. Please check the school calendar for current meeting dates and times, and topics or themes.

Site Governance Council

Governance Council, also called the School Site Council, is made up of the principal and elected teachers, staff, and parent representatives. Members serve two year terms. Elections are conducted yearly for vacant

positions. The School Site Council's duties include making decisions about school state and federal budgets, monitoring the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), updating the Comprehensive School Safety Plan (CSSP), and reviewing student achievement and family survey data. All parents are welcome to attend Governance Council meetings. For dates, please refer to the school calendar. Meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the website.

Sustainability and Beautification Committee (SBC)

The Sustainability and Beautification Committee (SBC) is a PTA committee that is comprised of parents and staff. SBC organizes various events such as school beautification days, bike-it-walk-it days, and garden projects. All parents and Staff are welcome and encouraged to attend meetings and volunteer at events. See the school calendar for meeting and event dates.

Donations and Fundraising

Public school education is free. However, donations help our children to have additional opportunities and resources to enhance teaching and learning. The school and your children greatly appreciate any amount that you can give. Big or small, your donation positively impacts your child's education. Donations are tax deductible. Contribution amounts are confidential and not disclosed. Many employers will match employee contributions so please also check with your employer when making a donation.

There are many ways you can donate to McKinley:

- **PTA Donation:** Your donation to the *PTA Direct Investment* Fund pays for *stuff*. So your PTA donation funds things like field trips, technology, school assemblies, and supplemental supplies. Checks can be made out to "McKinley PTA" or by credit card at the PTA website <https://mckinleypta.com/>
- **SMEF Donation:** The *Santa Monica Education Foundation* (SMEF) funds *staff*, so your donation to the Ed Foundation funds things like music, visual arts, ballroom dance, instructional assistants and more. More information and donations can be made at www.smedfoundation.org. Checks can be made out to the "Ed Foundation."
- **Fundraisers:** In addition to being fun community building events, our big fundraising events also raise a lot of funds for our school. You can donate at the event, and/or donate your time by volunteering at the event.
 - Jog-a-thon
 - Restaurant Nights
 - And other small fundraisers
- **Item Donations:** All necessary supplies for student learning is provided by the school. However, if parents wish to donate supplemental materials they may do so. Teachers may provide parents with a Wish List of items such as glue, stickers, markers etc. Parents may purchase these items directly and give them to the teacher. Classrooms are particularly happy to accept book donations. If you have a large item you wish to donate to the school such as a piano or computer, please contact the Principal or PTA President for more information.