Sequoia Academy
Family & Student Handbook
2026-2027

5900 Iroquois Road
Westminster, CA 92683
(714) 894-7271

Westminster School District
14121 Cedarwood Street
Westminster, CA 92683
(714) 894-7311

Principal's Message

Welcome to Sequoia Academy, a California Distinguished School, as well as a California Arts Exemplary & Pivotal Practice award winning elementary school! Sequoia Academy is a GATE, AVID, and STEA³M Magnet School where there are opportunities for every type of learner. Sequoia Staff continually strives to create a welcoming and stimulating environment where students are actively engaged in high level learning, while developing positive values and citizenship. We believe that collaboration and cooperation between the community and school is essential for ensuring academic and personal success for our Eagle students.

This handbook serves to provide Eagle families and students with information, items of interest, policies, procedures, and other information about Sequoia Academy. Sequoia Academy has developed an educational program that is consistent with research and effective practice. Our school emphasizes student-teacher interaction, order and purpose, student-centered decisions, an attitude of optimism, enthusiasm, and high expectations. Your cooperation in helping maintain a safe and welcoming learning environment is appreciated. If at any time you have questions, or need further information, please feel free to contact the Sequoia Front Office.

We welcome any suggestions you may have regarding additional information you feel will be helpful if included in this handbook. If at any time, you have a problem or if an area of need arises, please feel free to contact **Principal Alisha Tardif**, atardif@wsdk8.us.

Sequoia Academy
Main Phone (714) 894-7271
Fax (714) 891-9164
Attendance Reporting by 8:30am daily (714) 894-7271
Office Hours M-F 7:30am - 4:00pm

Office Manager

Community Liaison Kristi Bottiroli (8:00am – 11:00am) kbottiroli@wsdk8.us

Spanish Speaking Community Liaison Susana Moore (1:00pm – 4:00pm) smoore@wsdk8.us

School Nurse Kat Ibrahim (8:00am - 2:00pm) kibrahim@wsdk8.us

School Website https://sequoia.wsdk8.us/

@sequoiaacademy SequoiaAcademy @sequoiaes

Sequoia Academy Vision

High achievement, health, safety, and well-being for all Sequoia students.

Sequoia Academy Mission Statement

The mission of Sequoia Academy is to celebrate and continually strengthen our "community of learners" and ensure that every student becomes a responsible, life-long learner through the achievement of academic and personal success.

SEQUOIA ACADEMY

A California Distinguished School - Arts Exemplary Award

5900 Iroquois Road
Westminster, CA 92683
Office: (714) 894-7271 Fax: (714) 891-9164
sequoia.wsdk8.us

Principal: Ms. Alisha Tardif
Office Manager:

Teachers

Grade	Teacher	Room
Preschool	Mrs. Karina Becerra	C3
Preschool		C4
TK	Ms. Susie Wilkerson	K2
TK	Mrs. Tanya Wu	K1
Kindergarten	Mrs. Marissa Angeles	A4
Kindergarten	Ms. Lisa Bucci	A6
1st Grade	Mrs. Sarah Galvan	A5
1st Grade	Mrs. Bobbie Jo Weber	A1
2nd Grade		A2
2nd Grade	Mrs. Katie Schnaas	B7
2nd/3rd Grade		A3
3rd Grade	Mrs. Nicole Lagmay	A7
3rd Grade	Ms. Summer Bischof	A8
4th Grade	Ms. Ryan Iverson	B5
5th Grade	Mrs. Isabella Saati	B3
5th Grade	Mrs. Haylee Harwick	B4
6th Grade	Mr. Brian Long	B1
6th Grade	Ms. Teri Smith	B2

Student Calendar

First Day of School	**Wednesday, Aug 26, 2026**
Labor Day	Monday, Sept 7, 2026
Veteran's Day	Wednesday, Nov 11, 2026
Thanksgiving Break (5 Days)	Nov 23-27, 2026
Teacher Preparation Day	Monday, Nov 30, 2026
Winter Recess (10 Days)	Dec 21 - Jan 1, 2027
Dr. Martin Luther King Day	Monday, Jan 18, 2027
Lincoln's Birthday (Observed)	Monday, Feb 8, 2027
President's Day	Monday, Feb 15, 2027
Spring Recess (5 Days)	Mar 29 - Apr 2, 2027
Staff Development Day	Monday, April 5, 2027
Memorial Day	Monday, May 31, 2027
Last Day of School**	**Friday, June 11, 2027**

** Minimum Day - Early Dismissal 11:15am

Attendance

* Call (714) 894-7271 **by 8:30am** to report an absence.
* Schedule appointments outside of school hours if possible.
*Absences must be cleared within **5 days**.*
Contact Front Office for information on Independent Study.

Support Staff

Community Liaison	Mrs. Kristi Bottiroli	Ofc
Spanish CL	Mrs. Susana Moore	Ofc
Daytime Custodian	Mr. Lucas Goode	MPR
Nightime Custodian	Mr. Jonathan Montes-Cervantes	MPR
Technology Srvs Tech	Mr. Luis Venegas	Lab
School Counselor	Mrs. Angelica Sandoval	Coun
ESP (After School)	Ms. Cleo Henderson	R1
Library Media Assistant	Mrs. Shawn Henley	Library
Nurse - LVN	Mrs. Kat Ibrahim	Ofc
Nurse - RN	Mrs. Julia Kushner	Ofc
School Psychologist	Mrs. Eileen Ibarra	C5
RSP Teacher	Mrs. Kristal Thomas	R5
RSP Assistant	Mrs. Lina-Marie Valencia	R5
Speech Therapist	Ms. Anna Yi	Speech
RTI Coordinator	Mrs. Kristen Flores	B8

Trimesters

1st Trimester	Aug 26 - Nov 20, 2026
2nd Trimester	Dec 1 - Mar 12, 2027
3rd Trimester	Mar 15 - June 11, 2027

Modified Days

1:20 Dismissal (TK 1:15pm) on Wednesdays

Oct 19 - 23, 2026	1st Trimester Conferences
Mar 22 - 26, 2027	2nd Trimester "At Risk" Conferences
June 7 - 10, 2027	Modified Days
June 11, 2027	Minimum Day (11:00/11:15am)

Bell Schedule

Sequoia is a Closed Campus. Morning Walk 8:00 - 8:15am. Breakfast is FREE and available from 7:45 - 8:10am. Enter through Gate #3.

Grade	Regular Schedule			* Modified Schedule * Every Wednesday + dates listed above	
	Start	Lunch	Dismissal	Lunch	Dismissal
Transitional Kindergarten (TK)	8:15	11:00 - 11:45	2:10	11:00 - 11:45	1:15pm (TK) 1:20pm (K-6)
Kindergarten (KDG)		11:00 - 11:45	2:15	11:00 - 11:45	
1st & 2nd Grade		11:15 - 12:00	2:30	11:15 - 12:00	
3rd Grade		11:45 - 12:30	2:30	11:45 - 12:30	
4th Grade		11:45 - 12:30	2:45	11:45 - 12:30	
5th & 6th Grade		12:15 - 1:00	2:45	12:15 - 1:00	

FREE Breakfast is available in the MPR Monday through Friday from 7:45am - 8:10am.

Students are NOT permitted on campus prior to 7:45am as there is no supervision.

Sequoia Academy is a closed campus. Parents may drop off students at the open gates **from 8:00am - 8:15am.**

WESTMINSTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

STUDENT CALENDAR FOR 2026-2027

Board Approved: April 10, 2025

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL (Wednesday)	August 26, 2026

HOLIDAYS and NO SCHOOL DAYS

Labor Day (Monday)	September 7, 2026
Veteran's Day (Wednesday)	November 11, 2026
Thanksgiving Recess (5-days)	November 23 – 27, 2026
Teacher Preparation Day (Monday)	November 30, 2026
Winter Recess (10-days)	December 21, 2026 – January 1, 2027
Martin Luther King Day (Monday)	January 18, 2027
Lincoln's Birthday (Monday)	February 8, 2027
President's Day (Monday)	February 15, 2027
Spring Recess (5-days)	March 29 – April 2, 2027
Staff Development Day (Monday)	April 5, 2027
Memorial Day (Monday)	May 31, 2027
Last Day of School (Minimum Day)	June 11, 2027

Communication & Family Involvement

"Unity is strength..when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved."
Mattie Stepanek

Communication

Communication is a very important component in the success of our students. Sequoia Academy is able to communicate in a variety of ways. Our school website is a great resource for all of the up and coming events and main hub for all things Sequoia Academy. Principal Tardif communicates weekly with families through ParentSquare regarding school updates, upcoming events, and more information. Additionally phone calls and text messages are sent out with important updates. If you are not receiving these communications, please contact the Front Office to confirm the primary contact information on your child's emergency card. Schoolwide flyers and events are publicized through SeeSaw. We encourage you to subscribe to our calendar via the website to have the most up-to-date info about events and activities. Teachers communicate with parents about student progress in a variety of ways. These include individual parent conferences, telephone calls, notes, SeeSaw/Class Dojo messages, and progress reports. Additionally, parents are encouraged to inform school personnel about significant changes in the home environment that may affect a student's school performance.

Student Messages

Please do not contact the Front Office for a message to be communicated to your child unless it is an absolute emergency. Confirm after school plans (including pickups) with your child before sending him/her to school. The staff is working to keep all classroom interruptions to a minimum and your help in this matter is greatly appreciated. Communicate your pickup/transportation plan clearly to your child before s/he leaves home, and also in writing to your child's teacher. A written note must be provided PRIOR to student release when s/he is going home with another adult/family. Additionally, if a parent drops off a student's lunch or supplies to the Front Office, the student must come to the Office to retrieve the item(s). The office staff will not be delivering the items nor interrupting class time by calling for students to pick up items.

Partnership

Sequoia Academy values the Parent-School Partnership. When parents are involved in school, their children are more successful. Parents are welcome at Sequoia Academy and are encouraged to become actively involved in their child's education. The partnership between home and school begins with enrollment and continues throughout a student's educational program. Parent organizations and committees provide valuable volunteer time. Energy and financial support is provided to improve our school and enhance our educational programs. School effectiveness is positively impacted by frequent and consistent parent and family participation. There are several ways in which parents may be involved at Sequoia Academy:

- Join Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
- Become a member of the School Site Council (SSC) or District English Language Advisory Council (DELAC)
- Volunteer to help in the classroom
    - Read with students
    - Direct learning centers
    - Supervise reading games
    - Gather/construct instructional materials
    - Share a special skills or talent
- Volunteer for activities
- Participate as a Room Parent
- Volunteer to attend a field trip

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
The PTA at Sequoia Academy is a group of parents and teachers working together for the benefit of our school. PTA is actively involved as its members contribute hundreds of volunteer hours in their efforts to assist our school, students, and community. The primary goal of the PTA is to further enrich children's lives at home and at school. Each year this outstanding organization provides many services for our school such as: funding for field trips, family nights, Book Fair, and much more. We encourage all families to join the PTA in September during our membership drive to support these programs and opportunities that make Sequoia the supportive learning environment for all. If you are interested in becoming actively involved as a PTA volunteer, please call the Front Office.

School Site Council (SSC)
The SSC is made up of parents, teachers, and other community members who oversee the School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) and expenditure of funds for Sequoia students. SSC members are elected each year to serve on the Council and everyone is invited to attend the meetings. The meeting dates and times are posted in the Front Office 72 hours before the meeting. If you would like to know more about the SSC, please call the Front Office.

Parent Workshops and Seminars
Each year, a number of valuable parent workshops are offered. Watch our calendar for dates and topics. A few examples are: School Smarts Parent Education Workshops, Love & Logic Parent Workshops, Cyberbullying Virtual Workshop, WSD Parent Leadership Conferences.

Fundraisers
Fundraisers are extremely important for our programs at Sequoia Academy. The money generated from fundraisers supports activities such as field trips, special programs, assemblies, and other important educational events. Children are not encouraged to sell door-to-door but rather to sell to friends, relatives, or neighbors.

Campus Tours & Classroom Observations
Campus Tours are offered throughout the school year for new and prospective families. Additionally, current parents may request to observe a specific classroom by contacting and scheduling with Principal Tardif in advance. Classroom Observations (up to 20 minutes) and Campus Tours are led by Principal Tardif and allow parents to see students learning and teachers facilitating lessons. When visiting classrooms, parents are requested to be observers only and not engage with students or staff. Siblings and other children are not permitted to attend classroom observations.

Parent Teacher Conferences
Parent Teacher Conferences are held in the Fall (October) and At-Risk Conferences are held in the Spring (March) to provide an opportunity for the teacher and parent to discuss your child's progress, strengths, and weaknesses. Please be prompt in returning the proper paperwork for scheduling conferences. It is very important that parents attend these conferences. In addition, a parent may request a conference with his/her child's teacher at any time by contacting the teacher.

Back to School Night
Back to School Night is the night before school begins. During this evening, parents are provided the opportunity to meet the teachers and will be informed of the year's course of study, daily schedules and classroom procedures, materials and instructional practices. Back to School Night is an informative meeting for ADULTS only. Parents are encouraged to have students and small children remain at home. Supervision will not be provided.

Volunteering

Parents and family members are welcome to volunteer at Sequoia Academy. However, we strive to provide a consistent instructional climate for our students, so we ask that you follow the below guidelines while volunteering. The below expectations have been established to maintain a sound, instructional program, so we appreciate your support. Persons wishing to volunteer should contact the Sequoia Front Office.

How to be a Successful Volunteer - when you are volunteering at Sequoia Academy, you are demonstrating your support for education. We appreciate your cooperation with the following:

- Be punctual and consistent
- Sign up with the teacher for a designated work day, so the teacher can have work prepared for you
- Instructional time is sacred - please do NOT pop in, interrupt, or engage the teacher in conversation during class time
- If you are unable to attend your appointment, please call or send an email
- Please leave cell phones at home (or silences for emergencies only)
- Wear your visitor badge at all times on campus
- Complete your volunteer requirements
- Leave younger children at home
- Leave all discipline to the teacher
- Respect confidentiality (including taking photos)
- Review and adhere to WSD's Volunteer Guidelines (English, Spanish, Vietnamese)
- Any questions or concerns regarding volunteering should be brought to Principal Tardif

Volunteer Requirements

- Signed volunteer guidelines form
- Submit current negative TB Test
- Attend volunteer orientation
- Each visit, check in w/RAPTOR system using your Driver's License at the Front Office (Penal Code 627.2)

Volunteer Guidelines

- **Signing in at the Front Office**: You will need to sign in at the Front Office with a current identification through our RAPTOR system. You will obtain a visitor's sticker each time you volunteer. The visitor's sticker needs to be worn at all times while on campus. The procedure of having all visitors and volunteers sign in serves two functions. In the event of an emergency, the Front Office will know exactly how many people are on campus. Second, this helps to ensure the safety of our students and staff. The visitor sticker allows staff and students to instantly identify who is authorized to be on school campus as opposed to an unauthorized visitor.
- **Scheduling a time to volunteer**: When you are volunteering at Sequoia, you are demonstrating your support for education. We appreciate this very much. Please make sure to schedule your volunteering time in advance with the teacher so that s/he is prepared for your arrival and is able to best utilize you in the classroom.
- **Confidentiality**: Confidentiality is of the utmost importance in your association with teachers and students. What you see and hear at the school is private. You are in a unique position when you volunteer in the classroom to have information that is not to be shared. Students you observe in the classroom or the school cannot be discussed with other parents, faculty, or staff. Please refer any question regarding students at Sequoia to the child's teacher or Principal Tardif.
- **Photography**: Volunteers are not allowed to photograph students at any time. Staff will take photos as deemed appropriate and necessary.

- **Restrooms**: Please use the restroom in the office or the MPR. Student restrooms are NOT to be used by any adult.
- **Cell Phones**: Cell phones are to be turned off or on vibrate while in the classrooms. If you need to answer a call, please do NOT do so in the classroom and hallways, as this can interrupt instruction and student learning.
- **Language/Behavior**: Remember, we are all role models for the children around us. “Little eyes” are watching, listening, and learning appropriate behavior from our actions. Inappropriate language or discussions are not allowed on campus or on field trips.
- **Working in the classroom**: We realize that you are volunteering because your child is a student at Sequoia. We also understand that your natural tendency will often be to focus on giving all of your attention to your own child. However, we ask that you explain to your child that you are not in the room for him/her, but rather to help the whole class. Your child should expect to be treated like all other classmates and not be given special treatment or attention. Prior to volunteering, please explain to your child that you have a job to do and so does s/he. This will ensure that both you and your child have a positive experience.
- **Recess and Lunchtime**: Recess and lunchtime are designated for students to play and socialize with their peers. Volunteers are not permitted to interact with students on the playground.
- **Discipline**: Volunteers are not to discipline students. Discipline is solely the responsibility of the teacher. The teacher is the professional whose responsibility it is to plan the course of study and see that it is implemented. The volunteer always works under the direction of the teacher to help, not replace, the teacher. If there is a discipline issue, please report it to the teacher.
- **Field Trips**: When attending a field trip, parents must ride on the bus with the class. This will ensure that everyone arrives and leaves at same time and the class is not stuck waiting for a chaperone. When on a field trip, we ask that you not buy a special gift or lunch for the group you are supervising. Having one group return to the bus with goodies that the other students did not get is very discouraging. Please also remember that you may not bring another child or sibling on any field trip.
- **Dress**: Parents and family members are asked to use good judgment with regard to proper school dress. Please do not wear any clothes that carry a sexual, vulgar, or offensive message or reference the use of violence, alcohol, tobacco or drugs.
- **No Smoking**: Schools are tobacco free and vape free zones at all times. This means that you may not bring tobacco products onto campus, whether in your purse, pockets, or anywhere else.

Safety

“Safety doesn’t happen by accident!”

Pick-Up and Drop-Off Procedures

Safety is our #1 concern at Sequoia Academy. It is very important to us that your child arrives at school and returns home safely each day. Please review the daily route with your child who may be walking to and from school. Students are to go home immediately after dismissal. **No Students may wait for older siblings to get out of class.** We encourage students to walk to school whenever possible. When dropping off and picking up your child, we ask your cooperation with the following:

- Enter the Parking Lot drop off area from Iroquois Road and form a single file line. Be aware of walkers in the parking lot.
- The Drop-Off lane is for pick-up and drop-off ONLY. Do NOT park or exit your car in this area.
- Please pull all the way forward, stop, and have your child unload quickly. You should NOT exit

your car to help your child.
- Children should enter/exit cars on the RIGHT passenger side only.
- If a child is not prepared to enter/exit the vehicle, the driver will need to continue out of the driveway and then circle around to re-enter the parking lot.
- Do NOT enter through exits, nor exit through entrances. This causes multiple safety issues.
- Park your car only in designated areas and use the crosswalks.
- Do NOT stop in the middle of the street to let family members and/or children out of the car.
- Do NOT block driveways or cross streets outside of the designated crosswalks (including jaywalking near the kinder yard.
- Model appropriate crossing for our students by using the clearly defined crosswalks and sidewalks ONLY.
- Please be advised that the crosswalk located directly in front of the school on Iroquois Road, as well as the one in the school parking lot, is not staffed by a school employee. For the safety of all students and families, we ask that you use extreme caution when crossing during arrival and dismissal times.
- We strongly encourage families to use designated crossing areas and careful parent supervision at all times.
- Do NOT drive around stopped vehicles in the middle of the street or in the parking lot. This is NOT safe.
- All red curbs are NO PARKING Zones.
- Those who block the red curb will be asked to move immediately and may be ticketed.
- Do NOT drive through the front, circle drive. This area is for buses only and handicapped transportation
- Do not leave your car running or block other cars.
- Be patient and safe at all times when driving around campus.
- Watching out for children and families at all times around campus.
- Respect each other and remain in a calm state when driving near or on campus and as you wait your turn in the parking lot.
- Arrive before 8:00am if you are driving to allow time and to avoid being rushed in the drop off process.

Pets & Animals

Per WSD's School Safety & Security Policy, there are NO dogs allowed on campus at any time. No animals, fowl, or reptiles are allowed in the classroom or on campus unless prior approval is given by the Principal. Please do not walk your dog or other pets onto school property at any time, including during arrival and/or dismissal due to potential safety concerns as well as congestion in the area.

Arrival Time

Gate 3 opens at 7:45am for all students to eat breakfast. Please be sure your child does not come to school prior to this since supervision will not begin until then. If your child is not eating breakfast, s/he must wait until 8:00am to enter through the designated gate for his/her grade level. Gates open at 8:00am and drop off can begin then. Students enter the gate, drop their backpacks outside their classroom, and then report to their designated playground for morning walk. No students may wait in the halls or at their classroom doors due to lack of supervision. The bell for school to begin will ring at 8:15am and all gates will be locked. Late arriving students must report immediately to the Front Office as they will not be able to get in through the gates.

Walking Rules

- Walk to and from school along the same route daily, as designated and agreed upon by both parent and student.
- Walk directly from home to school and from school to home, unless previous parental permission has been obtained to change the routine.
- Always walk in a group of two or more students.
- Use sidewalks whenever possible.
- When crossing streets, use the crosswalks only.
- Please make all arrangements for after school pick-ups **before** school in the morning, so that your child is aware of who is picking them up.

Bicycles

Riding a bicycle to school is a privilege. Students must be in 4th grade or above to ride a bicycle to school. Students are required to follow all traffic laws and safety regulations traveling to/from school. Bikes must be locked while parked in the bike rack. Two bikes may not be locked together. Bicycles must be walked once you reach campus. The school is not responsible for lost or damaged bicycles. **State law requires bicycle riders under the age of 18 to wear safety helmets**. Further, Skateboards, scooters, “razors”, roller blades, and roller skates are prohibited, including after school and on weekends, per WPD and WSD policies. Students are not permitted to wear shoes with wheels/rollers in the soles (i.e. Heelys). ***ALL bikes (including electric/motorized) must be walked at all times while on school grounds and sidewalks.*** As part of Westminster School District’s (“District”) safety program, the District has adopted a policy applicable to any student using any electronic single rider vehicles on District property, including any school site. The District does not promote or endorse the use of Electric Single Rider Vehicle and encourages all students, parents, and guardians to carefully consider whether the use of an Electric Single Rider Vehicle is a valid option based on their specific needs. All students are required to obtain a permit before bringing any Electric Single Rider Vehicle on campus. The District may lock up or otherwise withhold any electronic vehicle that does not have a valid permit and the District may further revoke any issued permit if any student fails to follow the rules set established.

Closed Campus/Student Check Out

To protest the welfare and security of all students and staff, Sequoia Academy is a closed campus. The school gates are closed from 8:15am until dismissal each school day. For student and staff safety, all visitors to campus must enter through the Front Office, sign in, be RAPTORed, and receive a Visitor’s Badge to be worn and displayed during the entire period while on campus. (Penal Code 627.2) Students may not leave the school grounds after arriving at school without office authorization and parent consent. Students leaving campus during school hours must be signed out by an authorized adult or family member (showing ID) through the Front Office.

Playground Supervision

Adult supervision at Sequoia begins at 7:45am in the MPR for students eating breakfast and at 8:00am for all other students going to the playground for Morning Walk. It is important that you not allow your child to arrive at school before adult supervision is available. All students must leave the school grounds at their dismissal time or be enrolled in Extended School Program (ESP). Parents are not permitted to interact with children in the MPR for breakfast, or on the playground during the Morning Walk, Recess, or Lunch periods. This is a time designed to provide students with the opportunity to practice their socialization skills with their peers.

Aeries Student Data
All students must have up-to-date emergency contact info in the Front Office. We must have current information at all times regarding home, cell, and work telephone numbers, place of employment, babysitter's numbers, etc. in order to contact a responsible person in case of an emergency, illness, or injury. It is recommended that you list several emergency numbers in the event we cannot contact a parent. **If any of your contact information or medical information changes during the school year, please notify the Front Office immediately.** It is important to remember that we may not release a child to anyone other than those individuals officially designated by you on the emergency contact information. A picture identification card may be required to ensure student safety and protection. Additionally, students may be released only to individuals eighteen or older.

Emergency Preparedness
Sequoia Academy has a plan to ensure the safety of students during any kind of emergency. This plan is available in each classroom and every office on campus, including the Front Office. Emergency safety drills are held on a regular basis so that children will have automatic responses to emergency signals. We regularly practice fire, earthquake and shelter in place drills. Emergency equipment, supplies, and communication equipment is kept on site. During emergency drills, students evacuate with their classrooms. In the event of an emergency, students can be picked up at the school gate at the Kindergarten Playground. All students must have up-to-date emergency contacts on file. Sequoia Academy has an Emergency Plan which will be followed in case of a disaster. Following an emergency such as an earthquake, students will be kept under school supervision and released only to parents or an adult designated on the emergency contact list. Your cooperation is necessary in any emergency. Do not telephone the school. Telephone lines may be needed for emergency communication. Do not drive to school. If you wish to pick up your student, walk to school when possible. Streets must be kept open for emergency vehicles. You will be required to sign your child out with school personnel before your child is released to you or your designee. Impress upon your children the need for them to follow the directions of any school personnel.

Child Custody
It is very important that we be made aware of, and have official copies on file of, any legal papers that deal with unique circumstances concerning your child. Simply noting in Aeries a statement such as, "Do not release my child to..." is not enough. We must have a copy of any and all legal documents concerning custody. **Please be advised that the biological mother or father can obtain their child from school at any time unless a court order is on file in the Front Office indicating otherwise.**

Health Clerk
A health clerk is available for 6 hours each day from 8:00am to 2:00pm to administer first aid. The District Nurse is at Sequoia weekly and is always on call for emergencies.

Accidents
Considerable care is taken to ensure that Sequoia Academy is a safe place for students and staff. When an accident occurs, it must be reported immediately to the adult in charge. School personnel may administer first aid. In case of serious injury, parents will be contacted and paramedics may be called. It is most important that the Aeries Emergency Contacts be kept current.

First Aid
Emergency first aid is given by school personnel if a student is injured at school. If care beyond immediate first aid is needed for school injuries, the parent is called. Ill or injured children are to be taken home by parents or persons designated on the emergency contact list. The office is not

responsible for caring for ill children for extended periods of time. Ill or injured children are not permitted to go home alone.

Medications at School
Students are forbidden to have any prescription or over the counter medication in their possession at any time on school premises. This includes inhalers, aspirin, cough drops, and sore throat lozenges. According to the California Education Code, definite procedures must be followed with regard to taking medication at school. A signed permission form must be on file in the office BEFORE school personnel may administer medication to a child. No medication can be administered or consumed at school unless appropriate forms have been completed by both a doctor and a parent. Medication must be stored in the school office only and must be brought in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy (student's name, medication, and dosage). No medication is permitted in the backpack, desk, classroom, or on the school bus. Students are NOT permitted to carry prescriptive or over-the-counter medication at school.

Injured Students at School
Students who come to school with crutches or in a wheelchair **must have a doctor's note** stating that the crutches or wheelchair is required. Students also need a doctor's note for ace bandages, slings, braces, or other medical equipment at school.

Physical Restrictions
Notes from parents requesting Physical Education exemption following an illness or injury may be honored by the child's teacher for a short period of time. Requests for exemption from Physical Education for one week or longer require a physician's documentation of need.

Communicable Diseases/ Illness
If your child shows symptoms of illness during the night, please keep him/her home the following day. Keep your child home from school if s/he has any of the following symptoms or is COVID positive.

- Fever
- Headache
- Cough
- Sore Throat
- Running Nose
- Difficulty Breathing
- Congestion
- Loss of Taste or Smell
- Nausea/Vomiting/Diarrhea
- Fatigue/Body Aches

Students must be fever and symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication before returning to school. **Please notify the Front Office immediately when a communicable disease is suspected or diagnosed.** Children recovering from communicable diseases such as measles, mumps, chicken pox, pediculosis (head lice), etc. must be readmitted to school through the Front Office.

Good Health
The purpose of the school health program is to promote healthy living at school and in the community. One of the most important ways parents and families can support student learning is to make sure children get at least 9-12 hours of sleep each night. The staff recommends television and technology time be monitored and limited to no more than 1 hour each night. Children should eat a healthy breakfast so they can be alert and ready to learn. Teachers deliver lessons on exercising and eating healthy foods throughout the school year.

Behavioral Expectations

"In order to succeed, we must first believe we can." Nikos Kazantzakis

Sequoia Behavior Expectations

Sequoia School is a community of scholars who are respectful, responsible, and safe. Sequoia Staff empower our community to become lifelong learners and good citizens by dedicating ourselves to being respectful, responsible, and safe while promoting great citizenship and demonstrating EAGLE PRIDE! All children have equal rights to an education in a safe, nurturing, and orderly environment. It is the Principal's role to establish a climate that fosters these rights. Each child will be treated with respect and dignity. Fair and consistent expectations have been established at Sequoia Academy by the staff in collaboration with the parents and students. These expectations will be applied to maintain a learning environment desired by our community, students, and all staff.

We believe that every child…

- is entitled to be treated with respect and dignity.
- has the right to learn in a calm and orderly environment.
- has the responsibility to respect others' rights to learn in an atmosphere that is conducive to learning.
- is responsible for his or her own behavior.
- shows responsibility by practicing self-discipline and trying to settle his or her own problems.

It is the responsibility of…

- **Sequoia Academy** to promote, develop, and enforce codes of behavior.
- **Sequoia Staff** to organize and manage an environment that is conducive to learning and to teach acceptable forms of behavior.
- **Sequoia Students** to accept and understand the logical consequences of their actions.
- **Sequoia Parents** to assist in reviewing the rules with their child and promoting support of a safe, nurturing, and orderly environment.
- **Sequoia Staff and Parents** to recognize and respond appropriately to positive and negative behaviors.

Children will make appropriate choices when they know the standards of acceptable behavior. Children need to know the consequences for choosing whether or not to follow established expectations. Specific school and classroom standards and consequences have been developed and are included in this handbook. Each teacher may individualize their plan according to identified student needs and teaching style.

Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (PBIS)

Education and safety are at the heart of everything that takes place at Sequoia Academy. We endeavor to provide students with a framework that places emphasis on basic academic skills and subject matter, as well as promoting a personal sense of responsibility, good citizenship, pride, and self-worth. This framework is provided through PBIS which guides us in making schoolwide decisions based on the best evidence-based practices for improving academic and behavior outcomes for students. To provide a focus and to support the social and behavioral climate at Sequoia Academy, all staff members have been trained on the PBIS model. To ensure students achieve at the expected level, our school-wide behavioral expectations are clearly defined and deliberately taught to all students through classroom rotations, consistent practice, and PBIS assemblies in the first week of school. The expectations are continually reviewed and consistently reinforced daily with expectations posted in all areas (Computer Lab, Hallways, Library, Cafeteria, Classrooms, Playground, etc).

	Walkways, Hallways, Class Lines	Restroom	Assemblies	Playground	Eating Areas	Arrival & Dismissal
Safe	Keep Self to Self Watch Doorways Walking Feet Only	Keep Self to Self Flush Wash Hands See Something, Say Something	Keep Self to Self Sit Criss-Cross Keep Aisle Clear	Keep Self to Self Walk on Blacktop See Supervisor for Help	Eat Own Food Keep Self to Self Raise Hand for Support	Walk to Gate Promptly Be Alert Walk Directly Home
Organized	Walk in Single File Line Always Face Forward Stay in Boundaries	Put Trash in Can Bring Bathroom Pass One at a Time	Follow Directions Sit in Rows Eyes on Presenter	Follow Game Rules Stay in Boundaries Use Restroom with Permission	Remain Seated Sort Trash in Bins Follow Directions	Take Care of Supplies Enter/Exit Assigned Gate Remain with Your Class
Accountable	Be Patient Walk on Cement Remain with Class	Use Quiet Voices Flush Waste & Toilet Paper Only	Use Quiet Voices Actively Participate	Use/Return Equipment Appropriately Play Fair Freeze on Bell/Whistle	See Something, Say Something Make Healthy Food Choices	Use Quiet Voices Listen to Directions Follow Traffic Safety
Respectful	Stop For Other Classes Silent Eagles Enter/Leave	Be Patient Keep Area Clean Give Privacy to Others	Enter/Exit Quietly Be Open to New Experiences	Invite others to play Use Kind Words Line Up Promptly when Whistle Blows	Raise Hand to be Excused Clean Up Area Use Good Manners	Wait Patiently Walk to/from Destination Follow School Rules

Recognition for Positive Behaviors

Appropriate school behavior is encouraged by all of the Sequoia Staff. We have both classroom and school level recognition programs that promote good behavior.

- Eagle Bucks are used to recognize when students meet and exceed behavior expectations both inside the classroom as well as around campus and on the playground. Students can redeem their Eagle Bucks at our Student Store monthly.
- Scholarly Tickets are earned by students when they exhibit Sequoia's Scholarly Traits and expectations around campus. Scholarly Tickets are entered into a weekly drawing & winners are announced on the loudspeaker and come to Principal Tardif's Office to select a prize every Friday.
- Teachers may use Class Dojo to reward positive behavior within the classroom on a daily basis. Parents have access to Class Dojo and daily reports on students.
- Teachers use Class Dojo and ParentSquare to send positive notes to students, in addition to phone calls to parents, to celebrate students' successes.
- Student of the Month Awards @ monthly Flag Ceremonies: Teachers award to students demonstrating specific character traits.
- Perfect Attendance Drawing every Friday for students with No Absences, No Tardies, and No Early Outs for that week.
- At our Trimester Awards, teachers award students demonstrating academic achievement, outstanding effort, friendship, etc.
- At our End of the Year Awards, academic and citizenship awards are presented, including Perfect Attendance, PBIS Award, President's Academic Awards, etc..

Classroom Standards

Students who misbehave, distract from their own ability to learn, as well as distract other students from their ability to learn. When time is taken to correct a student's misbehavior, it comes directly from the time available for instruction. This is unacceptable. Therefore, each teacher has established

standards for their classroom. These standards are posted in each classroom. In addition, students are expected to:

- arrive at class on time.
- come to class prepared for that day's assignments.
- remain in class until permission is granted to leave.
- remain in supervised areas at all times.

Playground Behavior

It is our goal to make our playground a safe and fun place for students to exercise through games and activities. We will work with students in a positive manner while instilling attitudes of respect, responsibility, and appropriate decision-making skills that support the academic and social foundations of Sequoia Academy. Please review the following expectations with your child. We thank you for working with us to support the safety of all children and staff.

- **Safety**: In any situation, do NOT engage in any activity that will endanger your safety or the safety of others. THINK before you act, and ask an adult if you do not know what is allowed.
- **Designated Areas**: Students should remain in the designated playground space at all times. They are to ask permission from an adult on duty to get a drink of water, use the restroom, or leave the playground at any time during recess or lunch. Students should not be between or behind buildings, or in any unsupervised area at any time. When the playground is wet or muddy, students are required to remain on the blacktop area.
- **Restrooms**: Restrooms are to be used appropriately at all times. No playing, loitering, trashing, yelling, or gathering in the restrooms at any time.
- **Hallways & Walkways**: Students should walk at all times while on campus, including in walkways and on the blacktop (unless participating in an organized game). Additionally, shouting and loud noises are not permitted as they disrupt classrooms in session.
- **Equipment**: Swing, slides, bars, etc. are to be used safely and properly. Students are not permitted to jump from swings, go up slides, or jump off the play structure.
- **Physical Contact**: Bodily contact on the playground should be avoided at all times. Fighting or "play fighting" is NEVER allowed. There is no pushing, tripping, showing, or throwing of objects at any person at any time. Fighting or threatening others will result in disciplinary action.
- **Respectful Language**: Teasing and name calling is not allowed. Disrespectful words will not be tolerated during any games or unstructured activities.
- **Bell Ring**: Students must FREEZE IMMEDIATELY and drop down on a knee. Once the duty blows the whistle, students are to walk directly to their assigned class line.

Playground Misbehaviors may result in the following: **1st offense** - warning with a possible time-out, **2nd offense** - time out for remainder of recess, possible loss of next recess, teacher contact, **3rd offense** - time out in Office, Principal Conference.

Discipline is:

- teaching students to make appropriate choices.
- clearly defined school and classroom rules with consistent incentives and consequences.
- a focus on the development of positive relationships.
- reinforcement of desired behaviors.
- student self-management in a variety of environments.
- a team effort (student, parents, teachers, and Principal).

Consequences

When a student fails to observe the expectations, these consequences may follow:

1. Redirection and verbal warning
2. Minor Discipline Referral & Behavior Reflection Form to review their behavior and make a plan for a positive change, including possible loss of privilege.
3. Office Discipline Referral & Behavior Reflection Form to review their behavior and make a plan for a positive change, including possible loss of privilege.

Severe Clause (for extremely severe cases)
For severe behaviors, such as fighting, students may be sent directly to the Principal on the first offense. The Principal will notify parents and determine the consequences.

Suspension
The Westminster School Board and Sequoia Academy Staff believe that all students must have the opportunity to learn in a safe environment. The safety and welfare of all students may require suspension or expulsion of a student from regular classroom instruction. "Suspension" from school means a student is removed from the classroom for 1 – 5 days, as determined by District policies. "Expulsion" means the student is removed from the supervision of school personnel for a period of time determined by an Administrative Hearing Panel. **In all cases of behavior leading to suspension or expulsion, the student and parent must meet with the Principal to be informed of the behavior and determine ways in which the student's behavior must improve.** There are situations which arise that cause the school to take action for the protection of other students. These offenses are identified in the Education Code and state that a student may be suspended from school (even if they occur while on the way to and from school or outside the school setting) if s/he:

- Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person;
- Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive or other dangerous object :
- Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Section 11007 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind;
- Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance, as defined in Section 11007 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind, and then either sold, delivered, or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance, or material and represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant;
- Committed robbery or extortion;
- Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property;
- Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property;
- Possessed or used tobacco, except as provided in Section 48901;
- Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity;
- Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia as defined in Section 11264 of the Health and Safety Code;
- Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties;
- Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.

Per section 48900, a student may be suspended or expelled for any of the offenses listed above if s/he is:

- On school grounds,
- Going to or coming from school,
- During the lunch period, on or off the school campus,

- During, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

Administrative Transfers
Students who have accrued 10 or more days of suspension, may be administratively transferred to another school in the Westminster School District. Following 5 additional days of suspension, the students will again be transferred. If a student accrues 20 days of suspension, s/he will be recommended for expulsion from the Westminster School District.

The following serious offenses are further defined in California Education Code and Westminster School Board Policy and may lead to suspension and/or expulsion:

Zero Tolerance
It is against the law to bring dangerous objects to school. Any student who brings a firearm such as a rifle, pistol, or gun, or any look–alike firearm to school will be recommended for expulsion from the District and arrested by the Westminster Police Department. Any student who brings a knife to school will be suspended from school, and may be recommended for expulsion from the District and arrested by the Westminster Police Department. Any student who uses an object in a manner that poses a danger to students and/or school staff will be suspended from school, and may be recommended for expulsion from the District and arrested by the Westminster Police Department. If there is reasonable suspicion that a student possesses a dangerous object, that student may be searched. If there is reasonable suspicion that a student has an illegal or dangerous object in her/her desk or backpack a search will be made of that area.

Hate Crime
A hate crime is teasing, hitting, or hurting someone because of their: Disability, Religion, Gender, Sexual orientation, Nationality, Association with a person or group with one of these characteristics, Race and/or ethnicity.

Bullying
Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful, repeated behavior against those who find it difficult to defend themselves. It involves a desire to hurt, a hurtful action, a power imbalance, repetition, an unjust use of power, evident enjoyment by the aggressor, and a sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim. The behavior may be a) physically hurting another, b) teasing, c) whispering about another student, d) spreading rumors, and/or e) mocking another student. Although bullying is frequently thought of as activity consisting of such overt acts as physical intimidation or the more common verbal abuse or threats, a recently recognized form is relational aggression. This is a form of bullying that often takes the form of organized shunning, whispering, spreading negative rumors, and mocking particular students. Bullying is not tolerated at Sequoia Academy. Bullying behavior is not acceptable at any age and is subject to disciplinary consequences.

Sexual Harassment
WSD Policy states that “sexual harassment of any student or employee by another person is prohibited.” Education Code 212.5 defines sexual harassment is implemented across WSD. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to: (1) **Verbal:** Sexually demeaning comments, sexually explicit statements, questions, slurs, jokes, anecdotes or epithets that are demeaning; (2) **Written: s**uggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations; (3) **Physical:** Sexual assault, touching, impeding or blocking movement; 4) **Visual:** Leering, gestures, display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters. Sexual harassment also includes: Continuing to express sexual interest after being informed that the interest is un-welcomed. Making reprisals, or threats of reprisal

following a negative response to sexual advances, or following a sexual harassment complaint. The law prohibits any form of sexual harassment, which impairs the educational environment or a student's emotional well-being at school. **How comments or acts are *perceived* by the recipient is the final determining factor of whether or not the comment or act qualifies as bullying or sexual harassment. The perceptions and experiences of the recipient (victim) are what are important, not the reported intent of the perpetrator, ie.: "I was just joking around" is not a valid defense.** Further, it is a misdemeanor to send an obscene or threatening message to another person by means of a cell phone or another electronic device (PC653m).

Tobacco Free School District

The Westminster School District is tobacco-free. All tobacco products are prohibited, including electronic nicotine delivery devices such as e-cigarettes, vape sticks, hookahs (with or without nicotine), or any other device that mimics the use of cigarettes. The use of any type of tobacco or vaping is prohibited on school district property and at all district/school sponsored events and activities. Tobacco is the leading preventable cause of death in California, claiming more than 37,800 lives each year and costing the state $8.4 billion annually in health care bills. Currently, 13.2 percent of California high school students smoke, and 47,900 more kids become regular smokers every year. Smoking harms unborn babies, children, adolescents, adults, and seniors.

Tobacco Cessation Programs

California Smokers' Hotline

- 1-800-NO-BUTTS (1-800-622-8887) English
- 1-800-NO-FUME(1-800-456-6386) Spanish
- 1-800-778-8440 Vietnamese
- NHAN HOA Clinic (714) 539-8181- Vietnamese

Personal Items

Students must not sell, trade, or exchange items at school. Personal items such as Pop-Its, fidget spinners, iPads, video games, CD players, video games, bats, balls, skateboards, roller blades, Frisbees, scooters, trading cards, etc. **are not to be brought to school**. Sequoia Academy assumes NO responsibility for personal items of value lost or damaged at school. Be aware that bringing these items in backpacks for after school use is not an acceptable reason for bringing such items to school.

Cell Phones and Smartwatches

According to the Education Code, students may bring a cell phone and/or smartwatch to school as long as it is OFF during the instructional day. It is our recommendation that elementary students do not require a cell phone and/or smartwatch on campus. It is important that parents understand that administration does not look for "lost" cell phones and/or smartwatches and that taking pictures or videos using a cell phone and/or smartwatch is NOT allowed. Cell phones and/or smartwatches may not be turned on until a student has exited the campus and is off school grounds. Improper use of a cell phone and/or smartwatch will result in a parent being required to pick up the cell phone and/or smartwatch from the Front Office. Cell phone and/or smartwatch privileges may be revoked if the guidelines are not followed. Although the possession of a cell phone and/or smartwatch is **strongly discouraged** on campus, there are extenuating circumstances which necessitate students having them. In order for any student to have a cell phone and/or smartwatch at school the following rules must be observed or the phone may be confiscated:

- cell phones and/or smart watches must be kept in the bottom of the student's backpack at all times while on campus.
- cell phones and/or smart watches must be turned off at all times while on campus.

- cell phones and/or smart watches may not be used on campus at any time, including during after school clubs, and/or to take pictures.

If any of these rules are not adhered to, the cell phone and/or smart watch may be confiscated and held in the Front Office in accordance with the following progression of consequences:

- First Offense: Parent contacted, student review and discussion with staff member on cell phone and/or smartwatch policy, and student may pick up the cell phone and/or smartwatch AFTER school.
- Second Offense: Parent contacted and parent must pick up the cell phone and/or smartwatch from the Front Office.
- Third Offense: Parent contacted and student will no longer be allowed to bring cell phone and/or smartwatch to school.
- The Administration reserves the right to adjust these consequences on a case-by-case basis if needed (ie. extreme behaviors that break the law, engaging in bullying, or harassment of other students).

Please be aware that Sequoia Academy is NOT liable for damage or loss to a child's cell phone and/or smartwatch that is brought to school.

Library & Innovation Lab Time

Using the Library and Innovation Lab is a privilege. The behavior expected from children is the same as that expected when students are in the classroom. Students are expected to be responsible for the books and supplies that they check out, as well as their timely return. Computers are to be treated with the utmost of care. Students should make sure their hands are clean and should follow instructions about computer use. Lost books or damaged equipment must be paid for by the end of the year.

Textbooks & Library Books

Textbooks and school materials such as library books may be checked out for each student's use during the school year. It is the responsibility of each student to keep textbooks, library books, calculators, headphones, and other materials in good shape. Lost materials will result in charges to the student. Damaged materials will also incur a prorated charge.

Chromebooks

At Sequoia Academy, we are proud to offer Chromebooks, laptop computers, for every student in Kindergarten through 6th grade. Every student having a computer is known as "one to one" because there is ONE computer for every ONE student. Kindergarten students have access to technology in their classrooms. Using our school WiFi, Chromebooks are used in the classrooms for a variety of educational purposes. They allow students to research and collaborate on a project in real time. Students can complete and turn in assignments online. Student testing is also completed on the computer. The Chromebooks also allow students to learn new material in a variety of ways – videos, slide shows, interactive websites, and reading articles. Students also have specific programs that they access on the computer that assist with instruction. These include ST Math, ALEKs, Google Drive, Imagine Learning, and Accelerated Reader. Students are responsible for caring for their Chromebooks. Students are also responsible to use the Chromebooks appropriately, this includes internet searches. Optional Chromebook insurance is available at the beginning of the school year and will cover any problems that may arise.

Internet Safety

The Westminster School District policy meets the requirement of the Children's Internet Protection Act of December, 2000. The District uses a service that blocks Internet sites to protect against access to

websites that are inappropriate and harmful to students. All students and staff sign WSD's Acceptable Use Policy, (Spanish & Vietnamese versions), agreeing to use the computer for education purposes as stated by the Westminster School District. Students are not permitted to use e-mail communication. Sequoia Staff supervises student use of computers at all times. Students who violate the Internet Safety expectations will meet with the Principal and their parents.

Campus Cleanliness

Sequoia Academy campus is our shared environment. Our school's reputation in the neighborhood and with visitors is largely determined by our campus' appearance. All students, staff, and families are expected to help keep the campus clean!

Dress Standards

Providing students with a safe and positive learning environment is a priority at Sequoia Academy. It is our belief that coming to school ready to learn starts with how a child dresses. It affects his/her overall behavior and safety, and we want all students and staff to feel comfortable and welcome while on campus. The Governing Board encourages types of conduct, habits of dress, and attitudes which promote the general acceptance of students by their associates and which facilitate the learning process. Sequoia Academy Staff encourages students to wear school clothing in a manner, which does not offend the rules of decency, or attract undue attention at school and which does promote habits of good grooming. School dress must not cause health, safety, or discipline problems. Instructions shall be given to all students regarding the proper wearing apparel. These instructions shall be enforced by the School Principal and Staff. Students who wear unacceptable attire will have their parents/guardians notified and may be sent home. **As stated in the Board Policy in the final analysis, the Principal's evaluation shall prevail.**

Clothing/Shoes/Hats/ Accessories

- All clothing should be appropriately sized to the child. Excessively baggy or loose fitting clothing is not recommended for school.
- Undergarments shall not be visible at any time (male or female).
- Blouses and shirts should cover a child's midriff and avoid exposing the back. **Tank tops must have at least one inch straps.**
- Clothing that advertise or advocate alcohol, smoking, drugs, gangs, profanity, or violence should not be worn to school.
- Flip flops and backless shoes or sandals are not appropriate for school.
- Shoes should be secured to the foot (including at the heel/back of foot) and appropriate for participating in PE and playing on the playground.
- Athletic type shoes are considered safe footwear for school.
- Hats may be worn facing forward for sun protection outside the buildings only.
- Hats should not advocate or advertise alcohol, smoking, drugs, gangs, profanity or violence.
- Accessories should not interfere with the learning environment and or safety of the child while at school.
- Wallet chains, large bracelets, and earrings, and other such jewelry is not appropriate or safe to have at school.
- Extreme hairstyles or colors are not allowed.
- Pajamas are highly discouraged, except on special occasions including school spirit days or rewards.
- Clothing such as tops, shorts, skirts, and dresses need to be a modest length.

- We use the fingertip rule for bottoms. If a child places his/her arms at their sides, bottoms should be as long as, or longer than, their fingertips. Ripped or torn pants/jeans/shorts need to ensure that modesty is maintained.
- For tops, when a child raises his/her arms the midriff cannot show or the top is deemed too short.

Feel free to review the **Westminster School District Board Policy** and contact Principal Tardif with any further questions.

Sun-Protective Clothing

During daylight school activities, articles of sun-protective clothing shall be allowed for outdoor use only. Articles such as hats, visors, etc., shall be school approved and shall reflect the school's colors to protect the campus from unauthorized visitors. In addition, the only logo allowed will be the school mascot; no other logo of any type will be allowed. Sun-protective clothing, such as hats, visors, etc., shall not be worn indoors at any time. (Education Code 35183.5)

Academic Expectations & Curriculum

"Shoot for the moon, even if you miss, you'll land amongst the stars!" Norman Vincent Peale

Curriculum

The California State Standards and Frameworks and Westminster School District's Standards describe what students should know and be able to do. Classroom instruction is designed to provide rich and rigorous learning experiences for all students that are aligned with district standards. Sequoia Academy is proud of its excellent curriculum and well-prepared teachers. Each child will receive direct instruction in reading, language arts, math, history, social science, science, physical education, and visual/ performing arts. All children have access to State and District adopted textbooks in addition to supplementary materials to help students reach grade level expectations. In addition, those students who are struggling with receive additional support in a variety of ways that may include: 1) individual and small group instruction, 2) support from an intervention specialist, 3) after school tutoring or homework club. If a child is struggling with class work, a parent should contact the teacher to discuss their concerns.

Gifted And Talented Education (GATE)

Sequoia Academy's GATE program is designed to provide specialized educational services to students who have been identified as gifted or talented in one or more areas. There is one or more GATE identified classrooms at each grade level, 1st through 6th grade. In these classrooms, students' exceptional abilities, talents, and potential for high performance in academics are encouraged and further developed through daily enrichment and depth & complexity prompting embedded throughout all activities. Across the disciplines, students expand their knowledge and expertise, while maintaining a balance with the academic content and being challenged to make connections across disciplines, both over time and between disciplines.The essential philosophy of Sequoia Academy's GATE program includes:

- An accelerated basic skills approach where students are given the opportunity to progress at their own rate.
- A horizontal enrichment approach where students are encouraged to work on projects with a more in-depth focus.
- A creative approach where students learn and implement the elements of creativity.
- A whole child focus where the classroom environment is conducive to a student's emotional as well as academic growth.

Teachers focus on extended and enriched classroom curriculum throughout the year. GATE students are given the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities related to their given course of studies. Our program consists of four aspects:

- GATE identified classes at each grade level
- Pullout opportunities
- Extracurricular activities
- Heterogeneous groupings within the classroom

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)

Sequoia Academy's AVID is an embedded college readiness program that focuses on preparing students for success in high school, college, and beyond. AVID provides students with academic, organizational, and social support, helping them develop critical thinking, communication, and collaboration skills. Our students receive daily instruction in structured note-taking, time management, organization, reading, writing, and study skills. Additionally, they answer and ask high-level questions that go beyond routine answers. Our strong college-going culture encourages students to think about their college and career plans from the time they begin school. College pennants and banners are displayed throughout our campus and our staff provide the academic foundation that students need to be on a path for college and career success.

Science, Technology, Engineering, Academics, Arts, AVID, and Mathematics (STEA³M)

STEA³M Academy offers specialized programs and explorations to enhance and enrich the educational experience for all, while providing students with hands-on experiences, project-based learning, and opportunities to explore and develop their interests in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics. Additionally, Sequoia has a partnership with Disney Musicals in Schools, a sustainable musical theater program that develops a critical awareness and appreciation of the arts within our school, while it exposes students and staff to the wide spectrum of skills including critical thinking, problem solvings, ensemble building, communication, self-confidence, and interpersonal skills. Through discovery, exploration, innovation, and creative expression through arts integration and enrichment activities, students receive rich, extending learning opportunities, while building a positive school culture where every member feels valued and respected.

Standardized Testing

The California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System consists of the following assessments: Smarter Balanced English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA) and Mathematics, California Science Test (CAST), and Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments. These are all tests that students begin taking in 3rd grade and continue through high school. The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) is a multi state consortium working collaboratively to develop a student assessment system aligned with a common core of academic content standards for the English Language arts/literacy and mathematics. The SBAC is computer based and contains a variety of question types. There are multiple choice questions (some requiring one or multiple responses), constructed responses (a paragraph consisting of a topic sentence), three supporting details and a closing sentence), drag and drop activities and essay responses (multi-paragraph). The Smarter Balanced Assessment System utilizes computer-based tests and performance tasks that allow students to show what they know and are able to do. It is based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics and has three components designed to support teaching and learning throughout the year: the summative assessments, the interim assessments, and the Tools for Teachers formative assessment resources.

Physical Education (PE)

The PE program at Sequoia Academy provides students with knowledge of future good health and physical activity for their use now and in the years to come. Among our focuses throughout the year are motor skills, as well as individual and group games and activities stressing cardiovascular and muscular strength and endurance. PE helps a student's mental alertness, readiness to learn, relationship with others, and self-esteem.

Academic Expectations
All students should know that their parents and teachers expect them to be successful in school. Success is measured in terms of scores and grades in classwork, homework, tests, and report cards. Teacher comments to parents should indicate whether a student is aware of academic expectations and cooperative in the mutual process of accomplishing success.

Progress Reports
In compliance with the Education Code, the parent or guardian shall be notified by the teacher during each grading period whenever it becomes evident to the teacher that the child may receive unsatisfactory grades issued as academic or citizenship marks. Progress reports are sent home in the middle of each grading period.

Report Cards
Report cards are issued three times a year. When report cards and parent teacher conferences do not occur at the same time, report cards will be sent home in an envelope for parents to sign and return.

Educational Records
A Cumulative Record is maintained for each enrolled student. All student information is confidential. Parents are welcome to review their child's records by making an appointment with the Principal.

Honors and Awards
Academic achievement is an important goal of the school; therefore, outstanding work is recognized in all areas. Primary grades receive monthly Scholarly Trait Awards and upper grades monthly receive Scholarly Trait Awards as well as Honor Roll or Principal's Achievement each trimester.

Homework
The staff at Sequoia Academy believes that home study is a vital part of each child's educational program. The goal of homework is to develop student self-discipline, responsibility, and the ability to study independently. Homework is designed to reinforce classroom learning and to expand a student's school experiences. Homework is required in all classes. It provides practice, review, and completion of work. It also provides enrichment that makes school learning more effective and establishes a habit of regular study. Assignments completed at home help the child and teacher in reaching instructional objectives more quickly and thoroughly. **Suggested Times** Every student should plan on setting aside a reasonable portion of each school evening for this phase of the school program. This should take place at the same time each evening and requires that the student study and/or read on a regular basis. In this way, the student will learn that there is always a set time for studying, and beneficial home study habits can be developed. Please review the following guidelines for homework at each grade level:

- **TK & Kindergarten** Minimum **15 minutes** of reading together, sharing a story, a lesson, activity, or rhyme, taught that day, or reviewing concepts or skills taught during the week, and weekly assigned homework.
- **1st Grade** 10 minutes per night increased to 20 minutes as skills increase.

- **2nd Grade** □ 20 minutes per night increased to 30 minutes as skills increase.
- **3rd Grade** □ 30 minutes per night in addition to reading at home by the child.
- **4th, 5th, & 6th** □ 45 minutes up to 75 minutes per night. This includes some time each day for reading.

If your child spends substantially more or less time each day on homework than is indicated, please talk with your child's teacher immediately.

Responsibility of Students

- Know homework assignments before leaving school.
- Take homework assignments and materials home. Classrooms will not be re-opened after 3:00 PM.
- Spend the necessary time each night on homework.
- Demonstrate PRIDE in homework by doing the work well and independently.
- Submit finished homework to the teacher on time.

Responsibility of Parents

- Arrange a quiet time and study area including proper lighting.
- Expect regular assignments. Encourage reading for pleasure.
- Expect your child to report progress to you on long-term assignments.
- See that your child organizes homework for return at the right time.
- Contact your child's teacher if you have any questions regarding homework.

Make-Up Work

Students are given the opportunity to make up school work missed because of absences. Full credit will be given if the work is returned promptly to the teacher. A student is allowed one day to complete make-up work for each day of absence from school. A teacher may require a suspended student to complete assignments and tests missed during a suspension.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to demonstrate academic honesty at all times by showing honesty, responsibility, and integrity in all academic work. This means completing their own assignments, participating fairly in group work, and using their best effort to show what they have learned. Academic dishonesty includes cheating (such as copying, using unauthorized help, or breaking testing rules), plagiarism (using someone else's work without credit), and not contributing fairly in group tasks. Further, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT, Grammarly, or similar platforms is only allowed when clearly approved by a teacher. Using AI to generate or complete assignments without permission is considered academic dishonesty. Violations of this policy may result in a zero on the assignment, a "U" in citizenship, and other appropriate consequences.

Student Leadership

Sequoia Academy offers several leadership opportunities (including Leadership and Kindness Club) to students throughout the school year. Student Leadership has elected officers and classroom representatives follow parliamentary procedure and must abide by the following standards:

- Maintain a 3 average on Progress Report
- Complete and turn in assignments on time
- Follow all school and classroom rules
- Be a model citizen; showing PRIDE for self and others

If standards are not followed, students may be removed from office or placed on probationary status.

Attendance

"I wake up every day with PRIDE because I am a part of something BIGGER than I would have ever dreamed of!" Robert Fischer

Absences

Regular school attendance is important. California Education Code 48260 requires students to attend school every day, arriving on time, ready to learn. A student who is frequently absent will miss instruction, which cannot be made up even though written work may be completed. For attendance accounting purposes, the only legally **excused** absences are illness, visits to the doctor or dentist, religious holidays, mandated court appearances, and bereavement (1 day for in-state, 3 days for out-of-state). All other absences, including parent requests, are UNexcused. The Westminster School District is part of the Orange County Truancy Project. Students having more than three UNexcused absences, 30-minutes late to school for four days or more, or excessive excused absences will require a meeting with the School Attendance Review Team (SART) AND may be subject to a School Attendance Review Board (SARB) hearing and/or Orange County District Attorney's Office if attendance issues continue. If your child must be absent, please **notify the school by 8:30am** on the day of the absence. Please be prepared to give us the name of your child and his/her teacher, reason for the absence, and the anticipated length of absence. If you do not call, you must send a written, signed excuse with your child the day s/he returns to school. State the reason and the date of the absence. Absences not verified within 5 days become UNexcused absences. You may request homework for your child for each day of absence by phoning the Front Office on the morning of the absence by 8:30am. Homework may be picked up in the Front Office at the end of the school day. **Students who are absent during the school day are NOT permitted to attend afternoon/evening school events.**

Tardies & Leave Earlys

Students need to arrive at school time, before 8:15am daily. Students who are continually late or leave school early miss valuable class instruction and create a disruption to the learning of others, as well as themselves. Tardiness not only interrupts the instructional program but cultivates detrimental behavior that is difficult to reverse once a child reaches middle school. A student who arrives after the 8:15am bell must come to the office to sign in and receive a late slip for entering the classroom. Please be sure that your child leaves home in time to arrive at school before the bell rings. Many parents state that their child's tardiness is due to the parents' scheduling errors or traffic. Please be aware that "on time" behavior is definitely learned; help your child be on time so that s/he can develop good habits at a young age. There are no excused tardies. Students who miss more than 30 minutes of class are considered truant, unless a doctor's note for the student is received. Oversleeping, waiting for rides or friends, etc., are not considered valid reasons for excused tardies. Please, whenever possible, schedule dentist and doctor appointments before or after school. If a student accumulates 8 tardies in a trimester, the student and parent may be required to attend a parent conference. Habitual tardiness, 10 or more tardies per trimester, may result in a referral to the Student Study Team.

Truancy

According to the Education Code of the State of California, any student who is absent from school without a valid excuse, or in excess of 30 minutes on each, for more than 3 days in one school year is truant. Excessive truancies may result in a referral to the School Attendance Review Board (SARB) and the District Attorney.

Release of Students During School Hours
If it is necessary for a student to leave the school grounds for an appointment or other reason, a parent/guardian (over the age of 18) must sign the child out at the Front Office. We will only call the student from class once the parent has arrived in the office. Please be ready to show ID. A medical or dental excuse from the doctor or dentist should be returned to school with the student. Without this medical/dental note, the student's absence cannot be considered a medically excused absence.

Late Pick Ups
Parents are required to pick up their children within 5 minutes of dismissal. A child who is picked up late can get anxious, and our staff who have worked a full day need to be able to plan and prepare for the next day, all before they go home to their own families. Being on-time is a significant contributor to the job satisfaction of all of our staff and the happiness of our students. We pride ourselves on being a school whose parents are on-time and strive to have no violations of this expectation. Please ensure you arrive on time to pick up your child after school and/or have an alternate person lined up that you call as a back-up plan when you are going to be more than a few minutes late. Keep the Front Office informed of any problem preventing you from being on time. If you are consistently or repeatedly late to pick up your child after school or following after school clubs, you may be invited to a meeting with the Principal and/or your child may lose the opportunity to participate in afterschool activities. Further, late pickups may result in the Front Office seeking assistance from the local authorities.

Independent Study
The Westminster School District operates an independent study program for students who miss school during the year for reasons other than illness. Independent study arrangements must be made **at least two weeks in advance** for absences that are three or more consecutive days. All work must be returned **within three days** of returning to school for the independent study to qualify for credit. Independent study contracts must be signed by the parent, teacher, and Principal.

Staff Development Days
Sequoia Academy is a place of continued learning for all who work here. Continuous monitoring of assessments, curriculum and instruction is essential to professional growth. In order to help us implement this philosophy, the District will provide staff development for the upcoming school year. The staff development day for the 2025-2026 school year is April 13, 2026 with a Teacher Preparation day on December 1, 2025. Children do not attend school on these professional development and preparation days.

Breakfast & Lunch

"Leading a balanced lifestyle is the key to a healthy mind and body."

School Breakfast & Lunch
Breakfast is served each morning from 7:45–8:10am. A daily hot lunch is available and includes milk, juice, vegetable and fruit, in addition to the main course. Students may bring lunch from home and/or pick up a school lunch. If a child has forgotten his/her lunch, they may get one from the cafeteria for the day. They may not call home. Cafeteria menus can be found on-line at https://wsdnutrition.com/. Extra copies are available from the school office.

Breakfast & Lunch Behavior
All staff members maintain responsibility for the safety and well being of students on school grounds, and our students have the responsibility to behave in a safe, orderly, and respectful manner. Students

will be respectful to the adults on duty at all times. Students will follow directions the first time they are given. Students will stand in line orderly, quietly, and keep their hands and feet to themselves. Students will use table manners while eating: Chew with your mouth closed, Eat your own food (no sharing or trading), and Clean up lunch table and floor areas. Students will wait to be excused from the table by the adult supervisors. Students will throw all trash in the trash cans.

Delivering Forgotten Lunches
Please bring all forgotten lunches to school by 10:00am, so your child may pick it up in the Front Office during his/her assigned lunch time. Students will not be called during class time to pick up food as this will cause a classroom disruption. Lunch not brought to school before the child's lunch period will not be delivered and the child will need to pick it up after school.

Promoting Healthy Lifestyles
Eating right helps students learn. We are pleased to put federal laws in place to help our students: make healthy choices about eating right, teach more about nutrition, and get more children to exercise or do physical activity. Students who eat right and get a lot of exercise, feel better, are not sick as often, and are able to learn better. Nutritional guidelines come from many sources, including Senate Bill 965 and Senate Bill 12. These bills outline the following guidelines to be used at school: 1) all drinks at school or ½ hour before or after school, must be 50% juice with no sugar, or plain water, or 2% or less fat milk, or soy or rice milk, or sports drinks with no more than 42 grams of added sugars per 20-ounce serving, and 2) single items to be sold or given away cannot be deep fried. These items must also have no more than 35% of calories from fat, 10% of calories from saturated fat, 35% of total weight from sugar, and have 175 calories or less. Please be aware of these guidelines and when in doubt call the Front Office. More information is available at WSD's Nutrition & Food Services website: https://wsdnutrition.com/. **Carbonated Drinks are discouraged as they do not meet the Nutritional Guidelines and also cause a disruption when warm and/or shaken.**

Snack Policy
Students are welcome to bring snacks everyday for recess, except Wednesdays. Please review the following snack guidelines with your child.

- Bring a healthy snack - fruit, granola bar, etc.
- No juice, candy, large bags of chips, etc.
- Eat your snack at recess.
- All students may only eat on the designated benches.
- Eat **only** your snack, **no sharing food**.
- Eat your **entire** snack and throw your trash away before playing.
- Since we have snacks during recess, there is no need to bring snacks to lunch.

Celebrations & Rewards
All foods offered on Sequoia Academy's campus (including dismissal time at the gates) must meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools Nutrition Standards, including the following school events:

- **Celebrations and parties**. Nutrition Services provides a list of healthy snack options for principals, parents and teachers to purchase through the Nutrition Services department. Teachers may also fill out and submit the "competitive food request form" to Nutrition Services for prior approval of snacks and beverages for classroom parties.
- **Classroom snacks brought by parents**. Nutrition Services provides a "competitive food request form" to be filled out by teachers on behalf of parents & approved by Nutrition Services

to ensure snacks and beverages meet Smart Snack guidelines prior to parents bringing food or beverages from home.

Student Birthdays
Celebrating individual student birthdays at school is discouraged. It is very important that we provide students with sustained, uninterrupted instruction (Westminster Board Policy #6116). Also, this practice may cause hardship for some families who are unable to do the same. Therefore, do not send cakes, cupcakes, cookies or other snacks to school. Any items dropped off for students (balloons, flowers, etc.) will be delivered at the end of the school day so instruction will not be interrupted. We thank you for your cooperation. If you would like to send birthday items to all students in the class, please speak with your child's teacher about sending pencils or small, non-food items to celebrate and pass out after school at the gate. Please work with the teacher to determine the amount needed to ensure all students receive a birthday celebratory gift.

Party Invitations
If your child will be passing out party invitations at school please be sensitive to each student's feelings. The "hurt feelings" can be avoided by inviting ALL classmates. If this cannot be avoided, invitations are to be passed out or mailed **outside** of school.

Resources

"Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world." Nelson Mandela

Extended School Program (ESP)
Sequoia School offers an Extended School Program providing comprehensive child development services and homework assistance before and after school. Hours before school are 6:00–8:00am. After school hours are from after school until 6:00pm. Call (714) 898-8389 ext 3662. There is a waitlist every year, so register early! Students must be picked up on time or you may be billed for each minute late.

Counseling Program
Counseling services are available to all students. Staff, students, or parents may ask to see a school counselor. Parents may meet with a counselor by requesting a meeting through the school office or their child's teacher. Students are referred for school-based counseling for issues related to school attendance, behavior, health, or academics. Our School Counselor is trained to work in the areas of anger management, social skills, and coping skills, as well as change and loss issues. Parent permission is required for this service. Most students are seen for eight to ten sessions, meeting individually or in groups, on a weekly basis. Activities may include playing games, art activities, books read aloud, and discussions. Confidentiality is an important component of this program. Families who desire outside counseling for home-related concerns can contact the School Counselor or School Psychologist for a list of resources in the area.

Lost and Found
Lost and found clothing articles, water bottles, lunch boxes, and all else left behind are held on a cart inside the MPR. The Lost & Found cart will also be outside of Gate 2 on Wednesdays after school. Please only claim your own child's lost property. Please put names in jackets, on lunches, lunch boxes, water bottles, and all other personal items sent to school. This will help keep our lost and found relatively free of unclaimed items and help in returning items to their proper items when found around campus.. Lost and Found is cleaned out quarterly and donations are given to a local charity. Smaller items, including glasses, keys, etc., are kept in the school office.

Accelerated Reader (AR) Program

AR software provides teachers and students with a comprehensive program to motivate, monitor, and manage student reading practice. Sequoia School's library houses thousands of AR book titles. Students are encouraged to read the books and take the quizzes to earn points towards multiple incentives. AR Book Finder can help with selecting books for your child. www.arbookfind.com