

SEQUOIA MIDDLE SCHOOL



STUDENT HANDBOOK 2019-2020

PUSD Outcomes Creating Opportunities: Changing Lives

Our Vision: Sequoia students will be critical thinkers who can apply knowledge to the real world, and as a result, are self-sufficient, lifelong learners who are engaged in the community and world around them.

Our Mission: The mission of PUSD is to provide students with dynamic, engaging and effective educational experience that prepares them with skills to be productive citizens in a global society.

Expected PUSD Graduate Outcomes:

As a result, all students will develop and demonstrate:

- Critical thinking and problem solving skills
- Cultural awareness and the ability to collaborate with diverse groups
- Technical skills in digital media applications and information management
- Effective communication skills of listening, speaking and writing
- Creativity and innovation
- Leadership, self-management and organizational skills obtained through real world applications and community involvement
- Adaptability, responsibility and ethical behaviors
- The ability to navigate the global world of work and further their education

Office Information

Office Hours: 7:30 am. – 5:00 pm. Monday through Friday.

Students should not be on school grounds before 7:30 am. or after 3:10 pm. unless requested by a teacher or administrator, or for participation in a supervised activity.

Sequoia Middle School has a **Closed Campus Policy**. Once a student arrives on the school grounds, he/she is not permitted to leave unless signed out by a parent/guardian.

When visiting Sequoia Middle School, state law requires that all persons visiting our campus must sign in at the office. Guests will be given a visitor's badge. Students should come into the office for school business only, when called by an administrator, or in an emergency situation. Students need a pass from a teacher to be in the office during class time. Students are not to use the office phones, except in an emergency. If a student wishes to stay for after-school activities, he/she must make arrangements with parent/guardian BEFORE coming to school.

Deliveries

Due to the increased burden it places on our office staff, Sequoia Middle School will no longer accept the delivery of food, balloons, flowers or gifts for students during school hours. Under no circumstances should items/food be passed through the fences. *Fundraising money should be given directly to the teacher responsible for the fundraiser.

Counseling Services

The school-site psychologist will accept teacher referrals for any student who has concerns/problems in any area of school, with friends or peers, or at home.

Parents and other staff members may also submit referrals. Students may also self-refer by completing a request for counseling form available from a teacher or the office. This form can be returned to the box in the office. **All referrals and counseling are confidential.** The psychologist will only see students on an appointment or emergency basis.

**Bell Schedule
Regular Day**

First Bell	8:05 AM		
Period 1	8:10 AM	9:08 AM	58:00 Minutes
Period 2	9:13 AM	10:00 AM	47:00 Minutes
Period 3	10:05 AM	10:52 AM	47:00 Minutes
Period 4	10:57 AM	11:44 AM	47:00 Minutes
Period 5	11:49 AM	12:36 PM	47:00 Minutes
Lunch	12:36 PM	1:26 PM	50:00 Minutes
Period 6	1:31 PM	2:18 PM	47:00 Minutes
Period 7	2:23 PM	3:10 PM	47:00 Minutes

Early Release Wednesday

First Bell	8:05 AM		
Period 1	8:10 AM	8:57 AM	47:00 Minutes
Period 2	9:02 AM	9:40 AM	38:00 Minutes
Period 3	9:45 AM	10:23 AM	38:00 Minutes
Period 4	10:28 AM	11:06 AM	38:00 Minutes
Period 5	11:11 AM	11:49 AM	38:00 Minutes
Period 6	11:54 AM	12:32 PM	38:00 Minutes
Lunch	12:32 PM	1:02 PM	30:00 Minutes
Period 7	1:07 PM	1:45 PM	38:00 Minutes

Minimum Day

First Bell	8:05 AM		
Period 1	8:10 AM	8:45 AM	35:00 Minutes
Period 2	8:50 AM	9:20 AM	30:00 Minutes
Period 3	9:25 AM	9:55 AM	30:00 Minutes
Period 4	10:00 AM	10:30 AM	30:00 Minutes
Period 5	10:35 AM	11:05 AM	30:00 Minutes
Period 6	11:10 AM	11:40 AM	30:00 Minutes
Period 7	11:45 AM	12:15 PM	30:00 Minutes
Lunch	12:15 PM	12:45 PM	30:00 Minutes

Parking Lot/Morning Student Drop off

In order to maintain a safe and consistent flow of traffic during AM drop off times; Sequoia Middle School parking lot will adhere to a one way traffic pattern. **DURING MORNING DROP OFF PLEASE ONLY ENTER THE PARKING LOT AND DROP OFF ZONE FROM PROSPECT STREET AND PLEASE ONLY EXIT THE PARKING LOT AND DROP OFF ZONE ONTO CASTLE AVE.**

Activities and Eligibility

All Sequoia Middle School students are encouraged to get involved in campus life and activities. Your involvement in student leadership, athletics, clubs makes student life at SMS spirited and exciting.

Extracurricular activities are those programs that have all of the following characteristics **(Education Code 35160.5)**:

1. The program is supervised or financed by the school district.
2. Students participating in the program represent the school district.
3. Students exercise some degree planning or control of the program.
4. The program includes both preparation for performance and actual performance for an audience or spectators.

Extracurricular activities are not part of the regular school curriculum, are not graded, do not offer credit and do not take place during classroom time. **(Education Code 35160.5)**

Co-curricular activities are programs that may be associated with the curriculum in a regular classroom. **(Education Code 35160.5)**

Grade Point Average Requirement

The grade point average used to determine eligibility shall be based on grades of the previous grading period during which the student attended class at least a majority of the time.

(Education Code 35160.5)

Academic eligibility is to be determined at the end of the first and third quarters and at the end of the first and second semesters.

Citizenship and Attitude

Students are expected to display satisfactory citizenship in the classroom, on the campus, and as a participant in extra/co-curricular activities. Unsatisfactory behavior will be determined by the site administration.

Eligibility is to be determined on a weekly basis:

- **First infraction** – five day suspension from extra/co-curricular activities.
- **Second infraction** – suspension from extra/co-curricular activities for the remainder of the quarter.

Travel to Sports & Activities

Participants in an activity must travel to and from the activity in school-provided transportation. The only allowable exception is if a parent or guardian signs his/her child out at the end of the activity. **A pre-authorization for release must be on file, signed by the parent or guardian.**

Student Body Cards

All students are given a free Student Body Card at the beginning of school and are expected to carry it every day. If it is lost or misplaced one can be replaced for \$5.00 by the librarian.

Dances

Sequoia holds a variety of dances throughout the year. All school behavioral policies will be in effect including the dress code. Any student breaking school policies will be subject to disciplinary action.

Attendance

There is a high correlation between positive attendance and school success. Students are responsible for attending school with a positive attitude toward studying and learning as evidenced by regular, punctual attendance and completion of class work. The school asks parents to give students the best opportunity to be successful by insisting that they attend regularly and by calling to clear absences immediately. School law requires that students attend full-time classes until they are eighteen years old.

Clearing Absences

It is the student's responsibility to have absences cleared by parent/guardian or person authorized by the parent/guardian, by calling 788-0925 on the day of the absence or the day returning to school between the hours of 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Attendance must be cleared within 20 school days following an absence. Any absence not cleared within 20 school days will remain unexcused (as per Ed Code.)

Leaving Campus without Permission

Once students arrive on campus they must remain. Consequences will range from detention to referral.

Extended Leaves of Absence/Independent Study

Students who have a need to be away from school for an extended length of time (5-15 days) need to follow the guidelines listed below:

Request by parent/guardian must be submitted to Sequoia Middle School Front Office at least 5 school days prior to leaving. A Short Term Contract will be submitted. All work is due to the counselor/Lead Teacher on the specified ending date of the contract. Failure to turn work in on the specified date will result in unexcused absences for the length of the contract.

Truancy

Any absence without acceptable reason, with or without parent consent, for more than three days is considered truancy.

Tardy Policy

- Students are expected to be seated at their desks in their classrooms ready to learn when the bell rings.

School Attendance Review Board (SARB)

A School Attendance Review Board (SARB) has been established in accordance with state law. Any pupil who is a habitual truant, irregular in attendance or habitual insubordinate or disorderly during school attendance shall be referred to SARB. Upon referral, SARB will meet with all involved persons (including student and his/her parents) to discuss alternative programs and/or to sign a contract. If the program developed by SARB is not effective, referrals are then made to the district attorney's office for prosecution.

Dress Code and Appearance

The Porterville Unified School District has a dress code policy in place. We expect all students to follow this policy. We feel that this policy promotes a positive school climate as well as improved academic focus.

Dress Code Standards

1. Pupils must dress safely. For example, shoes must be worn at all times, sandals must have back straps, both at school or during school activities.
2. Clothing and jewelry shall be free of writing, pictures, or any other insignia, which are crude, vulgar, profane, obscene, libelous, or sexually suggestive. Clothing or jewelry that advocates racial, ethnic, or religious prejudice, or other unlawful acts, or the use of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol is prohibited.
3. Clothes must be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times. Underwear-type sleeveless shirts, see-through, fishnet fabrics, or other attire which exposes the body in a sexually suggestive manner, bare midriffs, tube tops, or halter tops, etc. are not acceptable. Straps must cover undergarments, and have a minimum of two inch wide strap over both shoulders (per District Dress Code). Dresses, skirts and shorts shall be at least mid-thigh length.
4. Earrings and other body piercing items, to be worn in ears only.
5. Attire that may be used as a weapon may not be worn (e.g., steel-toed boots, chains, items with spikes or studs, etc.).
6. Pupils shall not display any material or paraphernalia that incites a disruption of the school process or creates a clear and present danger of either the commission of unlawful acts on school premises or the violation of District or school-site policies or rules.

*Refer to district handbook for other examples.

Consequences for Dress Code Violations

Student violations of these regulations are deemed willful defiance of the valid authority of the school principal and the following administrative guidelines are a range of penalties to be utilized with each classification of student misconduct. The guidelines are designed to provide for variations in the circumstances associated with individual students involved in each episode of dress code violation. The circumstances associated with an aggravated case may result in the omission of the preliminary steps in the guidelines and the application of the last steps.

1. Verbal warning and student asked to immediately correct the dress code violation. Student will remain in office until the inappropriate dress is corrected. Available corrections are:
 - a. Student may change into acceptable clothing that is already at school.
 - b. Student may call parents to bring appropriate clothing.
 - c. Student may be temporarily supplied with suitable clothing by the school until the end of the day or until appropriate clothing is provided by parent.
2. If student refuses to immediately correct the dress code violation, the student will be in defiance of school authorities. Parents will be notified and a parent conference held. Parent and student will review the dress code regulations with an administrator. In-school suspension/motivation/suspension may be assigned for defiance
3. Continued defiance of school authority or violation, could result in suspension.

Computer and Internet Usage

On the school network and on the Internet, you may participate in a variety of activities that support learning. With access to other networks and people around the world, you might have access to information that may not be appropriate. The Porterville Unified School District has taken measures to prevent access to inappropriate information. However, we cannot control all the information available on the Internet. The district is not responsible for other people's actions or the quality and content of the information available through this service. We trust our students to know what is appropriate and inappropriate.

Yearly Computer User Agreement

Students must have a signed Users Agreement and Training Verification on file before access to the Internet is given.

The use of school and district networks must be in support of education, research, and the educational goals and objectives of the Porterville Unified School District. Students are personally responsible for this provision at all times when using building and district networks.

- The use of another organization's networks or computing resources must comply with rules appropriate to that network;
- Transmission of any material in violation of any United States statutes is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret. Be familiar with these rules and how to use the Internet before getting on-line. If you have any questions about these rules, please ask your teacher so you can understand. Be aware that the inappropriate use of electronic information resources can be a violation of school rules, local, state, and federal laws and that you can be prosecuted for violating those laws.

Violation of Acceptable Use Policy

- First offense: student will lose Internet privileges for the current semester and the following one.
- Second offense: the student will lose Internet privileges for the remainder of enrollment in the Porterville Unified School District.

Computer Vandalism

Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to physically deface, disable, or destroy computers, peripherals, or other network hardware or to harm or destroy data of another user or any other agencies or networks that are connected to the system. This includes, but is not limited to, the creation or transmission of computer viruses. Any vandalism will result in loss of network privileges, disciplinary action, or possible legal referral.

Library Media Center (LMC)

The Library Media Center is available to students from 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday. This includes before school, lunch, and after school hours. The library operates on a flexible schedule.

Fines are assessed when a book has water or liquid damaged, the binding is damaged, a barcode or picture has been cut from the book, or damage due to ink, highlighter, or writing has occurred inside the book.

Electronic Devices

Electronic signaling devices such as MP3's, radios, speakers, headphones are not allowed on a school campus (E.C. 48901.5). Laser pointers are also not allowed on a school campus. LEAVE THESE ITEMS AT HOME.

Cell Phones– Cell phones MUST BE TURNED OFF AND PUT AWAY, (NOT IN HAND), upon entering campus until the last bell rings. Unless otherwise permitted by school personnel.

Disciplinary action will be as follow-

- 1st infraction-Verbal warning.
- 2nd infraction-Phone collected by school personnel. Student may pick up phone after school in the office.
- 3rd infraction-Phone collected and two lunch detentions assigned. Parent may pick up phone after school in the office on Wednesdays and Fridays.
- 4th infraction-Phone collected and four lunch detentions assigned. Parent may pick up phone after school in the office on Wednesdays and Fridays.
- Administrative discretion.

***The school will not be responsible for or investigate any lost or stolen electronic device**

Bus Transportation

- Obey bus driver's directions at all times.
- Practice good bus conduct and safety rules both on and off the bus (includes bus stops).
- No abusive verbal or physical contact.
- Do not deface or damage school or personal property.
- Upon request, provide proper identification.

School bus infractions will be referred to the Dean. Penalties can range from a warning to a temporary or permanent denial of transportation privileges.

Bus Rule Violation Consequences

Bus drivers will resolve minor infractions using assertive discipline techniques and conference. When they have exhausted their resources, they will submit a bus referral that must be signed by a parent and returned. The referral may result in the loss of bus privileges for the student.

Disciplinary Procedures

All school rules will be enforced:

1. While on school grounds
2. While coming to or going from school
3. During school hours whether on or off campus, and
4. During or while coming to or going from a school-sponsored activity.

In order for students to learn and teachers to teach, every student is expected to abide by the following principles:

- I will demonstrate punctuality, reliability and responsibility.
- I will not disrupt the class.
- I will demonstrate the ability to work productively with others.
- I will obey all classroom and school rules.

Consequences:

1st STEP: Student/Teacher conference.

2nd STEP: Teacher/Parent/Student conference; detention may be assigned by the teacher.

3rd STEP: Admin/Counselor/Parent/Student/Teacher conference; disciplinary action[★]

4th STEP: Referral to Vice Principal; Parent/Student conference; disciplinary action[★]

5th STEP: Removal from class for the remainder of the semester with a grade of "F" and NO CREDIT. Students will be assigned to the Motivation Center for the remainder of the semester and placed on a Behavioral Contract.

The above step sequence involves classroom behavior only. More serious discipline issues of defiance, insubordination, or severe misconduct will be dealt with through a discipline referral and by sending the student to the administrative team. Police authorities may be notified.

Students also have a responsibility to notify their parents/guardians of any discipline problems they have encountered at school. Parents/guardians have the responsibility to contact teachers, counselors and assistant principals when they have received notification via phone or mail that there is a problem at school.

[★]Above steps are used as a general guideline. Disciplinary action may include Above steps are used as a general guideline: Assignment to community service on school grounds during non-classroom time, placement into the motivation room during lunch or for one or more periods, in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension.

In-School Suspension (Motivation Center)

Assignment to the Motivation Center is an alternative to home suspension. Students will be completely separated from the student body. Students assigned for the entire day may not participate in any extracurricular activities. Students are required to complete class assignments or assignments prescribed by the Motivation Supervisor. Lunch and breaks are controlled and supervised, and taken while other students are in class. Failure to comply with Motivation rules will result in home suspension.

Assertive Discipline

The following disciplinary procedures have been developed to insure that Sequoia Middle School provides a proper learning environment for all students. All rules will be enforced and appropriate penalties assessed for infractions. Students who have violated rules will be counseled, reprimanded, suspended, or expelled and/or cited by the police. It is the responsibility of every school employee to apply the rules consistently and equally for all students.

The site administrator will base his/her disciplinary action on the severity of the violation and other information available. The level of disciplinary actions may be accelerated by the Dean if the type and severity of the offense is deemed detrimental to the educational environment.

Expulsion

If a student possesses any firearm, knife, explosive or other dangerous object at school or at any off-campus school-related activity, the principal is required by ed code 48900 to recommend expulsion for that student. Students can be expelled for other ed code violations.

The Sequoia staff is looking forward to a wonderful school year serving our students and families.

GO HAWKS!