

# Indian Valley School



Home of the Hawks

## Parent Handbook 2015-2016

Web Site: <http://www.walnutcreeksd.org/iv/site/default.asp>

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## MISSION

**Through the efforts of staff and with the support of parents, we dedicate ourselves to providing a stimulating environment that promotes intellectual, academic, social, and personal growth for all children.**

### INTRODUCTION

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Welcome to Indian Valley School! This is truly a special place and we are committed to making our school mission statement about helping students to grow academically, intellectually, emotionally and socially a reality.

The staff at Indian Valley is dedicated to providing an education which will prepare each student for a happy, productive, and well-informed citizenship. In keeping with State and District guidelines, our program provides instruction in all curricular areas while fostering a climate of mutual caring, respect, and support among students, parents, and staff.

We acknowledge that you are your child's first and most important teacher and a successful elementary experience happens when home and school are connected. A learning community inspires and encourages children to act morally and ethically by fostering personal character traits including honesty, citizenship, respect, fairness, responsibility, caring, good work habits, self-discipline, self-reliance, pride in work, consideration for others, perseverance, teamwork, tolerance, patience, compassion, and reverence for life. It is a place where all members - students, staff, and parents are learners and teachers; where there is open and honest communication, a high level of trust, and no one way to teach or learn; where it is safe to take risks and to fail; and where learning successes are recognized and celebrated.

This parent handbook is designed to acquaint you with important information and policies at Indian Valley. Written policies are developed for the most effective operation of the school. They should be flexible and can be changed as better alternatives are found, but should be followed closely as long as they are in effect. We look forward to having you a part of the Indian Valley family this school year.

Sincerely,

*Melissa Banister*

Principal

## **ATTENDANCE**

Absences: Children are expected to be in school during assigned hours each day. Academic progress, as well as the financial well-being of the school district is dependent on good attendance. Absences excused or not, result in the loss of revenue. Absences are considered excused only for reasons of illness, medical appointments, attendance at a funeral of one's immediate family or quarantine.

When your child is ill please email the office manager or call the school (944-6832) every day of your child's absence. If you are unable to contact the office by phone or email, a written note giving the date(s) of the absence and reason is required. You will receive a call from the school if your child is absent and we have not heard from you. You may respond to this message. You may also receive a call from the attendance clerk in order to clear the absence. If your child has a fever, please keep him or her at home. He or she should be fever free for twenty-four hours before returning to school.

Tardies: If you are aware that your child will be tardy when she/he arrives at school, please remind him/her to check in at the office. Excessive and/or habitual tardiness is considered an attendance problem and parents will be notified. Please do not walk your child to class and try to speak to the teacher. Just having a student walk in late is disruptive to the classroom.

Early Dismissal: Children are excused to leave the school only upon the personal request of the parent. If a child must leave school before dismissal time, he/she must be signed out by an authorized adult in the office. Notes regarding early dismissal should be sent to the child's teacher. No one, other than the parents or those listed on the emergency card, may take a child out of the building without written permission from the parents or legal guardians. We reserve the right to check ID's if a person is a first timer picking up.

## **EMERGENCIES**

Emergency Cards: The emergency card is an extremely important item enabling school personnel to properly care for the child's needs while at school, including special health needs, illness, or accidents. It also enables us to contact parents quickly. The emergency card is completed online for returning families during the registration online process. For new families, it will be completed when they register in the office. Every card must list a local phone number. It is important that you have additional emergency contacts in case we cannot reach you during an emergency or if your child is too ill to remain at school. **Should there be any change during the school year, please advise the school office.**

First Aid: The school is equipped to render only emergency first aid. Since our space is limited it is necessary that children who become sick or injured be picked up immediately after the parent has been notified. To help control illness from spreading, please call the office immediately if a communicable disease is diagnosed so we can send the proper exposure notice home to families of their class/grade level.

Medication: Staff cannot give over-the-counter or prescription medication at school without a District form being completed by the parent and physician. These forms are available in the school office. Medication must be kept in the original container. Medications can be delivered to school by parents/guardians only. Do not give any medication, including aspirin, to a student to leave in his/her backpack or desk. This is strictly against District policy.

School Closure: In case of an emergency that would necessitate an immediate closure of the school, please have a contingency plan worked out with your child and another adult in case you are not home. If your child regularly goes to a place other than home after school, that address and phone number must be on file. In the event of a natural disaster or civil emergency a child will be released only to an authorized adult listed on the emergency card.

## **CONFERENCES**

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of the first trimester. If you would like additional conferences with your child's teacher, please make an appointment through the office or directly with the teacher. It is important to know if something is troubling your child. Sharing such information helps the teacher know how to help your child.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued at the end of each trimester and will be shared with you during conferences. At the end of the second and last reporting period, no conference is scheduled, and report cards will be sent home with the student.

## **HOMEWORK**

According to District policy, homework is an integral part of the instructional program and may be used as another means of contributing to the educational advancement of the pupil. Homework policies are generally explained by the teacher at Back-to-School Night, scheduled early in the school year. Length of time for completing homework will vary between grade levels and individual students. If a child seems to be spending more time on homework than expected, parents should contact the teacher.

## **HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

Frequent and meaningful communication between the home and school is a well-researched factor contributing to a successful education for the child. Please sign up to receive our weekly school wide eNews which comes out every Wednesday. Special events will be announced on special flyers. The school website provides much

information about school events, activities and progress. Teachers are expected to communicate with parents on a regular or as needed basis taking the form of regular classroom newsletters, personal notes, daily exchange journals, personal phone calls and/or e-mail. If parents/guardians have concerns they should call for a personal or phone conference with the classroom teacher.

## **PHONE SYSTEM**

Please note the following:

Please try to set up plans with your child before he or she leaves for school. We receive many messages for students daily, and these disrupt the classroom. We are trying not to interrupt teachers during valuable learning time. In an emergency, we completely understand.

Student Messages: Student messages should be left with the office (944-6828) as we cannot guarantee teacher will be able to access their voice mail during the school day.

Attendance: Attendance messages should be left by calling 944-6832 and leaving a message. The office staff will be accessing these messages throughout each school day.

Teacher Voice Mail: All of the IV staff has voice mail. To access the number press -98- for the directory.

Cafeteria: To reach the cafeteria, press -5-.

Principal: To reach Mrs. Banister, call the office and ask to speak to her.

If you call after hours, you will get our phone message system. Please follow the prompts to leave a message. My extension number is #4004 and you can enter it immediately to reach my voice mail after hours. Email is my preferable means of communication- mbanister@wcsd.k12.ca.us

## **TESTING**

This year, we will not be administering the STAR test except in science to our fifth graders. We will begin the Smarter Balance Assessment Program this year.

## **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

Speech and Language: A Speech and Language Specialist is available to evaluate children's speech and language development and provide follow-up instruction as needed on a pull-out basis.

Special Education: This program is for only those children with diagnosed learning disabilities who meet federal and state required qualifications. In general, children with learning disabilities are enrolled in regular classes whenever possible. A Resource Specialist provides additional assistance in identified areas.

English Learner: Non-English and Limited English speaking students are served by the regular classroom teacher. Most classroom teachers are especially trained to provide an appropriate instructional program for English Learners. In addition, EL students receive additional support from our EL Paraprofessional.

Independent Study: If you find that you must, due to circumstances beyond your control, take your child out of school and will be gone for five or more days you may come into the office and complete an Independent Study Contract. If it is approved by the principal, it will be forwarded to your child's teacher and sufficient work will be sent home with your child along with the complete directions and guidelines. If the work is returned on the first day your child returns to school and the teacher finds it satisfactory then the absences will be considered excused. **Please understand that family vacations must be taken when your child is on vacation and is not a valid reason for an Independent Study.** At least a one week notice is necessary to be eligible for Independent Study. Independent Study is not available during the last two weeks of school.

Home Teaching: This is a program for temporarily physically disabled children. A teacher visits the child's home or hospital until the child is well enough to attend school.

Instrumental Music: Instrumental music instruction is offered to fourth and fifth grade students.

Computer Lab: Students in grades K-5 are provided weekly instruction in the computer lab by the classroom teacher. This occurs during library time.

Physical Education, Music, Art and Science: All students are provided instruction in these subjects by specialists.

## **SPECIAL SERVICES**

School Psychologist: A child psychologist is assigned on a part-time basis at IV School to work with children in need of these services.

Health Services: These services, designed to help meet the health needs of students in relation to their academic progress, include advising school personnel and parents and providing leadership in health resources. Specific services include vision screening, hearing screening, scoliosis screening (curvature of the spine), and assistance in helping families obtain community services.

## **TEXTBOOKS & SUPPLIES**

The school furnishes all textbooks and supplies necessary for a child's instructional program. Students and parents are held liable for unreasonable damage or loss of a text or library book. Our wonderful PTO asks parents for donations of supplies and support for special activities.

## **LIBRARY**

Your child's class will have the opportunity to visit the school's library at least once a week. Books may be checked out for a one week period. Computers, encyclopedias and

other reference materials are also available for research projects. Magazines and periodical subscriptions are available for use. Students also have access to Internet based research. A child who forgets to return or loses a book will have library privileges suspended until the book is returned or paid for.

## **FIELD TRIPS/TRANSPORTATION/CHAPERONES**

Field trips, requiring bus or private vehicle transportation and parental permission in written form, are held at the discretion of the teacher. These trips are related to the instructional program and are designed to further the educational experiences of students. Donations may be requested to help defray the cost of a trip. Parents will be sent written permission slips in advance of each field trip.

If private vehicles are used for field trip transportation a private car registration form must be completed by the driver and a copy of the vehicle registration form, drivers license, and insurance must be provided. The teacher will provide the forms during the planning stages of the trip.

Field trip chaperones must complete a Volunteer Information form. Chaperones will be determined by the teacher as will be the duties and responsibilities. Siblings are never allowed on field trips. If chaperones drive private vehicles on a bused field trip due to space limitations, students are required to ride on the bus.

## **VISITORS & VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are encouraged and welcomed as part of the IV learning community. The many hours of assistance put in by parents, grandparents, guardians, and friends is one of the great assets we have at Indian Valley. A volunteer survey is sent home in the first day packet asking how you might be interested in volunteering including classroom, library, office, PTO, and school wide assistance.

As a volunteer there are some legal requirements that must be met when you work at school. First, volunteers need to check in at the office to sign in upon arrival and sign out at departure. Second, be sure to get clear directions from the teacher about what services you have been asked to do. If it involves equipment, be sure you are clear about its safe operation. You should also be aware that persons who perform authorized volunteer services on behalf of the school are covered by Workers' Compensation for any injuries sustained while performing such service. If you do sustain an injury or suspect you might have sustained an injury, contact school administration immediately. Those volunteers that work with students outside the direct supervision of a teacher will have a background check conducted by the Department of Justice.

Parents who wish to visit their child's classroom may make arrangements by contacting the teacher. Please understand that we cannot have visiting children coming to school during school hours.



The Board of Education bans the use of tobacco products on District property, therefore, smoking is not allowed anywhere on school grounds.

## **LUNCH PROGRAM**

A school lunch can be purchased for \$2.50. Lunch, including milk or water, is provided for students. You can find information about school lunches on our website. A free or reduced price meal application is also provided in the first day packet. The application usually takes 3-5 working days to process. If your child was on the lunch program at another school in the District you still must complete a new application within 30 days from the first day of school to continue this service.

Please pay for your child's meals by check, through the office in the morning or in the cafeteria during morning recesses, and specify what and who it is for. . Checks should be made to pre-pay the desired number of meals. Credit for a number of meals will be given and will last until the meals are eaten or until the end of the school year. Checks should be made payable to WCSD. Questions should be directed to Pam Vandergroen, our Food Services Director at 943-2691.

Parents who wish to take their student out to lunch must sign them in and out through the school office.

Students who have forgotten or lost their lunch money will be provided with free lunch two times. After that, they will receive salad bar only. We will contact parents after each time a child receives a free lunch.

## **DRESS STANDARDS**

Student dress is the responsibility of parents. A neat and clean appearance is most desirable and conducive to learning. It is important that the home and school mutually agree and enforce acceptable standards of dress for elementary age children rather than leaving this decision to the children or to their peer group. Halter tops, low cut tops, thin strap tops, tank tops, shirts exposing the midriff, tights, sunglasses or make-up are not allowed. Shorts, dresses or skirts must be as long as the child's fingertips when his/her arms are at the side. Pant waistbands must remain above the hips. Undergarments must not be visible. Hats can be worn outdoors only. No tobacco or alcohol ads on clothing is allowed, nor are any messages or pictures that could be considered inappropriate in a school.

## **LOST & FOUND**

Many items of clothing and other personal property are lost each year here at school. Much of this could be eliminated by clearly marking your child's name on each outer

garment and other loose personal property. Marked items are returned to their owners. Unmarked items are placed in a lost and found area in the multipurpose room. Unclaimed articles are donated to a charity organization several times during the year.

## **CLASSROOM PARTIES**

Classroom parties are held at the discretion of the classroom teacher at such times as prior to the winter holiday, Valentine's Day, and the last day of school. Simple refreshments are served which parents usually arrange for. We try to always include a healthy option like fresh fruit or vegetables for our students. A volunteer room parent usually helps with these activities.

## **BIRTHDAY TREATS**

We know it is fun to celebrate your child's birthday at school. Please consider making the treat a healthy one or a nonfood item if you wish to bring something to school for your child(ren)'s birthday. Goodie bags that can be passed out to the students at the end of the day is a good option and doesn't interfere with the daily instruction. A donation of a book, board game or PE equipment to the classroom is also appreciated in lieu of food. Please coordinate any birthday treats, goodie bags or class donations with the teacher before the birthday. Please avoid items with nuts due to student allergies.

## **PTO**

An integral part of Indian Valley School is the Parent Teachers Organization. This group is a service organization that works toward bringing the community and school together. A traditional role of the PTO has been the enrichment of school activities. Sponsoring a variety of events, PTO has provided support financially, through volunteerism, and through endorsement. Parents are invited to participate in the many activities sponsored by this group.

## **IVAAC—Indian Valley Academic Advisory Committee (SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL)**

The role of the Indian Valley Academic Advisory Committee is to develop and recommend to the district governing board the School Improvement Plan. Following approval of the plan, the site council has the ongoing responsibility to review with the principal, teachers, and other school personnel implementation of the plan and to assess periodically the effectiveness of the program. The SSC shall also annually update the school improvement budget. The site council is made up of parents or community members selected by parents and six school staff and meets approximately once a month.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Parents and teachers must work together as partners in providing the discipline that guides our children toward becoming responsible, self-directing people and develops their character. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines discipline as "training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties or moral character."

Indian Valley School must be a safe and good place to learn. When student behavior threatens safety or interferes with learning we must respond with appropriate discipline. Our school plan for providing discipline includes these key procedures, roles, and responsibilities:

- A. The parent is the child's primary disciplinarian.
- B. The teacher is the child's school parent (*en loco parentis*) and disciplinarian and works in partnership with the parent.
- C. At Indian Valley School we follow these general procedures and guidelines to establish and maintain good behavior.
  - 1. Ongoing positive feedback through student recognition.
  - 2. Reminders are used in the beginning when rules and procedures are being taught and learned.
  - 3. Consequences are used for misconduct after students have learned rules and procedures. Consequences range from warnings to formal school suspension.

In each classroom, discipline procedures are determined by the individual teacher and may vary from class to class. Your child's teacher will inform you of student behavior expectations, rewards for good behavior, and consequences for misbehavior used in that particular classroom.

## **UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT**

The School and District are committed to providing an educational environment free of unlawful harassment. The District maintains a strict policy prohibiting sexual harassment, unlawful discrimination and/or harassment because of race, color, ethnic group, ancestry, national origin, physical or mental condition, medical condition, and actual or perceived gender or sexual orientation, religion or any other basis protected by federal, state or local law or ordinance or regulation. Unlawful harassment is considered to have occurred if the conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment. We review this with our students annually.

## **SCHOOL RULES & GUIDELINES**

Rules and regulations are necessary for any large group of people to function adequately. The following represents those rules which are felt necessary to insure the respect for the rights and property of others, and the safety for all. These rules should be read and understood by everyone, and they should be fairly and firmly enforced by the staff. These rules should be visibly posted in classrooms.

## General

1. We practice safety and use self-control.
  - That means no fighting, play-fighting, hitting, or possessing dangerous objects. Running is allowed in designated areas only.
2. We show respect for others.
  - That means no teasing, put-downs, bad language, harassment, bullying, taking things that don't belong to you, or arguing with any adults.
3. We dress appropriately for school.
  - Halter tops, low cut tops, thin strap tops, tank tops, shirts exposing the midriff, tights, sunglasses or make-up are not allowed. Pant waistbands must remain above the hips. Undergarments must not be visible. Hats can be worn outdoors only. Chains and belts or jewelry with studs are not allowed. No tobacco or alcohol ads on clothing is allowed, nor are any messages or pictures that could be considered inappropriate in a school setting including "punk" or "gangsta" attire.
4. We take pride in our school.
  - That means no chewing gum. Eat only in designated areas, write only in the proper places, and use the restrooms properly.
5. We use equipment properly.
  - That means removing skates, walking scooters, skateboards, and bicycles while on school grounds. No personal toys, electronic equipment, or trading cards are allowed at school. All equipment and bark area use guidelines are to be followed.

## Going To and From School

1. Students should arrive at school no earlier than 7:50 a.m.
2. Students walking to school should walk on sidewalks and cross streets at marked crossings and intersections. Where city or school crossing guards are posted students should proceed crossing under their direction.
3. Students should come directly to school and go directly home. The school has authority over student conduct to and from school.
4. Students should not play in our IV neighbor's yards on their way to and from school.

## Bicycles/Scooters/Skateboards

1. Bikes, scooters, and skateboards are to be walked on school grounds.
2. Bikes should be locked in the bike racks provided. The school is not responsible for damaged or stolen bicycles, scooters, or skateboards.
3. Only one person should be on a bike.
4. Bike riders should follow vehicle laws.
5. Helmets are required for bicyclists under the age of 18 and recommended for scooter riders.

### Playground

1. Students are expected to obey yard supervisors and teachers at all times.
2. Tackling, wrestling, and other forms of rough play are not allowed.
3. Closing games to others is not allowed.
4. At the end of a recess period students are expected to stop play immediately, (primary students "freeze"), and given a signal, proceed in an orderly manner to their designated line-up areas.
5. To keep the school grounds and surrounding neighborhood free of litter, food can be eaten only indoors with the exception of snacks in designated areas and outdoor lunches.

### Play Equipment

1. Play equipment is provided for the use and enjoyment of all. It must be used safely and shared with others.
2. Students using the climbing equipment must do so with extreme care. Hands must be kept on the bars at all times.

### Cafeteria

1. Teachers walk their classes to the lunchroom.
2. The cafeteria should be a pleasant place for all. Running, loud noises and disorderly conduct will not be allowed.
3. Students are expected to clean up after themselves and to stay in the eating area until dismissed by the supervisor.
4. Students sit at assigned tables.
5. Students may leave their lunch boxes in an area designated by their teacher when excused from the lunch area.

### Bathrooms

1. Bathrooms are not play areas. Students are expected to use them correctly and leave them in the same order they were found. If misconduct occurs in the bathroom, and a mess was created, the child(ren) will be asked to clean up their mess and will be given the proper equipment (gloves, non-toxic cleaner). Parents will be notified.

### **WEBSITE**

Visit Indian Valley's website at: <http://www.walnutcreeksd.org/iv/site/default.asp> . It's a great place to see upcoming events, student work, teachers' e-mail addresses, and many more details about what's going on around campus.

### **eNews**

Sign up for eNews an email school newsletter intended for families of Indian Valley students. eNews has articles of interest and includes a calendar and information on events and special days as well as holidays. . Please sign up on our school website under Site Shortcuts on the right hand side of the page.

### **TELEPHONE USE**

Student use of the office phone is limited to only school related situations such as calling for a forgotten lunch or lunch money and not feeling well. After school arrangements should be made with your child prior to leaving for school. Students should ask to use their classroom telephone right after school rather than coming to the office.

### **THANK YOU**

Thank you for taking the time to read this Parent Handbook. We truly appreciate our wonderful Indian Valley parents. Please feel free to contact, Milissa Banister, IV Principal, with any questions.

