



Sierra School Parent and Student Handbook K-5 Lower Level School 2018-2019

Introduction and Background

Purpose Statement

The purpose of Sierra School is to provide an educational environment that fosters the development of each student's academic potential to the fullest; supports each student's creativity, uniqueness, and individuality; and empowers each student to use his or her knowledge and personal integrity to make the world a better place for all.

Accreditation

Sierra School is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

The accreditation certifies that Sierra is a trustworthy institution of learning and validates the integrity of our school's program as it supports student learning. Accreditation also assures parents that our purposes are appropriate and being accomplished through a viable education program.



Sierra School – Focused Learning Goals

These Focused Learning Goals were developed by the administration, faculty and staff of Sierra School and approved by the Board. They represent the skills we expect graduates of Sierra to develop.

1. Goal #1: Upon graduation a Sierra student will be an Academically Competent Learner

who:

- has mastered essential skills and knowledge in reading, writing, speaking, spelling, listening, math, science, social science and technology.
- has developed an appreciation for the humanities: art, music, literature and drama.
- is technologically literate.
- researches, organizes and uses information.
- demonstrates the ability to reason, think critically and solve problems.
- strives to be creative and productive.
- communicates well with others.
- scores at or above national grade level norms on annual standardized achievement tests.

2. Goal #2: Upon graduation a Sierra student will be a Compassionate Global Citizen

who:

- recognizes and affirms the dignity and worth of every individual.
- understands and appreciates ethnic and cultural diversity.
- learns from and coexists with the diverse peoples and cultures of our constantly changing world.
- practices environmental stewardship.
- displays a strong sense of service and community.

3. Goal #3: Upon graduation a Sierra student will be a Healthy Individual (socially, emotionally and physically) who:

- uses inter/intra personal communication skills to be inclusive, friendly, respectful and polite.
- recognizes the benefits and takes responsibility for lifelong wellness.
- recognizes the benefits of fitness and wellness.
- works to build a positive self-image.
- develops their own unique and creative talents.

4. Goal #4: Upon graduation a Sierra student will be a Self-Motivated Individual who:

- understands learning as a lifelong process.
- challenges themselves inherently to be the best they can be.
- accepts responsibility for their own actions and behaviors.
- embraces 21st century life skills such as collaboration, critical thinking, and communication.
- Strives to be flexible and adaptable.

It is our sincere hope that we can achieve these important goals for all of our Sierra Students! Our School's statement of purpose remains as true today as when it was established.

Hours and Schedules

Daily Schedules: SCHOOL BEGINS PROMPTLY AT 8:45 AM.

Lower Level (K-5)

7:00am	Morning Care
8:30am	Morning Care students out to the playground
8:40am	Morning Run/Walk
8:45am	Classes Begin
10:15am	Morning Recess
11:15am	Lunch (in classrooms)
11:40am	Lunch Recess
2:00pm	Afternoon Recess
3:15pm	Dismissal

Note: Extended Care coverage is available for K-5 students from 3:15-6:00pm daily for an additional charge. This is billed based on usage at the end of each 4 week period.

Access to the Facility

School parents will be provided with the key code to access the Main Hallway during regular facility hours before/after school – 7am-8:45am and 3:15pm-6pm. This code is to be kept confidential and NOT provided to the student for any reason, or anyone else other than those authorized to pick up your child. **Anyone arriving to school during regular class time hours MUST first check-in with the Main Office to receive a visitor’s badge.**

Supervision and Parent Responsibility

The school is not responsible for students on the playground prior to 8:45am and after 3:15 pm (unless the student is enrolled in a Sierra sponsored program).

No supervision is provided by school personnel after school; consequently, any primary students remaining on campus after 3:30 (and not enrolled in any Sierra sponsored program) are to be directly and closely supervised by their parents.

Since our Extended Care Program operates until 6:00pm, we ask that parental supervision include keeping primary students away from the main hallway, classrooms, blacktop and playground areas.

Before School Guidelines for K-5 Parents

Sierra School strives to promote independent, responsible students. It is important that your child learn these necessary skills for school, and beyond. Sierra teachers help to nurture these important attributes by establishing specific morning and afternoon routines.

- ◆ Allow your child to bring in their own backpacks and lunches into their classroom. This promotes responsibility and independence.
- ◆ Please ensure that your child is on time and on campus by 8:45am every day. Even better, try to have your child at school by 8:40 every morning to participate in our daily “morning run”.

- ◆ The school day begins promptly at 8:45am. Please leave immediately after dropping off your child so they may attend to their studies with fewer distractions.

Dismissal Procedures

All K-5 students are to be escorted by their parent to class in the morning and picked up outside the classroom at 3:15pm unless enrolled in a Sierra sponsored after-school program. Grade K-5 students can be walked to the front parking area of school at 3:15pm for parent pick-up; upon parent request. All K-5 students still remaining at 3:20 pm will be placed in Extended Care at an additional charge.

Visitors on Campus

All visitors to the school must first check in at the school office. They will need to obtain a visitor badge and be escorted to the classrooms.

School Office Hours

8:00am-4:00pm

Phone: 408-247-4740

FAX: 408-247-0996

E-mail: info@sierraschool.com

Parking and Traffic Information

The success of the day-to-day traffic flow relies entirely on the cooperation of the parents and students and their commitment to follow the policies put into place. Safety is our main concern.

Parents and Guardians: Please park in the main lot entering from either Redwood or Blake. Please do not park on the residential side of Redwood. Observe the rules of the road and please, drive slowly, as there is a lot of foot traffic by families and visitors in this lot. Park in designated areas only; do not block sidewalks or ramps; do not double-park; do not park or stop in the red zone. The Disabled Parking slots are only for those with disabilities and with vehicles displaying the proper placards. Please respect other drivers and pedestrians. The lot off Woodhams is also available for parking.

Communication

A school newsletter is sent home monthly. K-5 parents also receive a weekly letter from their child's teacher via email and in their child's Monday folder.

Communication Between Parent and Staff: Any communication regarding student progress should be addressed to your child's teacher first. Prior to visiting a teacher's classroom, make an appointment via e-mail or phone. If after speaking to the teacher you feel the need to talk to the Principal, an appointment can be made via phone or e-mail. Making an appointment will ensure thoughtful discussion about your child's progress and any information you might want to share.

Correspondence Guidelines: We encourage the use of e-mail and other written notes as a means of communication. In these and in all forms of communication, we expect mutual respect and consideration. Please adhere to standard letter writing conventions when addressing your child's teacher.

Attendance and Health Procedures

Absences: One major factor in a child's success in school is regular attendance. Each time a child is absent from school he/she misses instructional experiences that cannot be duplicated. It is very important that your child attend school every day unless he/she has a medical excuse because of illness. Every attempt should be made to schedule doctor and dentist appointments after school hours. When it is necessary for your child to be absent from school, please notify the school office by 8:45am.

Illness: If your child is vomiting, has a fever, diarrhea, or contagious condition, he/she should be kept home where they can be cared for. Additionally, other children will not be exposed to these illnesses. Your help and cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated. **Also, your child should not return to school until they are 24 hours free from fever, vomiting, or any other signs of illness.**

Tardies: Tardiness to class results in a disruption of the activities and a break of the continuity of the teaching process. Parents should make every effort to get their child to school on time. If your child arrives after 8:45am he/she will need to check into the office and pick up a late slip to enter his/her classroom.

Leaving School Early: If it becomes necessary for a student to leave school early, the student must check out through the office. When a child needs to leave early for medical or dental appointments it is requested that the parents send a note to the school on the day the child is to be released. Students must be picked up in the office. Do not go directly to the classroom to get your child. Students will be called to come to the office to be picked up by their parents, who will need to sign them out.

Health

Immunization records must be complete and in accordance with state law. Please send a note to school if your child has a medical condition that limits his/her ability to fully participate in school programs.

Illness/Accident Procedures: The Emergency Card must be current at all times. Changes of address, phone and names of persons to be called if parents are unavailable must be communicated to the Main Office as soon as possible. School personnel must be able to contact parents or their representatives in case of illness, accident or emergency.

Illness or accidents: Parents or their authorized designee will be notified and required to pick up their child in the event of, but not limited to, the following:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or more
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Evidence of a communicable disease
- Presence of any undiagnosed skin rash

Parents need to keep their child home from school when:

- A fever of 100 degrees or more is present AND for 24 hours AFTER the fever has subsided.
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea is present.

Medications: Over the counter medication and/or prescription medication can be administered to the child in the office with prior parent approval. Any prescriptive medications will need to be brought into the office with a doctor's note including directions for administering the medication, including dosage and time of day. The following guidelines are in effect for Prescription Medications at School:

1. A signed Prescription Medication Release Form must accompany the medication. You can pick up this form in the main office.
2. The medication must be in the original prescription container.
3. Students are responsible to come to the main office for their medications at the time they are due.
4. When PRN (as needed) medications are given at home, parents will be required to call the school office stating the time and dosage that was given prior to any administration at school.
5. Parents will be required to pick up any unused medication at the end of the year.
6. Medications may be given 30 minutes prior or 30 minutes after the time the medication is due.
7. As a reminder, the first dose of any new medication should not be given at school.

Your cooperation in fulfilling these simple requirements will assure that school personnel can process and implement your request in a legal, timely and safe manner should your child need to be given medication at school.

Food Allergies: Sierra School recognizes that students have allergies with varying degrees of severity. The school's primary goal is to provide a safe environment for all children. The policy outlined below has been designed to reduce the risk to students by implementing procedures that will prevent symptoms from occurring.

Student Responsibility:

1. Eat only food/snacks brought from home.
2. Avoid food items with unknown ingredients or unknown allergens.
3. Notify school staff immediately if symptoms of a reaction occur.
4. Be proactive in the care and management of their food allergy and reaction based on their developmental level.

Parent Responsibility:

1. Notify the school of the child's allergies and work with the school staff to develop a plan that accommodates the child's needs throughout the school day.
2. Provide school staff with updated and complete written medical documentation, instructions and medication, both periodically and upon request.
3. Provide complete and updated emergency contact information.
4. Provide any necessary and properly labeled medication and replace medication after use or upon expiration – to the office as necessary.

5. Educate your child in the self-management of his or her food allergy, including: safe and unsafe foods, strategies for avoiding unsafe food, identifying allergic symptoms, how to communicate a need for help, and how to politely refuse unsafe food when it is offered.

School Responsibility:

1. Identify and train school personnel on how to properly administer medications.
2. Create an allergen free classroom as appropriate.

Discipline Policies

General Guidelines:

- Display courtesy, friendliness and respect toward all
- Display personal pride in one's work, attitude, and appearance
- Show respect for the rights and property of others
- Be willing to resolve conflicts with directness, kindness, truthfulness, and non-violence
- Arrive on time prepared for school and ready to learn
- Do not bring inappropriate items (i.e., toys) to school
- Fully participate in all classroom and school activities
- Keep a clean school environment
- Do not chew gum on school premises
- Use materials and equipment responsibly and appropriately
- Follow all school, classroom, and safety rules
- Display appropriate school and classroom behavior

Classroom Rules: Each teacher will set up specific classroom rules with each class during the first week of school. Rules may be changed or added during the school year as the need arises. The teacher will always meet with the students whenever rules are changed or added, so that all students know what is expected of them. Students are encouraged to think of helpful rules and present them to their teacher.

Dress Code

Students at Sierra wear a variety of clothing, from casual to dressy. Jeans are acceptable only without rips, holes, or fraying hems (even if they are sold this way). T-shirts and long shorts are fine. Oversized T-shirts, which extend length of shorts, are not allowed. Boy's shirts must have sleeves (no tank tops or sleeveless shirts). No midriff should be exposed at any time. No thin strapped tank tops or thin strapped dresses are allowed. We encourage jewelry be kept at home for the protection of the item and safety of the child with activities such as PE and play structure usage.

Field Trip Information

K-5 students enjoy monthly trips to reinforce and supplement the in-class learning experience. All K-5 parents are required to attend at least 3 of these field trips per year.

Rules for Chaperones and Drivers:

- Driver/chaperones for field trips must follow teacher's directions.
- Drivers/chaperones **may not stop** on the way to, or from, the field trip destination for any reason other than safety needs.
- Booster seats/car seats must be used when required by law and when appropriate.
- Each passenger must wear a seat belt.
- No child in the front seat with an airbag.
- Drivers/chaperones must stay with children under their care until the teacher arrives.
- Because drivers/chaperones are responsible for the children in their charge, chaperones and drivers may not take non-Sierra children on the field trips.
- Parents must sign up for and be approved as chaperones **before** the event.

Field Trip Driver Information: Due to Sierra insurance regulations, every driver for a school activity must:

- Have a photocopy of their valid driver's license on file in the Main Office.
- Have a photocopy of their current car insurance on file in the Main Office.
- Have one seat belt per passenger.
- Have car/booster seats as required by law.

Homework, Evaluations and Grades

Homework K-5

Homework should enable students to practice and apply skills taught in the classroom. Homework should include those activities which can be carried on independently at home, but have a direct application to what is being taught in school. Homework will provide an opportunity for students to establish good study habits, work independently, extend classroom learning through projects, reports, and/or other extra credit activities, and enable them to maintain an interest in learning. Every child works and learns at a different pace. Therefore, it is possible that some students will need to spend more time on homework assignments than others. Approximate homework times per night are listed below:

Grade Levels K & 1	15-30 Minutes
Grade Levels 2 & 3	30-45 Minutes
Grade Levels 4 & 5	45-60 Minutes

In addition to the times listed above, children will be expected to read/be read to for 20 minutes per evening.

Work Missed Due to Absences

K-5 Sierra students are responsible to make-up any work missed due to illness, appointments, family events, etc. The rule is to allow one extra day for each day missed.

- One day absent = 2 days to make up work
- Two days absent = 3 days to make up work
- Three days absent = 4 days to make up work

If a student is absent for any lengthy period of time due to extended illness (4 or more days), special consideration will be given. This may include allowing extra time, and assigning only the most critical work to be completed. All K-5 teachers will work closely with students to make up missed work as appropriate. Unfortunately, many of the whole class activities and small group activities cannot be made up if missed. Teachers will work with students to make certain they have an opportunity to learn new skills taught while students were not in school. Our goal is to provide support for students who have missed class times due to illness.

Weekly Evaluations

The Sierra evaluation system works as follows:
Each Monday parents will receive in their child's folder an evaluation form about their child.

The information on the form will include:

- Math progress
- Reading progress
- Spelling progress
- Citizenship

A comment written by the classroom teacher on the student's overall progress will appear periodically.

Along with the Monday evaluations, parents will receive a notice from the teacher, telling them about upcoming classroom events. The student's work will be included in this packet. Parents are asked to go over the work and read the information sent to them. Please sign and return the bottom portion of the evaluation by the next day. The comment section provides an important means of communication with the teacher.

Grades

K-1 Grades in academic subjects are as follows:

- E Exceeds grade level expectations
- M Meets grade level expectations
- P Progressing: Making progress towards grade level expectations
- C Conference Required
- X Not evaluated at this time

Grades in work habits are as follows:

- + Outstanding
- ✓ Satisfactory
- Needs improvement

Grades 2 through 5 Letter grades will be given in the following academic areas: Reading, Math, Writing, Spelling, Social Studies, and Science.

Grades in these academic subjects are as follows:

- A Superior Achievement
- B Above Average Achievement
- C Average Achievement

- D Poor Achievement
- F Very Poor Achievement

Non-academic subjects (Spanish, Art, Music, PE, and Computer) receive the following grades:

- + Outstanding
- ✓ Satisfactory
- Needs improvement

All K-5 report cards are mailed home quarterly.

Miscellaneous Information

Birthday Treats – a healthier option for celebrating your child’s birthday

As part of our ongoing effort to offer healthier alternatives to our students, we have implemented Birthday Books! Instead of bringing in food items, we are asking families to donate a book to the classroom library in honor of their child’s birthday.

Dropping Off Items to the Office

We understand that lunches are sometimes forgotten, homework is misplaced, and jackets and sweatshirts can be left accidentally at home. When that is the case, please bring any forgotten items to the Main Office (**not directly to the classroom**). We will make sure your child receives them promptly.

Loss of Materials

Students will be billed for damaged or lost books. Please make an effort to keep track of all your materials and treat them well.

Office Rules

Sierra School supports students' access to parents or guardians through the use of the telephone during the school day. Along with that, we support a parent or guardian access to the student during the day. In the interest of both supporting classroom instruction and eliminating classroom disruptions, Sierra School Administration reserves the discretion of **when** it is appropriate to convey information between students and parents/guardians. We will ensure that important information from parents/guardians will be received at an appropriate time in the school day to the student. We will also ensure that parents/guardians are informed in a timely manner regarding their child during the school day. With permission, we will allow students to use the office telephone to call parents/guardians during the school day. Therefore, it is unnecessary for students to use a cell phone during the school day, for any reason.

Parent Participation

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to participate during the school year. Ways to assist include: attending Sierra Family Association (SFA) Meetings, volunteering to be a Room Parent, volunteering to help supervise the Fun To Run Program, assisting with Staff Appreciation Week, and helping with the Spring Musical. One special request we make is for parents to chaperone on our monthly field trips (at least 3 times per year). Please see your child’s teacher for other ideas on how to participate.

Pets on Campus

No pets are allowed on campus. While parents may believe their pet is friendly and safe around children, the behavior may be very different when lots of children are running around before or after school. Neither you, nor the school, would welcome the possible litigation should a pet bite a child. Please leave your pets at home. The safety of the children is our foremost concern.

Sierra Family Association (SFA)

The purpose of the Sierra Family Association is to:

- grow a connected community through events and volunteering,
- strive to be inclusive as possible and to enact a variety of family participation activities,
- support every child, teacher, and staff member equally while having fun in service to our school, and
- engage in the Sierra learning community through participation in accreditation events.

All parents are automatic members of the SFA!

Student Supplies

Please see the supply list included with your registration packet. All supplies need to be brought in by the first day of school.

Yearbook

Our school produces a yearbook that is published in May.

School Programs and Activities

Monthly Assembly: Sierra students participate in a monthly school-wide gathering and celebrations where teachers present awards to students. Students are recognized for both academic achievement and individual personal growth in citizenship and other areas as observed by classroom teachers.

December Giving: This is an annual student-led giving tradition in which students research and select at least one charity or service type organization to work for during December. Students obtain contributions of materials and/or money to donate to the selected organization during the holiday season.

Fine Arts Program – Music and Art

1. A 30 minute music instruction class takes place every Friday in each classroom.
2. All children take part in a K-5 choir class every Friday.
3. The Winter Songfest is an annual concert performed for the Sierra School community by all students in grades K-5 and 6-12 music students.
4. A Spring Musical takes place each year. All K-5 students participate, along with Grades 6-12 Performing Arts students.
5. Students actively participate in a 10 week visual art program each spring. This program culminates in an annual art show presented on the same evening as the Spring Musical.

After School Enrichment: After school programs offering various learning activities for our children are organized for a separate fee. Information regarding classes offered are available in the Main Office and flyers go home in Monday folders.

Beyond Technology Education: Sierra students participate in a weekly technology course, taught on laptop computers. Students spend the first half of each quarter learning a specific program (Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Desktop Publisher). The second half of the quarter is devoted to a student project, using the program learned, and integrating it into a specific classroom unit of study.

Spanish: Students develop a basic understanding of Spanish language and the Hispanic culture through speaking, grammar, writing, listening, reading, music, stories, and games. Classes take place twice a week.

Character Education for Social and Academic Success: Students build learning, empathy, emotion management, friendship skills, problem solving and other social and emotional learning skills throughout the year during class lessons.