

# Sierra School Parent and Student Handbook 6-12 and ESL Upper 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.

Full accreditation allows our school the opportunity to submit coursework to the UC system for approval. All Sierra School coursework is fully approved through the UC system. This allows our graduates the opportunity to apply to UC and California State colleges and universities as well as through community colleges, namely De Anza, Mission, Foothill and West Valley.



## 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 of Directors. 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 9:00 AM.**

### **Upper Level (6-12 and ESL) Schedule**

9:00am	Classes Begin
10:40am	Mid-morning Break
12:30pm	Lunch
3:00pm	Dismissal

### **Supervision and Parent Responsibility**

The school is not responsible for students on the school grounds prior to 9am and after 3pm.

### **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 smaller lot off Woodhams is also available for parking.

#### **Driving Policy (student):**

All student drivers must have a photocopy of their valid driver's license and current car insurance on file with the Main Office. Due to the safety and liability issues involved in teen driving, we do not allow any drivers to use their vehicle during the school day, other than driving themselves to and from school. Due to our closed campus policy, this, of course, also means no driving during the lunch period. If you do drive yourself to school, you must use the parking lot off Woodhams. Observe the rules of the road and drive slowly – you are on a school property. Park in the designated areas and respect other drivers and pedestrians.

## **Communication**

A school newsletter is sent home monthly. All staff are available via email. Phone messages can be left with the Main Office. ThinkWave is a software based grading and homework communication program set up for Grade 6-12 families. Log-in information is provided for both students and their parents.

**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 9:00am** at 408-247-4740.

**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/Guardians should make every effort to get their child to school on time. If your child arrives after 9:00am he/she will need to check into the office and pick up a tardy slip to enter his/her classroom. For your tardy child to be excused, we must receive a call to 408-247-4740 to explain the tardy, if you do not escort them into the office.

**Leaving School Early:** Under NO circumstances should you leave the campus without proper permission. Students leaving campus for appointments during their regular class periods must check out through the Main Office. Parents/Guardians should call in advance to excuse these appointments. Students who become ill or injured while at school are required to go to the Main Office so parents/guardians can be notified and will be expected to make appropriate arrangements for the student to leave the campus. Students who do not check out will receive an unexcused absence for the classes they miss that day.

### **Absences (Excused vs. Unexcused):**

Regular, daily attendance is expected and required for all students.

There are three basic categories of excused absences. They are: (1) illness of the student; (2) family emergency, and (3) medical/dental appointments. Please try to make your appointments after school whenever possible. All other absences are considered unexcused.

If you know ahead of time that you will be absent, bring a note from your parent at least three days prior, in order to obtain class work that you will miss. Please check your teacher's webpage to obtain missed assignments.

Any unexcused absence will result in a detention. Repeated unexcused absences from a class or classes will lower your grade. Ten absences excused or unexcused, in any one class, per quarter will result in an "incomplete grade" and no credit will be received.

Unexcused absences include extreme lateness, leaving class without permission, or leaving class with permission but not returning promptly.

A zero may result for class assignments missed during an unexcused absence.

### **Tardiness (First Period and other Periods):**

Students begin class work promptly at 9:00 am. All students are expected to be in their seats when class begins. This entails having turned in homework to bin, putting phone away, discarding or putting food away and having any warm up materials out and ready to go. This includes classes after break. Your morning break is 10 minutes. When class begins at 10:50, you are in your seats and ready to begin class.

Anyone who arrives late to class must receive a tardy slip from the office and will be given one period of detention if the tardy is unexcused.

Examples of excused first period tardies are: sickness with parent verification by note or phone call, medical appointment with verification by note or phone call, auto accidents – direct or indirect involvement, unavoidable breakdowns (flat tire, dead battery, etc), and unique, unavoidable circumstances, as confirmed by administration such as bus delays or breakdowns.

Examples of unexcused first period tardies are oversleeping, running out of gas, and normal traffic problems. The administration will be responsible to determine whether an absence or tardy is excused or unexcused.

High School students may lose credits due to consistent tardies to class.

### **Homework 6-12 and ESL**

Homework is given Monday through Thursday; occasionally weekend homework may be necessary due to special assignments, projects, missing work, etc. Any targeted work not completed in class is assigned for homework. Your teacher will make every effort to ensure your understanding of weekly targets and homework assignments.

Homework is due the day after it is given unless otherwise specified. If an assignment's due date is given in advance, you are required to turn in the assignment on the date specified **regardless** of whether or not you are absent during any of the days after the assignment is given. If you are absent on the day it is due, you can email the assignment to the school office (info@sierraschool.com) so it is not considered late. You must receive an email back confirming receipt to get credit.

If you are given class time to work on an assignment and you do not finish it, IT IS HOMEWORK and it is due the next day at the beginning of class. This includes any **Wordly Wise** work (English) or **Labs** (Science).

**Expectations for completing missed classwork, homework due to absence:** If you are going to be absent, you must inform your teachers as soon as possible. If you are ill in the morning and are unable to attend school, your parent/guardian must call the school office so that you can be given time to complete missed classwork, notes or assignments. If you miss classwork due to illness, you have 2 days to complete the assignment otherwise it will be considered late. The scores on late work will be automatically deducted 25%. If you are absent the day an assignment is due, you are expected to email the assignment to the school office (info@sierraschool.com) and your work will be relayed to your teacher. If you know you are going to be absent the day an assignment or project is due, you are expected to turn the assignment in ahead of time or arrange an alternate way to turn it in (i.e.: a classmate or parent/guardian).

**Note: If you are absent the day of a presentation in any class, you will not be given credit for the presentation.**

## **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.

**Audio/Electronic Devices**

Cell phones, i-pods/ipads, cameras, laptops, tablets and other small electronic devices can be brought on campus. However, they are not to be used at any time during the school day without the explicit permission of a member of the faculty or staff. This includes ear buds as well. Use of these devices during class time will result in the following consequences:

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense – device confiscated for the remainder of the day.

- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense – device confiscated and parent/guardian must pick up the device from the office.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense – device confiscated and student may not have the device in their possession on campus for the remainder of the quarter.

The only exception to this rule is that the devices can be used during lunch.

**Personal Belongings:** Students bring electronic devices to campus at their own risk. The school will not be held responsible for damaged or lost devices.

## **Rules and Behaviors**

### **Behavioral Contract**

All Sierra students are expected to abide by school rules and guidelines (see Code of Conduct below). Consistent failure to adhere to school rules may result in a required behavior contract. A behavior contract may be the result of infractions due to (but not limited to): unexcused absences, consistent tardies, dress code violations, inappropriate classroom behavior, irresponsible behavior. A student must conform to the requirements of the contract in order to maintain their status as a Sierra student. Failure to do so can result in suspension and eventual expulsion.

### **Cell Phones**

Cell phones must be silenced and put away during class. Students may only use their cell phones before school, during morning break and during lunch. Misuse of these privileges will result in the cell phone being confiscated.

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense – cell phone confiscated for the remainder of the day.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense – cell phone confiscated and parent/guardian must pick up the device from the office.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense – cell phone confiscated and student may not have the phone in their possession on campus for the remainder of the quarter.

### **Office Rules**

Sierra School does not deny students' access to parents or guardians through the use of the telephone during the school day. Nor, do we deny 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 both unnecessary and inappropriate for students to use a cell phone during the school day to contact a parent or guardian.

### **General Classroom 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
- 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

Come to class prepared with books, binder paper, pens and pencils. Once you are in class, you may not disturb another class to get material you have forgotten.

Mutual respect between teachers and students is essential. Disruption of class at any time is unacceptable. Disruptive, insubordinate, or rude behavior is not permitted and will be grounds for suspension.

Honesty, integrity, and trust are essential parts of the education process. Our focus here at Sierra School is to promote academic integrity. All student work should be the individual student's own work. That which is not the student's own work needs to be appropriately cited (MLA format). The use of some other person's work by a student without proper citation violates academic integrity and is known as plagiarism. Failure to adhere to academic integrity will lead to immediate disciplinary action.

We require that all students carry a backpack.

### Classroom Rules

During the first week of school, each teacher sets up specific classroom rules. Rules may be changed, added, or eliminated during the school year as the need arises. The teacher will always meet with the students whenever rules are changed, so that all students know what is expected of them.

### Closed Campus

Sierra School is a "closed" campus. Students are not allowed to leave campus, either by foot or by car, during the school day without prior Parent/Guardian approval and Main Office approval.

### Code of Conduct

We believe that students will achieve their personal best in a school where community members work together to build and maintain a caring and cooperative environment. The following yearly code of conduct is included here within the Student Guide, as it an integral part of the behavior required of our junior and senior high students.

By signing this agreement a Sierra School student **agrees** that all students have the **right** to:

- Be treated, along with their personal property, with courtesy, kindness and respect
- Express feelings and opinions
- Work and play in an atmosphere of harmony and cooperation
- Feel secure and to be safe in a caring and supportive environment
- Be valued for their individuality
- Learn in a supportive atmosphere

By signing this agreement a Sierra School student **agrees** to be **responsible** for the following actions:

- Treat others, and their personal property, with courtesy, kindness and respect
- Listen to others with mutual respect
- Maintain a safe and secure school environment

- Model and support school rules
- Develop responsibility for one's own actions
- Value others for their individual differences
- Work to achieve my personal best while allowing others to do the same

Also as a student of Sierra School, it is understood that failure to comply with these behaviors will result in logical consequences. These include:

- Student meets with the Principal
- Principal meets with the student and parent(s) to create a Behavior Contract
- Further action, i.e. detention, suspension, expulsion, determined by the Administration

### **Computer Use**

Computers are a shared resource for school-related use only. Therefore, students using computers agree to adhere to the rules as set forth in the Beyond Technology acceptable use policy that is signed at the beginning of the year. Any violation of the rules will result in disciplinary measures and the possible loss of use of school computers.

### **Detention Rules**

Inappropriate or impolite behavior results in a student being given a lunchtime detention. Examples of inappropriate behavior are, but are not limited to: talking out of turn, dress code violation, and rude behavior/speech/action towards others - including school staff, destruction of school or others' property, not following instructions or school rules.

Here are the guidelines for Detention:

1. Students must bring a lunch from home that does not require heating. No student may deliver a lunch to the student serving detention.
2. The first 10 minutes of detention (12:30-12:40) is to be used for setting up lunch, getting a drink of water. If a student arrives after 12:35, it is considered a no show/absence and the student will receive 2 extra days of detention.
3. After 12:40 students are not allowed to leave their seats for any reason.
4. No talking during detention. No cell phones. No electronic devices.
5. No bathroom breaks.
6. Students will be dismissed at 1:10 to use the bathroom and prepare for their next class.

### **Dress Code**

An important part of a dress code is to teach young people that in the larger arena of life, different types of dress are appropriate for different settings. Parents and guardians who send their students to Sierra School, and students who choose the Sierra School experience, accept the judgment of the Administration as final in matters of school policies and procedures, including dress code for a junior high and high school learning environment. To that end, students in this academic setting are expected to be clean and neat in their personal appearance, observing standards of modesty, moderation and good taste.

The school reserves the right to regulate against upcoming fads or fashions that reflect negatively on the school and/or person. Interpretation and judgment in matters pertaining to dress and personal appearance are, obviously, necessary.

Students are expected to remain in code after school while on campus and when attending Sierra School events, including off-site Sierra activities and school sponsored field trips.

Standards for all students –

- ◆ All clothing must be clean, with no holes and patches.
- ◆ Frayed or unhemmed garments and clothing with holes/nicks/snags are not permitted (even if garment is sold this way).
- ◆ Garments should be free of inappropriate slogans, pictures, etc. Clothing displaying language or symbols related to tobacco, drugs and alcohol are not permitted. Clothing displaying language or symbols of an offensive nature (sexist, obscene, or sexually suggestive), satanic lettering or pictures, violent expressions or images (including those connected to entertainment) are not permitted.
- ◆ Backpacks, books, notebook, etc. must be free of inappropriate patches, drawings and writings.
- ◆ Students are to wear shoes at all times.
- ◆ The hair must be cleaned, combed, neat and well maintained. Hair styles with extreme cuts, styles, or unnatural colors are not permitted.
- ◆ Shorts need to be no less than 7” at inseam.
- ◆ No belly shirts, crop tops or midriffs. Shirts must cover stomach and back.
- ◆ Baseball caps, hats, visors, sport headbands, thermal ear bands, beanies or sweatshirt hoods may not be worn indoors.
- ◆ No visible tattoos, unless you are of age (18 years or older) and tattoo must be appropriate for school environment.
- ◆ Any facial hair needs to be clean, combed, neat and well maintained.
- ◆ Spaghetti straps and bra straps must be covered at all times.
- ◆ Undergarments must be covered at all times.
- ◆ Skirts, dresses and slits in skirts or dresses must be no shorter than 6” from mid-knee.

### **Dress Code Violations and Consequences**

If a student appears to be out of school dress code, a teacher or staff member will send the student to the office with an explanation of the area of concern. Administration will address the concern with the student.

- 1<sup>st</sup> incident:** sent to office-warning, student will change into appropriate clothing provided by the school, or parents/guardians will be called to bring appropriate clothing.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> incident:** change of clothing (see above), detention-Any missed in class assignments cannot be made up.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> incident:** change of clothing (see above), detention, parent/guardian contact, any missed in class assignments cannot be made up, and placement on a Behavior Contract.
- 4<sup>th</sup> incident:** Student will be sent home for the day. Parent/Guardian will be called to pick-up by parent. Class credit for the day will be zero. Placement on a Behavior Contract upon return.

### **Grades and Progress**

A written progress report is mailed mid-quarter. If a student is underperforming, parents/guardians will be notified. If more in-depth communication is needed, conferences will be scheduled. Grades will be given at the end of each quarter. A semester grade will be given as the average between two quarters. The semester grades are recorded as part of the student’s transcript/report card. In each course a student takes, there are a certain number of possible points to be earned.

The percentage of possible points earned is converted to letter grades in the following manner:

93-100	A
90-92	A-
88-89	B+
83-87	B
80-82	B-
78-79	C+
73-77	C
70-72	C-
68-69	D+
63-67	D
60-62	D-
Less than 60	F

### **Harassment/Bullying Policy**

Sierra School is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment free of harassment and bullying.

All students and staff of Sierra School are forbidden from engaging in any form of harassing or bullying behavior which is directed at any member of the community – adult, adolescent, or child – at any time. This policy also extends to any visitor or guest of the school. It also covers behavior out of school that is hostile or intimidating towards another, devalues the dignity of the person, or detracts from the safe learning environment of Sierra School.

It is the responsibility of the individual to:

- Conduct him or herself in a manner that contributes to a positive school environment.
- Avoid any activity that may be discriminatory, intimidating or harassing.
- Immediately tell the one harassing them that the behavior is offensive and unwelcome.
- When told that he/she is perceived as engaging in discriminatory, intimidating, harassing or unwelcome conduct, that person must cease the conduct immediately.
- Report all incidents of discrimination or harassment to the Principal or other school staff member.

**Harassment** occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment or to a school environment, which is hostile or intimidating because of the individual’s race, creed, color, national origin, physical disability or sex. It includes, but is not limited to any of the following:

1. Verbal Harassment: epithets, derogatory comments, slurs, and jokes, threatening words spoken to another person.
2. Physical Harassment: unwanted physical touching or contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements or any intimidating interference with normal work or movement.
3. Visual Harassment: derogatory, demeaning or inflammatory posters, cartoons, photography, written words, drawings or gestures.
4. Sexual Harassment: unwelcome sexual advances and propositions, threats or demands, and other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Specific examples include but are not limited to: use of sexually degrading words to

describe an individual or an individual's body, telling inappropriate or sexually-related jokes

5. Retaliation: reprisal or threat for having reported or having threatened to report harassment or bullying.

**Bullying** is understood as repeated physical, verbal or psychological attacks or intimidation directed against a person who cannot properly defend him or herself because of size or strength, or because the person is outnumbered or less psychologically resilient. Specific examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

1. Assault
2. Tripping
3. Intimidation, rumor spreading and isolation
4. Demands for money
5. Destruction of property, theft of valued possessions
6. Destruction of another's work
7. Name-calling
8. Bullying of staff and volunteers by students
9. Electronic name calling or other written intimidation

**Rumors:** The use of false information, soiled reputations, mistrust, or spreading confusion is contrary to academic integrity. These can all be considered a form of bullying. No one likes to be the victim of rumors, false information or disinformation. Don't engage in this behavior. At Sierra School, this type of behavior impedes the purpose and philosophy of the school. Relationships that exist between staff and parents need to be focused on what is in the best interest of the students.

### **General Campus Guidelines**

Permission to use the office phone is given by the discretion of the administration.

**Do not bring valuables to school.** Always carry your money with you. Don't leave purses and wallets and other valuables unattended at any time. Sierra School cannot be responsible for any loss. Some students use **bicycles** as a means for transportation. They may not be ridden on campus at any time. Bikes must be locked in the bike racks. **Skateboards** are not to be used on campus. In addition, skateboarding is not allowed on the surrounding streets of the school.

The junior high, senior high, and ESL may use the quad area, the hallway, and the blacktop during **lunch time**.

We assume that **none of you are cigarette smokers**. Please note that smoking on or around campus is grounds for suspension. This includes bathrooms, in the parking lot, in a car, or on foot within the perimeter of Forbes Avenue, Kiely Blvd., Stevens Creek Blvd., and Lawrence Expressway.

**Drugs, alcohol, and weapons or the use of violence** are all grounds for immediate expulsion. Books, magazines, apparel, or other materials promoting violence or drugs will be confiscated and can lead to suspension. A student in disagreement with any disciplinary action taken can appeal the action to Sierra School's Board of Directors.

### **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 the classrooms). We will make sure your child receives them promptly.

### **Community Service**

In order to prepare students to successfully meet and deal with the academic pressures of today as well as the professional demands of tomorrow, Sierra School has integrated community service into its curriculum. All Grade 6-12 Mainstream students are to participate in 10 hours of community service per semester for a total of 20 hours per year. As an option, Sierra School students may perform their community service activity in conjunction with their church, synagogue, or other appropriate institutions.

Community service forms are handed out to the student each semester.

In addition to outside service, upper level Sierra students are paired up with the lower level students for five “Buddy Day” activities annually. Buddy Day activities include reading and playing various educational and fun games with the lower level students.

**Expectations of Effort and Quality of Work** As your teachers, we expect you to produce quality work and presentations that show what you’ve learned, as well pride in your education. To set you up for the most success possible, a rubric is given with every essay, project and presentation. These rubrics act as a guide to help you achieve your best possible grade. You will **not** be able to correct Final Tests, Long-term Projects or Final Presentations.

If you did not achieve your best score on an essay or quiz, or Math/Science Chapter test, you may correct your mistakes, up to one week after the original due date. Both scores will be averaged to get a final score.

### **Field Trip Information**

Gr. 6-12 and ESL students enjoy field trips to reinforce and supplement the in-class learning experience. Parents and guardians are encouraged to help drive and/or chaperone during these various trips.

### **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.
- Each passenger must wear a seat belt.
- Drivers/chaperones must stay with students under their supervision until the teacher arrives.
- Because drivers/chaperones are responsible for the students 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.

### **Gum, Food and Drinks**

Gum chewing is NOT permitted on the school grounds. Food and drinks should only be consumed at times designated for that purpose; break and lunch. Beverages, with the exception of water, are not allowed during class. Water bottles must have a lid or have the ability to be closed.

### **Individualized Learning**

Sierra's individualized system allows students to work at different levels. Students are expected to meet and/or exceed their weekly target. Progress is gauged by completion of assignments. Extra credit is encouraged.

### **Leaving Campus for Medical Appointments or Illness**

Under NO circumstances should you leave the campus without proper permission. Students leaving campus for appointments during their regular class periods must check out through the Main Office. Parents/Guardians should call in advance to excuse these appointments. Students who become ill or injured while at school are required to go to the Main Office so parents/guardians can be notified and will be expected to make appropriate arrangements for the student to leave the campus. Students who do not check out will receive an unexcused absence for the classes they miss that day.

### **Lunch (12:30-1:15pm)**

Students are given a 45 minute lunch break during the school day. During this time, a catering truck visits campus and has food and drinks available for purchase. Microwaves are available for student use. There is also an opportunity to order lunch through an online service. Students may only place on-line lunch delivery orders before school or during morning break time. Failure to do so will result in losing this privilege. All ordered food must be delivered directly to the office. The student must pick up their ordered food from the office. No student is allowed to pick up their food at the curb or from the parking lot area.

### **Parent Participation**

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to participate during the school year. Ways to assist include: chaperoning on field trips, attending Sierra Family Association (SFA) Meetings, volunteering to be a Room Parent, and helping with the Spring Musical. 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.

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is contrary to academic integrity. Plagiarism is defined as either copying word-for-word, whole paragraphs or phrases, from a given author without giving credit to the author, even though written in the student's own words. If work cited is not acknowledged (example: MLA format), it is plagiarism and the student will receive immediate consequences and the work must be redone.

### **Planning for College Admission**

Sierra School is fully accredited through WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges). Full accreditation allows our school the opportunity to submit coursework to UC systems for approval. All Sierra School coursework is approved through the UC System. This, in turn, allows our graduates the opportunity to apply for UC and California State enrollment. Our graduates continue on to successful terms at both in-state and out-of-state colleges and universities as well as through community colleges, namely De Anza, Mission, Foothill and West Valley. Sierra School employs a School Counselor who meets with and assists all 9-12 grade students in discussing career goals, completing college applications, registering for SAT, ACT, or TOEFL testing, and finalizing student choices and placement. Recent graduates are attending such diverse universities and colleges as: SJSU, Pepperdine University, Marquette University, UC San Diego, USF, Santa Clara University and others.

### **PSAT**

Each October, Sierra School hosts a PSAT testing day. The PSAT or “Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test” is a practice test that allows students to receive feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of skills necessary for college study.

### **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/guardians are automatic members of the SFA!

### **Sierra Property and Surroundings**

Help keep the Sierra campus clean. Please throw all trash in the trashcans that are provided in the classrooms. The grounds must be kept litter free. All desktops are to be kept clean and free from litter. Graffiti is unacceptable. Sierra shares its facility with three other organizations. Please treat our neighbors with courtesy and respect. This also includes containing the level of noise when students are outside. Excessive noise is disruptive to the students at the other organizations. Just because you are outside, doesn't mean you have to be loud; you are sharing the space with others – be considerate. Junior and Senior High students are to set good examples for the younger grades.

### **Student Supplies/Textbooks**

Students are required to provide their own supplies. Please see the supply list included in the registration packet.

Textbooks are on loan from the school and are to be maintained in good condition. Students will be responsible to compensate the school for loss (or damage) of texts or other school-owned materials.

**Student Council:** Members of Student Council (President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary) as well as classroom representatives are elected by the student body each fall. The Student Council plans and carries out seasonal activities, theme days, and fundraising throughout

the year. Student Council also takes a leadership role in the planning for the annual Spring Dance.

### **Tardiness (First Period and other periods)**

Students begin class work promptly at 9:00am.

Anyone who arrives late to class must receive a tardy slip from the office and will be given one detention. Any tardy greater than 10 minutes will result in two detentions.

Examples of excused first period tardies are: sickness with parent verification by note or phone call, medical appointment with verification by note or phone call, auto accidents – direct or indirect involvement, unavoidable breakdowns (flat tire, dead battery, etc), and unique, unavoidable circumstances, as confirmed by administration such as bus delays or breakdowns.

Examples of unexcused first period tardies are: oversleeping, running out of gas, and normal traffic problems. The administration will be responsible to determine whether an absence or tardy is excused or unexcused.

High School students may lose credits due to consistent tardies to class.

### **Transfer**

If a student transfers to another school, their records will be transferred to their new school upon signed parent permission.

### **Transcripts**

There will be no charge for a current student's transcript. A student who has not been enrolled in Sierra for the past 90 days will be charged \$5.00 per transcript.

### **Traveling Policy for I-20 Students (International)**

Sierra students are required to attend the full school year. Missed school days before the end of the semester due to travel may result in an incomplete on your transcript. Any international students needing early departure due to unforeseen circumstances are required to have their parent/guardian provide written request to the Administration.

### **Yearbook**

Our school produces a yearbook that is published in May.

### **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.

**Please note that any updates or changes to policies may occur throughout the school year and all students and parent/guardians will be duly notified.**