

**SUNDANCE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PARENT HANDBOOK**

*SUNDANCE
WILDCATS*

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A NOTE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents and Students:

Welcome to Sundance Elementary School! I am very excited to be back for my seventh year and look forward to continuing our work around 21st Century Learning and the implementation of the new State Standards as well.

This handbook contains important information about our programs, policies, and procedures. We believe it is essential for all students to accept responsibility for their actions. Therefore, we are asking students and parents to read the handbook, follow the rules, and help others to do the same. We are proud of our school and committed to providing a safe learning environment for the students at Sundance.

I look forward to working with the Sundance Staff and entire school community as we collectively strive to prepare all of our students for success in the 21st century. Together, I am confident that we can make this year the best year ever!

Sincerely,

Bob Rodrigo
Principal
Sundance Elementary School

Staff Self-Description of Sundance

Sundance is a small and diverse school where we strive to provide all of our students with the finest educational experience possible. We achieve this by blending strong foundational skills with multiple opportunities to use those skills in creative, fun, and innovative ways. While always pushing for academic excellence, we are also aware of the need to ensure that our children are socially and emotionally prepared for success in the 21st Century. To enable this success, we have created a culture where all of our staff is caring, collaborative, resourceful, and team-oriented. Knowing how very important it is to have a positive relationship with our school community, we continue to maintain and sustain this vital connection. Because we have created a tight-knit relationship, we are able to provide the resources for a plethora of activities for our students which include: PE, running club, music, dances, a fall carnival, international celebrations, chess club, and a science team. We are very proud of our successes. We are committed to maintaining those successes, while always searching for ways to make Sundance the best school possible.

MOTTO

Work hard.

Trustworthiness

Be honest and loyal.

Respect

Treat others the way you want to be treated.

Responsibility

Make good choices.

Be Kind.

Fairness

Follow the rules.

Caring

Be a friend and forgive others.

Dream big.

Citizenship

Do your part to help your community.

No excuses!

SCHOOL SONG

Sundance wildcats here we are
Honest brave and true
Sundance wildcats, shining stars
Learning we pursue
We're so proud of our great school
Outstanding and distinguished, too
Glory in our Sundance might
We always think of you with pride
Sundance wildcats
Here we are
Honest, brave and true
Sundance wildcats
Shining stars
Here's our cheer for you
SUNDANCE!

GENERAL INFORMATION

BICYCLES Students in grades 3-5 may ride their bicycles to school. Each bike rider must have a bicycle permit signed by their parents on file in the office. These are to be renewed yearly. Students are reminded that all traffic laws relating to automobiles also pertain to bicycle riders. In addition, by law, all students **must** wear helmets when riding their bikes. Helmets can be stored in the classroom during the day. Bicycles should not be ridden on the sidewalks, playground, or in hallways. A bike rack is provided for storing the bike during the day. Students should bring their own locks to secure their bicycles. The school is not responsible for damage or loss of bicycles. Skateboards, wheelies, scooters, and roller blades are not allowed.

CARS/CAR POOLS During arrival and dismissal times, traffic is very congested at Sundance. Parents are encouraged to carpool whenever possible. Parents should only drop off their children along the curb in the parking lot. Also, do not leave any cars unattended along the curb. Please read the Sundance Traffic Handbook for details.

CELL PHONES Students may be permitted to have in their possession a cellular phone/pager in school, on school property and at school-related functions provided that the use of the cellular phone/pager does not disrupt the instructional process except for medical reasons that have been reviewed with the school staff. In other words, they cannot be used during the instructional day. Since students have access to classroom and office telephones to call their parents for legitimate reasons, cellular phones cannot be used at recess or lunch. Sundance assumes no liability for the loss or damage of the device or its misuse by another person. If a student's cell phone rings during class times or if a student uses their phone during the school day, the phone will be given to the principal and parent will be called.

DAILY SCHEDULE:

DAILY SCHEDULE	M*T*W*F	Thursday Minimum Day
Grades 1-5: Playground Opens School Begins Dismissal	7:50 8:10 2:35	7:50 8:10 12:55
Kindergarten: August 24-Sept. 30 October 3-June 7	8:10 – 12:00 8:10 - 2:35	8:10 – 12:00 8:10 - 12:55

DRESS CODE Clothing should be neat, clean, and fit properly. Students may not dress in a manner that creates a safety hazard or that interferes with or distracts from the learning process. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

Blouses or shirts may not show the midriff even when the child is reaching. Straps narrower than 1," strapless or halter- tops will not be allowed.

Hats and sunglasses may not be worn indoors.

Appropriate shoes must be worn at all times. Beach shoes/flip-flops, open toe, and heeled (shoes with wheels) are not to be worn at school.

Pants must be tailored to the waist. Undergarments should not be visible.

Belts may not hang down and must be tucked into the belt loops at all times.

Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be an appropriate length. When standing straight, the child's fists should not be lower than the hem.

Clothing, jewelry, book covers, backpacks or binders that mention tobacco, alcohol, drugs, profanity, obscenity, weapons, or violence are not permitted.

Attire including clothing, jewelry, and other accessories, which may be a safety hazard to the wearer or others, is not permitted (e.g. wallet chains, chain necklaces, body jewelry).

No makeup will be permitted at school.

EMERGENCY DRILLS Once a month students and staff participate in a fire drill, lockdown, or duck and cover drill. Procedures are taught to all students and reviewed regularly in order to ensure their safety should a disaster occur. If it becomes necessary to release students from school, only the persons whose names are listed on the Disaster Release Form are allowed to take students. The forms are completed at the beginning of each year. Be sure the form is updated.

HOMEWORK All students, grades K-5, may have homework during the year. Homework assignments are an extension of the skills and activities learned in the classroom. Assignments are given on a daily or weekly basis. Teachers review homework policies with parents at Back-To-School Night.

LOST AND FOUND Parents should clearly mark their child's name on clothing, lunches, backpacks, and other items. If an item of clothing is lost, students or parents should check the lost and found rack in the hall by the front gates. Smaller, personal items are kept in the office. At winter break and at the end of the year, unclaimed items will be donated to charity. Please remember, the loss or damage to anything brought to school, including bicycles, remains the responsibility of pupils and parents.

MINIMUM DAYS School is dismissed every Thursday at 12:55. On the Fridays before the vacation in November, December, February, and April, the early dismissal day will be changed from Thursday to Friday.

HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

- ❖ **BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHT** Each fall, parents are invited to attend Back-To-School Night to meet their child's teacher and to hear about the materials, texts, teaching methods, and classroom procedures to be utilized for the year. Teachers will also discuss their expectations for student progress both academically and behaviorally. Since this is an informational meeting, we ask that children not attend.
- ❖ **CONFERENCE WEEK** During Parent Conference Week in November, teachers meet individually with parents to discuss their child's progress and explain the initial progress report. If students are having difficulty, strategies are discussed and a plan developed to help them be more successful.
- ❖ **ACADEMIC STANDARDS** The District has determined the academic standards each student should reach in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and math by the completion of each grade level. A copy of the document and resources to help students with each skill is available on the District website at www.powayusd.org (Click "Parent Resources", then "Elementary Resource Guide").
- ❖ **PROGRESS REPORTS** Report cards are given to parents during parent conferences in November and sent home in March and June. During the fall parent conference, the grading and format used on the progress report is explained.

- ❖ **PAW PRINTS** Our PTA newsletter is distributed to the students every two weeks. A copy is also posted on the school website.
- ❖ **WEBSITE** The school and district website have a wealth of information available. Go to www.powayusd.com/pusdsdes/ to check it out. The district website is helpful, too.
- ❖ **WEEKLY WILDCAT** A weekly bulletin is sent home via email every Friday afternoon.

PETS Most classrooms welcome pets for a visit. Please contact the teacher to make arrangements for the visit **before** bringing pets, as some students may have allergies. Pets must be brought to school by the parent. They are not allowed on school buses.

PTA The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) sponsors numerous activities and events throughout the year, including a variety of family activities. Membership dues are \$10.00. For further information be sure to read the next edition of the Paw Prints newsletter

RAINY DAYS Students will report to the multipurpose room before school on rainy mornings. Adults will be present to direct students where to sit or stand until the bell rings. The recess and lunch schedule does not change, but the play time does occur in the multipurpose room after eating at the outdoor tables.

SCHOOL HOURS The office is open daily from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The playground opens for students at 7:50 a.m. There is no playground supervision for students after school. Students are expected to go home unless they attend ESS (Extended Student Services). For more information about ESS, contact the ESS Office (858) 484-2978.

SCHOOL LUNCHES Students may either bring a lunch to school or purchase a lunch in the cafeteria. If your child brings a lunch, be sure to include only as much food as your child eats. Sharing of lunches is not allowed. Lunches should have the student's name and room number on the sack or lunch box.

Hot lunches may be purchased at the school. Menus are sent home at the beginning of each month. It is highly recommended that lunches are paid for in advance through MyLunchMoney.com. Additionally, prepayment envelopes are available in the school office and checks should be made out to PUSD. Include the child's first and last name in the lower left corner. Students who pay in advance are entitled to as many lunches as have been prepaid. Students are notified when they are about to run out of prepaid lunches. Any unused money is rolled over to the next school year as long as they stay in PUSD or refunded upon request at the end of the year. If students do not have enough money to buy lunch, they will be sent to the office to call their parents.

Cafeteria Prices:

School Lunch (Includes milk*)	3.25
Milk	.50
Juice	.50

*If your child is allergic to milk, juice can be substituted at no cost only on the presentation of a medical statement from the child's doctor.

Children are allowed to buy an extra lunch if they have money in their account. Please discuss your expectations with your child so as not to be surprised with a larger than expected lunch expense.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

We offer many special programs at Sundance. Please be sure to contact the office or your child's teacher if you need more information on the programs listed below.

- ❖ **BAND AND ORCHESTRA** (fifth grade) *All fifth graders have the opportunity to have beginning lessons on one of a variety of instruments. Classes meet weekly. Students need to provide their own instrument. The band and orchestra perform during the holidays and at the end of the year.*
- ❖ **ELL** (English Language Learners) (all grades) *Pull-out services are available for students who have little understanding of the English language.*

- ❖ ESS (Extended Student Services) (all grades) *The before- and after-school care program is offered on a fee basis to Sundance students between the hours of 6:30 AM and 6:00 PM. The staff is outstanding and offers a wide variety of enriching experiences to promote growth and help students build interpersonal physical and cognitive skills.*
- ❖ GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) (Grades 3-5) Students who qualify for GATE have successfully completed a district assessment for the GATE program. Student work is differentiated within the classroom.
- ❖ PIP (Primary Interaction Program) (K-3) Students who are facing transitions in their life, are very shy, or exhibit other behaviors that interfere with learning, may benefit from the small group weekly program with trained instructional assistants.
- ❖ RSP (Resource Specialist Program) (all grades) This is a special education program for students with learning disabilities and processing deficits that affect learning.
- ❖ SPEECH and LANGUAGE SERVICES (all grades) Available for students who qualify for services based on the criteria established by Education Code.
- ❖ STUDENT COUNCIL (Grades 3-5) *Officers and class representatives are elected by their peers. Student Council supports a variety of school-wide activities and programs including the student store and spirit days.*

TELEPHONE USE Students are allowed to use the office telephone in emergency situations only. Emergency calls would include illness, change of clothing or lost lunch money. Personal phone calls for forgotten items or after-school arrangements will not be permitted.

TWIN TRAILS EDUCATION FOUNDATION The Foundation works hard to raise money for the school to fill the budget gap in areas of technology, software, support staff, and other goals that are established each year. Their two main fundraisers are the capital campaign in the fall and the Auction Night in the spring.

VISITATIONS AND VOLUNTEERS Parents are always welcome and encouraged to visit and help in the classroom. All visitors must register in the school office as they come and leave the campus. Visits should be scheduled with the teacher ahead of time. If you want to talk to the teacher about your child, please make an appointment outside of school time. Teachers understandably need to be with their students immediately before, during, and after class time. Parents and members of the community are encouraged to become involved and volunteer at Sundance. Some of the activities in which parent volunteers help are as follows:

- Prepare materials for classroom use
- Listen to children read
- Review basic skills with students
- Assist in the library
- Assist with classroom projects
- Serve on School Site Council, PTA or the Twin Trails Education Foundation
- Help students with math and reading assignments
- Assist on field trips

To become a parent volunteer, contact your child's teacher or the PTA volunteer coordinator to let them know what your interests are.

IMPORTANT NOTE: You must have the Megan's Law Clearance and a current TB test (negative reading) on file in the office in order to do any work with students (i.e. classroom volunteer, accompany class on field trip). Information on the Megan's Law Clearance is available in the office. TB clinics are held monthly through the district's Health Services Department.

ATTENDANCE AND HEALTH SERVICES

ABSENCES If a student is unable to attend school due to illness, notify the **Absence Hotline** (858) 538-9574 or the school office (858) 484-2950 from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 the day of the absence. Leave the

student's name, grade, teacher's name, reason for absence, and name of the person leaving the message. A student who is absent due to contagious diseases may be required to have a note from their physician or the public health department before returning to school.

Student attendance is important and compulsory according to state law. There are some occasions (i.e.: religious holidays, a death in the family, or other family emergencies) where students must be absent from school. If the child will be out five or more days, an Off Campus Independent Study (OCIS) contract will be prepared. This OCIS contract allows the student to make up the work missed during an extended absence. The office staff needs to know a week in advance whenever possible so the contract can be prepared.

APPOINTMENTS A student who needs to leave school during the day for an appointment must be checked out in the office by the parent or legal guardian. If they return during the same day, they must also check back in the office.

MEDICATION Any student who is required to take medication, whether doctor prescribed or over the counter, during the regular school day must file an "Authorization to Administer Medication" form in the office. The health technician or other designated school personnel will then assist the student in receiving the medication if the school receives the following information:

Written statement from a licensed physician detailing the method, amount, and time schedules by which such medication is to be taken

Written permission from the parent or guardian indicating the desire for the school to assist the student

Children can bring sunscreen, lip balm, throat lozenges, and cough drops to school with written parent permission and teacher supervision.

STUDENT HEALTH Sundance has a full time health technician to take care of first aid and emergencies. In case of student illness at school, the health technician will notify parents or the emergency contact person listed on the enrollment form. No registered nursing services are provided at the school on a daily basis. Be sure to keep home, work, and emergency contact phone numbers current.

TARDIES Students who are late to school must report to the office before going to class. Student medical appointments are considered excused tardies. All other tardies are unexcused. If a child is tardy more than five times without a valid physician's note, a letter will be sent home stating the tardy problem and he/she may be assigned recess detention for every tardy thereafter. If tardies persist, the principal will request a parent meeting.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Sundance students and staff follow our school motto:

WORK HARD.

BE KIND.

DREAM BIG.

NO EXCUSES.

PLAYGROUND RULES

Playing in and around restrooms, classrooms, and hallways is not allowed.

Toys or other playthings may only be brought to the classroom with the teacher's permission and may not be taken out of the classroom at recesses or lunch.

Leave personal equipment at home (i.e. balls, bats, toys, etc.).

School will provide basketballs, soccer balls, cherry balls, and jump ropes during play times.

Kickball and soccer will be played on grass area only.

All children should immediately and quietly go to their classroom lines/rooms when the bell rings ending recess.

LUNCH AREA RULES

All food and drinks must stay in the lunch area and are not allowed on the playground.

Students should maintain a low noise level.
Walking is required in the lunch area.
Students are expected to clean up their own lunch area prior to being dismissed.

ASSEMBLY RULES

Students should enter and leave assemblies in an orderly manner with their teacher and sit where assigned.
Students should be respectful to speakers or entertainers. Whistling, cat-calling, etc. is not allowed.
Students who do not follow assembly rules may be sent to the office.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY In support of the District's Academic Honesty Policy 3.40, students are expected to demonstrate acts of honesty at all times. Teachers and staff members will support and enforce all District rules of academic honesty and provide a learning environment that does not allow or tolerate dishonesty. Any student who violates the rules of the Academic Honesty Policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

REWARDS FOR POSITIVE BEHAVIOR Students are regularly recognized for positive behavior at school. Friday morning flag assemblies, notes or phone calls home are some of the ways students are recognized for positive academic or social behavior.

CATCH OF THE DAY These mini-certificates are given to students showing responsible behavior. Each class determines how recipients of the certificates are acknowledged. Students who receive them are recognized at every Friday Flag assembly as well.

PRINCIPAL'S PRIDE POSTER Students can be recommended by staff to sign the monthly poster on the principal's door for standing out as an individual in academic progress or behavior. Students select a silver or gold principal's pride pencil and are recognized at the end of each month at the Friday Flag assembly.

CONSEQUENCES FOR NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR While it is hoped that Sundance students exemplify our motto, "Work hard. Be kind. Dream big. No excuses." occasionally negative behavior does occur. Consequences for negative behavior are posted in each classroom. These consequences are consistent and incremental. Additionally, the following school-wide consequences are in place.

WILDCAT WARNINGS

Students may receive a wildcat warning for the following reasons:

Disrespect or defiance
Inappropriate language, gestures
Inappropriate behavior
Littering
Running in halls
Excessive noise
Aggressive behavior

The consequences for infractions may include a warning, recess or lunch detention, or a letter of apology. Copies of the Wildcat Warnings are sent home for a parent signature.

OFFICE REFERRALS

If a student chooses to misbehave to the extent that he/she receives a referral to the office, such behavior will be treated as a serious offense. Office referrals will be written for the following:

Fighting
Dangerous or illegal acts
Blatant disregard for rules
Unsafe acts

Consequences will be determined on an individual case basis and may include, but are not limited to: reprimand, parent contact, loss of morning or lunch recess, time-out period in the office, after school detention, in-house or off-campus suspension.

HARASSMENT We believe that every student has the right to attend school and learn without being called names, and without being threatened, harassed, or bullied for any reason. Harassment is unwanted and unwelcome behavior from another person that interferes with an individual's life and well-

being. When the behavior is motivated by a prejudice against another person's race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, or gender, it is discrimination and could be described as "hate behavior" in some cases. This type of intimidation and harassment will not be tolerated in our school. It is our intent to promote the rights of equality and human dignity. If someone feels that they have been the target of harassment, threats, or bullying, it is important that they tell someone they trust such as parent, teacher, principal, or another adult. They will offer advice on how to deal with the situation. The principal has additional information including a complete copy of the District policies on this subject.

POWAY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT RULES OF STUDENT DISCIPLINE At the beginning of each year a copy of the District policy and consequences regarding weapons, controlled substances, alcohol, harassment, theft, vandalism, hate crimes, and willful disobedience is available on the PUSD website and in the school office. Parents are to read the rules and acknowledge receipt of them by signing and returning the form to school.