

# SIERRA MADRE MIDDLE SCHOOL



160 N. CANON AVENUE  
SIERRA MADRE, CA 91024  
(626) 396-5910

**School Hours:**  
**Monday 8:15am-1:25p.m.**  
**Tuesday-Friday 8:15am-3:05p.m.**

[smms.pusd.us](http://smms.pusd.us)

# SIERRA MADRE MIDDLE SCHOOL

## Core Values

Central to Sierra Madre Middle School's success are the guiding principles that define and support all actions and thoughts pertaining to the school's vision. These guiding principles are embodied by the following three Core Values:

**Academic Achievement**  
**Creative Culture**  
**Safe and Nurturing Environment**

## Mission Statement

Sierra Madre Middle School is committed to providing a program that promotes academic, physical, emotional and social growth for all of our students within a safe and secure environment. Our goal is that these endeavors will foster high academic achievement and creative thinking among our students and staff. We pledge ourselves, as a school and staff, to work together in harmony with parents and the community for the good of all students.

## Academic Program

Sierra Madre Middle School emphasizes a "hands-on" thinking, meaning-centered curriculum which includes basic academic skills and powerful learning experiences. Classroom activities are student-initiated, teacher-directed and child-centered. A variety of effective instructional methods are used.

### To be successful in school, students are expected to:

- Come to school on time and be prepared to do your best.
- Follow all school and classroom rules.
- Return completed homework on time.
- Spend time at home reading and studying.
- Cooperate with everyone in the school.
- Respect yourself and the rights of others.
- Respect school property.

### Parents are expected to:

- Promote high standards and regular study by providing a quiet, suitable place for completing homework.
- Support the school's homework, discipline and attendance policies.
- Make sure your child gets adequate sleep and has a healthy diet.
- Read all school-home communications and contact the school with questions and concerns.
- Listen to or read with your child every day.
- Establish a working relationship between yourself and your child's classroom teachers.
- Be responsible for textbooks and materials issued to your child.

### Teachers are expected to:

- Create a safe, positive and healthy learning environment.
- Provide a challenging instructional program which follows the curriculum frameworks and grade level standards.
- Communicate with parents on a regular basis.

- Assign appropriate homework with clear instructions.
- Encourage students to read daily at school and at home.
- Participate in professional growth activities.

## **Attendance**

Absence from school, regardless of the reason, limits your child's educational opportunities and can negatively affect his/her grades, academic achievement, promotion, graduation, self-esteem, and future employment.

## **Absences**

With very few exceptions, the only necessary absence from school is due to illness. The State apportions money to the school district for each child's daily attendance. Parents are urged not to keep children out of school for any reason except for a family emergency. Regular attendance is most important for successful achievement in school. We investigate every absence, unless you have notified us concerning the reason your child is not in school. A written note or telephone call is acceptable verification. In the event of an absence, please call the school office at (626) 396-5910 between 7:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.

## **Tardies**

It is the responsibility of all students to be on time to their classes at the start of the school day and throughout each passing period. Students are considered tardy when arriving to school after 7:40 a.m. In addition, four minutes of passing period time is provided for students to pass from one class to another. If a student accumulates three or more tardies within a week, they will be assigned to Monday School Detention. We appreciate your help in encouraging daily and timely school attendance

## **Truancy**

A student is considered truant after three absences or three tardies of more than 30 minutes each time or any combination thereof and the absences or tardies are unexcused. After a student has been reported as a truant three or more times in a school year and the district has made a conscientious effort to meet with the family, the student is considered a habitual truant. A student who is a habitual truant may be referred to a School Attendance Review Board (SARB) A student who is absent from school without a valid excuse for 10% or more of the school days in one school year, from the date of enrollment to the current date, is considered a chronic truant.

## **Cell Phone & Electronic Device Policy**

Students **may not** use their cell phone during the school day without the permission of an adult staff member. Each student has been issued a Chromebook to utilize in support of classroom instruction. Students **may not** use their Chromebook during non-instructional times. Electronic devices that are utilized inappropriately may be confiscated.

We understand that parents may provide students with cell phones to use for emergency purposes. However, please remember that cell phones and all electronic devices (i.e. iPods & video games) are brought to school at your own risk. **The school is not responsible for the damage or theft of any electronic device.**

## **Dress Code**

In accordance with the Pasadena Unified School District Uniform Dress Code Policy for Middle School Grades, Sierra Madre has adopted the following guidelines so that students may display pride through their attire.

**Basic Presumptions:**

- Health: Clothing must be clean and adequate to protect children from weather conditions.
- Safety: Clothing that puts the wearer or others at risk cannot be worn.
- Decency: Clothing must conform to societal norms in regard to modesty, and display respect for self and others.

**The only acceptable “tops and/or outer wear” for middle years students are:**

- Full cut standard t-shirts with regular sleeve or long sleeve -solids, stripes, and patterns
- Full-cut blouses or sport shirts with sleeves – solids, stripes, and patterns
- Polo shirts, regular or long sleeve – solids, stripes, and patterns
- Turtlenecks

**The only acceptable “bottoms” for middle years students are:**

- Shorts and skirts that are closer to the knee than the buttocks
- Shorts and long pants that are not excessively baggy or tight, and do not reveal underwear or skin at the waist or midriff.

**The only acceptable “shoes” for middle years students are:**

- Those that have no more elevation than a typical tennis shoe
- Those that are secured around the ankle some way – tie, buckle, strap, etc.

**The following items are unacceptable at all grade levels**

- Jewelry except for watches, rings, necklaces, earrings
- Wallet chains or any heavy gauge chain
- Clothing that depicts inappropriate language
- Flip-flops as shoes
- Caps, hats, or bandanas during the school day except for outdoor use.
- Torn, worn-out dirty clothes
- Sleeveless tops or halter-tops
- Gang-type attire
- Pajamas
- Blankets

**Homework**

Our philosophy is that homework shall support the achievement of the learning objectives and be used as a tool towards mastery. Therefore:

- Homework shall be reasonable, relevant, and something students can do on their own;
- Homework assignments shall be as carefully planned as classroom activities;
- Homework shall be assigned when needed to meet one or more of the following educational objectives:
  1. Provide an opportunity to practice and/or reinforce skills and knowledge learned in the classroom
  2. Extend and reflect on what was learned in the classroom
  3. Prepare students for future classroom activities
  4. Transfer knowledge and apply skills in content or subject matter previously learned in the classroom;
- Homework shall never be assigned as punishment;
- Teachers need flexibility to ensure that homework is differentiated and based on student needs in order to provide appropriate enrichment opportunities for all;

- Teachers shall take into consideration students' age, instructional and life experiences, student needs, instructional levels, and family resources;
- Homework shall count for no more than 10% of a student's grade at the secondary level;
- Homework shall not be assigned to students over Thanksgiving, winter recess, spring recess, or religious holy days;
- Each campus shall communicate with parents the purpose and policy regarding homework annually
- Feedback shall be given on homework assignments. This feedback may take a variety of forms (written, verbal, in small groups with students, etc.). We recognize that homework provides feedback not only for students, but through evaluation of homework, teachers receive feedback on the instructional objectives of the lesson, and will use the results of this evaluation to monitor understanding and modify teaching practices as appropriate.

## **Discipline Program**

Students and adults at Sierra Madre Middle School treat each other with respect. The administration, teachers, support staff, other school professionals and volunteers set a positive, nurturing tone for Sierra Madre Middle School students who are encouraged and guided toward responsible behavior. The following behaviors are expected of all Sierra Madre Middle School students:

### **All Students are Expected to Be Safe, Respectful, & Responsible**

We make every effort to acknowledge students who demonstrate respect and responsibility. Incentives include special monthly Spotlight Awards, School Spirit Days, and our weekly Character Cash program. Most importantly, each person is treated as an individual, worthy of respect and capable of making good choices. Beyond simply following a list of rules, it is our hope that each child will develop into a thinking caring and responsible adult. Students who are unable to abide by the school-wide expectations and thereby, who interfere with the learning process and the orderly environment will receive an appropriate consequence such as Monday Afternoon School. The Guidance Aide, under the supervision and direction of the Principal and Assistant Principal, will counsel students and notify parents of the consequence assigned.

The following behaviors will result in suspension and/or expulsion.

- Physical injury to another person.
- Possession of weapons, replicas of weapons, drugs or drug paraphernalia.
- Damage or theft of school property.
- Obscene acts or sexual harassment.

## **Parent Involvement Policy**

Parent volunteers and visitors are always welcomed on campus, and we are grateful for your cooperation. Sierra Madre Middle School's policy regarding parents and visitors on campus is as follows:

- **Volunteers** should pre-arrange with the teacher, sign-in at the office, and may need to have a TB screening completed.
- **Conferences** should also be pre-arranged with the teacher so that adequate information may be gathered for the meeting.
- **Parent Classroom Visitations** should also be pre-arranged with the teacher and/or the administration. Be sure to sign in at the office, and we ask that you limit your visit to approximately 15 minutes.

## Progress Reports

Progress reports are mailed home to parents every five weeks. The teacher is the final authority on the awarding of grades. The purpose of the progress reports is two-fold. First and foremost, they are intended to inform parents/guardians of their child's progress. There are three progress reports each semester, with a final cumulative grade assigned at the end of the semester. The second function of the progress reports is to serve as **FAILURE NOTICES** to parents. They are intended to communicate that a student is not meeting the minimum standard and may not be eligible for promotion from the eighth grade. Please be certain to carefully review each progress report and contact the teacher if you have any questions or concerns.

## Parent Portal

The Parent and Student Portals were created as a way for both parents and students to stay involved in the student's academic life. The PUSD Parent and Student Portals allow for better communication between parents, students and teachers.

Parent and Student Portals have up to date information on:

- Grades
- Assignments
- Attendance
- . . . and more

## Promotion Requirements

The Pasadena Unified School District has established minimum standards for students to graduate from the middle school program. Sixth grade is a transition year. It is however, an essential time that builds a foundation that will ensure success as students move on to the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. In order to promote to high school, a student must earn a minimum of 120 units in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. This includes the four core subjects each semester, along with physical education and enrichment. Each student has the opportunity of earning 30 units of study per semester towards promotion.

**Students who have not earned 120 units by the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade, will not be eligible to participate in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade promotion ceremony.**

## Textbook Policy

Sierra Madre Middle School has developed the following textbook policy in order to ensure that every student has appropriate and adequate learning materials.

- Textbooks are distributed to all students in the subjects of Math, English Language Arts, History, and Science.
- Textbooks are distributed to students in August, and are barcoded for record keeping purposes.
- Students must return their books in June, or at the time they withdraw from school, to the library, and will be held financially responsible for the condition of the books.
- **Sierra Madre Middle School does not accept responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged textbooks.**
- Students are required to make payment on a lost or damaged textbook prior to being able to check out another textbook from the library. The average cost of a textbook is \$60. Cash or money orders are the only acceptable forms of payment.
- Student grades and school files will be withheld from parents until payment is made on lost instructional materials.
- All school debts will be carried over until fulfilled by the student.

# THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

## **Bicycles, Skateboards, & Scooters**

Bicycles, skateboards, scooters & rollerblades may be ridden to school. However, for safety reasons, they are prohibited on campus during school hours and must be secured in the designated areas. All riders must wear helmets, and the school does not assume responsibility for any stolen or damaged items.

## **Bus Schedules**

Bus schedule information is available in the school office. All students are expected to follow bus rules of behavior when riding a school bus. The school bus is an extension of the school campus; misbehavior can result in loss of bus riding privileges.

## **Cafeteria**

Nutrition and Lunch may be purchased each day, and are free to students on the free lunch program. Drinks (milk or juice) may be purchased separately. For the first two weeks of school, returning students will receive free or reduced price lunch based on the previous year's application. A new lunch application must be filled out completely and returned for approval each school year to ensure your child's continuing in the free lunch program. Healthy snacks are recommended to be sent from home for your child to eat during morning nutrition.

## **Community Involvement**

To support a partnership among school, parents and community, Sierra Madre Middle School provides many opportunities for involvement. Parents can participate in decisions relating to the education of their children through several collaborative teams on campus: the PTSA, School Site Council, African American Parent Council, and English Language Advisory Council. If parents or community members wish to participate in any of these programs, please call the school at (626) 396-5910.

## **Emergency Card Information**

Emergency cards are filled out upon enrollment or during the first week of the school year. If your child becomes ill or is seriously injured at school, you will be called. We must have your current telephone numbers or the telephone numbers of adults we can call if you are not home. In the event of an emergency or a disaster, students remain at school under the supervision of school personnel until a parent or authorized person picks up the student. No student will be released to a person whose name is not listed on the emergency card. Please include several names of people who could be responsible for your child in the event of an emergency.

## **Medical Insurance**

Information regarding student accident insurance is sent home at the beginning of each school year. The school district does not carry insurance to cover students in the event of an emergency.

## **Medications At School**

To protect all children and to conform to the State Education Code, no child may bring any medication without completing a Medication Form provided by the school. Your physician must write directions on the form. Medication must be delivered by a parent or guardian to the school nurse in the original labeled prescription bottle. Only under these conditions may any medicine be given at school. Please call the school if you have any questions regarding the administration of medications.

## **Playground**

Classroom teachers review appropriate rules and safe playground practices with their students. Students are taught to report any injury on the playground to the teacher or adult on duty. Parents are asked to reinforce at home that children should immediately inform the playground supervisor or their own teacher if they are ill or injured. The school provides suitable balls, jump ropes and other equipment. No play equipment or toys are to come from home.

### **Special Education Rights & Responsibilities**

A Special Education Parent Handbook is available from the Office of Special Education or at school sites. This handbook describes the district's Special Education Services, the Student Support Team and the referral, evaluation and placement procedures.

### **Withdrawing Students from the School Day**

To withdraw your child from school during school hours you must sign out in the school office. Since teachers are not permitted to release children for any reason, parents must meet children in the office before departure. Once your child is in school, he or she is not to return home without permission from the office. If your child does arrive at home during school hours without notification from the office, please call us immediately. This is for your child's safety and to protect him or her from being taken from school by anyone except parents or guardians.