



# Eastside Union

S C H O O L D I S T R I C T

## Parent and Student Handbook 2024-2025 Gifford Cole Middle School

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This Parent and Student Handbook contains an information section specific to your school, district-wide information, as well as information which the state requires districts to provide to parents and guardians annually. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook. If you require additional information, the school office will assist you.

Greetings, Students, and Families,

We welcome you to the 2024-2025 academic year at Cole Middle School. As we commence this new journey, we want to emphasize the importance of transparent communication between our school, students, and their families. To facilitate this communication, we provide various channels to inform you about school activities and events. Our website contains essential information about our curriculum, faculty, policies, and updates on upcoming events and extracurricular activities. Additionally, we recommend that you follow us on social media and sign up for the following to stay current on all the latest news and developments: Aeries Parent and Student Portals, Google Classrooms, Parent Square, and our Facebook page.

Here at Cole, we are committed to your success. We value education, not just as a means to an end, but as a lifelong journey of learning and growth. We believe in the potential of every student, and we provide the necessary support for them to succeed at their highest potential. This support includes personalized learning plans, dedicated teachers, and a safe and inclusive learning environment. Our goal for Cole Middle School's students is to become independent, focused learners and leaders within our school community, paving the way for higher education and rewarding careers.

At Cole, we work to inspire each other like we do our students. And we always encourage community members to share their resources to help our children become happy, skilled contributors to our world. We take pleasure in inviting & welcoming our students' families and other community members to visit our campus, join us to enjoy events and activities and help us support our students' social & academic development. We ask that you respect our instructional time and honor the protocols we have in place to secure the safety of our students, staff & faculty, ensuring a secure and respectful environment for all.

We eagerly anticipate and value your partnership. Together, let's make this academic year a resounding success. We are thrilled to embark on this exciting journey with you. Go Crusaders!

Best regards,

Michael Richardson, Principal  
Gifford C. Cole Middle School

The Eastside Union School District is committed to providing equal opportunity for all individuals in district programs and activities. District programs, activities, and practices shall be free from unlawful discrimination, including discrimination against an individual or group based on the person's actual race, color, ancestry, nationality, national origin, immigration status, ethnicity, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, genetic information, medical condition, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or gender expression; the perception of one or more of such characteristics; or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

For any questions, concerns, or to file a complaint regarding discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, or Title IX, please contact: Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services, Daryl Bell, [DBell@eastsideusd.org](mailto:DBell@eastsideusd.org), 44938 30th Street East, Lancaster, California, 661-952-1200 and/or visit the Eastside Union School District's webpage at [www.eastsideusd.org](http://www.eastsideusd.org).

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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ANIMALS/PETS (BP/AR 6163.2)	5
ANTI-BULLYING POLICY	5
ATTENDANCE	6
ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL/SAFETY	7
BREAKFAST/LUNCH	7
BUS TRANSPORTATION	8
CELEBRATIONS	9
DRESS CODE	9
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES	10
FIELD TRIPS (AR 6153)	10
FOOD ALLERGIES/SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS	11
HOMEWORK POLICY	12
ILLNESS	12
INJURED STUDENTS	12
LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROGRAM OFFERED	13
MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT	14
MEDICATIONS	15
MENTAL HEALTH	15
MOBILE COMMUNICATION DEVICE	16
PARENT INVOLVEMENT - TITLE I POLICY	17
PARKING LOT	18
SCHOOLWIDE EXPECTATIONS	18
SEXUAL HARASSMENT	19
VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS	22

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TEACHER/STAFF CONTACT

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Assistant Principal QiAna McKnight 5001  
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School Office Assistant Sharon Foster 5006  
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ANIMALS/PETS (BP/AR 6163.2)

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Other than service animals for students with disabilities and animals used for instructional purposes by teachers, pets and other animals are prohibited from being on school property during, before, or after school hours. This is necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all students and staff.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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All staff at Gifford Cole Middle School believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment and have an obligation to promote respect, tolerance and acceptance. We will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student.

Generally, bullying is an aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power between individuals with the intent to cause emotion or physical harm. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or social/relational and may involve a single severe act or repetition or potential repetition of a deliberate act. However, acts of bullying that constitute grounds for suspension or expulsion, and the right for a victim of an act of bullying to transfer to another school through the intradistrict or interdistrict process, must meet the criteria specified under EC 48900(r). Under EC 48900(r), "bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students as defined in EC 48900.2, 48900.3, or 48900.4, directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing a reasonable student(s) in fear of harm to their person or property.
2. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on their physical or mental health.
3. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with their academic performance.
4. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with their ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

There are different types of bullying and misconduct including, but not limited to:

**Physical bullying:** An act that inflicts harm upon a person's body or possessions, such as hitting, kicking, pinching, spitting, tripping, pushing, taking or breaking someone's possessions, or making cruel or rude hand gestures

**Cyberbullying:** An act such as sending demeaning or hateful text messages or emails, spreading rumors by email or by posting on social networking sites, or posting or sharing embarrassing photos, videos, website, or fake profiles

**Social bullying:** An act that harms a person's reputation or relationships, such as leaving a person out of an activity on purpose, influencing others not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors, or embarrassing someone in public

**Verbal bullying:** An act that includes saying or writing hurtful things, such as teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting, or threats to cause harm

**Sexual harassment:** any unwanted or demeaning behavior based on someone's sex, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity or gender expression. Sexual harassment may require additional investigation.

**Discrimination:** targeting someone based on their actual or perceived race, color, ancestry, nationality, national origin, ethnicity, ethnic group identification, immigration status, age, religion, marital status, pregnancy, parental status, physical or mental disability, medical condition, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information -- or their association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics -- may be considered an act of hate and may be a crime.

Students, parents, and/or staff are expected to immediately report incidents of bullying to the school principal or designee. Each complaint of bullying shall be promptly investigated. This policy applies to students on school grounds, while traveling to and from school or a school-sponsored activity, during the lunch period, whether on or off campus, and during a school sponsored activity.

To help ensure bullying does not occur on our school campus, staff development training in bullying prevention will take place. Students will participate in campus-wide bully prevention lessons which will take place during designated class times.

## ATTENDANCE

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Eastside Union School District has a mission to provide a rigorous education in a safe, inclusive learning environment with caring, passionate professionals who prepare students to reach their highest potential.

*Arrive, Achieve, Succeed, On Time & On Target!*

Unparalleled results can only happen when students show up to school, every day, ready to learn. We have increased our communication to our parents and students around the importance of attendance. Attending school every day helps our students build a solid foundation for their future in school and in life.

We understand there are unavoidable illnesses or other times when your child should remain at home. We also know that absences add up quickly, and attendance is critical to your child's success. Please refer to the Annual Notification for reasons for excused absences.

If your child is absent, please call your school's office and inform the school of the absence and reason. 661-946-1041

When a child is absent from school, it adversely impacts the learning process. Attendance is extremely important to your child's academic success. If your child must be absent from school, please call the school's office as soon as possible. Please provide the following information:

1. Your name.
2. Your child's name.
3. Your child's teacher's name.
4. Date(s) of the absence.
5. Reason for absence (specific illness).

Independent Study Contracts (ISCs) are available for extended absences of three or more days. The ISC allows students to be given attendance credit. You must notify the office a minimum of 3 days prior to the beginning of the ISC to allow the teacher(s) to gather the work. ISC's are available for 3 - 14 days. Parents and students are required to complete work and log to receive credit.

Tardies of 30 minutes or more are documented and may result in truancy letters. Tardies now include early pick up of more than 30 minutes. Please try to schedule appointments before and after school to avoid tardies.

#### ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL/SAFETY

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Our campus will open to all students at 8:00 AM and breakfast will be served in the cafeteria. At 8:25 AM, students will report directly to their first period classroom. Teachers will be standing outside their classroom door to supervise and to call their students into class. Students are not allowed to leave once inside. Students are expected to participate in Bell Ringer activities, be present by participating, sharing ideas and respecting others' opinions.

For the safety and welfare of our students, Gifford C. Cole Middle School enforces the closed campus regulation. This means that students may not leave the campus between the time they arrive in the morning and the time school is out in the afternoon. Students are not allowed to leave the school grounds after the bus has brought them to school in the morning nor while they are waiting for the bus after school. Students are not to be on school grounds before 8:00 AM unless they are participating in an extended learning zero period starting at 7:30 AM. All students are to be picked up or walk home promptly after school at 3:10 PM or 4:15 PM if they are participating in an extended learning opportunity. **On Wednesday the students are released earlier that time being 1:46 PM. Minimum days the students are released 1:20 PM.**

In order for a student to be released from school before the end of the school day, the student's parent or authorized adult must report to the school office, present a photo ID upon request, provide a reason for the early checkout, and sign a log. The student will be called to the office only when the parent or authorized adult is physically present. Students will not be released to anyone who is not listed on the emergency procedure card. These procedures are to ensure the safety of all students.

#### BREAKFAST/LUNCH

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*All students enrolled in Eastside Union School District are eligible to receive a healthy breakfast and lunch at no cost each day. In addition, participation in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program does not require a meal application to be completed. Instead, a simple online form is required in order not to jeopardize state school funding to the District. Please use this link ([eastsideusd.rocketscanapps.com](http://eastsideusd.rocketscanapps.com)).*



You can also contact the child nutrition office at 661-952-1229, and we will help you complete it over the phone.

Menus are sent home with the first day packet, parents can sign up to have the menus automatically emailed monthly at: <https://lingconnect.com/public/menu/LQL7S4?buildingId=061f67f1-4697-ed11-b95b-b54ae6323928>

## BUS TRANSPORTATION

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### Contact Information:

Student Transportation of America (STA)  
(661) 946-5686  
Carol Morris  
Or your school's office (661)946-1041

### Bus Conduct

Students are required to:

- Follow the Driver's directions.
- Arrive at the bus stop five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled departure time.
- Use the designated stop assigned for pick up and drop off.
- Be pre-approved by the school if using a different bus stop. Note must identify parent or guardian and who will receive the student at the other stop.
- Enter/Exit the school bus in an orderly manner.
- Promptly sit in your assigned seat. Move as far to the right as possible allowing other students to be seated.
- Remain in your seat while the bus is moving.
- Face forward.
- Keep head, hands, fingers, arm and all personal items in the bus at ALL TIMES.
- Keep bus aisle and emergency exits clear of feet, legs, arms, backpacks and other items at ALL TIMES.
- Keep the bus clean.
- Keep out of the street and off private property while going to and from the bus stop and while waiting for the bus.
- Act appropriately – school rules apply on the bus.
- Keep your hands to yourself.
- Use a quiet, indoor voice at all times.
- Use appropriate language.
- Respect all equipment – including seats, windows, floor, etc.
- Keep cell phones in your backpack while on the bus.

Failure to observe rules may result in any of the following:

- Discipline by school
- Denial of bus riding privileges
- Relocation of bus stop

Surveillance systems may be installed and used on school buses to monitor student behavior while traveling to and from school and school activities. This will help deter misconduct and improve discipline, ensure the safety of students and bus drivers, and prevent vandalism.

A prominent notice is placed in each bus stating that the bus is equipped with a surveillance monitoring system. Contents of a recording may be a student record and, as such, may be used in student disciplinary proceedings or referred to local law enforcement, as appropriate.

### Crossing the Street

When required to cross the street at a bus stop, because the student lives across the street, THE STUDENT MUST WAIT for all other students to unload from the bus and ONLY CROSS WHEN THE DRIVER INDICATES IT IS SAFE TO DO SO. Students must walk in front of the bus and straight across the street. The driver will escort students across the street, but only in a safe location and where legally permitted to do so. Students shall not cross streets or parts of streets where it is prohibited by law. Please follow all instructions given by the driver.

### Notice for Parents/Guardians

Cole Middle School students must show their bus pass to the driver before entering the bus. Failure to show a valid bus pass will result in transportation being denied. If a temporary pass is needed, it must be issued by the school office. Please keep the temporary pass until the regular pass is issued. If the pass is lost, another pass may be purchased from the Transportation office for a fee.

If a student lets another student use his or her bus pass, bus riding privileges can be denied for both students and a parent conference will be arranged to discuss the situation.

### Bus Schedule Revisions and Delays

Bus routes, bus stops, and schedules may be revised. STA and EUSD will make every effort to promptly inform the school and parents of such changes. As with all vehicles, mechanical problems can sometimes occur. If you are at the bus stop five minutes prior to the scheduled departure time and the bus has not arrived, please do not leave. STA will ALWAYS send a bus to any stop where students have not yet been picked up. The school will not mark students late or tardy due to late buses.

## CELEBRATIONS

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Non-food celebrations are encouraged. Schools shall limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than two per year. Food and beverages for class parties should strive to meet the District's nutrition standards for foods and beverages. If the celebration is not part of the National School Lunch Program, the celebration must occur after the last lunch period. Non-food celebrations might include: birthday books, special occasion items such as pencils, erasers or stickers, special classroom activities, or classroom donations.

## DRESS CODE

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"Dress for Learning" is a first step toward maintaining the safety of students within our school and community and enhancing the learning process. Apparel and grooming must not inhibit participation or

cause disruption in any phase of the instructional program. Casual clothing is recommended for school except for special “dress-up” occasions. “Spirit days” will be announced with additional dress guidelines for participation.

Tennis shoes are essential as students will change for P.E. and feet need to be protected. Students may wear sun-protective clothing including, but not limited to, hats while outdoors. Information regarding procedures related to the use of sunscreen is available at each site.

In order to assist us in maintaining an effective learning environment and to keep the focus of the classroom on learning, the following attire ***is appropriate for students:***

- Jeans, cords, denims, slacks, simple dresses, skirts, and shorts (no shorter than mid-thigh)
- Shirts, T-shirts, blouses, and sweatshirts
- Clothes must be modest and completely cover undergarments, midriff, shoulders and back
- Shoes should be sturdy enough to cover and protect students feet.

The following attire ***is inappropriate for students:***

- Oversized and baggy clothing, cut-offs (i.e., shirts, pants, jeans, tank tops, with oversized armholes; pants are to fit around the waist and not drag on the ground.)
- Clothing with inappropriate language or advertisements, or any reference to alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or gangs
- Gang-related clothing (i.e., long belts, trench coats, chains, chain wallets, caps worn backwards, etc.)
- Slippers, after sport-slides, flip flops, crocs and shoes which do not fasten to feet to provide protection.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

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In order to familiarize students and staff with proper procedures, the following drills will be conducted, as appropriate, throughout the school year: fire, lockdown, earthquake drop procedures, and bus evacuation.

Parents should prepare their children for an emergency by:

- Being aware of the emergency procedure instructions given to their children at school.
- Keeping their child’s emergency card on file at the school and updated at all times.
- Establishing the safest and most direct route to and from school.
- Arranging for a neighbor or friend to care for their child if the parents leave home for the day.

In the event of an emergency during the school day, the best place for the students to remain is at school. Students will be kept in a safe area until parents or authorized persons noted on the emergency contact list arrive at the school. Students not picked up will remain at school until the end of the normal school day, and will be released at that time, providing it is safe to go home. During the emergency, it is essential that the school telephone lines are available to school personnel and those providing emergency relief; therefore, the school should be called only if it is absolutely necessary.

## FIELD TRIPS (AR 6153)

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Academic field trips are meant to supplement and enrich the classroom learning experience, lead to increased student achievement, and foster student engagement. They are to be conducted in

connection with the adopted course of study or school-related social, educational, cultural, athletic, school band, or other extracurricular or co-curricular activities. Field trips may also be intentionally planned to incentivize appropriate behavior and academic progress during the school year. For these trips, students who do not meet the established criteria (*e.g.*, grades, behavior, attendance) will not be eligible to participate.

Before a student can participate in a school-sponsored trip, parent permission slips must be signed and returned to the school. All school rules apply on school-sponsored field trips; therefore, violations of any school rules will be addressed in the same way as if the incident occurred on campus. If a student is serving a suspension on the day of the scheduled field trip, that student is not eligible to attend the trip. School administration may also exclude from the trip any student whose presence on the trip would pose a safety or disciplinary risk. All students must ride on the bus to and from the field trip location.

All chaperones must be 18 years of age or older. To maintain student safety during a field trip, a student's siblings and/or other family members are not permitted to accompany the chaperone. Additionally, anyone who is not cleared by administration to serve as a volunteer or chaperone will not be allowed to have contact with students at any time during the field trip.

#### FOOD ALLERGIES/SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS

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There are students who have special dietary needs and/or are allergic to certain foods or ingredients (*e.g.*, peanuts, tree nuts, wheat, milk, etc.). When exposed to an allergen, affected students may experience shortness of breath, wheezing, difficulty breathing, difficulty talking or swallowing, hives, itching, swelling, shock, or asthma. Students will not be excluded from school activities nor otherwise discriminated against, harassed, intimidated, or bullied because of their food allergy and/or special dietary needs.

Please help keep all students safe and healthy at school by keeping in mind the following:

1. Parents are responsible for notifying the principal or school nurse, in writing, regarding their child's food allergies or other special dietary needs.
2. When a student's food allergy or food intolerance substantially limits one or more major life activities, they may be evaluated to determine if accommodations pursuant to Section 504 are required.
3. School lunch meals make dietary accommodations for students who have a medically certified disability that is verified by a medical statement.
4. Each school site has designated allergen-free area(s) to ensure students with allergies are safe.
5. Students should not share or exchange meals or utensils with other students.
6. Without identifying the student, the principal or teacher may notify parents of other students in the class that a student is allergic to a specific food and may request that certain foods not be provided at class parties or other school events.
7. Parents are encouraged to bring non-food items, such as stickers or pencils, for school celebrations in lieu of food items which present a challenge for students with food allergies.
8. When sending food for others to consume, do not send any foods that do not have food labels.

## HOMEWORK POLICY

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Meaningful homework assignments can be a valuable extension of student learning time and assist students in developing good study habits. Homework will be assigned when necessary to support classroom lessons, enable students to complete unfinished assignments, or review and apply academic content for better understanding.

Homework assignments will be reasonable in length and appropriate to the grade level and course. The number, frequency, and degree of difficulty of homework assignments will increase with the grade level and the maturity of students. Although it is the student's responsibility to undertake assignments independently, parents may serve as a resource and are encouraged to ensure that their child's homework assignments are completed. When a student repeatedly fails to complete homework, the teacher will notify the student's parents as soon as possible so that corrective action can be taken prior to the release of any final grades or report cards.

Homework will not be given for disciplinary measures. However, the teacher of any class from which a student is suspended may require the student to complete any assignments and tests missed during the suspension. When a parent of a student who has been suspended for two or more school days requests homework that the student would otherwise have been assigned, the student's teacher must provide such homework. If a homework assignment is requested and is turned into the teacher by the student either upon the student's return from suspension or within the timeframe originally prescribed by the teacher, whichever is later, and is not graded before the end of the academic term, the homework assignment may not be included in the calculation of the student's overall grade in the class.

Students who miss schoolwork because of an excused absence will be given the opportunity to complete all assignments and tests that can be reasonably provided. As determined by the teacher, the assignments and tests will be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the assignments and tests missed during the absence. Students will receive full credit for work satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time.

## ILLNESS

### INJURED STUDENTS

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Students requiring the use of crutches, casts, or any other medical apparatus (example, but not limited to stitches, splints, etc.) will need a note from the attending physician authorizing their use at school. Parents will need to provide a doctor's note signed by the attending physician with restrictions and limitations in regards to physical activity during physical education class and during outside times such as recess.

If a student comes to school with a medical apparatus, stitches or staples (without a doctor's note stating activity limitations and/or restrictions), the student will be kept in the health office during recess and physical education times for their own safety until the stitches, staples, or apparatus is removed or until a doctor's note releasing them to participate in physical activity is received by the school.

All children with medical restrictions can sit in the school office during recesses as per doctor's orders. Minor first aid and illnesses will be handled by the office personnel. If necessary, parents will be called for additional assistance. It is our policy to inform you of a head injury reported to the office.

## LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROGRAM OFFERED

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Language acquisition programs are educational programs designed for English learners to ensure English acquisition occurs as rapidly and effectively as possible, and provides instruction to English learners based on the state-adopted academic content standards, including English language development (ELD) standards.

The District is required to provide a Structured English Immersion (SEI) program option. Your child will be placed in a classroom that uses mostly English for instruction. The (SEI) Program offers a classroom setting for English learners in which nearly all classroom instruction is provided in English but with a curriculum and presentation designed for pupils who are learning English. At minimum, English learners will be provided a program of Structured English Immersion.

To effectively implement a language acquisition program, the District will allocate enough resources to support the success of the program in attaining its articulated goals. Sufficient resources include, but are not limited to: certificated teachers with the appropriate authorizations; necessary instructional resources; pertinent professional development for the proposed program; and opportunities for parent and community engagement to support the proposed program goals.

Parents may choose a language acquisition program that best suits their child. Schools in which the parents or legal guardians of 30 pupils or more per school or the parents or legal guardians of 20 pupils or more in any grade request a language acquisition program that is designed to provide language instruction shall be required to offer such a program to the extent possible.

Parents may provide input regarding language acquisition programs during the development of the Local Control Accountability Plan. If interested in a different program from those listed above, please contact the school principal to ask about the process.

Although schools have an obligation to serve all EL students, parents of English learners have a right to decline or opt their children out of a school's EL program or out of particular EL services within an EL program. If parents opt their children out of a school's EL program or specific EL services, the children retain their status as English learners. The school remains obligated to take the affirmative steps required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the appropriate actions required by the Equal Education Opportunity Act of 1974 to provide EL students access to its educational programs.

## LOST AND FOUND

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In order to ensure that lost articles are returned to their proper owner, it is suggested that your child's name be printed on clothing articles such as sweaters, coats, lunch pails, etc. Articles that are found will be turned in to the school office or placed in the school's designated area and may be claimed at recess or after school. Lost and found items are donated to a local charity group at the end of each reporting period. Schools are not responsible for loss or damage to items.

## MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT

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The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act for Homeless Children and Youth entitles all students experiencing homelessness to the same free and appropriate public education that is provided to non-homeless students. A homeless youth is defined as a child who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes children and youth who: are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; may be living in motels, hotels, trailer parkers, or shelters; have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; are living in cars, parks, public spaces abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; or are migratory children who qualify as homeless because of similar living circumstances.

The District's educational liaison for homeless youth is Shannon Birden, MSW, District Social Worker, (661) 952-1200 ext. 8292, [sbirden@eastsideusd.org](mailto:sbirden@eastsideusd.org). The role of the educational liaison is to 1) ensure that homeless students are identified so that they have access to and receive educational services for which they are eligible; 2) assist homeless students when transferring from one school or school district to another school or school district in ensuring proper transfer of records and grades; 3) ensure that homeless families and students receive referrals for services, such as health care, dental, mental health, and housing; 4) assist, facilitate, or represent a homeless student who is undergoing disciplinary proceedings that could result in their expulsion; 5) participate in an individualized education program or Section 504 team meeting to make a manifestation determination regarding the behavior of a student with disability; and 6) address any disputes over school selection or enrollment.

To ensure that each school identifies all homeless and unaccompanied youths enrolled at the school, a housing questionnaire is administered at least once a year. The questionnaire can be made available in the primary language of the student's parent or unaccompanied youth upon request.

The following is a brief summary of a homeless youth's rights:

1. Right to attend either the "school of origin" or the current school of residence. The school of origin can be the school attended when the student had permanent housing, the school most recently attended, or any school the homeless youth attended in the last 15 months. Transportation may be provided.
2. Right to immediate enrollment even if the homeless youth is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment (*e.g.*, proof of residency, birth certificate, transcript, immunization), does not have clothing normally required by the school (*e.g.*, school uniforms), or has outstanding fees, fines, textbooks, or other monies due to the school last attended.
3. Right to automatically qualify for child nutrition programs.
4. Right to priority access to an intersession program. If the homeless youth moves during the intersession period, the homeless youth's educational rights holder may determine which intersession program to attend.
5. Right not to be stigmatized by school personnel.
6. Right to file a complaint through the Uniform Complaint Procedures if there is allegation that the District has not complied with requirements regarding the education of homeless youth.

Unaccompanied youth who meet the definition of homeless youth are also eligible for rights and services under the McKinney-Vento Act. An unaccompanied youth is defined as a minor who is not in the physical custody of a parent.

## MEDICATIONS

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ALL MEDICATION (including cough syrup, cough drops, Tylenol, ChapStick, sunscreen, etc.) must be kept in the school office. It must be delivered to the school by a parent or other authorized adult, unless the student is authorized to carry and take the medication by themselves (*e.g.*, auto-injectable epinephrine or inhaled asthma medication). A form is available in the school office that must be completed and signed by the parent and physician before school employees can administer prescription or over the counter medication. Prescription medication MUST be in a prescription bottle that lists the student's name, doctor's name, name of the medicine, and instructions for when to take the medicine and how much to take. Medication cannot be sent home with a student at the end of the day. Any medication -- whether discontinued, outdated, and/or unused -- going home must be picked up by a parent or authorized adult.

## MENTAL HEALTH

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"School counselors recognize and respond to the need for mental health and behavioral prevention, early intervention and crisis services that promote psychosocial wellness and development for all students. School counselors are prepared to address barriers and to assess ways to maximize students' success in schools, communities and their family structure by offering education, prevention, and crisis and short-term intervention until the student is connected with available community resources." (ASCA, 2015).

In addition to each school site having a school counselor, each school is partnered with mental health service agencies, which provide School-Based Therapy services.

### **Masada Homes**

(Serves Enterprise Elementary School)  
314 E Ave K4 #104  
Lancaster, CA 93535  
Tel:(661) 726-5500

### **Children's Bureau Center**

(Serves Eastside Elementary, Tierra Bonita Elementary and Cole Middle School)  
921 West Avenue J, Suite C  
Lancaster, CA 93534-3443  
Tel: 661.949.0131

Columbia Elementary School  
(Agency to be determined)

There are additional community agencies who provide Mental Health Services. If you have private insurance, reach out to your insurance company for information on local service providers.

### **Alafia Mental Health**

43845 10<sup>th</sup> St. W. Ste. 2-B  
Lancaster, CA  
(661) 940-9094



**Child and Family Guidance**

40005 10<sup>th</sup> St. W. #106  
Palmdale, CA  
(661) 265-8627

**Children's Center of A.V.**

45111 Fern Ave.  
Lancaster, CA  
(661) 949-1206

**Masada Homes**

314 E. Ave. K-4, #104  
Lancaster, CA  
(661) 726-5500

**Penny Lane Centers**

43520 Division St.  
Lancaster, CA  
(661) 266-4783

**Children's Bureau of Southern CA**

921 W. Ave. J Ste. C  
Lancaster, CA  
(661) 949-0131

**Hathaway Sycamores**

44738 Sierra Hwy., Lancaster, CA  
(661) 942-5749

**Pathways Community Services**

44285 Lowtree Ave.  
Lancaster, CA  
(661) 341-3900

**Tarzana Treatment Center**

44447 N. 10<sup>th</sup> St. W.  
Lancaster, CA  
(661) 726-2630

**Antelope Valley Mental Health Center**

349 E Ave. K-6, Suite A  
Lancaster, CA 93535  
(661) 723-426

MOBILE COMMUNICATION DEVICE

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The use of any electronic signaling device (*e.g.*, smartphone) by a pupil in any classroom without the prior consent of the teacher and the principal is prohibited as it disrupts and impairs the teaching process and discipline in the schools. Devices must be placed in backpacks and turned off. However, no

pupil will be prohibited from possessing or using a smartphone or other electronic signaling device under the following circumstances:

1. In case of an emergency, or in response to a perceived threat of danger. (See below for examples of what constitutes an emergency.)
2. When a teacher or administrator grants permission to the pupil, subject to any reasonable limitation imposed by that teacher or administrator.
3. When a licensed physician and surgeon determines it is necessary for the pupil's health or well-being.
4. When it is required in a pupil's IEP or Section 504 plan.

Examples of emergencies:

- During natural disasters
- Experiencing serious emotional, mental, or physical pain or disturbances
- Danger of serious physical injury or death, which can include school shootings
- Change of clothes due to biological accidents (*e.g.*, blood, urine, or fecal matter)

Examples of non-emergencies:

- Forgot lunch
- Forgot school work or class materials
- Minor injury that can be treated by the school nurse
- Need money for personal reasons
- Incidents on campus in which they're not involved (*e.g.*, fights)
- Make alternate plans for after school

Any pupil in violation shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT - TITLE I POLICY

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The Eastside Union School District recognizes that, when schools and parents form strong partnerships, children's potential for educational success improves significantly.

ESSA and Title I of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act are designed to improve the academic achievement of students. Title I programs, activities, and procedures shall be developed and agreed upon with parents/guardians of participating students.

The California Education Code guides all school and District practices regarding the engagement of parents in their children's education. In addition, the California Education Code requires that every school receiving federal funds establish a School Site Council (SSC). Parents must be involved in advising or, as members of the SSC, in making decisions about the school's educational program, the use of categorical funds to support these programs, and the school plan to involve parents in their children's education.

The District has established a Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy and directs all schools to annually review and revise, as necessary, their school's Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy. In addition, all schools with twenty-one or more English Learners (EL) students, not including Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) students, are required to establish an English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC).

All EUSD schools have established a parent resource room where parent support services and training will occur. The School Goals for Parent Engagement sets standards for effective parental engagement and guides school efforts to effectively engage parents at all grade levels in a broad range of roles and activities. These goals are the following:

- Ensure parents are welcomed as equal partners.
- Provide parents opportunities to strengthen their capacity to support learning.
- Operate an effective volunteer program.
- Respond effectively to parent concerns.
- Maintain compliance regarding all parent involvement mandates.

Parent engagement programs at schools are developed at the school level, with each school staffing a parent liaison. All parents, including parents of English learners, migrant students, and students with disabilities are guaranteed access to school-based activities and programs. Upon request, schools will make special accommodations for parents who are disabled or who require other special consideration. In addition, the Division of Special Education provides free resources for parents of students with disabilities, including offering them information about their child's education and ways to be involved. For more information, contact (661) 952-1224.

## PARKING LOT

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The school parking lot is located in front of the school and in the back of the school. Parking is not permitted in front of the stairs, this is designated for dropping off and picking up students only. Stay in designated pick up areas as directed by school personnel.

- Yield to pedestrians, crossing guards, and buses, and be aware that children who are walking home may not look both ways before venturing in or across a roadway.
- Speed on school campuses is to be kept at or below 10 mph and drivers must operate their vehicles with due care and caution at all times.
- Be sure to drive the proper direction through parking lots and nearby streets.
- When waiting for students to be released, pull all the way forward on the curb to allow other cars ample room and minimize driving around.

## SCHOOLWIDE EXPECTATIONS

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Each school site and each classroom teacher has established behavior expectations for their students that are consistent with Board policy and applicable state and federal laws. It is the responsibility of the teachers and administrators to see that rules are carried out in a fair and reasonable manner. Every teacher, administrator and other designated employee will hold students to a strict account for their conduct on the way to and from school, in the classroom and other school buildings, on school grounds, and on the school bus. Students must conform to school regulations, obey all directions, be diligent in

study and respectful to teachers and others in authority, and refrain from the use of profane and vulgar language.

Specific behaviors are forbidden by state and federal laws and by District policy. Violations of these laws and policies may result in advising and counseling students, conferencing with parents, detention during and after school hours, loss of privileges, community service, involvement of law enforcement, placement in alternative programs, suspension, or expulsion.

The severity of disciplinary consequences depends upon several factors such as the nature or seriousness of the offense and whether the offense is a first offense. Ordinarily, suspension (and expulsion) is imposed only when other means of correction fail to bring about proper conduct, or whenever the student has committed a serious, first-time offense; or when it is also determined that the student's presence causes a danger to persons or property or threatens to disrupt the instructional process.

Corporal punishment will not be used. The use of reasonable and necessary force by an employee to protect oneself or students or prevent damage to District property is not considered corporal punishment.

### **SCHOOL WIDE EXPECTATIONS (PBIS)**

The focus of PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support) is to create and maintain a positive learning environment by empowering students and staff with a clear system for expected behaviors at Cole Middle School. There are several components of the program including teaching expected behaviors in all settings, acknowledging students when they demonstrate the expectations, and providing interventions when the expectations are not met. Through PBIS we will work to maintain a productive, safe environment in which ALL school community members have clear expectations and understandings of their roles in the educational process.

#### **Cole Expectations (LEAD):**

1. Learn with a Growth Mindset
2. Engage in the Cole Community
3. Act Responsibly
4. Develop Positive Relationships

**Cole Behavior Expectations Matrix Link:** [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1InNztb9u5A6g1dARiN\\_J-FI8R1J5PjVA/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1InNztb9u5A6g1dARiN_J-FI8R1J5PjVA/view?usp=sharing)

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

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The Board of Trustees is committed to maintaining a safe school environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. The Board prohibits, at school or at school-sponsored or school-related activities, sexual harassment targeted at any student by anyone. The Board also prohibits retaliatory behavior or action against any person who reports, files a complaint or testifies about, or otherwise supports a complainant in alleging sexual harassment.

The district strongly encourages students who feel that they are being or have been sexually harassed on school grounds or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity by another student or an adult, or who have experienced off-campus sexual harassment that has a continuing effect on campus, to immediately contact their teacher, the principal, the district's Title IX Coordinator, or any other available school employee. When a verbal or informal report of sexual harassment is submitted, the Title IX Coordinator shall inform the student or parent/guardian of the right to file a formal written complaint in accordance with applicable district complaint procedures. Any employee who receives a report or observes an incident of sexual harassment shall notify the Title IX Coordinator. The report shall be made regardless of whether the alleged victim files a formal complaint or requests confidentiality. The following individual has been designated as the Title IX Coordinator: Daryl Bell, Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services at 44938 30th Street East, Lancaster, California 93535, 661-952-1200 Ext. 8221, [dbell@eastsideusd.org](mailto:dbell@eastsideusd.org).

Once notified, the Title IX Coordinator shall ensure the complaint or allegation is addressed through AR 5145.71 - Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures or BP/AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures, as applicable. Because a complaint or allegation that is dismissed or denied under the Title IX complaint procedure may still be subject to consideration under state law, the Title IX Coordinator shall ensure that any implementation of AR 5145.71 concurrently meets the requirements of BP/AR 1312.3.

The Title IX Coordinator shall offer supportive measures to the complainant and respondent, as deemed appropriate under the circumstances. If sexual harassment is found following an investigation, the Title IX Coordinator, or designee in consultation with the Coordinator, shall take prompt action to stop the sexual harassment, prevent recurrence, implement remedies, and address any continuing effects.

The Superintendent or designee shall inform students and parents/guardians of the district's sexual harassment policy by disseminating it through parent/guardian notifications, publishing it on the district's web site, and including it in student and staff handbooks. All district staff shall be trained regarding the policy.

#### Instruction/Information

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that all district students receive age-appropriate information on sexual harassment. Such instruction and information shall include:

1. What acts and behavior constitute sexual harassment, including the fact that sexual harassment could occur between people of the same sex and could involve sexual violence
2. A clear message that students do not have to endure sexual harassment under any circumstance
3. Encouragement to report observed incidents of sexual harassment even when the alleged victim of the harassment has not complained
4. A clear message that student safety is the district's primary concern, and that any separate rule violation involving an alleged victim or any other person reporting a sexual harassment incident will be addressed separately and will not affect the manner in which the sexual harassment complaint will be received, investigated, or resolved
5. A clear message that, regardless of a complainant's noncompliance with the writing, timeline, or other formal filing requirements, every sexual harassment allegation that involves a student, whether as the complainant, respondent, or victim of the harassment, shall be investigated and action shall be taken to respond to harassment, prevent recurrence, and address any continuing effect on students

6. Information about the district's procedures for investigating complaints and the person(s) to whom a report of sexual harassment should be made
7. Information about the rights of students and parents/guardians to file a civil or criminal complaint, as applicable, including the right to file a civil or criminal complaint while the district investigation of a sexual harassment complaint continues
8. A clear message that, when needed, the district will implement supportive measures to ensure a safe school environment for a student who is the complainant or victim of sexual harassment and/or other students during an investigation

#### Examples of Sexual Harassment

Examples of types of conduct which are prohibited in the district and which may constitute sexual harassment under state and/or federal law, in accordance with the definitions above, include, but are not limited to:

1. Unwelcome leering, sexual flirtations, or propositions
2. Unwelcome sexual slurs, epithets, threats, verbal abuse, derogatory comments, or sexually degrading descriptions
3. Graphic verbal comments about an individual's body or overly personal conversation
4. Sexual jokes, derogatory posters, notes, stories, cartoons, drawings, pictures, obscene gestures, or computer-generated images of a sexual nature
5. Spreading Sexual Rumors
6. Teasing or sexual remarks about students enrolled in a predominantly single-sex class
7. Massaging, grabbing, fondling, stroking, or brushing the body
8. Touching an individual's body or clothes in a sexual way
9. Impeding or blocking movements or any physical interference with school activities when directed at an individual on the basis of sex
10. Displaying sexually suggestive objects
11. Sexual assault, sexual battery, or sexual coercion
12. Electronic communications containing comments, words, or images described above

#### Disciplinary Actions

Upon completion of an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint, any student found to have engaged in sexual harassment or sexual violence in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action. For students in grades 4-12, disciplinary action may include suspension and/or expulsion, provided that, in imposing such discipline, the entire circumstances of the incident(s) shall be taken into account.

Upon investigation of a sexual harassment complaint, any employee found to have engaged in sexual harassment or sexual violence toward any student shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, in accordance with law and the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

#### Record-Keeping

In accordance with law and district policies and regulations, the Superintendent or designee shall maintain a record of all reported cases of sexual harassment to enable the district to monitor, address, and prevent repetitive harassing behavior in district schools.

For a copy of the District's board policy and administrative regulations on sexual harassment, go to:  
<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/Policy/ViewPolicy.aspx?S=36030646&revid=OfTxXDu7plusNVvPkhcpxM8slshA==&st=sexual%20harassment&mt=Exact>

## VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS

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Because parents serve as the backbone to our instructional program, parents are always welcome to visit classes and volunteer. Visits should be pre-arranged with the classroom teacher to avoid unnecessary interruptions to the instructional program. All volunteers and visitors are required to sign in using the Raptor system at the school office and wear a volunteer or visitor badge while on campus. We must be aware of all non-employees on our school campus to ensure the safety of our students. All volunteers are required to have a TB risk assessment and obtain a certificate showing that they have submitted to a tuberculosis (TB) risk assessment, and if TB risk factors were identified, they were examined and found to be free of infections TB.

Volunteers may serve as nonteaching aides under the immediate supervision and direction of certificated personnel to perform noninstructional work which assists certificated personnel.

The District requests that classroom observations be arranged 24 hours in advance for security reasons, and to ensure that instructional time is maximized. Observations should be limited to no more than thirty minutes. Visitors should not engage the teacher in conversation during classroom visits. Conferences may be arranged for a later time.

The Eastside Union School District very much appreciates the valuable service volunteers provide our students and staff. In order to assure the safety and well-being of our children, a person who is required to register as a sex offender pursuant to Penal Code 290 shall not serve as a volunteer. Registered sex offenders and/or persons convicted of a felony are required by law to disclose this information to school officials prior to entering the campus. Failure to notify school officials may result in arrest, prosecution, and likely fine and imprisonment.

Please note that the District may verify a volunteer's status as a registered sex offender by checking the Department of Justice's Megan's Law internet website or may request that a local law enforcement agency conduct an automated records check. Information about registered sex offenders in California can be found on the California Department of Justice's website, <https://meganslaw.ca.gov/>. The website also provides information on how to protect yourself and your family, facts about sex offenders, and frequently asked questions.