

# WELCOME TO MIRAMAR RANCH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## A Message from the Principal's Desk

This parent handbook will provide you with general information about our school, available programs, and our school-wide behavior plan. Please read this information and review it with your child(ren). If you have questions, please contact your child's teacher. Thank you for your continued support. The staff here at Miramar Ranch looks forward to working with you during this school year.

Miramar Ranch School opened in September 1976. It is located in the heart of the Scripps Ranch community and has an enrollment of approximately 750 students. Miramar Ranch operates on a traditional school schedule and has a diverse population.

The administration and staff strive to provide a quality education for all children. Our school is a community of learners in which all children are encouraged to achieve academic and social success, to enjoy learning, to celebrate diversity, to develop analytical skills, and to model exemplary behavior. We empower our students to take responsibility for their own learning. They are active participants, and every child has a responsibility not just to perform a task, but to do it to the best of her or his ability.

In order for children to excel, they require an environment that encourages them to take risks in their learning. Our staff works together to create a nurturing environment so that students can take risks without anxiety, can think critically, and are encouraged to ask questions about their learning and their world.

The instructional program integrates core curriculum components with all traditional subject areas and emphasizes high academic standards and high expectations. Teachers incorporate a variety of instructional strategies to address individual learning styles. Parents are encouraged to actively participate in school activities directly related to their child's educational experience and academic success in school.

We look forward to an exciting and rewarding school year!

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## **General School Information**

### **Residency Policy**

Students may attend Miramar Ranch Elementary if they reside within our boundaries. A proof of residency is required for registration. Residency is defined by Education Code as the place where the student sleeps/ resides a majority of the time. A family may not claim more than one primary residence. Homes of grandparents, friends, or other relatives may **not** be used to establish residency. The office is required to substantiate any resident claim where there is a doubt of authenticity. Nonresidents may apply to attend Miramar Ranch through the Choice or VEEP programs.

### **Vision**

Miramar Ranch Elementary School is committed to partner with students, parents, teachers and community members to develop confident, responsible, compassionate, cooperative and creative students. Our commitment is to provide a safe and academically rigorous environment that challenges all students to rise to their highest potential.

### **Morning Arrival**

For your child's safety, students should arrive at school **no earlier than 7:30 a.m.** when supervision is provided. Upon arrival to school, students are to go directly to the playground and wait in line with their classmates at their room number or they may participate in Running Club on the lower field. Students are to keep backpacks, lunch boxes, etc., with them when lining up in the morning. Do not drop these things off at the classrooms as these areas are not supervised before school starts. **All children** are prohibited from using the playground equipment both before and after school.

However, students eating breakfast at school may arrive no earlier than 7:15 a.m. and should go directly to the cafeteria. Supervision will also be provided for those eating breakfast between 7:15 and 7:40 a.m.

An administrator will contact parents of students arriving prior to these times on each occurrence.

### **Tardiness**

Our tardy policy is the same in every classroom. The first bell will continue to ring at 7:48 a.m. and will serve as a signal that it is time to line up. The second bell will ring at 7:50 a.m. and will signal the start of the instructional day. At that time the teachers will meet their classes and walk them to the classrooms. Attendance and tardies will be noted and marked by the teacher after the last student in line has entered the classroom. By taking attendance and marking tardies in this manner in every classroom at our school we will fairly and consistently take attendance and mark tardies. Children arriving late to school cause classroom disruption and require additional teacher time for directions and assignments already presented. They also begin the day feeling left out of the loop. **Please be sure your children arrive at school on time. If your children are not at school by 7:50 a.m. they are tardy. Parents will be contacted by the school and/or the District if their child has recurring tardies to assure arrival to school on time.**

### **Attendance**

**The San Diego City Schools District is making a special effort to reduce absences. Regular attendance and prompt arrival is essential for success!!! State law places the responsibility for regular attendance upon the parents. If your child is going to be absent, it is imperative that parents call the school office (NOT the teacher) on the first day of their child's absence, give their child's name, room number, and the reason for the absence. Our 24-hour attendance number is 858-271-0470 ext. 4.**

**Excused Absences** - Absences for the following reasons are excused but not funded. Funding is only earned for a day when a student is present.

- Verified illness
- Verified medical or dental appointments

- Attendance at funeral services for a member of the immediate family.

These are the only absences recorded as “excused” by the district. Medical and dental appointments should be scheduled after school hours when possible.

**Truancy** - Any pupil absent from school without a valid excuse (see excused absences above) three full days or more in one school year, or tardy or absent for more than any 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof, is truant.

**Independent Study Contracts** – Study Contracts can be arranged in advance for absences of at least five school days, but not more than 20 school days. This ensures an excused absence and assignments for the students. Please contact the school office to make arrangements no later than **one week before the start of the contract** so the teacher has time to prepare the work. Your cooperation in promptly reporting absences is greatly appreciated.

Procedures for Independent Study Contracts (ISC):

- Contact the school office to receive an ISC
- Parent will fill out and sign the contract
- Teacher provides classroom work that will be missed
- Student will turn in completed work upon their return

If your child will be gone for less than 5 days inform the teacher and ask the teacher to get together the work that your child will be missing. If the work is completed and returned to the teacher, the absence will be marked an excused absence instead of unexcused. Make sure you notify both the teacher and the office one-week ahead of the absence.

## Cafeteria Services

The school cafeteria serves a well balanced breakfast and lunch daily. The Kid's Choice Cafe has proven quite successful. For lunch students have a choice of one entrée, salad bar, snack, milk and/or juice daily. Students are choosing and eating their school lunches now! The Point of Sale program provides a pin number account for each student. Students can purchase breakfast or lunch on a daily basis or use their prepaid pin account. Parents are encouraged to purchase meals in advance for their child. **Please include cash or a check made out to Miramar Ranch School Cafeteria with the student’s name, room number, and the amount enclosed written on the sealed envelope, and submit to the office or cafeteria in the morning.** Make a note on the check if you are paying for more than one child with their names and room numbers. Please do not send large bills, as we do not have change available in the office.

<b>Breakfast</b>	\$ .75	Breakfast will be <b>served</b> from 7:15 –7:40 a.m. each morning.
<b>Lunch with milk</b>	\$1.50	Lunch is not sold without milk unless a written statement from your doctor is on file with the cafeteria.
	\$ .25	Milk can be purchased for those bringing a lunch from home.

Some students qualify for free or reduced priced meals. Information will be sent home with all students at the beginning of the school year. A reminder is sent home with the child when the account is running low. Unfortunately, sometimes these reminder slips never make it home, therefore please monitor the balance of your child’s lunch account. We will contact a parent if your child’s account is out of money.

## Healthy Recess Snacks

We encourage staff and students to enjoy a healthy snack at recess time. Please help your child choose wisely from foods such as fruit, string cheese, crackers, juice, or half sandwich. Please no Top Ramen, sunflower seeds, Flaming Hot Cheetos, canned potato chips, soda in cans, candy, or over-sized potions.

## Lost and Found

The lost and found cabinet is located outside the cafeteria doors. Please mark all belongings with your child’s full name and room number. All unclaimed articles remaining at end of each month are donated to charitable organizations. Periodically we will display all the lost and found items in the lunch arbor. Please read your Parent Bulletin for the dates and times.

## Voice Mail and Phone Use

Our school has Voice Mail. We are pleased with how this system improves home/school communications. Parents can leave messages for your child's teacher on their voice mail. The system will be accessible 24-hours a day. Teachers will check for messages before school, during recess and lunch, then again after school. Your call will be returned as soon as possible by the teacher. For your convenience, you will receive a complete listing of extensions. **IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY YOU WILL ALWAYS BE ABLE TO PRESS "0" FOR IMMEDIATE HELP FROM THE OFFICE STAFF.**

Students' use of the office phones is for emergencies only. Students are encouraged to bring all needed materials and assignments to school without the need to phone home for forgotten items. If they are going home with a friend, arrangements need to be made before they come to school. Students are not to call home at dismissal or at the conclusion of any after school activity to arrange for their ride.

## Inclement Weather Days

If the weather is quite bad, your child will not be sent out of doors at recess or lunchtime. "Bad" weather usually constitutes rain, extreme wind, or a day that seems quite cold because of a combination of cloudy weather and wind. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather. Students eat lunch outside beneath the covering due to space limitations. Other than the conditions described above, we encourage all children to go outside for recess. If a child is too sick to go outside, he/she is probably too sick to be at school.

## Pets

Ask the teacher before bringing any animal to school. The recommended stay is 10-15 minutes. You may not bring hamsters, mice, rats, black widow spiders, rattlesnakes, unbanded parrot-like birds or any animal that bites. **Dogs (other than service dogs) are not allowed on campus at any time. Please do not bring dogs onto the campus when picking up your child.** Bus drivers will not allow animals to board the bus.

## School Logo Wear

T-shirts and sweatshirts with the Miramar Ranch logo printed on them are available for purchase. Order forms will be sent to all families at the beginning of the school year. Order forms will also be available in the hallway in front of the office.

## **Safety and Health Issues**

### **Release of Students**

Parents are reminded that students are expected to remain on the school grounds during school hours. If you wish to have your child released from school during school hours, please come to the office and obtain a release slip. **For your protection and the child's, students are only released to parents, guardians, or other authorized persons whose names are listed on the student's registration card and who show a valid picture ID. Students will not be released by telephone requests.**

### **Registration Card**

Please notify the office immediately if any information on the registration card changes during the school year. This information is used for parent contacts, release of students, or in the case of an emergency. Your cooperation in keeping a registration card with current information is greatly appreciated.

### **Dismissal**

School is dismissed at 2:05 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and at 12:00 p.m. on Thursdays. Upon dismissal from class, students are to depart the school grounds from designated exits. Students are not to use the stairs inside the building to exit the school unless accompanied by an adult. At dismissal, please do not attempt to pick up children from the School Safety Patrol Zone or staff parking lot. Picking up students in these locations create a safety hazard to students and drivers alike. Safety is our greatest concern and there have been far too many near misses in recent years. Please advise your child (ren) to follow the rules below. Your cooperation is needed and greatly appreciated by the Miramar Ranch community.

**The Safety Rules which are to be followed by all students are:**

- 1. STOP, LOOK, AND LISTEN**
- 2. Cross ONLY at crosswalk**
- 3. WALK, don't run, across street**
- 4. Don't cross the street between cars**
- 5. Don't follow toys into street**
- 6. NEVER skateboard or play in the street. It's against the LAW.**

It is very important that students leave the campus promptly after school ends. Please make arrangements with your child for a meeting place at dismissal. Students who have not been picked up in a timely manner will be brought to the office. Parents will be contacted and the incident will be logged in. The office staff cannot be responsible for students left in the school office after hours. If parents cannot be reached, school police will be called.

### **Safest Route to School**

Students who are walking to school or dropped off on the south side of Red Cedar Drive must use the crosswalk located at the front of the school. Students will enter the school grounds through the Kindergarten playground and up the steps to the upper playground. Access is also allowed at the pedestrian gate located near B5 as well as the gates onto the lower field.

At dismissal, students will depart from various exits throughout the school. Students, who are walking from school, or being picked up on the south side of Red Cedar, must use the crosswalk located at the front of the school.

### **Traffic and Parking**

Please obey all traffic laws, parking ordinances, and the Safety Patrol when driving or parking at school.

Our school Safety Patrol members are selected for their leadership ability and are trained by an officer of the San Diego Police Department. The school Safety Patrol is trained to assist pedestrians crossing Red Cedar Drive before and after school. The San Diego Police Department will be monitoring the safety of Miramar Ranch and will enforce traffic laws and write citations as necessary.

Bus parking is clearly marked NO PARKING on Red Cedar Drive next to the driveway. San Diego Police will issue tickets to people who stop or park in the bus-parking zone from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Although it may take a few additional minutes, the crosswalk that is controlled by the Safety Patrol should always be used for safety reasons. We ask that parents also cross at crosswalks in order to model for you children. Cars will not be allowed to pass through the parking lot in front of the school entrance for loading or unloading students. Please encourage your child to use the crosswalk when crossing Red Cedar Drive.

The upper parking lot is not available for drop off and pick up of students. The parking lot is closed from 7:30 – 8:00 a.m. and from 1:50 – 2:20 p.m. On Thursdays, when school is dismissed earlier, the lot is closed from 11:45 - 12:15 p.m. The gate will be locked 7 p.m. - 6 a.m. Monday through Friday and on weekends and holidays

Much of the street parking in front of Miramar Ranch is designated a three-minute passenger pick-up zone during peak congestion periods throughout the day. **The three-minute passenger loading zone begins in front of the school and ends near the red light at the north end of Red Cedar Drive. Cars are not to be parked for longer than three minutes in this zone during the times posted.** Please do not leave your car unattended.

Our Parent Patrol is comprised of parent volunteers. Their purpose is to provide the safest arrival and dismissal for students, families and community members. Some services that they provide are: assistance for students with getting into and out of vehicles with personal belongings in an expedited manner; encouraging an orderly flow of cars while at the same time maximizing curb usage; encouraging the use of crosswalks; and providing a visual reminder to be safe and courteous to all. Your support of their efforts is much appreciated. If interested in joining our Parent Patrol, please stop by the school office.

## Health and Accident Procedures

Adminstrating Medication at School -

- Children may not be given any kind of non-prescription medication at school unless he/she has a statement from a physician.
- Parents must submit a “Physician’s Recommendation for Medication” for any student who must take medication prescribed by a physician during the school day. The medicine must be in it’s original container and the label must include 1) name of student, 2) name of prescribing physician, 3) an identification number of the prescription on the container, 4) name of pharmacy, 5) the amount of medication to be taken and time(s). **Parents are responsible for maintaining their child’s supply of medicine in the office. No injections may be given at school except by a registered nurse. All medicines are kept in the nurse’s office.**

Injuries at school - Staff will take care of all minor injuries at school. In the event of a more serious injury, parents are always notified and may be requested to come to the school for their child. Names and phone numbers of those legally empowered to take charge of an injured child, in the event the parent cannot be reached, must be on file for each child.

## Criteria for School Attendance and Health Issues

- Children too ill to participate in normal school activities should be excluded from school attendance whether or not the child has a fever.
- A child with a temperature greater than 100 degrees should be excluded until the temperature is normal for at least 24 hours.
- Children with persistent vomiting should be excluded from school until vomiting has stopped for at least 24 hours.
- Children with a known or suspected contagious illness should be excluded from school.
- Any child with a rash of undetermined origin needs to stay home until the rash is gone or it has been determined to be non-contagious by a physician.

- Any child having a medical procedure requiring general anesthesia needs to be kept home at least 24 hours after anesthesia and have a medical release to attend school (with P.E. recommendations).
- If a child has live head lice, they must shampoo with a lice-specific medicated shampoo and show proof of such treatment upon returning to school (i.e., shampoos box or contained). A parent must accompany the child to school the day after treatment so the nurse/health aide may confirm the child's hair is free of all nits.

Final decisions and exceptions regarding attendance for reasons of health of any student will be at the discretion of the school nurse.

## **School Insurance**

Parents are urged to study the student insurance brochure sent home with each child the first week of school. The plan is entirely voluntary.

## **School-wide Emergency Preparedness Plan**

Our extensive plan for emergency preparedness includes a practice fire or earthquake drill for staff and students monthly. A large-scale emergency preparedness drill is held involving all staff, students, and parent volunteers annually. In the event it is necessary to evacuate the school, students will be taken to the upper playground or the alternate area, the lower field. More detailed information will be provided during the school year.

## School Visitation and Teacher Conferences

We welcome visits by parents at all times. We would suggest delaying your initial visit until after the first week of school so that you can see the regular program in operation and allow an adjustment period for your children. Letting the teacher know ahead of time regarding a visit can minimize impact on classroom instruction. Conferences during class time are not appropriate.

California State Law requires that all non-students and others without official business in a school building or on the school grounds must register in the school office. This means that all visitors to the school, including parents, must report to the office and sign in. A visitor tag will be issued when you sign in permitting you to remain on school grounds. Although this requirement may be an inconvenience, it was designed to maintain the security and safety of all children while at school.

## Classroom Assignments

As we assign children to classrooms, we are guided by several factors:

- **Class Size:** A reasonably equitable number of students are assigned to classrooms at each grade level according to District and State policy. In grades K-3 a maximum of 20 students is allowed in each classroom according to state law (at times, class size may rise above or fall below the desired average of 20).
- **Ethnic Balance:** In all classrooms, the racial/ethnic balance may not deviate more than plus or minus 20% from the ethnic make-up of the school.
- **Gender Balance:** The number of boys and girls in each classroom is equalized as much as possible.
- **English Language Proficiency:** English Language Learners are assigned to teachers who have specialized training in English Language Development.
- **Range of Academic Skills:** Students in each classroom will reflect a range of academic skills resulting in heterogeneous groups in each room.
- **Social Adjustment:** Children requiring special social/emotional guidance will be placed with teachers best suited to assist them. An equitable distribution of these particular students will occur.

At Miramar Ranch the placement process is a professional team effort and involves your child's current teacher, any specialists who are familiar with your child (district counselor, resource specialist, speech and language specialist, nurse, psychologist, etc.) and administrators. We individually place children according to their unique needs. The principal is ultimately responsible for the final placement of each student; however, the principal and staff work closely together to make placements.

The teachers at Miramar Ranch are highly trained professionals who meet students' instructional needs. Students whose primary language is not English, students who qualify for the Gifted and Talented Educational Program (G.A.T.E.), and students who receive special education are placed in classrooms with teachers holding the appropriate credentials.

Student placement has become quite an involved process regarding district and state mandates. The administrative staff will no longer accept letters for student placement decisions or meet with parents on this issue. We ask for parents to place their trust in the administrative and teaching staff of the school as we make student placement decisions.

After school resumes in September, parents who are concerned with their child's placement are encouraged to talk to their child's teacher. Generally, once the parent and teacher talk and begin an open line of communication all concerns subside. Time is also a factor in many cases. **Students will not be moved during the first three weeks of school unless there is a general reorganization of the school.**

### Grade Level and Classroom Configuration

Current enrollment and enrollment forecasts from the District are used to determine a tentative grade level and classroom assignment for each teacher. These assignments are tentative in that enrollments are subject to fluctuations beyond the control of the school. Personnel changes also often occur after the grade level and room assignments are made, sometimes necessitating changes in configuration.

### Reorganization

Reorganization is a normal part of the process of setting up classrooms, at the beginning of the year, due to fluctuations in enrollment.

If reorganization must be made after school begins, we will follow the same process that was used in the spring and parents of students involved in any changes will be notified the day before the moves are made, in writing. We ask that parents be supportive of teachers throughout any reorganization and keep in mind that changes are not made arbitrarily, but out of necessity.

## **Homework**

Regularly assigned homework is an official policy the San Diego Unified School District for all students. Homework is designed to help students extend or reinforce concepts presented in the classroom as well as to develop organizational and time management skills. Homework assignments will be given in all subject areas. Some assignments may integrate these subject areas or take the form of a project. While parents are encouraged to assist and supervise children's home learning, they should not do it for them. If you have a concern about the quantity or quality of your child's homework, please contact the teacher.

## **Home Reading**

The Board of Education mandated that each student enrolled in San Diego City Schools should read and report on a minimum of one book per month, although it is expected that most students will read more (20 minutes daily). This reading is intended to be done outside of the classroom. Parents are asked to encourage students to read at home nightly. Part of the Literacy Standards requires teacher certification and evidence the child has read: At least 25 books, including: at least four genres; at least five different authors; and at least four books of the same topic or by the same author or of the same kind.

## **Reporting Student Progress**

Report cards are distributed three times a year. These dates will occur in December, April, and June. Minimum days are scheduled during the first two reporting periods for parent conferences. Your child may be asked to attend the conference. Although parent conferences occur in December and March, a conference to discuss your child's progress may be scheduled at any time with the teacher.

## **Learning Contracts**

It is our goal at Miramar Ranch to help each student meet or exceed grade level standards. Students who are identified as performing at less than grade level by standardized or classroom assessments will be put on a learning contract. This contract outlines support and responsibilities of the school, parents and child to assist the student in meeting standards.

Students on learning contracts will be provided additional literacy and math support as available. Students on learning contracts may also need to attend summer school. This information will be communicated at parent conference meetings.

Parents will be notified if their child is at risk of not meeting grade level standards within the first ten weeks of school for grades 1-5. Kindergarten students shall also be identified at risk of not meeting State standards, though they will not be given a Learning Contract

## **Home/School Communication**

Teachers communicate with families using various approaches (newsletters, weekly progress reports, daily behavior cards, personal notes/phone calls). Our goal is to build a bridge between home and school that best supports each student. Please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher to discuss concerns, celebrate successes, or clarify information. If a problem arises, contact the teacher first. If it cannot be resolved, an administrator will assist in reaching a resolution.

## **Website**

Visit our school website at <http://miramarranch.org/> for all of the latest news pertaining to Miramar Ranch. This is also a means of e-mailing staff members.

## **Physical Education**

Two credentialed physical education teachers direct the physical education program at Miramar Ranch. Students are provided 50 minutes of instruction once a week with the P.E. teacher and another 50 minutes of P.E. time with the classroom teacher. The P.E. program offers students in Kindergarten through fifth grades structured lessons in physical fitness and physical skills development, as well as instruction in recreational and sports skills and games. The P.E. department also oversees outdoor activities such as Running Club, Field Day, and the Student/Staff softball game. Please make sure your child wears athletic shoes on their P.E. day.

## **Instructional Supplies**

Students are issued books and materials needed for their studies. They will be responsible for all books and materials entrusted to them. The cost of lost or damage textbooks will be billed to the student's family in accordance with School District procedures.

## **Study Skills Program**

All fourth and fifth grade students at Miramar Ranch participate in a study skills program. The goal of the program is to improve students' organizational skills. Students are taught time management, note taking, and assignment organization skills directly in the classroom, which will enable them to experience success throughout their remaining school years.

## **G.A.T.E. Program**

All G.A.T.E identified, non-seminar students are placed with students of mixed ability in a single classroom where they remain throughout the school day. These G.A.T.E students will comprise 25% or more of each classroom, grades 3-5. All G.A.T.E Cluster parents will receive a copy of their child's teacher's G.A.T.E. Accountability Plan that is filed with the District, as well as an informational sheet explaining the approaches teachers use to differentiate the curriculum. A G.A.T.E Parent Meeting will be scheduled in the Fall. The District provides opportunity for re-test at grade 5 and for students newly enrolled from out of the district. Please consult the GATE handbook for retest guidelines and qualifying factors.

## **English Language Instruction**

Students who have been identified as English Language Learners are placed in classrooms with teachers who have been specially trained to teach them. All classes are conducted in English; however, specialized instruction is woven throughout the daily curriculum to foster English Language Development.

## **Library/Media Center**

The goal of the Library/Media Center is to encourage all students to become excited about exploring the wonderful world of books and to become computer literate. The library/media program assists students in locating and using library information systems and emphasizes practical skills in referencing and researching through the use of standard reference materials as well as electronic resources. The ultimate goal is to provide students the opportunity to gain experience in locating information and to encourage students to be self-directed, lifelong learners.

## **Book Circulation**

The library maintains over 15,000 books with a fully automated circulation system. All students visit the library once per week. Students must have parent permission to check out books. Library books may be checked out for a one-week period. Books may be renewed. When a student has an overdue library book, a lost book, or a damaged book he/she may not check out a new book until the book is returned or a replacement fee is paid.

The library provides a variety of reading materials that serve every child. Teachers furnish literary guidance during classroom visits and encourage self-selection. Library visits extend classroom learning and support curriculum enrichment activities.

## **Birthday Books/Celebrations**

Parents, relatives, or friends may donate a book to the library in honor of the child's birthday. This book will contain a special bookplate with the honoree's name inscribed on it. This is a wonderful way for the community to become involved in helping the library grow. If every child donated a book for their birthday that would increase our collection by almost 1,000 books a year! Please arrange with your child's teacher any birthday celebratory activities/snacks in advance. Most teachers will allow a small snack, individually

sized, for each member of the class to celebrate a birthday. It should not detract from the instructional program. No balloons, singers or flowers are allowed at school.

## **Technology**

The media center supports a computer lab that includes Macintosh, IBM, and Apple computers. The computer lab uses software that meets instructional needs of the students and coordinates with the classroom curriculum when possible. Multimedia equipment and the integration of this technology enhance student research methods and extend academic enrichment activities across the curriculum. All classrooms are equipped with at least one Apple computer and printer for teacher and student use.

In line with the school Technology Use Plan, all students are encouraged to select from a variety of grade level programs available on media center computers. Time for experimentation with learning applications is provided as early as Kindergarten where they develop an awareness of software capabilities. By third grade, students are exposed to a wide variety of instructional uses of technology. They are introduced to applications that include writing and publishing, key boarding, graphics, C. D. ROM, videodisc, multimedia, and network resources that utilize on-line Internet and World Wide Web resources.

## **Field Trips**

Classes may go on up to four instructional field trips throughout the school year. Bus transportation is the preferred form of transportation for all field trips. For all car field trips, the driver must provide a copy of proof of insurance and a driver's license must be turned in to the teacher sponsoring the field trip three days before the scheduled field trip. In addition, a parent or guardian must provide signed, written permission to participate at least the day prior to the field trip. Without authorized written permission, the student is not permitted to participate. School-age siblings will not be allowed to attend field trips other than those sponsored by their classroom teacher. **PHONE PERMISSION IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.**

## **Student Resources and Opportunities**

### **Counseling Center**

A specially credentialed district counselor is on site to work with children who have counseling needs. The Counseling Center Program includes student recognition activities, individual and group counseling, problem solving, topical guidance groups, parent consultation, 504 coordination, attendance monitoring, and referral to community resources.

### **Miramar Ranch PALS Program**

The PALS Program assists K-3 students adjust to their school environment and enhance their personal development and academic achievement. The program is directed by the district counselor and supported by two guidance assistants. Funding is pending at the State level Early Mental Health Initiative (EMHI) program.

### **Instructional Study Team (IST)**

When a student experiences educational difficulty, he/she may be brought to the attention of the school site's Instructional Study Team (previously called the Student Study Team), composed of school staff and other professionals knowledgeable about the student. The parent/guardian is invited to attend this meeting, where concerns about the student's progress are reviewed and modifications/accommodations are identified for implementation in the classroom.

### **Language, Speech, and Hearing Program**

A specially credentialed teacher is on site to work with children who have articulation problems, or expressive or receptive language difficulties. These students have Individualized Educational Plans (IEP) in order to receive this service or have been enrolled in speech improvement classes with an identified need.

### **Resource Specialist**

Students requiring special education assistance receive support from the resource specialist to work on specific goals and objectives. These students must have Individual Educational Plans (IEP) and meet State of California criteria to qualify for the program. A specially credentialed teacher is assigned to work with the special education students. Individual attention and specifically designed materials are used to assist the students.

### **School Psychologist**

The school psychologist serves as a member of the Instructional Study Team to assess the academic and emotional/behavioral needs of students.

### **Student Opportunities for Service**

The Miramar Ranch staff encourages student participation in service activities as a necessary ingredient for social development and academic success. Many extra-curricular activities are available to students at different grade levels. Activities include: Student Council, Equipment Managers, Safety Patrol, Peer Buddies, cross-age tutors, and more!

### **Student Recognition**

Students at Miramar Ranch Elementary have the opportunity to receive recognition through awards and school-wide newsletters, "Student of the Week" boards, published student books, P.E. awards, etc. Students are recognized for special talents, academic achievement, or good citizenship. Kindergartners receive awards called "Bear Hugs"; and students in grades 1-5 have the opportunity to earn A.C.E (Achievement, Citizenship, Effort) awards at monthly flag assemblies.

### **VEEP (Voluntary Ethnic Enrollment Program)**

Our VEEP partner school communities are Hamilton Elementary and Linda Vista Elementary. Families from these two schools may apply for enrollment at Miramar Ranch for their children. For more information, contact the Enrollment Options office at 858-692-0269.

### **Choice Program**

Scripps Ranch schools are highly impacted by overcrowding. Miramar Ranch has recently been given approval to accept a small amount of Choice students. Limited space is available. Please contact the school office for Choice applications. For more information, contact the Enrollment Options office at 858-692-0269.

## **Parent and Community Resources**

### **Family Faculty Association (FFA)**

The Family Faculty Association is a group of parents and faculty members committed to providing the best education possible for the children, both through volunteering time and raising funds. Annual membership is encouraged for all families for any child attending the school. Each year the FFA funds many excellent enrichment programs for our students which include: assemblies, music instruction, an art program, field trips, family programs, a reading incentive program, special curriculum, supplementary literature, P.E. medals and awards, teacher requests for classroom purchases, and the latest technology advanced equipment.

### **Parent Volunteer Program**

Volunteers are an essential part of our school program. There are many opportunities to volunteer at Miramar Ranch. The volunteer program is coordinated by the Family Faculty Association (FFA). Sign up

for the volunteer program on the first day school in the Multipurpose Room. You may also become a volunteer by contacting the FFA, your child's teacher, or by requesting information in the school office. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in their child's classroom, library/media center, Morning Running Club, Art Corps, or Rolling Readers. Parents can volunteer at a regularly scheduled time, assist with field trips and special events, or offer to complete a task at home to help the class. We welcome any time that you can give.

## **Partners in Education**

Miramar Ranch Elementary is fortunate to have outstanding business partners to support our school in a variety of ways. Our school has partnerships that are in the process of being developed for the next school year.

## **School Based Management Team (SBMT)/School Site Council (SSC)**

The SBMT/SSC consists of elected parents, committee representatives, and staff. Elections are held each fall, and members serve a two-year term each. This group makes recommendations and decisions concerning budget issues, evaluates school programs and student achievement, and offers suggestions to improve communication between school and community. The SBMT/SSC meets a minimum of six times a year.

## **After School Childcare**

Social Advocates for Youth (SAY) operates a licensed childcare program at Miramar Ranch. Their hours of operation are after school until 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. For a complete schedule of fees and services offered, please contact SAY at (858) 565-4148.

## **Enrichment Activities**

Enrichment activity classes for interested students are provided, for a fee, by Virginia Valente. Harmonium, Inc. sponsors the program. This program is designed to enhance and enrich students' lives, expand educational opportunities, constructively channel students' energies, and provide meaningful activities for their free time. Information is sent home with students throughout the year. Enrichment classes are held at Miramar Ranch. Three sessions are offered: September, January, and April.

## **Discipline Policy**

At Miramar Ranch School we are committed to providing quality education for our students. We feel that all children have the right to attend school and feel comfortable and safe. In order to provide an atmosphere, which is conducive to the best learning situation, we have developed a plan for positive behavior.

Our approach to student discipline places the greatest possible emphasis upon school choice. With this in mind, students are held strictly accountable for their behavior.

We believe that:

- 1) All students have the responsibility to learn.
- 2) All teachers have the responsibility to provide a positive learning environment.
- 3) All parents have the responsibility to support the students and teaching staff.

## **School-Wide Standards**

**To ensure a safe, positive, rewarding education experience, we will:**

- **Listen and follow directions the first time**
- **Keep hands, feet, and objects to ourselves**
- **Be courteous, kind, and thoughtful to all**
- **Respect the rights and property of others**
- **Use safe conduct at all times**

**These rules apply on the way to school, at school, and on the way home.**

\*\*\*Students are **not allowed** to bring the following items to school:

Toys / Balls	Electronic Equipment	Skateboards	Gum / Candy
Trading Cards	Videos / DVDs	Scooters	Soda
CDs / Cassette Tapes	Skates	Top Ramen	Sunflower Seeds
IPOD/MP3 players	Heelies		

## **Confiscation of Student Property**

If a child brings any of the above mentioned items to school, or any other item deemed to be of value, the teacher shall confiscate the item in question and send it to the office immediately. We will log it in and put it in a safe place. The teacher will call the parents that same day and let them know about the item and that they can pick it up in the office. If there is any doubt about the value of the item, the item will be sent to the office. If a child brings a “distracter” to school (i.e., toy of little value), the child will be asked to put it in their back pack to take home.

## **Cell Phones, Pagers/Electronic Signaling Devices**

Students may only use cell phones, pagers or other electronic signaling device on the school campus **before** and **after** school. These devices must be kept out of sight and turned off during the instructional program.

Portable CD players, electronic games, or music players are not allowed on campus. Unauthorized use of such devices disrupts the instructional program and distracts from the learning environment. Unauthorized use is grounds for confiscation by school officials or classroom teachers. Confiscated devices will be returned to the parent or guardian. Repeated offenses may lead to disciplinary action.

## **Reinforcing the Expected Standards**

The following guidelines assist school personnel whenever inappropriate student behavior occurs.

Teacher will activate classroom discipline plan, which will include:

- Establishment and enforcement of classroom rules
- counseling the child
- communicating with parents to inform and seek support
- providing appropriate consequences

## **General Procedure for Resolving Behavior Problems**

- I. All discipline problems to be resolved need to begin with the student, parent and classroom teacher. If a student disregards the rules listed in the handbook, the following steps will be followed.
  - a. Teachers apply their discipline policies and contact parents.
  - b. Services of the counseling staff will be utilized to assist the student.
  - c. A conference with the principal / vice principal and student will be held. Consequences depend on the severity and recurrence of the problem. Examples of possible consequences: school service and in-school suspension. Principal / vice principal will contact parents by phone at work or home.
  - d. An in-school suspension (1-2 days) will occur if problem continues. The student will complete a work packet and/or perform school service. Parents will be notified that the next step is a formal suspension. Any misbehavior during in-school suspension will result in a formal suspension.
  - e. Formal suspension (1-5 days) will be imposed. It becomes a part of the student’s permanent record and requires a parent conference with the principal / vice principal before the student is allowed to return to class. There are certain offenses that we are required to report to School Police.

## **Suspendable Offenses**

A student may be suspended from school if they:

1. Cause, attempt to cause, or threaten to cause physical injury to another person.
  2. Disrupt school activities or otherwise willfully defy the valid authority of the staff.
  3. Unlawfully sell, deal, or otherwise furnish any substance purported to be a controlled substance.
  4. Steal, or attempt to steal, school or private property.
  5. Commit an obscene act or engage in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
  6. Possess, sell, or otherwise furnish, any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object.
  7. Possesses or uses tobacco on school premises.
  8. Cause, or attempt to cause, damage to school or private property.
  9. Knowingly receive stolen school or private property.
- II. It is important for the parent to contact the classroom teacher first when problems or questions arise. Communication between the teacher, parent, and the student is essential for reaching a successful solution.
- III. At specific times, it is necessary to refer specific problems to other personnel such as the nurse, counselor or administrator for additional information that might be related to the cause of the behavioral problems. It may also be necessary to have the student join with the parent, teacher, administrator and auxiliary personnel for individualized counseling and/or home / school contract.
- IV. If all efforts fail and the discipline problems continue to exist, parents will be asked to shadow their child in the child's classroom during the school day.

## **Student Dress Standard**

The students and staff at Miramar Ranch Elementary expect everyone to have high standards of conduct and appearance. Clothing should be suitable and comfortable for normal school activities and should reflect respect, pride, and good standards of the student's home and community. The student's clothing and appearance should not be of such extreme that it draws undue attention to the student nor should his/her clothing and appearance detract or interfere with the teaching and learning in the classroom.

General clothing standards require that children wear shoes at all times. Please adhere the following:

- Tennis shoes or shoes that have a heel of 1" or lower. All shoes must be close toed and have a back strap. This is a safety requirement. Shoes with wheels are not permitted.
- Hats or any form of headgear (caps, beanies, etc...), other than required for religious reasons or with a doctor's note, are not allowed.
- Shirts must cover each shoulder by a minimum of 2" in width. Halters are not to be worn to school. Shirts should be long enough to tuck in. Try this test. When arms are held horizontally at shoulder level, if your back or midriff shows it is too short. Undergarments should not be visible.
- Make-up and hoop/dangling earrings are not allowed.
- Sunglasses may only be worn with a doctor's note.
- Skirts, shorts and dresses must be an appropriate length. Try this test. Place hands along side of body with fingers extended. Length must be a minimum of 2 inches beyond the extended fingers.
- Clothing should be free of inappropriate words, symbols or adult themes.
- A backpack or school bag is a good idea. We recommend rolling styles to avoid carrying heavy bags. Purses are not allowed.
- Clothes should be appropriately sized so that they do not sag or drop unexpectedly.

Students who wear inappropriate clothing will be sent to the office to call home for a change of clothing. If parents cannot be reached, then more appropriate clothing will be supplied for the student.

We appreciate the strong support from all parents in meeting the expected dress code. We intend to consistently and fairly enforce the dress code.

## **Bus Transportation and Bicycles**

### **Buses**

If a student is going to be absent from school, in addition to calling the absence in to the school, parents need to call the Transportation Department (858) 496-8460 and press '1', identify yourself and tell them the child's name, school of attendance, bus number/letter.

Students need to arrive at their designated stop 10 minutes before the scheduled pickup time. Students should wait an additional 10 minutes after the scheduled pickup time before returning home to inquire about late buses.

To ensure safety, the student is expected to obey these transportation rules:

- Follow all directions given by the driver.
- Enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner.
- Physical playing or rough conduct is not permitted.
- Remain seated at all times with feet and arms out of the aisle.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects inside of the bus.
- Ask the driver for permission to open the window.
- Use quiet voices while on the bus.
- Do not eat or drink on the bus.
- Radios may not be brought onto the bus.
- Report any problems on the bus to the Principal or Vice Principal.

Students will be recognized for model behavior throughout the year. If a child behaves poorly in the bus, bus referrals are given by the bus driver. The parent will be notified and receive a copy of any referral received by their child. If the child receives three bus referrals, he/she will be denied transportation for one day. Subsequent referrals will result in removal from the bus for extended periods of time. Children suspended from the bus are still expected to attend school, or they are deemed truant.

## **Bicycles**

Children in grades 4 - 5 are permitted to ride bicycles to school.

- Students are required to obey all traffic laws and wear a helmet.
- Bicycles must be licensed.
- Bicycles must be walked, not ridden, on school grounds and sidewalks.
- All bicycles are to be left in the bike racks and must be locked.
- No playing in or around the bicycle racks, before, during, or after school hours.

**Students who do not abide by these rules will lose the privilege of riding their bicycle to school. Miramar Ranch is not responsible for theft or damage to any bicycle.**

**Skateboards, rollerblades, and scooters are not acceptable transportation to and from school.**

We hope that this parent handbook was informative and useful to you. We thank you for making Miramar Ranch Elementary School a great place to learn.