

# PARENT HANDBOOK

Dear McKinley Families: This handbook contains important information about our school that will help you support your child. The staff at McKinley School looks forward to working with you during your child's time at McKinley. Your suggestions and ideas about how our school can better help all children meet high academic standards in a safe and nurturing environment are always welcome. Beginning 2009-10 school year, only families new to McKinley will receive a hard copy. The handbook is available on our web site: [www.mckinley.smmusd.org](http://www.mckinley.smmusd.org)

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## Family-School Communication Plan

Family-school communication is a priority at McKinley School because we believe it contributes to cooperation and student success. To promote better communication we are sharing with you the best ways to get answers to your questions and have important conversations about your child.

- ✓ If you have questions related to your child's academic or social progress you should contact your child's teacher first. Your child's teacher will review his/her communication plan at Back to School night.
- ✓ If you have questions about community resources please contact our Community Liaison in the office.
- ✓ If you need to speak to an administrator (principal or assistant principal), please follow these steps:
  1. Contact the administrative assistant in the office. You may come into the front office or call the school (310) 828-5011 and dial extension 123.
  2. Please be prepared to share some information about your question or concern so that the administrative assistant can determine the most appropriate person to help you. At times, the school counselor or other support personnel may be able to answer your questions.
  3. If you are requesting a meeting with the principal, please be prepared to share the purpose of your meeting. If it is to discuss a classroom concern, you will be asked if you have already met with your child's teacher. If you have not, you will be asked to do so before meeting with a site administrator. If you have already discussed your concerns with your child's teacher, a meeting will be scheduled with an administrator and the classroom teacher.
- ✓ The principal and assistant principal have blocked out time each week to address individual parent questions.
- ✓ Parents are also encouraged to attend Coffee with the Principal, during which there is time for questions and answers about our school.

This communication plan has been developed to provide opportunities for communication with site administrators while allowing adequate time for them to visit classrooms and assist students & staff members. By following this procedure, parents will be able to receive immediate answers to many questions from staff members or a response from a site administrator within approximately 48 hours.

If you choose to communicate by e-mail, please be aware that the response time may be longer due to the high volume of e-mail traffic and limited time during the school day to respond. We want to have good communication with parents and hope that this information will help us work together in achieving that goal.

**Staff Roster and Contact Information** - Please refer to the current school calendar for current staffing information. The current listing is also available on our web site: [www.mckinley.smmusd.org](http://www.mckinley.smmusd.org)

## School Schedules

Office Hours - Mon.-Thurs. 8:00–4:00PM and Friday 8:00-3:30PM

Grade Level	Minimum Days	Regular Days	Wednesday Hours
Kindergarten	8:30AM – 12:50PM	8:30AM – 1:35PM	8:30AM – 1:35PM
1 <sup>st</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup>	8:30AM – 1:35PM	8:30AM – 3:00PM	8:30AM – 1:35PM

## Minimum Days

A few days each year are designated as minimum days – usually at the beginning or end of the school year and around family conferences or events like Back to School Night or Open House. On these days students are dismissed earlier than usual. Refer to your current school calendar for current year's schedule.

## Wednesday Schedule – Banked Time Days

All SMMUSD schools have one banked time day each week so teachers can participate in on-going professional development. We add a few extra minutes to each day to offset the fact that students in grades 1-5 are dismissed at 1:35 p.m. each Wednesday. Having time to meet together as a professional learning community, plan and reflect on instruction, and learn new skills helps us provide a rigorous and high quality program for our students.

## Arrival and Dismissal

**For your child's safety, do not drop children off before there is adult supervision on campus or leave them on campus after playground supervision ends.** If your child is enrolled in supervised before school child care, he or she may arrive beginning at 7:00 a.m., please note: **PARENTS MUST SIGN STUDENTS INTO CHILD CARE.** Otherwise, no children should be on campus before the breakfast program, which begins at 7:45 a.m. Students having breakfast at school should remain in the cafeteria until 8:10 a.m.

- Beginning at 8:10 a.m. there is supervision on the playground
- Children arriving after 8:30 a.m. are arriving late. Please time your morning commute so that your child is at his or her classroom door by 8:25 a.m.

Children should be picked up promptly at the end of the school day. All children staying on campus after dismissal who are not in a childcare program must be registered for CREST playground access and wait for their families on the playground. All children need to be in a supervised setting if they are on campus past their dismissal time. Playground access is free but you must register.

At times, there may be McKinley staff helping to enforce traffic safety during drop off or pick up times. Please model respect in the presence of your children and understand we are all working towards maintaining safety for all. The crossing guards are trained to stop traffic and to cross our children at busy intersections. Please do not coax your child, with a horn honk or a yell, to cross the street at any illegal point.

## Traffic and Parking

Parking in the McKinley neighborhood is limited. Plan to arrive a little early so you can find parking and get your child to school safely and on time. **THERE IS NO PUBLIC PARKING IN THE SCHOOL PARKING LOT. THERE IS LIMITED PARKING FOR PARENT VOLUNTEERS ON THE LOT – CHECK WITH THE OFFICE.** Cars will be towed after one warning. Please be especially watchful as there are many small children arriving at school at the same time.

- Drop your child off only in designated drop off zones (by the Arizona Avenue gate and in the school parking lot drop off zone.
- All students must enter campus through the gates on Arizona Avenue or via the main parking lot.
- Never double park or leave your car blocking another car.
- Always stay in your car when in the drop-off zone. Pull forward and keep it moving.  
Do not park in the handicapped parking zones without a handicapped-parking sticker.

## Bicycle Safety & Skateboard Policy

If children ride their bikes to school, helmets are mandatory! We have bike racks located on the big yard. Locks are required and students must lock their own bikes to the rack. Always walk bicycles onto school grounds. **Riding bicycles, skateboards, rollerblades/skates, scooters, using shoes with retractable wheels and motorized items are not allowed on school grounds at any time. Do not allow your children to bring these items to school or to evening events.**

## Visitors on Campus

For the protection of our students, McKinley maintains a closed campus during the school day. After morning arrival time, all visitors must enter through the McKinley office. All visitors and volunteers must sign in at the main desk as soon as they enter school premises and sign out upon exit. "Visitor" badges are next to the sign-in book and must be worn and be visible at all times.

## Classroom Observation Procedures

For our returning families, this is just a reminder of our Classroom Observation Procedures. For our new families, we hope this information assists you. We value all you do to ensure a quality education for your child. However, to ensure **minimum interruption** of the instructional program, we would like to inform you that the following procedures, pursuant to District Policy #1250 (revised 9/2005), have been established to facilitate your observations to your child's classroom during regular school hours.

1. A written request must be submitted to your child's teacher with detailed information regarding date and time of your requested observation
2. The above request must be given to your teacher at least 48 hours prior to your **requested** observation. The teacher will respond within 24 hours to schedule the observation once the following has been determined:
  - a. The time/day which will ensure minimum interruption of the instructional program (determined by teacher)
  - b. A scheduled time when an administrator can be present during the observation. We have put this protocol in place so that a staff member is available to answer any questions you have.
3. Classroom observations are limited to a maximum of 20 minutes.
4. If a conference is desired, an appointment should be set with the teacher during non-instructional time.
5. To ensure the safety of students and staff and avoid potential disruption to the instructional program, all visitors must register immediately upon entering any school building or grounds when school is in session.

Your child's teacher will discuss parent volunteer procedures and expectations with you at Back to School Night. We appreciate your cooperation in advance and hope that this procedure will assist you in building a collaborative relationship with your child's classroom teacher. (Please refer to the volunteer opportunities section of this handbook).

## McKinley's Safe School Guidelines

McKinley is committed to ensuring a caring community for learning in a safe environment. Therefore, at McKinley Elementary, we follow the following guidelines: **(A copy of these guidelines goes home for parent/student signature in the opening packet every fall)**

- We will be respectful of differences of all types – physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual
- We will choose our words and actions to help, not hurt others.
- We will work to keep our school free of verbal and non-verbal put-downs with regard to the following: 1) Academic progress; 2) Age; 3) Appearance/body image/mannerisms; 4) Athletic ability; 5) Belief systems; 6) Cultural, ethnic and/or racial background; 7) Family background and composition; 8) Friendships; 9) Languages; 10) Learning styles; 11) Physical Challenges; or 12) Sexual harassment of any type, including gender stereotypes and homophobic taunts.
- We will use school-appropriate language.
- We will not tolerate physical abuse, taunts, threats or bullying.
- We accept responsibility for our words and actions without excuses.
- We use Cool Tools to teach students the skills to get along with others and resolve conflicts non-violently.

## Behavior Expectations

- We walk in the hallways at all times.
- We follow safety directives of staff.
- We climb appropriately on play equipment.
- We remain on campus from the beginning until the end of the school day unless we are signed out through the office by a parent or adult on our emergency card.

- We only leave the classroom with our teacher’s permission to go in a timely fashion to a specific destination – where possible, we go with a buddy.
- Students never open gates to admit adults or to retrieve balls.
- At lunchtime, we remain in the cafeteria until dismissed by a Noon Aide.
- At recess, we stay on the playground in an area being supervised by an adult. We don’t play in the hallways, behind buildings or other areas of the school.
- During recess, we use the restrooms closest to the playground.
- Only kindergarten children and children in the K/1 classes are allowed to play in the K yard.
- If we need to go to the library, the health office, or the office during recess or lunchtime, we let the adults on duty know where we are going and get a pass.
- We don’t use any behavior that puts ourselves or others at risk or that damages property.
- If we see someone hurt or in trouble, we tell the adult on duty.

## **Respect for Our School**

- Each person is responsible for using school resources wisely and cleaning up after themselves
- We don’t waste school resources and we take only what we need.
- We use the restrooms with good hygiene and do not make a mess or vandalize the restrooms.
- We write on paper, not on walls, books, or desks.
- We play ball games only on the playground, not in the hallways, gardens, or courtyards.

## **Playground Rules**

- We play running games **on grassy areas only**.
- We share swings by making a line, counting 20 swings and then changing.
- Anyone who is willing to play the game by the rules and use good sportsmanship may play – make a line and take turns if only a limited number of people can play at a time.
- During morning recess, we only eat snacks while sitting at a bench and we place all trash in trash cans. We don’t eat on the yard or while playing games.
- We use the bubble tool when waiting in line to allow plenty of space between ourselves and others.
- We don’t play tackle football at school or any other game that involves pulling or throwing another person to the ground or use slide tackles when we play soccer.
- We use the slides one at a time and go down feet first sitting up.
- We don’t play tag or chasing games on the structure.
- We don’t throw balls at another person.
- Some games have specific rules – rules in force will be those taught by the Coach.
- We settle arguments or problems with another person with Cool Tools, never with violence, name-calling, or bullying. If we can’t come to a good compromise, we go to the adult on duty for help.

## **Positive Recognition and Student Participation**

Each teacher recognizes students who follow school rules and values. Some send conduct and effort reports home, some hold class meetings; others have charts, lists, or graphs recognizing effort and persistence.

- Each month, teachers recognize students with excellent work habits, or showing great McKinley P.R.I.D.E. meriting recognition for Pride, Respect, Intelligence, Diversity and Enthusiasm. Student Award Assemblies are held every month in the auditorium. A letter will be mailed home, if your child is to be the recipient of an award.
- Outside their classrooms, students also receive recognition for helping others and solving problems appropriately by receiving a MAC Slip. This is another way we can support our McKinley P.R.I.D.E. A weekly drawing is held with two winners from each grade.
- Primary classes are paired with upper grade classes who become their “big buddies” during the school year. The classes meet together periodically to foster relationships between the children, read and do art projects together.

- Upper grade students have the option of joining our Student Council or participating in other activities to be determined by the teachers, which help students develop leadership skills and contribute to various important areas of the school community.

## **Progressive Discipline System**

Because the first responsibility of all staff is the safety of children, any staff person will immediately interrupt any unsafe behavior he or she sees. Our second responsibility is to use this incident as a teachable moment to help children learn to use safe, respectful behavior, and learn how to settle problems appropriately. To stop unsafe behavior and teach appropriate behavior, we often use the phrase: “Stop, that’s not OK at McKinley” and then tell children how something should be done. Progressive discipline begins with **clear expectations**. We discuss these in class and ask parents to make sure that children are familiar with school rules and our behavior expectations. Should a negative behavior or violation of school rules occur, in general we follow these steps:

- 1) Interrupt the behavior, redirect the student, and teach the appropriate behavior or skill.
- 2) If the behavior continues, restate the expected behavior and give a warning.
- 3) If the behavior continues, check to see if something else is going on that we’re not seeing and that might be causing the negative behavior and address that problem.
- 4) If needed, we assign a logical consequence for the inappropriate behavior (put ups to repair damage, time to sit and think, time to write what they did and could have/should have done instead, working in a buddy teacher’s room until they can work productively in class, etc.
- 5) If these steps fail to redirect the behavior, we make a call home to the parents or send a note that requests parent discussion/action and requires a signature and return of note to school. We know that parents want to know about challenges children may be having and wish to help teach appropriate behavior.
- 6) If the inappropriate behavior continues, or if the behavior is a suspendable offense, children are sent to the principal’s office with a discipline referral for a conference with the principal or administrative designee. An Office Referral Form generally will come home after a conference with the principal so that parents are informed and can follow up with children at home. A consequence is often assigned.
- 7) Additional parent contact, parent conferences and/or referral to a counselor may be requested as needed to help children learn and use appropriate behavior at school.

Education Code violations (violence, weapons, destruction of property, theft, etc.) go directly to the principal or administrative designee for disciplinary action. Consequences, depending on the severity of the offense, may include a phone call to parents, detention, in-school suspension, or suspension from school. These progressive steps may vary depending on the severity of the behavior and based on prior incidents of discipline for the same offense.

## **Suspendable Offenses**

Our progressive discipline system helps students resolve most problems before they get to the point of meriting suspension from the classroom or from school. However, there are some behaviors that the State Education Code 48900 deems to be grounds for suspension from the school (by the administrator) or from the classroom (by the teacher). When students are suspended from the classroom, they are sent to another supervised setting and are expected to continue their class work and make up any assignments they miss. Students who are suspended from school must leave with a parent or guardian, meet with the administrator and may not return to campus during the day or after school until the suspension is over. Assignments are sent home so that children can continue their class work. Students may be suspended if they:

- a. Caused, attempted, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person;
- b. Possessed, sold or furnished any firearm, knife, explosive or other dangerous object, unless possession was with written permission from a certified employee concurred in by the principal;
- c. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or furnished or been under the influence of any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant;
- d. Unlawfully offered, arranged or negotiated to sell any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant, and then either sold, delivered or furnished to any person another liquid, substance, or materials and represented it as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
- e. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion;
- f. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school or private property;
- g. Stole or attempted to steal school or private property;

- h. Possessed or used tobacco;
- i. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity;
- j. Had unlawful possession of or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia;
- k. Disrupted school activities or willfully defied valid authority;
- l. Knowingly received stolen school or private property; or private property.
- m. Possession of an imitation firearm.
- n. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault, or committed a sexual battery as defined by penal code.
- o. Harassed, threatened or intimidated a pupil who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding.
- p. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- q. Engaged in or attempted to engage in hazing.
- r. Engaged in the act of bullying, including but not limited to bullying by means of an electronic act.
- s. Aiding and abetting in the infliction of physical injury to others.

## **McKinley School Learning Agreement**

### **Parent / Guardian Agreement**

I will:

- Ensure that my child comes to school regularly and on time and report absences to the school office.
- Make sure that my child gets enough sleep and eats nutritious meals.
- Establish a quiet time and place for homework and reading. Review and sign homework regularly.
- Encourage my child's efforts and be available for questions.
- Maintain communication with the teacher about my child's progress and attend parent/teacher conferences.
- Participate in school events and school organizations.
- Engage in family activity (games, sports etc.) and monitor television, texting/cell phone usage, and computer viewing.
- Read with my child and encourage my child to read every day. Let my child see me enjoying reading materials.
- Support McKinley PRIDE (Peaceful, Respectful, Intelligent, Diverse and Enthusiastic) and Cool Tools.

### **Student Agreement**

I will:

- Come to school ready to learn and do my best.
- Listen to my family and teachers and ask for help when I need it.
- Complete and return all assignments, projects and reports on time.
- Read every day.
- Follow the school rules, classroom rules and treat others as I would like to be treated.
- Play appropriately on the yard at all times.
- Support McKinley PRIDE (Peaceful, Respectful, Intelligent, Diverse and Enthusiastic) and Cool Tools.

### **Teacher Agreement**

I will:

- Provide a safe and nurturing learning environment.
- Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction including meaningful homework, reports and projects.
- Encourage students to learn using a variety of activities in the classroom to make learning enjoyable.
- Provide clear expectations and communicate regularly with families and collaborate to support student success.
- Participate in professional development opportunities that improve teaching and learning.
- Support McKinley PRIDE (Peaceful, Respectful, Intelligent, Diverse and Enthusiastic) and Cool Tools.

### **Principal Agreement**

I will:

- Provide a safe and nurturing learning environment.

- Encourage teachers to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction including meaningful homework, reports and projects.
- Participate in professional development opportunities that improve teaching and learning.
- Enforce school policies that promote a positive learning environment for all students.
- Communicate regularly with families about school-wide goals for student success.
- Support McKinley PRIDE (Peaceful, Respectful, Intelligent, Diverse and Enthusiastic) and Cool Tools.

## Student Placement

Planning for fall classroom groups is done by school staff beginning in the Spring. Using a team approach, placement of students focuses on the needs of those students and the fact that our program works best with balanced classes. Classes are formed by grade levels without a specific teacher assigned to them. The formed classes are placed in sealed envelopes and the teachers are assigned randomly to the formed classes by the office.

Class lists are posted the Friday before the first day of school. Staff considers:

- The specific needs of individual children.
- Heterogeneous groupings (a mixture of instructional needs, academic abilities and talents, gender balance, equitable class sizes);
- Creating appropriate emotional and behavioral dynamics.

Parents may inform the school in writing of special needs or considerations regarding their child. Such information should be directed to the school office by early-May of each year. If you have a concern about your child's placement in the fall, please put that concern in writing and address it to the principal; however, **parents do not choose their children's teachers**. Because classes are very carefully balanced, changes in assignment are rare and no changes will be made in the first month of school. Most initial concerns work themselves out as children make friends and develop relationships with their new teachers

## School Programs

### Library

Teaching library and research skills, is a part of the McKinley program. Students have weekly time in the library with their teachers and the librarian. A large number of books and other materials are available for student use and are catalogued on a computerized library system. Parent volunteers are welcome and appreciated. The library checks out free reading books, research materials, and textbooks to students at no charge. However, families are responsible for paying for lost or damaged books. Many families like to donate books to the school library in honor of children's birthdays; please see the librarian for ideas.

### Music Programs

Music is part of the curriculum for all students at McKinley. Students in Kindergarten through third grade receive a vocal music class. In 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades, students have the option of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade choir or instrumental music (with instruction in strings, woodwinds or brass). Instruction takes place during regular school hours with district music teachers. Students receive grades in music as they do in other subject areas and behavior expectations are the same in music classes. Help your child remember his or her instrument and encourage your child to practice at home. Families will have the opportunity to attend at least one music concert per grade level. **Please refer to you school calendar for dates.**

### Technology

Every classroom has computers and printer available for student use. We have televisions and VCRs/DVDs, document projectors, scanners and digital cameras available for use by individual classrooms. Smart Boards are installed in 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms. All 3-5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers participate in ongoing professional development in technology integration. We also have a computer lab available for whole class media projects and each classroom has time in the lab each week so that by the time students leave 5<sup>th</sup> grade they have a variety of technology skills. Technology use at McKinley is guided by a plan to ensure smooth skill development and appropriate use at all grade levels. SMMUSD also has policies for student use of the Internet and of school technology resources. All students and parents must review and sign this policy annually and failure to respect

technology use guidelines may result in suspension of a student's privileges to use school technology resources. The Internet is a valuable educational tool and is used for instructional purposes only at school, always in a purposeful, guided and supervised manner. Unsupervised "surfing", checking e-mail, or checking personal pages in on-line communities are not allowed.

### **Elementary Model Technology Classrooms**

McKinley Elementary is a participant of the district's **Model Technology Classroom Program**. The goal of the program is to evaluate the proposed technology classroom standard components and how effectively they can be integrated into the classroom curriculum. The program supplies two of our teachers with a technology outfitted classroom which contains a SMART Board, Document Camera, Teacher and Classroom Laptops, Wireless Network, Classroom amplification system (Speaker system), DVD/VHS/Tuner, Wireless Airliner Slate, and Network Printer. As our Governance Council allocates funds for technology, these classrooms will serve as a model for enhancing technology integration school-wide.

### **Gifted and Talented Education (GATE)**

In SMMUSD, students are identified for Gifted and Talented Education beginning in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Students are identified based on their scores on the state STAR tests and by academic achievement and teacher recommendation. Most services are provided in the classroom via differentiated curriculum and assignments. Each year McKinley's GATE program offers additional enrichment opportunities for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, which may include sponsoring special assemblies or purchasing enrichment materials for classrooms, and offering enrichment classes or seminars after school. GATE identification occurs each fall and parents of children identified as GATE are invited to attend an annual advisory meeting to review student needs and help shape the program. If you have any questions or wish more information regarding our GATE program, please email Keri King, our GATE Coordinator at [kking@smmusd.org](mailto:kking@smmusd.org).

### **Reading Program**

McKinley offers during school and/or after school services to support students not at grade level in reading fluency and /or comprehension. If your child qualifies for this program, you will be notified by our reading teacher.

### **Physical Education**

**Curriculum:** Our P.E. curriculum reflects the California State Physical Education Standards for each grade level. Below please find a brief list of the games, sports and skills that your child will be experiencing at his or her grade level this year:

**1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade:** Tag and aerobic games, muscle strengthening and stretches, dribbling and kicking, dribbling and passing, hula hoop, jump rope, parachute, handball, Frisbee, flag games, striking and volleying, and throwing and catching.

**3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade:** aerobic and cardio games, muscle strengthening and endurance, flexibility, eating smart, personal hygiene, fitness and sports challenges, basketball, hockey, lacrosse, cricket, football, parachute, soccer, softball/baseball, volleyball, handball, dodge ball games, and flag games.

At all grade levels we emphasize sportsmanship, team spirit, accepting personal responsibility, setting and meeting personal goals for fitness, honoring differences, collaboration and cooperation. For more information about the California Physical Education Standards, please visit the CA Department of Education website at:

<http://www.cde.gov/be/st/SS/documents/pestandards.pdf>

**Proper Dress Attire:** All students must wear comfortable athletic shoes that provide foot and/or ankle support. If your child is wearing sandals, slippers, dress shoes, or any other type of non-athletic shoes please pack your child a pair of athletic shoes to change into for P.E. and recess (for additional information about dress code, please see page 11 in the Parent Handbook). Wearing proper footwear helps ensure that students have a safe and successful P.E. experience. In the event that a student does not wear or bring athletic shoes, we will ask the student to refrain from the active physical education exercises, and instead participate in an alternate activity. Should this occur, we will also be sending a letter home to remind students of proper dress attire.

In addition, please make sure your child wears or brings comfortable clothes for P.E. class. T-shirts, loose-fitting pants, jeans, and sweatshirts are examples of clothes that are acceptable to wear during P.E. Shorts or leggings can be worn under skirts or dresses. Thank you for helping support your child in dressing appropriately for P.E.

**Sick Notes:** It is important that all sick or injury notes be brought to the nurse first to be documented before given to the coach. Please include the following information in the note that is submitted to the nurse:

Describe the reason for missing P.E. What is the nature of the sickness or injury?

How many days will your child be sitting out of P.E.?

What is the best way to contact you should we have follow-up questions? Without a note from you, the doctor or the nurse your child will not be excused from P.E.

**Lunch Leagues:** Throughout the course of this year we will be doing lunch leagues. Lunch leagues is a program that started during the 2007-2008 school year. It is a fun and exciting way to get kids involved in organized sports during lunch recess. It provides students an opportunity to pick their own teams, the name of the team, as well as be responsible for tracking their team's progress. Our sports this past season included a 3-on-3-basketball tournament, dodge ball, color wars, and soccer. During lunch leagues, brackets are set up so that it's a two-loss elimination. The champions will receive a small prize. Each tournament will last about a month with a one-to-two week break before the next tournament begins.

If you have any questions, please contact Coach Danny (Grades 3-5) at [doyenoki@smmusd.org](mailto:doyenoki@smmusd.org) or Coach Adrianna (Grades 1 & 2) at [agutierrez@smmusd.org](mailto:agutierrez@smmusd.org)

## Testing and Assessments

Students at McKinley are assessed regularly in a variety of ways to determine their progress towards grade level standards. In addition to on-going assessment by teachers, students take periodic district evaluations in language arts, writing and math. In the spring of each year, students in grades 2-5 also participate in the required state-testing program (STAR), and take the California Standards Test (CST). Please check your school calendar for testing dates. Testing usually occurs the last week of April to the second week of May. Please avoid absences during this time. Individual results on these assessments are mailed home during the summer.

## Student Success Team

If there is a concern about student progress or needs that could benefit from the input of school specialists in addition to the classroom teacher, either parents or teachers can request a meeting of the Student Success Team (SST). Parents can make this request through their child's teacher. Our SST will also determine if additional accommodations can be made in the classroom, if the Excel program would be beneficial to the student or if a special education referral for assessment should be made.

## Special Education

SMMUSD offers a variety of services to ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed in school. Our staff includes a speech pathologist, school psychologist, occupational therapist, and special education teachers who can provide assessment for students experiencing problems with learning. Additional services are provided by staff from SMMUSD as needs are identified. If you have questions about special education, contact the principal or our Resource Specialist. McKinley offers a Resource Specialist Program (RSP), which serves students in Kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> grades with identified learning disabilities. Students work in the Resource Room or in their classrooms with our resource teachers as their Individual Education Plan prescribes. Our speech and language specialist provides extra help for students on a one-on-one and small group basis if students qualify for the program through an IEP (Individualized Educational Program) process.

## Counseling Services

Family Services of Santa Monica provides a counselor to assist McKinley families and children. The City of Santa Monica funds these services. There is no cost to our families. The counselors help parents and children deal with a wide range of behavioral and family issues. Teachers may refer children, or parents may request assistance by calling the Counseling Center at 310-828-5011 ext 101. Counseling services are determined by the counselor and require parent consent.

## **Preschool Programs**

A full fee pre-school, State sponsored preschool and Head-Start program are located on the McKinley campus. For information call Child Development services at 310-399-5865 or check the district web site at [www.smmusd.org](http://www.smmusd.org). **Enrollment in the preschool does not guarantee enrollment in the McKinley K-5 program as the programs have separate enrollment criteria.**

## **Homework Policies**

Homework is an integral part of your child's instructional process and provides practice for skills taught in class. It is never intended to be busy work. At times, especially in the early years, homework will require parental support. However, homework is usually meant to provide independent practice of skills that have been taught in the classroom. At McKinley, homework is given Monday through Thursday and occasional Fridays. Homework is evaluated with feedback given to the student as soon as possible. McKinley follows the district's guidelines on homework.

## **Dress Code**

Students should wear clothing that is appropriate for school and allows students to safely participate in playground and P.E. activities. Tennis shoes are highly recommended. Shoes should have rubber soles, laces, straps or buckles and protect toes and heels. Sandals, clogs, platform shoes or shoes with wheels are **unsafe and are not allowed**. Spaghetti straps, bare mid-drifts, short shorts or overly baggy clothing are not appropriate at school. **No makeup ALLOWED. No extreme hair lengths haircuts or hairstyles that would disrupt or interfere with the education process or safety of students.** Clothing with inappropriate or disrespectful language, symbols or references is not allowed at school. Shorts are recommended under skirts or dresses. Appropriate hats (no team logos or offensive language) and sunglasses are permitted OUTSIDE ONLY and daily use of sunscreen is highly recommended. Hats must be removed while the child is in the classroom. A variety of McKinley spirit wear is available for purchase in the office. Children are encouraged to wear McKinley spirit wear on Fridays and on field trips.

## **Messages and Deliveries to Students**

Please ask the office to transmit messages to your child only in the event of an emergency. Do not interrupt classroom time by going to the classroom with forgotten items or messages. If you must see child during the school day, report to the office and do not go directly to the classroom. Lunch deliveries for children should go to office where they can be picked up by your child at an appropriate time. Students must remember to bring their instrument to school. Forgotten instruments are not accepted for delivery. **Every effort is made not to interrupt instructional time.**

## **Lost and Found**

Please be sure to label ALL of your child's belongings. A labeled lunch box or jacket has a much better chance of finding its rightful owner. Unclaimed items are gathered and put outside the front office. Unclaimed items are periodically donated to local charities; at the end of every month. The custodians and office staff are not able to unlock classroom doors if items are left in the classroom.

## **Items Brought from Home**

Toys, electronic games, trading cards, yo-yos, sports balls, dangerous objects, matches, lighters, toy guns, toy knives or any other look-alike weapons are not allowed at school. "Sharpies" are not allowed at school. They are not considered a "school supply". These items may be confiscated and held until the end of the school day. Repeat offenders will not get these items back.

## **Cell Phone Policy**

Students, visitors, or volunteers may not use cell phones and pagers in the classroom during school hours and the school is not responsible for the security of these items if they are brought to school. Board policy prohibits the possession and/or use of any electronic signaling device while on school property by elementary school students. **If a student uses his/her cell phone during school hours, it will be confiscated and held until the end of the school day and must be picked up by a parent.**

**Please do not send valuable items to school with your children. This includes money.** If your child needs to bring money for lunch, pictures, the book fair, or some other obligation, we suggest that you seal it in an envelope marked with your child's name, room number, the amount and the purpose. Most teachers, especially in the primary grades, will hold the envelopes for children until they are needed.

## **Weapons**

Weapons of any kind are prohibited. According to SMMUSD policy, action taken for possession or use of weapons includes police notification and suspension or expulsion.

## **Attendance Policies**

### **Absences (Full and Partial Day)**

Every time your child is absent, he/she is missing an important day of school. Absences also impact our school budget as McKinley does not receive state funding for students who are not physically present in school. Please make every effort to ensure that your child attends school each day that he/she is healthy. Avoid scheduling family trips or scheduling appointments while school is in session. We will receive state funding if you your child attends a partial day, **If you are taking your child for a medical, dental, court appointment etc. please do not keep you child out of school all day, bring your child in late of pick your child up early. If your child will be absent, please call the absence line ext. 121 and leave a message stating your child's name and teacher, your name, the length of the absence and the reason for the absence.** If you do not call in the day of the absence, your child must bring a note from home, signed by the parent or guardian and stating the specific reason for the absence when he returns to school (i.e. "flu", "fever", etc.). Absences of five or more days due to illness require a doctor's note for re-admission. Absences that are not explained by a call or a note from a parent or guardian are considered unexcused absences..

### **Homework for Absent Students**

If your child is absent and you wish to pick up school assignments, call the office before 9:30AM to request the assignments. The child's homework may be picked up in the office after 3:00PM that same day. This applies to classes where assignments are given on a daily basis. Students should have an outside reading book(s) with them each day so that they do not miss independent reading homework. Also, for the upper grades, make sure your child has at least two "study buddies" that they can call for assignments.

### **Independent Study (Absences 5 or more days)**

If your child absolutely must be absent for five or more days for reasons other than illness, please use our Independent Study Program so they can keep up with their studies. Speak to the office at least one week in advance of the absence to arrange for this and to complete the Independent Study Contract. The office will coordinate with your child's teacher to put together a work packet. The school also benefits by still receiving funds when the Independent Study is completed.

### **Release from School**

Students may be excused from school in the company of an adult only when the adult has been properly identified by a school authority and is listed on the emergency card. Such releases are permitted only with the full knowledge and consent of the parent or guardian. A student may not be released at his/her own request. For appointments, the adult should notify the office of the time and day of the appointment and report to the office and sign out the child. The office will call the student to the office. Please do not go directly to classrooms. **Once a student exits the campus at the end of the day, they may not return to campus without adult supervision.** If they leave after school to visit local vendors or businesses or visit in other friends' homes, they will not be readmitted to campus. **Please make sure that your child understands that once on campus, they should not leave without formal permission either during or after school.**

### **Tardies and Late Arrivals**

Children arriving after school begins are tardy. Teachers will note this on their records. It is essential to your child's success that he/she arrives at school on time. It is disruptive to your child, the teacher and the rest of the class when a child arrives late.

If students are more than 5 minutes late, students must come to the office and sign the tardy book in the office and receive a tardy slip to be admitted to class. **Please note: Students arriving late to school must be signed in by a parent/guardian or bring a note explaining the reason for arriving late. This needs to be done in the office before going to their classroom.** Students with out a parent or parent note will receive a “Pink Slip”. We use every available minute for instruction and late arriving students miss valuable information. Please be considerate of the other students and the teacher and help your own child get a good start to the day by arriving by 8:20 a.m.

### **Unexcused Absences/Truancy**

Any student who is absent from school without a valid excuse for more than three days, or tardy in excess of 30 minutes on each of more than five days in one school year, is considered truant and shall be reported to the Principal. Unexcused absences, excessive absences and excessive tardy arrivals violate the state’s compulsory attendance laws for school-age children and can result in referral to the Student Attendance Review Board (SARB) and possible referral to the district attorney’s office. For families on permit this may mean revocation of an inter-district permit. Most significantly, erratic attendance and habitual tardiness mean that your child is missing instruction and may fall behind. Excessive absences for illness will require doctor’s notes to remain excused.

### **Excessive Absences or Tardies**

Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District as well as McKinley School monitors excessive absences or tardies. You may receive notices from McKinley School and/or the school district office advising you that you are not in compliance with state mandatory attendance law. For monitoring purposes, excused absences constitute illness, (excessive or chronic illnesses require documentation from your doctor) medical or dental appointments (with a note from the doctor or dentist) religious holidays and bereavement or court mandated appointments. If your child’s school record indicates excessive absences, you may be asked to provide a documentation to verify the absence. We work with the County District Attorney’s office to assist us with families who have chronic attendance issues.

### **Health/Wellness & Emergency Information**

As do you, we recognize that students need to be healthy, rested, and well-fed in order to learn to the best of their ability. State law requires that schools watch or screen for childhood diseases and other health related matters. Periodic vision and hearing screenings are conducted in grades K, 1, 2 and 5. For further information regarding district health services refer to web site: [www.smmusd.org/HEALTH/flash/index.htm](http://www.smmusd.org/HEALTH/flash/index.htm)

### **Communicable Disease/Illness**

If your child will be out of school because of a communicable disease, notify the school immediately. When returning after recovery from a communicable disease, for example, measles, mumps, chicken pox, or strep throat, the child must bring a release slip from the family doctor. All children with any communicable disease must be checked through the nurse’s office before returning to the classroom. All cases of head lice should be reported to the school nurse. The school nurse or designee will approve your child’s return to school after appropriate treatment for head lice. **If your child was sent home from school because of a fever, he or she must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school**

### **Immunizations Physical & Dental Exams**

State law requires all children entering school to have written documentation that all the required immunizations up to date. This is to protect your child and others from the spread of contagious diseases. If an outbreak of a communicable disease occurs, the non-immunized student will be excluded for his/her safety until such a time as directed by health officials or district administration. A medical examination is required 18 months prior to entering the first grade. Most students have this examination done as part of their enrollment into Kindergarten. This provides early detection of issues that can affect learning. In addition, Kindergarteners are required to have a dental exam before entering school. For more information call the school nurse.

## **Injuries**

If your child sustains any type of major injury, e.g. a broken bone, a note from your doctor is required before your child returns to school. Students needing any supportive appliances (crutches, cast, wheelchair, etc.) must also have a written order from the prescribing physician. Call the school nurse for details.

## **Medication**

If your child must take medication prescribed by a physician during the regular school day, he/she will be assisted by the school nurse or other designated school personnel. This includes over the counter medications. Medication will be administered **only** if there is a written Medication Authorization form completed and signed by the prescribing physician and legal guardian. Medications must be in their original containers with the pharmacy label including the child's name, dosage and frequency. All medications must be kept in the Health office. Contact the school nurse if there are any adjustments in medications through out the school year. **Students may not have any medications (including over the counter medications, cough drops etc.) in their possession (backpacks included). All medications must be checked in with the school nurse.**

## **TB Tests for Volunteers**

State law requires that all classroom volunteers have a current Mantoux TB test before they enter the classrooms. The school nurse will administer and check the test for parent volunteers at no charge. Tests can only be given on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Please see the nurse to schedule a time if you are interested in volunteering in the classroom. *THE TEST MUST BE GIVEN EVERY FOUR YEARS.* Our District also requires fingerprinting for all volunteers attending overnight trips. Please check our web site for the volunteer policy and to download the required Volunteer application.

## **Health Office Personnel - Schedule**

A registered nurse is at McKinley on select days. Please check with the office for the current nursing schedule. Our office staff will assist in the Health Office as needed. To reach the Health Office call 310-828-5011 ext 119.

## **Earthquake Preparedness**

State and local disaster officials tell us that, in the event of a major disaster, we should all be prepared to be on our own up to 72 hours. This could mean that many of our students would need to be at school for one to three days. Our staff has been trained in first aid and search & rescue. We have emergency supplies in each classroom in the event that students need to remain in the classroom or at school beyond the school day. Earthquake kits are a part of our disaster plan. The school will prepare this kit for you. All families are asked to make a donation toward our Earthquake Emergency Fund. Please see the front office if you have any questions.

## **Emergency Drills**

Drills are conducted periodically during the school year so that students and staff are prepared to deal effectively with emergencies. These include (fire, earthquake, lock down, etc.). If you are on campus during an emergency drill, you are expected to evacuate along with the students; we must account for all persons on campus.

## **Emergency Cards**

Every child must have two emergency cards on file in the school office. These cards are the only way the school staff has to get in touch with you in case of emergency or illness. Include home, work, and cell phone numbers. Please make sure the contact information is accurate and kept current throughout the year. Advise the office immediately if your addresses or phone numbers change. **Please note: Any custody agreements or orders that affect who may pick up your child must be on file at the school office.**

## **Cafeteria and Food Policy**

### **Breakfast**

Breakfast is served in the school cafeteria from 7:45 am to 8:10 am. A monthly menu for breakfast and lunch goes home at the beginning of the month to help you plan your child's meals. Breakfast is available for purchase at regular price, and if you

qualify for free or reduced lunch, you also qualify for free or reduced breakfast. Breakfast is a very important meal and all children are welcome to participate in the breakfast program – either regularly or on an as needed basis. This is a valuable time saving option for working families, especially if there is a commute to work involved.

## **Lunch**

Students can eat lunch in the school cafeteria, have a salad from the Farmer’s Market salad bar, or bring a lunch from home. The school cafeteria serves breakfast and lunch, including milk, every school day to all grades. In case of milk allergy, substitutes are available with a written request from your doctor. Call our school nurse for assistance.

Refer to the current year’s lunch menu for current pricing or check with the office staff. We discourage students from carrying money each day in their pockets; it’s more secure and a better deal to buy lunches ahead of time – taking advantage of Food and Nutrition Services meal deal, which provides 20 pre-paid meals at a substantial discount. Parents can prepay with cash or check made out to SMMUSD. Parents can prepay for as many months as they would like, however Food Services cannot refund any unused funds at the end of the school year. Please note that breakfast must be paid separately. You can write one check but you must let the office staff know how much money to allocate for lunch and how much to allocate for breakfast.

McKinley’s cafeteria offers a “fresh from the Farmer’s Market salad bar” as an alternative to hot lunches. Students may choose from a variety of fresh vegetables, fruits, cheeses, meats and breads. The Meal Deal lunches may be used for either hot lunch or salad bar. Children may also bring their lunches from home. Please, do not send candy, sodas, chips or glass containers. Because of food allergies, we do not allow children to share food. Very occasionally, a parent may deliver lunch to school for their child. **Please save this for special occasions and understand that we will not interrupt instructional time to deliver the lunch.** Your child may pick it up on the way to lunch. If your child does not have lunch credit/money, we will pay for your child as we want your child to eat but expect you to repay the cafeteria when you receive a notice of payment. If your balance remains unpaid with excessive charges, Food Services can only serve the state required lunch portions until the balance is paid or repayment arrangements are made. If you send a lunch box with your child, please make sure his/her name is clearly marked inside to facilitate the return of any lost items.

## **School Lunch Program**

Applications for free or reduced-cost breakfasts and lunches are available in the office. Parents must submit applications every year. To make sure your eligibility does not lapse, submit your application by mid-September. All students have a lunch card that resembles a credit card. The cards are identical for children who purchase lunches for full price, pay a reduced fee, or receive free lunch – all the information is coded in the magnetic strip to protect your child’s privacy.

## **Snacks**

Children have a mid-morning and a lunch recess. If your child requires a mid-morning snack, please pack appropriate, nutritious foods. Candy, chips, dessert items, “juice” drinks that are less than 50% juice, soft drinks are not allowed. No glass containers are allowed and, due to food allergies, sharing of food is not permitted. Children eat snacks in designated areas on the playground.

## **Wellness Policy**

The Board of Education recognizes that sound nutrition, optimal physical fitness, emotional well being and the adoption of life long healthy habits correlate with learning readiness, academic achievement and decreased discipline problems. Life long healthy habits include the daily consumption of fruits and vegetables and daily physical fitness activities. Such habits can prevent Type 2 Diabetes, some Cancers, Cardiovascular Disease, Obesity and Osteoporosis.

As part of this policy and consistent with California state law, the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District has established policies regarding the types of foods which can be sold or served to elementary school students during the day and 30-minutes before and after school. This policy has implications for our school breakfast and lunch programs, for food sales after school, and for birthday parties, classroom parties, and/or potlucks that are held during the school day and governs what we can and cannot provide to students during the school day and for one-half hour before or one-half hour after school.

## Birthday Celebrations

While many parents like to bring in treats for the class to celebrate their child's birthday, such observances must be coordinated with the classroom teacher and should generally occur after lunch. Sugary or fatty snacks (cupcakes, cake and ice cream, chips, etc.) are not allowed during the school day, and only 100% juice, milk and water may be served to students. Rather than bringing in food, consider bringing a ball for the classroom, art supplies, or a book for the class library. If you want to bring in food, stick to fruits or vegetables or other foods that meet the nutrition guidelines (a complete copy is available from the school office or on the district web site at [www.smmusd.org](http://www.smmusd.org)).

## Invitation Policy

Please take care of invitations for birthday parties, play dates, etc., outside of school (even if the whole class is invited). We are unable to send them home in the Wed. Folders or student cubbies. A class roster is sent home in Wed. folders for you with student names and addresses in the fall, so that you can mail invitations home. You may obtain an additional copy from the office.

## Before and after school care and enrichment

### CREST (*Child Care, Recreation, Enrichment, Sports Together*)

The City of Santa Monica and the Santa Monica School District sponsor this program, which combines on-site childcare with a recreation and sports program. C.R.E.S.T. features such activities as flag football, volleyball, homework club, dance and other enrichment classes as well as supervised free play. Full-time as well as occasional use enrollment is available. Scholarships are available. For more information, call the Child Development Office at 310-399-5865, CDS Lead Teacher at extension 131 or Upper CREST Lead Teacher (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades) at extension 143.

### Playground Access

CREST also offers an after-school Playground Access Option for children in grades 1 through 5. **Parents must register their children in order to participate in Playground Access** and maintain up-to-date emergency cards. Children will be required to sign in and out. Once they sign out they may not re-enter the program that day. ***Please note that this option does not operate on rainy days or holidays.*** There is no fee to participate in this program. If you wish to enroll your child, call extension 143, Room B-4.

- Children in grades 1 and 2 may have 30 minutes of playground access for supervised unstructured play after school and can remain on the playground after 30 minutes if they are playing with an older sibling (**grades 4 & 5 attending McKinley and enrolled in Playground Access**) or are being supervised by their caregiver.
- Children in grades 3-5 may have up to two hours of playground access for supervised unstructured play after school.
- Playground Access does not operate on rainy days or holidays.

## Organizations

### McKinley PTA (Parent Teacher Association)

The PTA is a non-partisan organization devoted to improving the educational opportunities for all children. Members of the PTA have the opportunity to serve as officers on the PTA board. Board members and their appointed committees are responsible for organizing PTA community events and fundraising activities. The McKinley PTA is very active in providing volunteer assistance and financial support to the school. The PTA supports children by raising money to fund teacher grants, classroom supplies, field trips and assemblies, technology, academic support and enrichment programs, school beautification, and the fine arts and music programs. The McKinley PTA also organizes and coordinates events and activities throughout the year. Aside from fun and fundraising, the McKinley PTA is a strong advocate for every child and a voice at the School Board, the State Legislature and in Washington. **All McKinley families are urged to become members of the PTA. Annual dues are very modest, a portion of which goes to our District Council, to State PTA and National PTA to help our legislative effort. PTA Association meetings are generally held monthly in the auditorium. Topics discussed are matters of importance to all parents. The PTA Executive Board also meets monthly.** Please check your school calendar or web site calendar for current meeting dates and times, and topics or themes.

## **African-American Parent Student Support Group (AASG)**

The AASG is a school-family-community partnership designed to increase the test scores of African American students at our school. AASG's focus is to give parents the support they need to encourage and assist their child to succeed at school and in life, as well as to provide a place for voicing their specific cultural concerns. Contact AASG President, TeNisha Collins at [faithslinger@hotmail.com](mailto:faithslinger@hotmail.com) or the school liaison, Lily Marquez at [lmarquez@smmusd.org](mailto:lmarquez@smmusd.org) for more information.

## **English Learners Advisory Council (ELAC)**

This group of parents and staff advise the principal and faculty on matters affecting the school's program related to the education of students who are learning English as their second language -- English Language Learners (ELL). Parent education is often featured at the group's meetings. All parents are welcome to attend; the meetings are generally conducted in English and Spanish. Meetings are held bi-monthly at 8:30AM in room 204. For more information contact our Community Liaison in the school office 310-828-0335 ext. 122. Please check your school calendar or web site calendar for current meeting dates and times, and topics or themes.

## **Governance Council**

Governance Council is made up of the principal, teachers, staff members and parent representatives. Members have staggered terms and are elected each fall. Governance Council meets monthly during the school year to make decisions about school state and federal budgets, monitor the school plan, and review evaluation data. All parents are welcome to attend Governance Council meetings held monthly at 4PM in room 204. Meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the Bulletin Board in the hallway outside the main office. Our School Governance Council reviews and approves Title I to ensure academic success for ALL Students. A Governance binder containing agendas and minutes is kept on the office counter.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

### **McKinley Parental Involvement Policy**

**In collaboration with parents, faculty, and staff, McKinley School has developed a written parental involvement policy. Our goals are as follows:**

1. Build consistent and effective communication between the home and the school so parents may support student learning.
2. Offer parents techniques and strategies to improve their child's academic success in school and at home.
3. Support and encourage staff members to communicate effectively with parents.
4. Integrate parental involvement programs into the school's Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA).

**McKinley's Parental Involvement Policy is implemented in the following ways:**

1. This policy is presented annually to parents. The school offers flexible times for parents to receive this information. The information is presented during Back to School Night and the first ELAC, PTA, and Coffee with the Principal meetings of the new school year.
2. The presentation includes the following information:
  - a. McKinley Parental Involvement Policy
  - b. McKinley Learning Agreement
  - c. An overview of the school's curriculum, assessment practices and current achievement data
  - d. School-wide federal Title 1 requirements
3. Staff members provide additional opportunities for parents to participate in their child's education throughout the year. The activities include:
  - a. PTA Family Nights: The focus of these nights is curriculum-based (such as math, science, and writing) and aligned with the goal areas identified in the school's Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA).
  - b. ELAC Meetings: The focus of these meetings is to share strategies to support English Language Learners in curricular areas identified in the SPSA. Connecting our families to community resources is also a focus of our meetings.

- c. Coffee with the Principal Meetings: The principal surveys parents about topics for this open opportunity to meet with the principal. The survey information is used to plan the focus of each monthly parent meeting.
- d. Open House: Every May, parents are invited to tour classrooms to see the accomplishments of the students.
- e. Gifted and Talented Education and Reading Program: Each program begins with a survey of parents and a parent meeting regarding their child's participation. Interactive learning activities for students and their families are scheduled annually.
- f. AASG Meetings: The goal of the African-American Support Group is to build community and encourage participation of all families at McKinley. Sharing and developing strategies to support our students academic and social growth is also a focus of our meetings.

## Volunteer Opportunities

Parent help is greatly needed and appreciated. **We ask all parents to make it a goal to give at least 20 volunteer hours to the school each year.** Parents can assist in classrooms, with fundraisers and festivals, or with the many other tasks that it takes to sustain a high quality school. Whatever your schedule and skills, there's something you can do. Volunteering supports your child and our school and helps you get to know other families. The PTA prepares a menu of volunteer opportunities and sends it home with a volunteer sign up form early in each school year. You can volunteer your time by filling out the PTA Volunteer form, arranging time with your child's teacher or by calling the school office. Everyone has something important to contribute and we need your help.

**Before you can begin volunteering, we need you to complete a Volunteer Application.** Please see our Community Liaison, Lily Marquez for the volunteer application which must be completed and signed by the principal.

**\*\*As of January 2009, all volunteers working with students must submit an application and be cleared from Megan's Law website in order to serve as a volunteer. All volunteers working directly with students must have a clearance for tuberculosis. The California Health and Safety Code, Section 3454, and the Board of Education require volunteers to document tuberculosis clearance within 60 days before starting and every 4 years thereafter.**

*In addition to completing the application and the TB test, parents assisting teachers on overnight trips must be fingerprinted. Fingerprinting is done at the district office at no cost.*

**Before you begin a volunteer shift during the school day, you must always sign in at the front office in our volunteer book and wear a volunteer badge.** All students have been instructed to help with this by giving reminders to our parent volunteers. When you end your volunteer shift, make sure that you sign out in the office as well. Documentation allows us to track volunteer hours and maintains a safe environment where all visitors check in and out at the office (per Santa Monica Malibu School District policy). There is a training session for all classroom volunteers each fall.

Younger siblings are **NOT** allowed during volunteer time, field trips or class parties due to liability issues. It is critical that cellular phones, pagers and other electronic devices are turned off when you are volunteering in the classroom. We devote this time to our students, and we need to maintain a constructive learning environment at all times. Remember that you are a classroom volunteer; this **is not a parent teacher conference appointment.** Once your volunteer shift is complete please know that the teacher still needs to continue teaching. If you have the need to conference about your child, please schedule an appointment so that the teacher can give you the appropriate attention.

## Room Parents

Parents from each classroom volunteer to serve as room parents under the direction of the PTA Room Parent Coordinator. Room parents periodically phone or send home a monthly note to inform parents of the activities, curriculum and school events. Room parents serve as a special link between the teachers and the families. **For more information, please contact the Room Parent Coordinator, noted on your McKinley Calendar.**

## **Back to School Night**

Back to School Nights are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed. in September for K-2 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed. in September for grades 3-5. Information about grade level standards, classroom rules, expectations about homework and the academic program for a grade level is provided during classroom meetings. This is also an excellent opportunity to open lines of communication with your child's teacher and meet the other families in your child's class. A flyer will be sent in the Wednesday folder. Please join us!

### **Please Note:**

- Back to School Night is for adults only. If your child must accompany their parents in the classroom. Please make sure they stay with you at all times and follow class room rules. We ask that you make other arrangements outside of McKinley for middle school and high school siblings.
- Students will not be permitted on the playground.

## **Coffee with the Principal**

School-wide initiatives are shared with families during our "Coffee with the Principal". Please refer to the McKinley School Calendar for topics, dates and times. A flyer will also be sent in the Wednesday folder. Please join us!

## **Fall Parent Conferences**

Information on individual student progress is shared with parents formally during fall **Parent-Teacher Conferences in November**. Conferences with teachers may also be arranged at any time during the year by leaving a message for the teacher in the school office. Do not hesitate to contact the office if there is any question regarding the school program, scheduling, or any other concern, which affects your child. Do not wait until a small problem becomes a large one.

## **Open House**

Open House is scheduled every spring in May. This is a special night when your child can show you their classroom and the work the class has been doing. It is an informal time to talk with the teacher and look at the classroom. **Please check your school calendar or web site calendar for current years date and time.** A flyer will also be sent in the Wednesday folder.

## **Report Cards**

Progress Reports are issued at the end of the first semester (usually at the end of January) and the last day of school. They provide comprehensive feedback on student progress relative to state standards in key areas.

## **School Newsletter: McKinley Messenger**

Information about events and school issues is provided via school newsletter, **The McKinley Messenger**. The newsletter is also posted electronically on the McKinley website [www.mckinley.smmusd.org](http://www.mckinley.smmusd.org). Also sent home on a monthly basis in the Wed folder is "MAC Events" this one page bulletin gives you updates on events occurring at school as well as additional events that may not be in the school calendar.

## **Gifts, Donations & Fundraisers**

### **Annual Fundraisers**

Several of our annual celebrations also include opportunities to support the school. Profits from our Halloween Carnival, Silent Auction, International Day, and the "Love McKinley" Valentine's Day Fundraiser all go to the PTA to support programs for students. Additionally, the PTA sponsors our Fall Fundraiser product sales and a percentage of the products purchased go to McKinley.

### **Direct Investment Drive**

Direct Investment Drive donations are tax deductible and the PTA Treasurer will mail you a receipt for tax purposes. Contribution amounts are confidential and not disclosed. Many employers will match employee contributions. This is also one of the best ways for community members and local business owners to contribute to McKinley. Please contact the PTA President with questions. Our goal is 100% participation at whatever level is comfortable for our families.

## **Donations to Classrooms & Classroom Wish Lists**

Families may make a direct donation to their children's classroom to support supplies and enrichment projects. Please see your child's teacher about their wish list.

## **Jogathon**

This spring event provides good fun and exercise as students gather pledges from family and friends and run laps around the field. The money raised from this event goes towards equipment to be used by the P.E. staff. Pledge whatever amount you can, in support of your student.

## **Silent Auction**

An impressive variety of goods, services, theme baskets, tickets, fun activities for your children, and classroom art projects are available for purchase via our Silent Auction. The items to be auctioned are donated by McKinley families and community members and all profits go to McKinley.

## **Book Fairs**

The PTA generally sponsors two or three book fairs per year with a great selection of titles. A percentage of the sales go to the McKinley Library. This is a great way to add good books to your child's library, stock up on gifts, and contribute to the school at the same time

## **Technology Donations**

We gladly accept any PC's, MAC and MAC-compatible products which are no more than 2 years old. Old camcorders are useful as long as they have a digital connection (known as fire wire, 1394 or Sony link). We can only accept laser printers. We cannot place a dollar value on the donations. Please contact the Technology Coordinator at 310-828-5011 ext 138, if your family or business is upgrading equipment and have gently used equipment to donate.