



Student/Parent Handbook
2016-2017

2906 N Boulder Canyon
Mesa, AZ 85207
Phone: 480.986.7071 Fax: 480.218.9804

Revised July 2016

ADMINISTRATION

Principal	Mrs. Susan Stradling
Assistant Principal	Dr. Jessica Seaman
Administrative Assistant	Mrs. Tara Walton
Secretary/Health Assistant	Mrs. Kathleen Sellards

SEQUOIA PATHFINDER ACADEMY GOVERNING BOARD

Tamara Becker	Aundre Bell
Thomas Lindsay	Maxie Patel
Melissa Walton	

SCHOOL HOURS

MONDAY - THURSDAY

K – 2 ND GRADE	7:50AM - 2:45PM
3 RD – 6 TH GRADE	7:50AM – 3:00PM
7 TH – 8 TH GRADE	7:50AM – 3:20PM

ATTENDANCE

Admission to First Year of School

Children must turn 5 years old by August 31st to enter kindergarten.

Daily Attendance

Regular daily attendance and punctuality are essential for student progression. A child is expected to attend school regularly unless he/she is ill. Illness, contagious disease, death in the immediate family, and exceptionally urgent situations affecting the child are the only reasons for excusable absence from school. For student safety, a parent must notify school office personnel (480.986.7071) prior to any school absence. Excessive absences will directly affect grades. All work missed because of absence must be made up. Students who miss more than seven days during a semester may lose course credit or the privilege to attend this school. A student missing ten unexcused consecutive days of school will be withdrawn according to Arizona State Law.

Because Pathfinder Academy has a four-day school week we appreciate families using Fridays for appointments and family time.

Tardies

When a child arrives late to school the parent must walk the child into the office to sign him/her in. Schoolwork missed because of tardies will be made up during recess or after school. When a student walks in tardy, the entire class is disrupted. **We appreciate the effort parents and students make to be at school on time.**

Early Dismissal

In case of illness, injury or emergency, a child may be dismissed from school during the school day. Teachers may not give dismissal permission at any time, this is the responsibility of the school office. If a child needs to leave school for an appointment, please contact the office (480.986.7071). A parent will need to sign the child out when leaving and sign them back in if returning.

ARRIVAL ~ DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

ARRIVAL:

- STUDENTS MAY BE DROPPED OFF NO EARLIER THAN 7:30am. THERE IS NO SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS BEFORE 7:30am.
- Cars should pull up to the sign to drop off, **staying to the far right**, ensuring others can pass on the left, as this will help with drop off time and ensure the safety of all students.
- Students walk through the north gate and stay on the grass field or in the gym until the bell rings at 7:45am to go to class.
- At 7:50am the north gate is locked and tardy students, accompanied by a parent, must sign-in at the front office.

DISMISSAL:

- TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF STUDENTS AND REDUCE CONFUSION, NO EARLY DISMISSALS WILL BE ALLOWED AFTER 2:30pm EACH DAY. IF YOU MUST PICK UP YOUR CHILD EARLY, PLEASE MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO PICK UP BEFORE 2:30pm.
- Any changes to transportation must be called in to the front office before 2:30pm. Calls coming in after that may be missed.
- Parents pull into the parking lot in a single file line of cars, **staying to the far right**, ensuring others can pass on the left.
- Please pull all the way forward to keep the line moving.
- Parents must have the prepared name card on the passenger side dashboard.
- Staff members radio for the dismissal of individual students.
- Staff members escort students to the waiting cars.
- Parents leave as soon as their children are picked up to allow others to move forward.
- Families with students in several grades with different dismissal times can pick up all of their children at their oldest child's dismissal time.
- PLEASE BE PROMPT WHEN PICKING UP STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL. THERE IS NO AFTER SCHOOL SUPERVISION AVAILABLE.

BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

General School Rules:

- No chewing gum is allowed any place on campus.
- All toys, including balls, are to be left at home.
- No knives or weapons of any kind are allowed, real or fake.
- Students are expected to respect and obey all school rules in the classrooms, buildings, and on the playground.
- Tardiness, unexcused absences, excessive detentions, plagiarism, lying, cheating, dress code violations, disruptive behavior, damage to school property, failure to follow school rules, profanity, disrespect, fighting, threats, abuse, theft, or any other form of academic misconduct will result in consequences ranging from an informal conference to expulsion, based on the offense, attitude, severity, and prior history.

Bullying

Pathfinder Academy is committed to providing all students with a safe school environment where everyone is treated with respect. Students have a right to be free from any form of bullying. Students, parents, and school employees have a right and a responsibility to report incidents of bullying. Reports must be made within 30 days of the last incident. Any student who has committed an act of bullying, intentionally filed a false report, or retaliated against another who has participated in an investigation of bullying, will be subject to disciplinary action including possible police involvement.

Anti-Bullying Program: The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring, and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is an anti-social behavior that affects everyone. It is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will students be able to fully benefit from opportunities available at school. Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behavior, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Students who are being bullied may show changes in behavior, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration, or truancy from school. The three main types of bullying are:

- physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
- verbal (name calling, racist remarks)
- indirect (spreading rumors, excluding someone from social groups)

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to administration.
- Administration will interview all concerned and take appropriate disciplinary action.
- Teachers will take preventive actions and advise administration of repeat incidents.
- Parents will be kept informed.

Students who *have been bullied* will be supported in the following ways:

- immediate opportunity to discuss experience with trusted staff member
- reassurance from staff
- continuous support to help restore self-esteem and confidence

Students who *have bullied* will be supported in the following ways:

- opportunity to discuss incident(s), discovering why and how they became involved
- acknowledge and take ownership for wrong doing and the need to change
- inform their parents and enlist their help in the process of change

Student Searches

School administration has the right to search and seize property, including personal and school property temporarily assigned to students, when there is reason to believe that some material or matter is detrimental to the health, safety, and welfare of the student(s). Items provided by the

school for storage (i.e. desks) are the property of the school and are subject to control and supervision. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy and items may be inspected at any time without notice by school personnel. A minimum of two people will be present when conducting student searches.

Due Process

Students involved in any type of disciplinary situation must enter the process at the preliminary investigative point where early guilt/innocence of charges is determined. Dependent upon the seriousness of the offense, the student must be accorded the following basic rights:

- notice of charges, nature of evidence supporting charges, and possible consequences
- notice of right to a hearing at which time he/she may respond to charges
- a fair hearing, including the right to present witnesses and evidence
- a fair and impartial decision

Mandatory Reporting of Criminal Activity to Law Enforcement

Arizona State Statute (A.R.S. 13-3620) requires schools and school employees to report criminal activity to local law enforcement. Suspected child abuse is not something school employees can ignore. Apparent non-accidental injury, sexual molestation, abuse, neglect, and crimes against children are required by law to be reported to local law enforcement and the Department of Child Safety. Recent changes in the law require schools to report threats or rumors of threats against schools, students, and school personnel. Schools must also report incidents of non-accidental injury, which might occur during altercations at school.

Short-Term Suspension

Short-term suspension is temporary withdrawal of the privilege of attending school and school-related events for a period of ten consecutive school days or less. There is no right to appeal a short-term suspension and school administration has the authority to suspend a student.

Long-Term Suspension

Long-term suspension is temporary withdrawal of the privilege of attending school and school-related events for a period of 11 consecutive school days or more.

Expulsion

Expulsion is permanent withdrawal of the privilege of attending a school or any function in the organization unless the Governing Board reinstates that privilege.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health

A child should be kept home for at least 24 hours if he/she: has a temperature of 100 degrees F or above, has diarrhea, or has vomited. Children with these conditions in school will be sent home, and it is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation.

Emergency Information

The school must be informed of individuals to contact in case of an emergency. It is essential that the school be provided with a complete health record of each child, including contact information if the child becomes sick or injured. A form is provided for this purpose. If parents are to be out of town during a school day, they should notify the school indicating who will accept responsibility for the child in case of emergency.

Prescription Medications

When a student must take prescription medication, the following procedures must be followed:

- A parent must fill out appropriate form requesting administration of medicine and bring medicine to front office. A student must never bring medication to school.
- Medication must be counted and signed off agreeing to the number of pills by the parent and the person representing the school.
- Medication must be in a properly labeled prescription bottle, as received from the pharmacy, with student name, name of medication, the dosage, and time of day to be given.
- School administration may designate a school employee to administer the medication.
- All instances of administration of medicine to students must be documented in a log.
- The medication must be stored in a locked box in a locked storage cabinet.
- If the medication is returned to the parent, the medication must be again counted and signed off by both the parent and the school representative.

Over the Counter Medications

When a student must take non-prescription medication, the following procedures must be followed:

- A parent must provide written permission for administration of the non-prescription medication.
- The medication must be brought to the school in the manufacturer's original container, which states the name of the drug, the proper dosage, and contents of the drug.
- School administration may designate a school employee to administer the medication.
- All instances of administration of medicine to students must be documented in a log.
- The medication must be stored in a locked box in a locked storage cabinet.

Self-administration

When a licensed physician has determined that a student must carry and self-administer emergency medications, including auto-injectable epinephrine or a handheld inhaler device, while at school or school activity, the following conditions apply:

- Parent must fill out appropriate form requesting administration of medicine by the student. A student must never bring medication to school until the parent has completed the forms.
- The student's name must appear on the medication container or on the medication device.
- Annual authorization must be obtained from the student's parent.
- A student who uses auto-injectable epinephrine while at school or school activities must notify the nurse or designated school personnel.

Diabetes Management

If a student has been diagnosed with diabetes by a licensed health professional, the following procedures must be followed:

- A parent must annually submit diabetes medical management plan to school personnel.
- The plan must acknowledge that the student is able to self-administer medication and equipment and must be signed by a licensed health professional.
- The plan shall state the student is capable of self-monitoring blood glucose and shall list the medications, monitoring equipment and nutritional needs that are authorized and prescribed for the student as being medically appropriate for the student to self-administer.
- The plan shall state the student is able to practice proper safety precautions for the handling and disposal of equipment and medications, specifying a method to dispose of equipment and medication as agreed upon by parent and school.
- The plan shall contain procedures that enable the school to withdraw a student's authorization to monitor blood glucose and self-administer diabetes medication if the student does not practice proper safety precautions.

Use or administration of medication at school or school activities may be revoked by school administration or superintendent, if they, in consultation with a licensed health professional, determine that the use constitutes a risk to the student, other students, or staff. Students must secure their medication and equipment at all times and may never give the equipment or medication to another person. A student must immediately report the loss or theft of medication or equipment brought to the school or school activity to school personnel.

Safety

Pathfinder Academy staff, faculty, and students will perform the following emergency response procedures throughout the year:

- Fire Drills – at least one per month
- Lock Down – at least two per year
- Evacuation – at least one per year

ASSESSMENT

Testing

Throughout the school year, students will participate in a variety of formative and summative assessments. These assessments assist educators in planning instructional programs to meet the needs of all students. Every effort should be made for children to attend school when summative assessments are administered, especially during times of state testing.

- Students in grades 3–8 are administered a standards-based assessment four times a year to monitor their progress and acquisition of standards mastery in the areas of ELA and Math.
- All students in grades 3–8 are required to take Arizona's state assessment AzMERIT. It evaluates performance on grade-level standards in the areas of Reading, Writing and Math.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued four times during the year, and each report covers approximately 9 weeks of work.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents are asked to come to the school for conferences with the teacher during the first and third quarters. This private conference allows parents to ask more detailed questions, see their child's records, and maintain open communication between home and school. The second and fourth report cards will be sent home with students for parents to review. If an additional parent-teacher conference is requested by the teacher, principal, or parent, it will be scheduled at the convenience of everyone concerned.

It is important that report cards reflect a child's performance based on expected outcomes. Children on a special education program for specific subjects will be graded according to their individual progress in meeting IEP goals. All other students are assessed according to school standards.

GENERAL INFORMATION

45 Day Screenings

A screening shall be completed within 45 calendar days after entry into kindergarten or for newly enrolled school-aged children. The screening identifies any concerns with a child's academic achievement or development. Parents are notified if any concerns are noted.

504 Plans

A 504 Plan helps a child with special health care needs to fully participate in school. Usually, a 504 Plan is used by a general education student who is not eligible for special education services. A 504 Plan lists accommodations related to the child's disability and required by the child so that he or she may participate in the general classroom setting and educational programs.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthday celebrations should be pre-arranged with the classroom teacher.

Cell Phones

In some cases, a parent may wish to send a cell phone with a child for emergency purposes. The school cannot accept responsibility for any electronic devices brought from home. If your child brings a cell phone to school, it must remain in a backpack on silent mode and should not be taken out during the school day. If a student takes out a cell phone during the school day, the student will be required to give the phone to a staff member. The teacher or principal will hold onto the cell phone and a parent will be required to come to the school to pick it up.

Dress Code Standards

The purpose of Pathfinder Academy's dress code is to minimize distractions to learning and promote positive, modest choices in dress. Violations of Dress Code Standards may be subject to the discipline system. Specific standards are covered in the following:

1. Clothing must be neat, clean and in good repair.
2. Clothing that is cut off, tattered, torn or has holes must be repaired before being worn to school.
3. Inappropriate, suggestive, or obscene language, advertisements or images including violence, drugs, alcohol, tobacco or other possible offensive symbols are not allowed on any article of clothing or on any item brought to school.

4. Pants should be worn around the waist.
5. Extremely baggy/saggy style shorts or pants showing underclothing are not acceptable.
6. The length of shorts, skirts and dresses must be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee and cover all underclothing.
7. No spaghetti straps or bare midriffs, straps must be at least 1 ½ inches wide and armholes must be less than 2 inches from the armpit.
8. Baseball caps, hats, hoods or visors may be worn to and from school and during outside activities. They may not be worn inside any building. This includes boys and girls.
9. Shoes must be fastened to the foot and kept on at school. No flip flops or slip on sandals. Sneakers are recommended.
10. Up to two pieces of pierced jewelry may be worn on the ear. No other pierced jewelry is allowed, including gauges.

Administrative Discretion: Pathfinder Academy's administration has the final decision as to whether a garment or accessory meets the dress code. Parents will be notified if a student is in violation of the dress code. Students may be asked and will be expected to fulfill any reasonable request by administration to alter or adjust clothing to meet standards. Additionally, continuous disregard of dress code could result in suspension.

Electronics Policy

All electronics are to be left at home. This includes, but is not limited to, calculators, IPODs, tablets, games, and cameras. In using the school computers, students are expected to be respectful of the property and be responsible for their actions and conduct on the Internet. Students will access only those sites pertaining to teacher instruction.

ELL

The Arizona English Language Learner Assessment (AZELLA) is administered to all students whose enrollment form indicates that English is not his/her primary language. If the results of this assessment indicate a student is not proficient in English, an Individual Language Learner Plan (ILLP) will be developed to support their language acquisition. For more information on ELL programs visit www.sequoiaschools.org.

Enrollment

All Edkey schools are non-profit, public charter schools. Admission to Pathfinder Academy is based on space and program availability. Because of high demand for students to attend the school and the school's commitment to maintaining optimum class sizes, waiting lists are created for each grade level. Students are admitted on a first-come-first-serve basis with priority given to siblings of students already attending Pathfinder Academy. Parents with children on waiting lists will be contacted when space becomes available. To register a student, an original birth certificate or other satisfactory evidence of age, such as a passport, is required. When enrolling a student, parents need to provide proof of residence, immunization record, and other relevant information. Please see the Pathfinder Academy website at www.sequoiaschools.org to fill out and submit the pre-enrollment information.

Field Trips

Various educational field trips are planned each year and they differ for each grade level. School buses are usually provided for these trips. Permission slips are required for every child to participate and sometimes there may be a fee for attendance.

Homework

Homework is an opportunity for children to learn responsibility, time management, and reinforce concepts taught in class. In addition, it provides an opportunity for families to participate in the student's learning. Any unfinished daily work from class will need to be completed at home as well as assigned homework.

Immunizations

To help protect each child, state law requires immunizations against:

- Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Meningitis
- Measles, Mumps, Varicella, Polio
- Hepatitis B, Hepatitis A
- Rubella (German Measles), Haemophilus Influenza B (Hib)

A form indicating month and year the child was immunized against these diseases **MUST BE COMPLETED** at time of enrollment. Although the law allows exemptions, the County Health Department may require the school exclude exempted children from school activities if there is an outbreak of any of these diseases.

Children can be exempt from immunizations:

- If a physician certifies that one or more of the immunizations would endanger the child's life.
- If parents submit a signed statement that immunizations are contrary to their religious or personal beliefs.

Instructional Supplies

Occasionally a student loses or damages a book or materials purchased by the school. If this does occur, the student and his/her parents are held liable to replace the damaged or lost article. An invoice for payment will be given to the parent in such cases.

Lost and Found

A great deal of time is spent during the school year trying to locate owners of lost articles of clothing, etc. Children's clothing, lunchbox and water bottle should be clearly marked with their names. Articles that are not claimed in a timely fashion will be given to service organizations. Lost and Found is located in the gym.

Parent Concerns

If parents have any concerns regarding child's placement, program, or behavior in school, they should immediately contact the classroom teacher.

PLEASE NOTE: We do not guarantee a parent request for teacher placement as we make every effort to balance classrooms regarding student gender, behavior, and academic needs.

School Lunch

Students may bring their lunch from home or purchase a school lunch. Families meeting federal income guidelines are eligible for free or reduced meals. Applications are available in the front office and must be filled out each school year. All information is confidential. All family meal accounts should maintain a positive balance and all balances, positive or negative, are carried over from one year to the next. Please use the price list below to determine your family's daily charge activity.

Student Meal Prices

Lunch - \$2.85

Reduced Lunch - \$0.40

Milk Only - \$.25

School Messenger

School Messenger allows the school to communicate with parents via text or email. Important notifications and information is disseminated to all families using this system. Please make sure to keep your contact information updated with the school office to ensure timely delivery of important news and events.

Special Classes (Music~Art~Physical Education)

Students participate in music class one day a week.

Students participate in art under the direction of their classroom teacher.

Students participate in physical education class three days a week...Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Sneakers are recommended.

Special Education

Federal and state law requires all schools to provide a free and appropriate education to eligible children with disabilities. This education includes related services described in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and provided to the child in the least restrictive environment. Children with disabilities, and their parents, are guaranteed certain educational rights or procedural safeguards, from birth to age 22. Please visit www.sequoiaschools.org for more information.

If your child is having difficulty in school, please check with the teacher to determine what interventions have been implemented to help your child succeed. If the interventions are unsuccessful, a referral for a special education evaluation may be necessary.

If special education disabilities are suspected, the school is required to evaluate a child to identify and document whether he or she has a disability that affects learning, and if so, determine what special education and related services are required. This evaluation will be conducted according to federal and state guidelines and only after the plan is shared with a parent. If a child qualifies for services parents will be part of the team to develop an IEP.

Speech Therapy

Speech therapy is offered to those children who qualify for services in this area.

Standards Based Instruction

All Edkey schools align instruction and academic programming with Arizona's College and Career Readiness Standards. These standards can be viewed on our website at sequoiaschools.org or on the Arizona Department of Education's website.

Student Privacy

As a general rule, schools do not release the names of students or any identifying information about students to outside agencies. However, the school reserves the right to release the names of students in announcing honors and recognition won by students, participation in plays, musical programs, etc. In releasing such information the school may also provide the student's town, age, sex, name of parent or guardian, etc. and such other details deemed appropriate.

The school also maintains web pages that will occasionally feature children's pictures and/or names. Parents sign written releases that permit in-school use of student pictures.

Parents who do not wish any information released must contact the school and request, in writing, that the information be withheld.

Student Records

In accordance with FERPA the school respects the rights of parents or guardians to examine the school records of their children.

Teacher Qualifications

Information on teacher qualifications and certifications is available in the school office.

Telephone – Students

Should you find it necessary to telephone your child at school, please call the office and the message will be relayed to him/her. If possible, all instructions should be given to your child in writing before he/she leaves home in the morning.

Telephone – Teachers

Teachers may be reached one half-hour before school opens in the morning, or immediately after school is dismissed. (Please note that teachers may be on duty at these times on certain days.) A message may be taken at any time for a teacher. Unless there is an emergency, teachers will not be interrupted during the school day. Children are not allowed to use the telephone (including cell phones) for outgoing calls except when the teacher or office personnel deem it to be necessary.

Title I

Title 1, previously under No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), and now under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), provides financial assistance to local educational agencies to meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged children at preschool, elementary, and secondary school levels. The purpose of Title I is to help all children achieve the state's academic standards. This is accomplished through supplemental programs, including instructional services, instructional support services, school wide reform efforts, and increased parental involvement.

Visitors

Visitors are welcome to the school at any time; however, all visitors must report to the office upon entering the building and sign-in.

Volunteers

Parents and family members may volunteer in their child's classroom, on field trips, at school activities, and events. Many activities require volunteers to help make it successful, so these parents are very much appreciated. If volunteering in a classroom, please leave preschoolers at home. All volunteers must follow the school dress code.

PATHFINDER ACADEMY
SIGN-OFF SHEET

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

Please read the following pledge, initial, and sign:

As the parent or guardian of this student, I pledge that I have read this handbook with my son/daughter. Together we acknowledge our understanding and acceptance of all the policies and procedures of Pathfinder Academy contained in this handbook.

We acknowledge student expectations, attendance policies, student drop off/pick up procedures and dress code policy. We will respect the school's authority to handle matters of discipline.

_____ I acknowledge the school policy that drop off time is no earlier than 7:30am.

_____ I acknowledge the school policy that no parent/guardian can pick up their child early after 2:30pm. Parents/guardians must wait until the official dismissal time (2:45~3:00~3:20) to sign out their student unless prior arrangements have been made.

_____ I acknowledge that Pathfinder Academy does not have after school care and my child will be picked up promptly at dismissal time (2:45~3:00~3:20).

(Print Student Name)

(Student Signature)

(Date)

(Print Parent Name)

(Parent Signature)

(Date)

These policies and procedures may be revised at the discretion of the administration if deemed in the best interest of the school. Parents will be notified if revisions are made.