

# Parent/Student Handbook

## Cortina PreK-8



TIGER PRIDE: Building Student Success One Stripe at a Time



# Welcome to Cortina PreK-8



Dear Parents, Students and Community members:

It is a pleasure to welcome you to our school. At Cortina, we are committed to educate, guide, challenge and inspire your child to become a responsible citizen in a safe, positive, and respectful environment. The Cortina Staff is committed to promoting lifelong learning through high expectations and shared goals with our parents and students. To achieve this objective, communication between the school and the home is essential. We know that each of you has a special contribution to make. It is our hope that you will work with us in the development and achievement of our goals.

Please remember that the research shows that children whose parents are involved in their child's education perform better in school. We would like to extend an invitation to each of you to become an active partner in your child's learning. There are many ways to become involved from volunteering in your child's classroom, becoming a member of the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), and attending after school athletic and performing arts events.

This handbook was created as a guide to help all members of our Cortina community learn about the school. Within its pages you will find information regarding school routines, general policies, office hours, and much more. An additional publication, the Higley Student Code of Conduct, clearly defines expectations for student behavior and will be provided to all families on our website. Your understanding and support of these policies and procedures helps us to establish a school environment that is respectful, conducive to learning, and ensures the safety and welfare of students. Our schools website has additional information.

This year our theme is Connect, Engage, Inspire....Cortina with our motto being Tiger Pride: Building Student Success One Stripe at a Time. Please join us as we work together to make this school year a rewarding and successful one for our students, staff, parents, and community.

Thank you for joining us on the learning safari,

Cort Monroe  
Principal

Nancy Diab  
Assistant Principal



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## School Day

Office hours are from 8:15 AM to 4:45 PM. Cortina's main phone number is (480) 279-7800. The school day starts at 8:55 AM for all students. Students are dismissed at 3:50 PM unless they are assigned 7th hour from 3:50-4:35. Kindergarten begins 8:55 AM and will be dismissed at 3:40 PM to avoid the foot traffic and crowds.

Students are **not** to **arrive** at the school **before 8:30 AM** as no supervision is provided for their safety until that time.

## Health Office

If a student has an illness or injury that requires more than minimal care, the parents will be notified and asked to seek medical help for their child. The school will notify the alternative contact persons indicated on the student's yellow emergency card if the parent cannot be reached. It is very important that the school be provided with current telephone numbers and an alternative contact such as grandparents or neighbor. Please contact the school nurse at 279-7815 with updated information.

When it is necessary for a student to take medication during school hours the following conditions must be met:

1. If your child needs to take a prescription drug or an over-the-counter drug, the medication **must be in its original container and brought to the school by the parent or a responsible adult**. Also, when medications need to be taken home, they cannot be sent home with the student, they must be picked up by a parent or responsible adult.
2. The pharmaceutical label must be on the container of any prescription drug, and must include the student's name, route of administration, amount to be given, and time to be given.
3. The parent must provide written direction to school personnel when the student's medication is to be administered.
4. To prevent medication overdose, Tylenol and over-the-counter-drugs will only be given between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM.
5. All medications must be picked up by the parent at the end of the school year. Any medications not picked up will be destroyed.

## Immunizations

The school health office maintains a health file on each student. An immunization record for school attendance must be completed and current before a student can be enrolled. Arizona Revised Statute §15-872 requires that a complete, up to date record, including month, day and year, of each immunization, be furnished by the parent/guardian *prior* to school attendance. The immunization requirements for each child entering school (K – 12) are as follows:

- **Diphtheria / Pertussis / Tetnus (DPT) - 5 doses** (4 doses acceptable if #4 dose given on or after 4<sup>th</sup> birthday)
- **Polio - 4 doses** (3 doses acceptable if #3 dose given on or after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday)
- **Measles / Mumps / Rubella (MMR) - 2 doses** (must be given on or after the 1<sup>st</sup> birthday)
- **Hepatitis B - 3 doses with last dose given after age 24 weeks**
- 

**Varicella (chicken pox) – 1 dose or documented history of the disease up to age 12** (Students receiving the 1<sup>st</sup> dose of vaccine at 13 years or older need 2 doses of vaccine at least one month apart.)

**All grade levels required to have either documented history of disease or vaccinations.**

Students entering 6th grade at age 11 will be required to have a Tdap and meningococcal vaccine.

Students entering 6th grade at age 10 will need the Tdap and meningococcal immediately after their 11th birthday.

**Pre-School Requirements** are as follows:

- DPT – 4 doses
- Polio – 3 doses
- MMR – 1 dose
- Haemophilus Influenza B (HIB) 3-4 doses
- Hepatitis B (HBV) 3 doses
- Varicella (chicken pox) 1 dose
- Hepatitis A – 2 doses (6 mos. apart) In Maricopa County ONLY

Parents/guardians are asked to inform the health office of any newly received immunizations with a copy of the immunization record in order to keep school records up-to-date.

Arizona Revised Statute §15-872 provides exemptions from immunization requirements for the following reasons:

- Medical Reasons – Permanent
- Medical Reasons – Temporary
- Personal Beliefs - Kinder and older only
- Documentation of Adequate Immunity to Disease

In the case of an outbreak of disease, an unimmunized child will need to be excluded from school for the duration of an outbreak.

### Emergency Medical Information

Each student must have a current emergency information card, which is kept in a confidential file in the nurse's office. Please contact the school office at 480-279-7800 **if your contact information or emergency medical information changes during the school year; therefore, if there is an emergency we can contact you as quickly as possible.**

## ACADEMICS

### Curriculum and Instruction

The instructional program at Cortina Elementary School has a strong emphasis on the basic subjects: Language Arts, Reading, Phonics, Spelling, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. Programs in Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Leadership, Gifted, Special Education, Computer Education and Physical Education are also provided to students at different grade levels.

### Accelerated Reader

Cortina's 1st-5th grade students participate in the Accelerated Reader program to encourage independent reading. Our library has thousands of books, and yearly Book Fairs provide support for increasing our collection.

### Textbooks

Current textbooks and materials are used in the basic subjects. Multiple textbooks and a variety of instructional materials are used and are necessary to effectively prepare students for state mandated assessments. Quality Learning tools are used to promote continuous improvement throughout the school community. **Students are responsible for lost/damaged books and will need to pay for**

replacing the item.

## Promotion and Retention

Students who satisfactorily meet the requirements at their grade level will be promoted to the next grade. Parents and teachers work closely together during the school year to ensure students are progressing. The school administration is there to support the teacher and the parent in making decisions that are in the best interest of the student.

If a student is not progressing satisfactorily, the teacher will contact the parent or guardian as soon as possible to discuss the concerns. Teachers will notify parents of a possible retention well in advance of the end of the school year. Students who are in 7th and 8th grade will be referred to the Higley Learning Center if they do not meet promotion requirements.

## Student Placement Procedure

The classroom placement process begins in early April and takes many different factors into account. Teachers place students based on their academic, social and emotional needs. The placement process works to balance classes with a range of ability levels in order to broaden the educational experience for all learners. Parent input and participation in this process is valued. In the Spring, parents have the option of obtaining an environmental request form from the front office and completing information regarding preferred teaching style and classroom environment. This information is reviewed during the placement process and taken into consideration as assignments are made for the following school year. Final notification regarding student placement is communicated prior to the beginning of the school year.

For middle school students, the placement process is somewhat more complex. Students are assessed in the areas of reading and language arts as well as in mathematics to determine their current academic levels. These assessments are then used to create balanced classes in much the same way as in the elementary classrooms. In addition honors class placement assessments are done near the end of the year for the upcoming school year.

## Homework

Students need to set aside time each day to complete their homework. Homework should be fully completed, accurate to the best of their ability, returned to the teacher on time, and should be done as neatly and correctly as possible.

Teachers depend on the assistance of parents to insure that each child gets the maximum benefit from the educational program. Parents should be available to assist their children with their homework when necessary, but parents should not complete the work for their children. Homework should also include studying for any tests that may be given. Parents should review the homework their children are doing from time to time to see that it is completed and done correctly.

Nightly homework assignments should involve no more than:

20-30 minutes in Grades 1-3

45-60 minutes in Grades 4-5

60 minutes for 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades

If your child is having difficulty completing the assigned homework, or must spend additional time each evening to complete the homework, please contact the classroom teacher to discuss your

child's situation. Student's in the 6th-8th grade will be assigned to the PRIDE room from 3:50-4:35 if they do not complete the homework and have it out for the teacher when he/she are coming around to stamp their cards.

### Parent-Teacher Conferences

We must work together in order for your child to be most successful in school. Ongoing email and website communication between home and school is critical. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher to address concerns as soon as possible. Please check your child's eachers webpage for the most up to date information.

There will be regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences at the end of the first and third grading periods. Teachers will notify you in a timely manner if your child is doing unsatisfactory work, and a conference should be scheduled as soon as possible to plan a strategy for assisting your child in becoming successful. Teachers are available for conferences before and after school. Your child's teacher will notify you of times available during scheduled Parent-Teacher Conference days.

### Report Cards and Progress Reports

Report cards are issued to students four times a year, at the conclusion of each grading period. A schedule of the grading periods and parent-teacher conferences is listed on the school calendar. Progress reports are sent home mid-quarter. Please us ParentVue to check your child's grades

### ATTENDANCE

"You Miss School, You Miss Out"

Teachers in grades K-5 will take attendance each morning between 8:55 and 9:05 AM. Afternoon attendance will be taken after lunch. Middle school teachers will take attendance at the beginning of every class period.

If a student is going to be absent, parents must notify the school by phone, note or in person regarding the nature of the absence (illness or personal). On the morning of the absence, parents are to call the school attendance line before 8:55 a.m., to report an excused absence. Any absence not verified by the attendance office during the school day will be classified as unexcused. Unexcused absences may result in disciplinary action. The attendance line can be reached by calling 480-279-7800, pressing 2 and following the recorded prompts. Contact the school in advance when possible, or as soon as possible on the day of the absence and each subsequent absence, but no later than 8:55 AM. If no contact is made staff members may contact the home and/or work place to determine why the student is not in school.

#### **Pursuant to School Board Policy J-1550 Student Absences & Excuses**

The regular school attendance is required by state law. Regular school attendance is essential for success in school; therefore, absences shall be excused only for necessary and important reasons. Such reasons include illness, bereavement, other family emergencies, and observance of major religious holidays of the family's faith.

In the event of a necessary absence known in advance, the parent is expected to inform the school; if the absence is caused by emergency, such as illness, the parent is expected to telephone the school office. When a student returns to school following any absence, a note of explanation for the parent is required.

Middle school students who are tardy in the morning and have not been called in to the office prior to their arrival will be assigned to 7th hour from 3:50-4:35 PM for that day. Parents must call the front

office at 480-279-7800 prior to the child's arrival or come in with the student and sign them in. **Notes will not be accepted. The phone message system time logs all calls, If the call is not done prior to the return of the child to school he/she will be called to the office and given 7th hour.**

### Leaving Early

When a student is going to be dismissed early from school, the parent must come to the office and sign out the student, stating the date, time, student's name, the name of person taking the student, and the reason for the dismissal. If the student returns the same day, parents must sign the student back in. The student will receive an admission slip before returning to class.

Anyone checking out a student early MUST have a photo identification and be listed on the emergency contact card. For the safety of our students there will be NO EXCEPTIONS. Students will not be called from class until the parent has arrived on campus. This policy minimizes loss of instructional time.

### Tardiness

Excessive Tardies and/or Absences may result in a referral to the CUTS program. This may result in a meeting with a representative of the Arizona Superior Court. If children are late to school they must report to the office before going to the classroom. Parents must come in to the office (when dropping students off) or call prior to the child arriving at school to report the tardy student in order for it to be excused. **Middle school students who are tardy in the morning and have not been called in to the office prior to their arrival will be assigned to 7th Hour from 3:50-4:35 PM for that day.** The student will be given a pass to take to the classroom teacher.

### Make-up Work for Excused Absences

When students have an excused absence, they will be allowed one day of make-up time for each day missed. This deadline can be extended, when there is adequate need, by contacting the child's teacher. There will be no grade penalty if the "made-up" assignment is turned in within the allotted time. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain the missed assignments.

## DISCIPLINE

### Behavior Management Plan

All members of the Cortina's school staff care about students' rights and safety. We also want to provide a pleasant environment in which to learn. It is our goal to teach and help students learn appropriate behavior in classrooms, in hallways, on the playground, in the lunchroom, on the bus, and during performances and presentations.

### Discipline guidelines

The Higley Unified School District "Student Code of Conduct" provides detailed information regarding student discipline and consequences. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with this document.

### Bus Transportation

Riding a bus is a privilege. Arizona law does not require school districts to transport students. Riding a bus is not a right. This privilege can be revoked if behavior is inappropriate and/or endangers the safety of others. Parents are responsible for transporting students to school if they lose bus privileges.

### Bus Stop

School rules apply at the bus stop. Additional bus stop rules are as follows:

- Be on time for the bus before and after school
- Stand a safe distance back from the curb or street
- Always listen to the bus driver for instructions

## Messages

We will make every effort to ensure that messages are given to students during school hours. Please try to refrain from calling in messages the last 15 minutes at the end of the day. It makes it extremely difficult to make sure your student receives the message due to all the activity at the end of the day. This is especially important as it relates to change of transportation messages.

## Classroom

At our school, every child is expected to maintain community standards of expected behavior. These standards include the six pillars of character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. No student may interfere with the learning of others.

Each teacher/class will develop their own discipline plan based on the following guidelines:

- The discipline plan will always allow the student to retain his/her dignity while being disciplined.
- The discipline plan will allow instruction to continue with minimal interruption.
- The discipline plan will include levels of parental communication.
- The discipline plan will modify disruptive student behavior.

## Playground

Student safety is the number one rule on our playground. Consequences for unsafe behavior will range from an informal conference, inside lunch assignment, to suspension from school.

Students will be expected to follow the first time they are given. Failure to do so will result in consequences ranging from informal conference to suspension from school for defiance of authority.

The following is a list of rules and expectations for our playground:

- **BE SAFE!!!**
- **Keep hands and feet to yourself**
- **Stay in designated areas**
- **Use equipment properly**
- **Line up immediately when the whistle is blown**
- **No food or drinks allowed on playground**
- **Use appropriate language and voice level**
- **Follow playground aide's directions the first time they are given**
- **Respect school property**
- **Respect others**

## Toys and Valuables

Students are discouraged from bringing toys, valuables items to school. If students choose to bring such items to school they will assume all responsibility. If the item is lost, stolen or damaged there will be no investigation by school administration or teachers. Teachers have ultimate authority to determine if such items will be permitted into their classrooms and/or how they may be used.

## Cell Phones, Pagers, and Electronic Devices

To keep the learning environment free from distraction, cell phones and pagers are not permitted

during the school day. Electronic devices should be left at home. **Cell phones must be turned off and not visible.** If they are used, visible, ring and/or vibrate a HUSD Staff member will confiscate them and the following consequences will incur:

1st : Warning (All MS students were warned in a discipline meeting)

2nd: Detention and parent must pick up phone

3rd: 1 day ISS parent must pick up phone

4th: 1 day OSS parent must pick up

OSS will escalate with ore occurances. **Camera phones are never allowed.**

The District/ may temporarily confiscate a cell phones and/or other electronic equipment if the student's possession or use of the item is causing a disruption to the educational environment and the student has failed to comply with verbal direction from an adult to cease the disruption. Generally, the item will be returned to the student or the parent at the conclusion of the school day.

Students who need to contact a parent or guardian during the day, may do so by using the school's front office phones or, with instructor permission, phones located in the classrooms. Middle school students who receive 7th hour will be allowed to call their parents, from a classroom phone, to let them know that will be required to be at 7th hour from 3:50-4:35. Parents can also leave messages for students during the school day, by calling the school's front office.

### Student Transportation

Students should always lock their bicycles, non-motorized scooters in the bike rack. Skateboards will not be allowed on campus. Heelys (shoes with wheels) are prohibited on campus.

If a student's bicycle is stolen or vandalized it is the parent's responsibility to notify the police and file a report.

### Lost and Found

Please be sure that your child's clothing and other items brought to school are clearly marked with his/her name. Items that are not claimed will be donated to a local charitable organization at the end of each grading period. The school cannot be responsible for personal belongings brought to school by students.

## SPECIAL PROGRAMS

### Special Education Services

Cortina Elementary School has special education programs designed to help those students who may have learning disabilities. When a teacher or parent has a concern regarding a child's ability to learn, a conference will be scheduled to discuss the child's progress. If it appears that the child may have a learning disability, the special education resource teacher will be consulted. If the student's teacher, parent, special education teacher, and administrator agree that the child may have a learning disability, parental permission to refer the child for academic testing and/or a psychological evaluation will be requested.

### Gifted Program

The Gifted program is designed to meet the needs of students who are academically advanced in mathematics and language arts. For information on the referral process and testing, please speak to your child's teacher.

### Food Service Program

The Higley Unified School District provides a balanced and nutritious lunch for its students. Eligible students may qualify for the free or reduced price lunch program. Students may purchase milk or juice if they bring their own lunch.

Forms for the Free/Reduced Lunch Program will be available online at [www.husd.org](http://www.husd.org). sent home with every child at the beginning of the year for parents to complete in the event they are eligible for free or reduced priced lunches. Applications are also available after July 1st by calling the District Office Business Department at 480-279-7063.

Students who will be buying lunches and/or milk will be asked to deposit money into their accounts. At this time, deposits can be made on-line ([www. Mymealtime.com](http://www.Mymealtime.com)) or in the cafeteria. Please place your payment in a sealed envelope clearly marked with your child's name, student ID number, teacher, and room number. *Deposits of \$10 or more each time are suggested.* Cost is \$2.10 per day, or \$0.40 reduced price. Deposits may be made between the hours of 7:45 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

The cost of each day's lunch or milk will be deducted from his/her account. You are strongly encouraged to keep a balance in your child's account. Contact the cafeteria manager with any questions 480-279-7820.

### Student Insurance

School insurance is available to all students. The policies available are for medical, dental, and life. A brochure is available in the office.

All students who participate in after-school sports during the school year should purchase the school insurance unless parents have adequate coverage through family insurance. Parents of athletes who do not purchase school insurance will be asked to furnish proof of family medical coverage for their child.

### Athletic Programs

Our school is a member of the San Tan Conference, which includes Ben Franklin Charter School in Queen Creek, and all schools in the Higley Unified School District. A complete competitive after-school sports program is available to seventh and eighth grade students. Girls' sports include soccer, basketball, volleyball, cheer, cross country, and softball. Boys' sports include cross country, basketball, soccer, baseball and flag football.

A physical examination, performed by an M.D. or D.O. is required to participate in tryouts, practices and games in the Higley Unified sports program. Physicals are good for one year only. Proof of a physician's examination must be turned in to the school nurse before students try out for a team. District approved physical forms are required; forms are available in the school office.

Students must maintain a minimum grade of "D" in all subjects in order to participate in sports. Grade checks for every participant will take place every week. If a student receives an "F", they will then have a period of one week to raise the grade. If a student then receives an "F" in the same class, they will be ineligible until they are no longer failing. If this occurs twice in a season, the student will be removed from the activity.

1. When a student violates the rules, regulations and/or discipline policy of Higley Unified School District or any Rules and Regulations outlined in this policy, the principal or a designee will declare a student ineligible for practice and the following game.

In accordance with state law, fees will only be assessed for those programs that are offered "above and beyond" state and federal requirements. A fee of \$50.00 per sport and/ or \$350.00 max per family (if multiple children from the family participate in multiple sports).

Make checks payable to HUSD. The extra-curricular Tax Credit Program can be used to offset the

participation fees for those eligible programs.

**\*\*\*K-8 & High School Fees are independent of each other\*\*\***

Parents are responsible for their child's transportation home after practices and after returning to Cortina after away games.

### Instrumental Music Programs

Band and Strings are curricular programs with extra-curricular performance requirements offered at our school. Although participation in these programs is optional, it is expected that students who join Band or Strings will commit to their chosen ensemble for at least one full school year. Students will also be required to obtain the class method book, a musical instrument and supplies to use for the class.

Although Cortina does own a few instruments which can be rented for \$50.00 per year based on need, instrument rental programs offered through several different music stores in the surrounding area are a good way to take care of this requirement. Please contact the school for more information about these programs.

### Middle School PRIDE program

One of our goals with our middle school for the school year is to help students establish the necessary and beneficial study skills that will ensure your child's success in school now and in the future. To help us facilitate this goal Cortina will be implementing the PRIDE program. This is a mandatory program for all middle school students. Transportation will not be provided.

#### 1. What is Tiger PRIDE?

Pride is an acronym for Personal Responsibility in Daily Effort. The PRIDE program addresses the following expectations:

Students will arrive to school and class on time

Students will complete and turn in assignments on the day they are due

Students will come to class prepared (materials, books, paper, pencil, etc)

#### 2. What are stamp sheets?

Students will be given PRIDE stamp sheets on the first day of every quarter. **Every day, for every class, your child will be given a stamp ONLY if he/she has NOT met the PRIDE program expectations.**

If your child has not met the expectations in that class period box they will receive a:

T= Tardy

H= Missing homework/assignment

M= did not have the necessary material/supplies for class

#### 3. What happens if my student has perfect PRIDE?

Weekly- Students who have perfect pride for the week can have their names put in for a weekly drawing.

Quarterly- Students will be given award certificates and be able to participate in the school reward activity.

#### 4. What are "free" paws?

We recognize that students are not perfect. Even the most organized students may have an off day. Therefore all students receive 2 "free paws" per quarter. These passes are a do-over or a freebie. For example if they forget an assignment they still must turn it in, but they do not have to go to 7th hour and it won't count against them for perfect PRIDE.

**5. What happens if I receive a T, H, or M in one of my classes?**

The student must serve 7th hour after school from 3:50-4:35PM Monday-Friday. It is the student's responsibility to notify his/her parents that they will be staying afterschool. Bus transportation home after 7th hour will not be available.

**6. What happens in 7th hour?**

a. Students are expected to complete schoolwork during that time period. If a student has an H for one or more class periods they will be required to complete those assignments and turn them in to the teacher the next day. There might be points taken off of the assignment per the teacher's syllabus; however, the student will still be required to turn in the work.

Teachers will be available for homework help. If a student does not have homework for that evening there will be enrichment packets for the student to work on and turn in to the PRIDE teacher.

**7. What happens if I am given 7th hour and I do not go to 7th hour?**

a. 1<sup>st</sup> no show- re-assigned 7th hour the next day

b. 2<sup>nd</sup> no show- ISS all day

c. 3<sup>rd</sup> no show- parent meeting, Out-of -School suspension and placement on an academic/behavior contract.

**Students involved in extra-curricular activities must serve 7th hour before they can attend practice/games/activities.**

**What happens if I lose my stamp sheet?**

First hour teachers will check that you have your PRIDE sheet and that you went to 7th hour the day before. If you do not have your PRIDE card you will be issued a replacement PRIDE card and you will serve 7th hour that day. There will be consequences if you need to be given more than one replacement card per quarter up to and including suspensions. You will not be eligible for the quarterly reward activity if you have a replacement card.

**9. What happens if I have an appointment after school?**

You are required to serve 7th hour the following day. A parent must call the front office at 480-279-7800 on the day you are assigned 7th hour by 3:50 or it will be considered a no-show and the above stated consequences will be incurred.

**10. What if I receive more than 2 T, H, and/or M in one day?**

You will be assigned lunch detention along with 7th hour.

**11. What if I forge or alter a stamp?**

a. You will be assigned 7th hour for that day. You will be suspended.

## STUDENT RECOGNITION AWARDS

### Attendance Awards

Regular school attendance is vital to student learning. Students are expected to arrive on time and attend school daily. Certificates are issued at the end of each school year in recognition of those students who have maintained exemplary attendance throughout the year. K-5 Student of the Month based on academics, effort, and behavior. Two students will be chosen from each class each month.

### Honor Roll

Honor Roll eligibility **begins in fourth grade**. To qualify for Honor Roll a student must:

- Receive A's and/or B's in all letter graded subjects in grades 4-5, and middle school 3.1 to 3.99 GPA.
- Receive a satisfactory (S) grade in all non-letter graded areas
- (Exceptions include Accelerated Reader grades and any extra-curricular coursework)

### Principal's List

Principal's list eligibility **begins in fourth grade**.

To qualify for the Principal's List a student must:

- Receive straight A's in all letter-graded subjects in grades 3-5, and middle school 4.0 to 4.5 GPA.
- Receive a satisfactory (S) grade in all non-letter graded areas
- **Extra-curricular coursework grades are included in consideration for Principal's List.**

### Middle School Principal's Award

This is an award available for all 6th grade, 7th grade and 8th grade students. The award can be earned each of the 3 years of Middle School. The award will be based on an honor system of students meeting the following requirements, having them signed off by the appropriate staff member/parent and submitted to the principal.

#### Requirements

Minimum GPA 3.2 (including special areas and electives) through 3 quarters

Attendance: No more than 8 total absences during the year.

10 hours of service to the school, community, and/or church group.

Demonstrate 6 pillars of character consistently:

Responsibility

Respect

Citizenship

Trustworthiness

Fairness

Caring

(no office referrals)

Perfect Pride for 3 quarters of the school year

Participation in an extracurricular activity such as Band, athletics, clubs, NJHS, Student Council, etc.

Spend a one on one lunch interview with the principal during the year

Complete the required reading for your grade level by April 1: Please see your Language Arts teacher for the list.

(school library availability is limited and you may need to purchase or rent book from local library)

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### Birthday and Other Celebrations

The District discourages the delivery of gifts (i.e. balloons, flowers) to students during the school day. If such a gift is delivered for a student, it shall be kept in the office during the school day and available for pick up by the student at the conclusion of the school day. Exceptions to this Policy may be made in the discretion of the Principal for certain holidays or in special circumstances. The school does not assume responsibility for damage to or loss of such items.

### Pets

For the safety of all students, please do not bring pets on campus. An adult may bring pets to the classroom for educational purposes only. Animals must be transported in a proper enclosure and/or cage. Written permission must have been received from the teacher. Animals cannot be transported on school buses. If a pet follows a student to school, the office will contact the student's home to arrange for pet pick up.

### Talking to Strangers

Any problems with strangers are to be immediately reported. Students are not to get into an

## Emergency Drills

Fire and other emergency drills are held on a periodic basis to teach students the safest, quickest route from the school buildings. All students, volunteers, and guests must follow the emergency procedures.

- Follow teacher directions
- Leave all work and line up immediately.
- Know the emergency exit route from each room. Routes will be posted.
- Without talking, walk in a line until reaching designated areas.
- Remain in line facing the building and wait until the teacher directs the students to return to class.

Visitors who arrive at the school during an emergency drill will be asked to wait in the parking lot until the drill is concluded.

## Governing Board Meetings

The Higley Unified School District #60 Governing Board has two scheduled meetings a month. Public notices are posted at each school site and the district office at least twenty-four hours before the meeting is scheduled to occur. The notice will state the date, time, and location of the meeting, as well as a meeting agenda.

## Tax Credit Contributions

Arizona law (ARS 43-1089.01) allows taxpayers a tax credit for contributions paid during the taxable year to a public school for the support of extracurricular activities or character education programs. This tax credit is 100% deductible from your taxes, and is available to Arizona individual taxpayers. There is no requirement that the taxpayer have a child enrolled in a public school in order to get the credit.

Contributions made by single or head of household taxpayers cannot exceed **\$200**. For married taxpayers that file a joint return, the credit cannot exceed **\$400**. The amount of the tax credit does not have to be for the total allowable amount, any amount can make a difference.

You may indicate where you would like your contribution to go. Contributions may be split between schools and/or between different activities. Contributions can be made to music, for field trips, character education, athletics (you may specify the sport or activity), sports participation fees, and clubs. If no preference is made, the schools will use the contribution where it is needed the most. Contributions can be made at any time during the calendar year but must be made in the calendar year that you wish to claim the deduction. Contributions can also be accepted at any of the schools or can be mailed to the district office.

## Volunteers

Parents who volunteer their time and services to the school are appreciated. Help is needed in the classrooms, office, school programs and school grounds. Volunteers must sign in at the school office and get a visitor's pass. **As a courtesy to others, children should not accompany volunteers to school.** Parents interested in volunteering should contact the front office at 480-279-7800 to fill out the appropriate paperwork. Volunteer paperwork must be filled out prior to anyone volunteering in the classroom.

## Questions, Concerns

We are here to serve our community, and will do our best to meet your needs. However, if issues do arise, parents are encouraged to keep the school notified of their concerns and questions. The usual line of communication in a school is to first contact the teacher, then the principal if necessary.

Joint efforts between parents, teachers, and the principal or assistant principal will frequently solve most problems and answer most questions.

### Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

- Messages for teachers or students should be left on the teacher's voice mail or e-mail. Please contact the office if you have an emergency.
- Please call **279-7800 option #2** to report absences.
- Gift balloons or flowers delivered to the school will be held in the front office until the end of the day.
- Please do not hesitate to call the school office at 279-7800 if you have any other questions.