

Chaparral Elementary School

Parent/Student Handbook
2016-2017



Welcome to Chaparral Elementary School

Dear Parents, Students and Community members:

It is a pleasure to welcome you to our school. At Chaparral, we are committed to educate, guide, challenge and inspire your child to become a responsible citizen in a safe, positive, and respectful environment. The Chaparral 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 Chaparral 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.

We look forward to working with you this school year!

Sincerely,

Kristine Hanson
Principal

Terry Peper
Assistant Principal

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School Day

The school day starts at 8:05 AM for all students. Students are dismissed at 3:05 PM on M,T,TH, F and 1:00 PM on Wednesdays. Kindergarten begins 8:05 AM and will be dismissed at 2:55 PM to avoid the foot traffic and crowds. Students are **not to arrive** at the school **before 7:45 AM** as no supervision is provided for their safety until that time.

Office Hours

Office hours are from 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM. Chaparral's main phone number is (480) 279-7900.

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 279-7915 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.
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 9:00 AM and 1:00 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:

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 480-279-7900 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.

- 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 additional information, please contact the health office.
- In the case of an outbreak of disease, an unimmunized child will need to be excluded from school for the duration of an outbreak.

ACADEMICS

Curriculum and Instruction

The instructional program at Chaparral 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, Computer Education and Physical Education are also provided to students at different grade levels.

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 may 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.

Student Placement Procedure

The classroom placement process begins in March 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. 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.

Homework (Practice)

Homework is an integral component of learning at Chaparral and part of the instructional program. It deepens student learning and understanding and helps develop independent study skills. K-6 students at Chaparral will participate in homework practice that is meaningful, appropriate and purposeful. It will be an extension of skills taught in class.

Although a student's top priority, time spent on homework should be balanced with the importance of both personal and family well-being and the wide variety of family obligations experienced in our society today. Parents and teachers are responsible for helping students know that learning occurs in the world all around them. Practicing these newly acquired skills at home without penalty helps to reinforce this learning. Practice (homework) should be the result of collaborative, thoughtful and coordinated efforts. It should be consistent within the other classes in the same grade level of the child at Chaparral. Grade levels will provide more specific details and communicate with parents with regards to practice given to students each year.

Assigning homework over holidays and on weekends is discouraged, with the exception of certain units of study and make-up work. The better the homework practice, the better the student performance. Practice will reflect accommodations and modifications of curriculum as stated in a student's IEP/504 plan. Reading is a key building block of learning and will be a consistent part of the nightly program.

At the primary grades, practice will reinforce basic skills previously taught by the teacher. At the intermediate level, practice will consist of completing, practicing, preparing and extending core academic skills. Long term projects should be limited in amount and duration and not require costly materials or significant assistance from parents. Teachers should establish checkpoints along the way to guide the students. The majority of the project work should be done at school and in class.

Practice done at home will not always be assigned a grade but will be checked for completion. At appropriate times, teacher will provide feedback to the student on the skills practiced and will track for accountability. Homework will emphasize quality over quantity. Opportunities will be given at school for students to finish unfinished practice from home at recess and other times during the school day.

Assigning homework over holidays and on weekends is discouraged, with the exception of certain units of study and make-up work. The better the homework practice, the better the student performance. Practice will reflect accommodations and modifications of curriculum as stated in a student's IEP/504 plan. Reading is a key building block of learning and will be a consistent part of the nightly program.

Nightly Practice Time Guidelines (maximums)

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
Kindergarten	15 minutes
First	20 minutes
Second	30 minutes
Third	40 minutes
Fourth	40 minutes
Fifth	40 minutes
Sixth	40 minutes

Parent's Role : Show interest. Check for accuracy nightly. Assist student when needed. Assist with organization of folder and backpack. Request homework a week prior for students for planned absences. Ensure that child reads nightly. Contact teacher if you have questions or concerns. Provide suitable place to complete work.

Student's Role: Be accountable to complete and return practice to teacher. Seek help from teacher or parent when needed. Return any books and materials to school.

Teacher's Role: Guide students to establish good study habits. Plan and assign relevant work to practice. Contact parents when work is not consistently returned or is incorrect. Communicate with parents in a timely manner.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

We must work together in order for your child to be most successful in school. Ongoing communication between home and school is critical. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher to address concerns as soon as possible.

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.

ATTENDANCE

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

The regular school attendance is required by state law. Teachers in grades K-6 will take attendance each morning between 8:10 and 8:20 AM. Afternoon attendance will be taken after lunch.

Regular school attendance is essential for success in school; 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 absence can be changed if verified by the attendance office during the school day will be classified as unexcused. Changes to an unexcused absence will be accepted within a 24 hours of the date of the absence.

Unexcused absences may result in disciplinary action. The attendance line can be reached by calling 480-279-7900, pressing 2 and following the 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. When the absence is caused by emergency and contact cannot be made please notify the school the day the student returns to school. If no contact is made staff members may contact the home and/or work place to determine why the student is not in school. Please be aware that 10 consecutive days of unexcused absence is an auto make withdrawal for your student.

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. 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 Chaparral'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. 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. 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 30 minutes at the end of the day to ensure delivery. **Changes in transportation/pick-up plans must be communicated to the office no later than 2:00 PM on M, T, TH, F and no later than 12:00 PM on Wednesdays.**

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 listen and follow our rules 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
- Help keep our campus clean by placing trash in provided trash cans
- 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 and Electronic Devices

To keep the learning environment free from distraction, cell phones are not permitted for use during instructional time. Electronic devices should be left at home. Cell phones must not be turned on during school hours on K-6 campuses, and this does include lunch. **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. 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 or non-motorized scooters in the bike rack. Skateboards, rollerblades and Heelys (shoes with wheels) are not allowed to be ridden/used 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. The lost and found is located in the 100 building hallway, by the cafeteria door.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Special Education Services

Chaparral 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. 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 \$2.55 per day. Free and Reduced lunch prices are available to those who qualify. 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 480-279-7920.

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.

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 Chaparral 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.

STUDENT RECOGNITION/AWARDS

Honor Roll

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

- Receive all 4's and/or 3's in reading, writing, math, science and social studies. In 6th grade all A's and/or B's should be earned.
- 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 all 4's in reading, writing, math, science and social studies. In 6th grade all A's must be earned.
- Receive a satisfactory (S) grade in all non-letter graded areas
- **Extra-curricular coursework grades are included in consideration for Principal's List.**

Super Shark Award

This is an award available for all K-6 grade students. Students exhibiting exceptional character and/or academic achievement will be chosen for this award and will be recognized at a morning assembly. Parents/guardians of students chosen for this award will be invited to this assembly.

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. This includes before and after school at parent drop off and pick up. An adult may bring pets to campus for educational purposes only with prior Administration approval. 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

Students must report any problems and/or contact with strangers immediately. We strongly recommend that parents discuss the following with their student(s):

- Students are not to get into an automobile or any form of transportation with a stranger.
- Students are not to accept gifts, food, or anything else from a stranger.
- Students are not to follow a stranger anywhere, no matter what he or she says or what sort of treat or incentive is promised.
- **Students are not to talk to strangers.**

Dress Code

There is a relationship between student dress and student success. Dress and grooming can have an impact on student and staff safety, school pride, and ultimately, an impact on the accomplishments of the curriculum goals and objectives met by our students. For this reason, we ask that parents guide students in dress and grooming to promote a caring, safe, and productive learning environment for all students on our campus. District standards prohibit student dress or grooming that, in the judgment of the school administration:

- Creates an atmosphere of threat, intimidation or undue pressure.
- Interferes with the educational environment or process.
- Is counterproductive to curriculum goals or educational objectives.
- Displays or suggests obscene, sexual, or violent language or symbols.
- Displays or advertises alcohol, drugs, tobacco or any illegal or controlled substance or item.
- Presents a risk to the health, safety, general welfare of others (i.e. spiked jewelry, body jewelry).
- Causes damage to school property.

In order to help families determine if clothing choices are appropriate, we have campus guidelines. Our Chaparral dress code specifically requires that shorts and skirts are a minimum length that reaches the student's fingertip. Tank top straps should be a minimum of 2 inches in width at the shoulder. No undergarments or midriffs should be visible. **Hats and sunglasses are not allowed indoors.** Pajamas and slippers are not appropriate. Shoes must be appropriate for a student's age and activities (i.e. tennis shoes on P.E. day). Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action and will be required to change into appropriate clothing. School administrators will make the final decision regarding the appropriateness of a student's appearance while the student is at school.

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 teacher/front office directions during emergency procedures.

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 480-279-7900 to fill out the appropriate paperwork.

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 279-7900 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 480-279-7900 if you have any other questions.