

**OAK HILLS
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
OAK PARK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**



"A special place for children to learn, grow and succeed"

**A National School of Excellence
A National Blue Ribbon School
A California Distinguished School**

**SCHOOL HANDBOOK
2014 ~ 2015**

**An important guide for parents and students about the policies and practices at
Oak Hills Elementary School**

**1010 N. Kanan Road
Oak Park, CA 91377**

A message from your Principal, Mr. Erik Warren

Welcome to the Oak Hills Elementary School family. We believe that the school staff and our families form a vital team, working together to assist our children in their academic, social and emotional growth.

At Oak Hills we set clear expectations and goals at high levels. We do this because we know that every member of our school community will work together to ensure that each individual achieves at the highest level. As one succeeds, so does the team.

Oak Hills is a very special and unique learning community that has been recognized as a leader in elementary education. The school has been recognized twice as a National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education for meeting national standards for school excellence. We have been named a California Distinguished School by the California State Department of Education for excellence and as a school with high academic standards, a well-articulated curriculum, and an outstanding learning environment. We have also been selected as an Honor Roll School by the California Business for Education Excellence organization.

We hope that the information in this handbook will enable you and your student to understand our programs and practices. Please take a moment to review this handbook, especially this year as some minor changes have been made to better serve our school community.

Oak Hills Vision Statement

"Oak Hills Elementary School, a learning community of children, staff, parents, corporations, and organizations, enhances children's lives by actively engaging them in meaningful learning experiences. These experiences empower our students to become creative, productive, socially responsible, life-long learners and problem solvers who successfully contribute to a culturally diverse and technologically evolving society."

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Oak Hills strives to provide an environment of warmth and support. We are confident that through mutual respect, personal accountability and social responsibility we will achieve excellence, positive growth and a safe environment for each and every one of us.

Communication

Communication between home and school is essential to ensure that students, parents and school are working as a team. Once school begins you can access voice mail extensions, calendars, bulletins, menus and much more information from our website at www.oakparkusd.org/ohes

Attendance.....	818-597-4227
Office.....	818-707-4224
Fax.....	818-707-4232

To reach any staff member via email, simply type their first initial and last name followed by @oakparkusd.org. Staff email addresses are also listed on our website. Teachers check their emails daily, but in most cases will not respond during times when students are still in class. Whenever possible, staff will respond to inquiries within one working day.

Communications using phone, email, or any other method, must remain civil by all parties. Violations of the District's Civility Policy, such as using profanity, making threats, or using insulting, rude, offensive or demeaning language, could result in the loss of email access or other restrictions in future communication with staff members.

Parent Participation

Parent participation and support is vital to the success of our school. Classroom volunteers, room parents, story readers, field trip drivers and many more opportunities await you should you wish to help Oak Hills:

PTA: The Oak Hills PTA is the Parent/Teacher support organization for Oak Hills Elementary School. The Oak Hills PTA operates under the rules and by-laws of the National and State PTA. The PTA is responsible for promoting a positive school climate and enhanced learning environment for our children. The PTA raises significant funds to enable the school to offer an educational program of very high quality. All officers are elected by members. Membership is encouraged for all Oak Hills parents and staff members.

School Site Council: The School Site Council is made up of five parents elected by parents, three teachers elected by teachers, one classified employee elected by classified employees and the principal. The SSC is responsible for the School Improvement Program, and general goals and philosophy, as well as the content of this handbook. Many school policies are initiated and approved by the SSC. Meetings are held monthly and are open to the public. Meetings are posted in the school bulletin.

Parent Volunteers: At Oak Hills, we highly value our parent volunteers. It is important however that the following guidelines are followed when volunteering at school:

- Volunteers must check in at the office and wear a badge. When leaving, volunteers must sign out. This is for the safety of students and volunteers in the event of an emergency.
- Volunteers may not bring younger children with them while they volunteer on campus.
- Volunteers are to remain confidential in terms of viewing of student learning, student work, individual student needs, etc.
- Children are to respect volunteers however the teacher is responsible for student discipline.
- Under all circumstances, volunteers are to follow the directions of the teacher.
- Volunteers must be respectful of teacher privacy in the staff room during recess and lunch. Teachers often use this time to discuss individual student needs.

Attendance

We want all students to be successful at school. Common sense and extensive research tell us that the most successful students are those with good attendance. Because of state law, schools only receive funding for the actual time students are at school, *regardless of the reason for an absence.*

State Law requires parents to send students ages 6 – 18 to school on time, to compel the student to attend regularly, and to provide an explanation satisfactory to school personnel for all absences or tardiness. Parents and/or guardians who fail to meet these obligations may be guilty of an infraction and subject to prosecution (E.C. 48070).

Reporting an Absence

We ask that parent/guardians call the Attendance Line at **818-597-4227** **every morning** that their student is going to be absent from school. This number is available 24 hours a day. This will help us verify each student's safe arrival to school, and accurately record each student's daily attendance. Please be ready to provide the following information:

- Name of caller and relationship to student
- Student name
- Teacher name
- Reason for absence

Excessive Absences: Our district attendance system counts the number of days that students miss school whether excused or unexcused. Excused absences include illness or injury to the child, quarantine of the home by a county health official, a medical/dental appointment that can only be scheduled during school hours, or attendance at funeral services for immediate family. Absences for religious holidays may be granted upon written request of parent/guardian.

Reporting Student Tardiness

If your student is going to be late to school due to an appointment or other valid reason, please call the attendance line at **818-597-4227** and let us know when the student will arrive, reason for late arrival and if student will be requiring a hot lunch for the day.

Excessive Tardiness: Students are considered tardy after the 8:25 AM bell. Students who arrive after that must report to the office for a late pass. **On the fifth tardy**, a letter will be sent home reminding parents that students are required to be on time to school. **On the tenth tardy**, parents/guardians will be required to conference with the Principal. **On the fifteenth tardy**, parents/guardians will be referred to the Ventura County School Attendance Review Board (SARB) which in turn may refer the case to the Superior Court for prosecution.

Leaving School

Students may not leave campus without being signed out by the parent/guardian or other adult listed on the child's emergency card. Students leaving campus during the school day will be called to the office from class after being officially discharged in the office. Under no circumstance is anyone to go directly to a class or the playground to remove a child from school.

Independent Study

An Independent Study Contract can be formulated to provide on-going instruction for students who may be away from school due to extended illness and/or other extenuating circumstances. Contracts are for a minimum of five consecutive days. It is the intent of the contract to provide an on-going instructional program while the student is out of the classroom. Parents can assist by setting aside study time each day so that work can be accomplished in a calm and suitable environment. Please note the additional items:

- Independent Study Contracts must be requested in person by parent/guardian in the school office.
- Contracts must be requested **one week prior** to expected absence.
- All contracts shall be signed and dated by student, parent, teacher and principal.
- Clear and definite homework assignments shall be given to the student that will substitute for at least one day's worth of work for each day of absence from school.
- The contract and all accompanying work shall be turned into the teacher **on the day of student's return to school.**
- If work is not turned in and is overdue, the absences will be changed from excused to unexcused and the contract will be cancelled. All work will be considered missing.

Make-up Policy

When a child is absent, work will be provided for the student only at the parent/guardian's request. This request must be made before lunch and work will not be available for pick up until after 3:00 pm. Please be aware that the teacher will typically allow the student the number of days absent as an extension for the work to be completed.

Home/Hospital Instruction

Home/Hospital instruction is available to students with temporary disabilities that make attendance in regular day classes or alternative education programs impossible or inadvisable. According to California Education Code §48206.3, a temporary disability is defined as a physical, mental, or emotional disability incurred while a student is enrolled in regular day classes or an alternative education program, after which the student can reasonably be expected to return to regular day classes or an alternative education program without special intervention. Home/Hospital students can normally be expected to return to their regular classes without special intervention after their disability has been addressed through medical intervention. Home/Hospital Instruction is not normally provided to students who may be out between one and two weeks. Instruction for these students can be handled at the site level through either short-term Independent Study or regular classroom teacher support with Make-Up assignments and flexible timelines (see above). Please contact the school office for further information.

School Safety

It is absolutely critical that parents, staff, and students work together to ensure the safety of our campus. Oak Hills has a comprehensive safety plan and the supplies and equipment necessary to handle emergencies. Drills are held periodically to make sure we are prepared in the event of an emergency. In the event of a major disaster, school is one of the safest places for your child. We will immediately protect, and account for every student before releasing them to parents. The parking lot will be **off limits** to all but emergency personnel. Parents/Guardians or designated contacts should pick students up from the Kindergarten Playground.

Emergency Contacts: In case a parent or guardian cannot be reached by telephone only the person(s) listed on the "Emergency Card" may be contacted. It is imperative that you keep this information up-to-date for the safety of your student.

Traffic and Parking Lot Procedures

The following guidelines are designed to ensure everyone's safety and may cause some minor inconveniences. Nevertheless, parents are expected to model good, safe practices and expect their students to do the same. With that in mind, please drive very slowly and carefully, be patient and courteous toward others, and respectfully follow all directions from staff members. Do not use your cell phone while driving, especially in our parking lot. We strongly encourage those students within walking or bicycling distance to please utilize those options. Carpooling is also strongly encouraged. This benefits our environment, mitigates traffic, as well as promotes the physical fitness of students.

Pick-Up and Drop-Off Procedures

There are three areas designated for pick-up and drop-off at Oak Hills:

- The Loop – Located in the staff parking lot by the flagpole. When using this area, please pull all the way forward before picking up or dropping off. Do not drop off anywhere except in the marked “drop off zone” along the walkway. **Do not park and get out of your car in this area. UNATTENDED VEHICLES WILL BE TICKETED AND TOWED.** If children are not here for pick-up, the driver must either circle again using the “thru traffic lane” or park on the street.
- Staircase on Churchwood – **NEVER DOUBLE PARK HERE!** It is unsafe and illegal.
- The Park – Valley View Park is contiguous to our campus and has a parking lot. This is an acceptable area as children can walk a short distance directly to our playground.

THE PARKING LOT IS FOR STAFF PARKING ONLY. THERE IS NO PARENT OR VISITOR PARKING IN THE LOT AT ANY TIME. DO NOT USE THE STAFF PARKING LOT BY THE PLAYGROUND TO DROP OFF. THIS IS UNSAFE AND YOU ARE ENDANGERING YOUR STUDENT.

Parents are invited to park on the street, at the park, or may use the church lot if it is available.

Walking and Bicycling to School

Children who walk to school must walk on the sidewalk and only use marked cross walks to cross any streets.

The following rules will be enforced regarding riding bicycles, scooters, skateboards, roller skates and blades:

- Only students in grades 4 – 5 may ride bicycles to school. Students who do not follow these rules may be forbidden from riding to or from school.
- Students **may not** ride skates, blades, scooters, Razors, or skateboards or any motorized equipment to school. These items may not be ridden on the campus at any time. This includes before and after school, weekends, holidays and vacations.

- Students riding a bicycle must wear a certified helmet. It must be worn and fastened correctly. It is the parent/guardian responsibility to ensure this. If a student is caught riding a bicycle to school without a helmet, parents will be called to bring the appropriate helmet and/or retrieve the bicycle at dismissal time. The student will not be allowed to leave campus without the proper helmet.
- Bicycles must be walked once the student enters the campus and should be secured in the bike racks.
- Bicycles must use the designated bike lanes when available. Students must walk their bikes across streets at designated cross walks.
- Bicycles are required to follow all traffic rules that affect motor vehicles including heeding of all road signs.
- **Bikes must be ridden responsibly and in a controlled and safe manner at all times.** It is the parent/guardian obligation and responsibility to ensure that their student is mature and reliable enough to handle the charge of riding their bike to school.

Playground Supervision

The main playground and Kindergarten yard are open and supervised after 7:45 a.m. in the morning. There is no supervision at the park at this time. Only children on the campus playground will be supervised. **THERE IS NO SUPERVISION AFTER SCHOOL. FOR THE SAFETY OF YOUR STUDENTS, CHILDREN ARE NOT TO BE ON CAMPUS BEFORE 7:45 A.M. AND MUST BE PICKED UP PROMPTLY AT DISMISSAL.**

Playground Rules

The school playground is a place for recreation, enjoyment, and learning. To ensure this, the following rules are in place:

- All games are open. This means that all students may participate in any game at any time. No one may be excluded from any game.
- Deliberate interference with games is not permitted.
- Every game has rules. Many of these rules will be taught to the students as part of the Physical Education program and may not be changed by the students.
- In the event of a disagreement over a game, students playing in the game are to vote. The outcome of the vote is final and may not be appealed to the yard supervisors or principal.
- Food and snacks may be eaten in the lunch area only.
- Martial arts, including karate, are not permitted in any form at any time.
- Games involving tackling, wrestling, pushing, etc. are not permitted.

- Students are not permitted in the parking lot or off campus during the school day.
- Balls, except soccer balls, are not to be kicked. Balls are not to be bounced against classroom walls, including portables.
- Students must use bathrooms designated for their grade levels only. **Students may NOT use the bathrooms at the park at any time.**
- Students may not wander in the pod areas, library, computer lab, office, front of school, or corridors without a pass from the teacher. Students are not to be in a classroom or school area unattended by a school official. Students should get permission from the playground staff before heading to the office.
- There shall be no climbing or pulling at trees or foliage. All wildlife is to be respected and honored at all times.
- Students may not bring toys to school except for share items with the permission of the teacher. This includes collector items, cards, electronic games, etc. Students may bring their own balls as long as they are clearly labeled with the student's name. These items are to be shared in the same way as school-owned equipment. Any items brought from home are brought at student's own risk.
- In absolutely all cases the yard supervisors are to be respected and obeyed. Students who disobey or are disrespectful will face disciplinary action.
- Students may not use any type of profane language.
- Free falls off the bars and flips are not permitted.
- Students may not throw sand, dirt or other objects at others.

Animals on Campus/Playground

Animals can be an effective teaching aid. In addition, instruction related to the care and treatment of animals teaches students a sense of responsibility and promotes humane treatment of living creatures. Animals may be brought to school for educational purposes subject to rules and precautions related to health, safety and sanitation. Teachers and the responsible adult owner shall ensure that these rules are observed so as to protect both the animal and the students. Dogs may be brought to campus as long as they are on a lead and under control at all times. Dogs that may pose a danger to others may not be brought on campus

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is required at all times to ensure student success. Academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, is considered a violation of school policy and will result in disciplinary consequences including receiving no credit for the assignment, project or test. Examples of academic dishonesty include:

- Copying homework or any class assignment from another source (plagiarizing), or allowing another student to copy one's own work
- Willfully falsifying data and presenting it as one's own research or work
- Passing notes during a test, looking at notes during a test, attempting to look at another student's test, or allowing another student to see one's own test
- Talking or otherwise communicating with others during a test

Racial/Ethnic Sensitivity

Respect for all racial and ethnic groups is required at all times. Students will not make remarks, slurs, innuendoes, jokes, etc. related to a person's race, gender, ethnicity, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation, or background. These remarks made in general or directed toward another child, adult, or family **will not be tolerated**. Students who make such remarks are subject to suspension or other consequences.

Sexual Harassment

Any student who engages in sexual harassment may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. Any student who feels that she/he is being harassed should immediately contact the principal. Each complaint of sexual harassment shall be promptly investigated in a way that respects the privacy of all parties concerned. Sexual harassment at the elementary school level may include:

- Sexual slurs, threats, verbal abuse, derogatory comments or sexually degrading descriptions
- Graphic verbal comments about an individual's body, overly personal conversation, and/or inappropriate touching
- Sexual jokes, stories, drawings, pictures or gestures
- Spreading sexual rumors
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects

Controlled Substances

Any student who is in possession or under the influence of any controlled substance, or look-alike substance, including tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drugs, or misusing legal

prescription or non-prescription drugs, will be suspended from school and may be expelled from all schools in the Oak Park School District.

Oak Hills Elementary School and the entire Oak Park Unified School District is a "Smoke Free Zone." Board Policy strictly prohibits use of any tobacco product by anyone on the grounds or buildings at any time. This also includes field trips with students off campus.

Weapons

The Oak Park Unified School District prohibits the possession of any type of weapons on campus. Any student who is found to be in possession of a weapon including but not limited to, any knife or any type of gun including pellet, bb, or any explosive device including a firecracker or fireworks, will result in suspension and possible expulsion. This includes any replica or look-alike of the above.

Students and parents are strictly prohibited from making credible threats against school officials, school property or both.

Technology and Internet

Our classrooms and computer lab are Internet capable for teacher and student use. Internet access is filtered to prevent access to inappropriate material and student use is monitored to the best ability of parent or staff member. Please review the Technology Use Agreement carefully with your student. The Agreement must be signed by each student and/or adult using school computers.

Dress Code

The district expects students to attend school wearing **neat and clean clothing and be appropriate for all school activities**. In no case should the dress or appearance of a student endanger the health or safety of the student or others. Clothing may not be of a nature to have a "disruptive effect upon the orderly operation of the school." (State of California Administrative Code, Section 5, Section 30200).

- No attire may be worn that promotes or advertises the following: alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, other drugs, negative or profane comments, vulgar or obscene language or images. **No rude or insulting slogans or items that can be viewed as threatening.**
- Students may not wear revealing clothing, bare midriffs, tank tops or "spaghetti straps". No cut off shirts or shorts, oversized clothing or showing of underwear.

- Appropriate footwear is required. No thongs, sandals, open toed shoes, boots or heels. Comfortable and flexible shoes or tennis shoes are suggested. Shoes must be safe and appropriate for Physical Education activities.
- Hair should be clean and well kept. Outrageous hairstyles and hair color are not permitted. Boys are encouraged not to wear “pony tails” or “rat tails”.
- Due to safety issues no dangling earrings are permitted. Girls may only wear post earrings. Boys may not wear earrings at school. This could be viewed as inappropriate at the elementary school age and could be disruptive to the orderly operation of the school.
- Students may not wear any type of tattoo, including temporary rub on types.
- Students are encouraged to wear hats and visors outdoors to provide additional protection from the sun. However, they may not wear them indoors or in classrooms.

Enforcement of Dress Code

Parents can help students use good judgment in choosing what to wear to school. Students who violate the dress code will be sent to the office and parents will be called to make arrangements for a change of clothing. Students may be required to remain in the office for the remainder of the school day if parents cannot be reached. If appropriate clothing is available for the student, the inappropriate item will be kept at school until the student’s parent/guardian can retrieve the item in person. Repeated issues will result in normal disciplinary procedures.

Cell Phones and Electronic Equipment

- We strongly recommend that elementary students do not bring cell phones to school. If cell phones are brought to school, they must remain completely turned off (not just silenced) and must remain in the student’s backpack at all times during the school day. In an emergency, parents will be contacted using the school telephones, not the child’s cell phone. Cell phones may only be used before and after school.
- Many electronic devices can have tremendous educational value. Devices such as laptops, tablets, or “e-reader” devices may be brought to school, but only with the permission of the student’s teacher and parent.
- Any electronic items brought to school are brought at student’s and parent’s own risk. These items can be easily lost, damaged, or destroyed and are costly to replace.

Student Behavior and Discipline Procedures

Although positive reinforcement and modeling are our primary tools regarding student behavior, there are times when students will need to understand that their actions can have negative consequences as well. At Oak Hills, the goal of all discipline procedures is to assist parents in their role of providing guidance to their children, and to teach students to make positive choices regarding their behavior and actions. Therefore, the following procedures will be implemented regarding violations of school and classroom rules:

- Students will usually be warned regarding the violation of a rule on the first offense. Warnings will not be given regarding serious offenses such as fighting, theft, destruction of property, or defiance. Consequences will immediately result from these offenses.
- After a warning, the appropriate adult will issue a consequence that fits the offense, such as a time out or benching during lunch or recess. Parents are not normally notified unless this occurs frequently.
- If the offense is serious or if the same offense has occurred before, the student may be referred to the principal. The student will be given the opportunity to offer an explanation. The principal will investigate, weigh the facts, make a judgment on the matter and assign consequences. Consequences may include but are not limited to after school detention, loss of recess, loss of privileges, in school detention, and out of school suspension. In all serious offences the parents will be notified of the incident.
- **In situations that involve fighting, all students who participate may receive consequences no matter who started the altercation.** Students should not be advised by adults to fight to defend themselves. Problem solving and conflict resolution should be the goal. **No form of fighting will be tolerated at Oak Hills for any reason.**

Suspension/Expulsion

Teachers may suspend a child from their class for a period of one day in the school office. The principal or designee may suspend a child for up to five consecutive days either in school or at home. In all situations regarding a suspension, the parents will be required to attend a conference to discuss the situation and to review papers that will be placed in the child's cumulative record. The district policy has been established regarding all suspension that includes due process. Please note the following:

- State law allows schools to require parents to spend a day with their child at school in the event of continuing or severe disciplinary problems. Parents may be required by the

school to do this and employers are required to release the parent, however the employer may charge vacation/sick leave.

- Corporal Punishment shall not be inflicted on any student at any time. An amount of force that is reasonable and necessary for a school official to quell a disturbance threatening injury to persons or damage to property, for self-defense or to obtain possession of weapons or dangerous objects shall not be considered corporal punishment.
- Students may be recommended to the governing board for expulsion from school for the continuation of offenses. Students will be recommended for expulsion for possession of weapons or replicas of weapons or narcotics or any controlled substance on the first offense.

Questions and Concerns

In the event that you have questions or concerns about your student, a program or classroom expectations, please contact the teacher first. If after working with the teacher you feel that your concerns are not handled in a satisfactory manner, please contact the principal. Subsequent to that meeting if you still feel dissatisfied you may access the OPUSD Complaint Procedure by filing a written complaint on the form available in the school office.

Classroom Observations

Parents wishing to observe in a classroom must fill out a request form and submit it to the office at least two days prior to the requested visit. Observations are to be no longer than 20 minutes in length and the parent is to be accompanied by a school administrator.

Student Assessment/Goal Conferencing

Student assessment at Oak Hills includes student-led conferencing, goal setting, and standards based report cards. In grades 3 – 5 a student-led goal setting conference will be held in November. In grades K – 2, parent-only conferences with report card distribution will take place at that time. An optional second report card conference will be held in March at the request of either the teacher or parent.

In the spring, students in grades 2 – 5 will participate in STAR testing. Individual test results will be sent home during the summer. At Oak Hills we view the STAR as only one of several ways that students are assessed.

It is our hope that our carefully crafted assessment system will help us to honor student differences and plan for a wide range of diverse needs. Many areas of growth are targeted and all types of excellence will be celebrated.

Health Information

In an effort to provide the most healthful and wholesome atmosphere for children at Oak Hills, we are providing parents with the following information, rules and regulations:

- Please do not send your child to school with an illness, respiratory infection (common cold), a temperature of 100 degrees or above, or a rash. A child who has had a fever must have a normal temperature (below 100 degrees) for at least 24 hours without taking fever-reducing medication before returning to school.
- Please do not send your child to school to be diagnosed by school staff.
- If your child is sent to school and the staff thinks that his/her physical condition will not support an ability to learn, the parent will be called and the student will be sent home. If a parent is unavailable, persons designated on the emergency card will be contacted.

Prescription and Non-Prescription Medication

If your child requires prescription or non-prescription medication to be given at school on a regular basis, you and your child's doctor must complete a medication form. In addition, the medications must be received by Oak Hills office staff in its original packaging or a prescription bottle from your pharmacist with the name of the student, the dosage, and the name of the medication clearly marked on the label. Please note the following:

- If your child requires as-needed medication for bee stings, peanut allergies, asthma, migraine headaches, etc., and you wish to keep medication on hand at school, a medication form will have to be signed by you and your child's doctor. The medication must be in its original packaging or prescription bottle, clearly labeled with the correct dosage. There must also be a visible expiration date on the package.
- The office does not have a supply of over-the-counter medications for students.
- Office personnel will administer any and all medication provided by you only if you and your student's physician have completed the appropriate medication form. Under NO circumstances may a child have any medication (including over-the-counter products) in his or her possession while at school. All medication forms must be renewed at the beginning of each school year.
- We must have a note from the doctor detailing an injury and necessary restriction of all students with breaks, fractures or sprains. We need information about all injuries that require ace bandages, splints, casts, or crutches.

Nut And Allergic Reaction Policy

Students with allergies need to participate freely in our world community as a whole. So rather than isolate these students or attempt to enforce our site as a “nut free” school environment, we have instead chosen to educate all of our students and staff members about food allergies. It is our belief that if we empower our students, they will become active participants in helping support one other. In addition, we are teaching those with allergies necessary life skills as they approach the uncontrolled environments that they will deal with throughout their lives.

These statements do not mean that we take nut/food allergies lightly. All staff members are trained in the use of Epi-pens. All staff members receive a copy of “Students With Health Concerns” list that identifies each student with name, picture, allergy and treatment. The front office and campus supervision staff is trained in CPR/first aid as required by district. The health office staff reviews and logs all medication with all office staff for ease of access in the event of emergency.

At Registration and New Student Orientation, all parents are advised to notify the office if their student has any allergies or other health concerns. It is also at this time that parents are reminded that we have students with food allergies on site and to be conscious of this when planning class party foods and packing lunches.

To further identify students with allergies, at initial registration we ask parents to complete the Health Inventory, and fall registration forms are collected before the beginning of school with the health section of the OPUSD enrollment form reviewed by the office staff.

When the school is advised by parents that a student has an allergy, the health tech contacts the parent to establish the course of action that the parent and student’s health provider have determined to be appropriate. If medication such as an Epi-pen has been prescribed, it is the parent’s responsibility to return the appropriate completed “Authorization for Any Medication Taken During School Hours” form along with the proper medication. At this initial contact, the health tech explains our philosophy and reviews with the parent the prescribed protocol.

After the start of the school year, the health tech visits each classroom to discuss techniques to minimize spread of germs (hand washing, cough covering techniques), health office procedures and helping each other with allergies (food, nut, bee, grass and the like). Students who have allergies are invited to share symptoms of a reaction and what help they might need from their fellow classmates. It is at this time that eating arrangements for nutrition and lunch are discussed.

Severe Reaction Accommodations

At nutrition and lunch we assign our students to eat at grade-level tables. Students who have nuts in their meal are told to not sit at the same table as their fellow students with allergies. No one is isolated; no one is forced to sit alone. If a student has a nut product, they may consume it after anyone with allergies has left the table or they may move to another class level table. Students with a severe reaction threshold are asked to leave the eating area through doors away from trashcans that might contain nut odors.

Homework Policy

The purpose of homework at Oak Hills is to enrich each child's learning experience by providing an appropriate quantity and quality of homework for each child at each grade level. Homework is meant to be a positive learning experience for each child with the intention of reinforcing the concepts taught in the classroom, preparing students for classroom activities, and teaching responsibility and the importance of completing tasks.

One of the most important aspects of a primary education is developing good reading skills. For this reason, each child is expected to read, or be read to, for a minimum of thirty minutes each day. This time is intended to be an enjoyable part of the child's (and hopefully family's) day.

The purpose of school projects is for the students to develop and share their knowledge of a given subject or concept in a variety of ways. Age and grade level appropriate projects may be assigned with the expectation that students have the knowledge and are capable of completing them on their own.

In addition to the homework described above, a student may need to complete other types of work at home. This may arise if the child has unfinished class work or if the child has make-up work.

Forgotten Homework Materials

During the first few hectic weeks of school the office is happy to assist you and your student with opening classrooms to retrieve forgotten work when possible. Starting in October, we would like you to remind your child to make an extra effort to remember their homework, as the classrooms will not be opened. We suggest that your student write their "study buddy's" telephone number down at home so that forgotten assignments and books can be easily borrowed.

Goals and Guidelines for Holiday Education and Activities

A child's experience in a public elementary school will comply with the First Amendment and the Establishment Clause of the United States Constitution.

- If it is part of the district standards and curriculum for a grade level, teachers may teach about various religious holidays, their historical

origins, why they are celebrated, along with associated holiday traditions throughout the year.

- Choral performances in December are considered artistic expression and not a religious celebration.

Student Attendance at Sibling Performances

While we appreciate the desire of parents to have siblings attend each other's school performances during the school day, we would like to make parents aware that this can create problems for your children and for our staff. In order to minimize the disruptions that might be caused when a child is pulled out of his or her class to watch a sibling perform, we have established the following procedures:

- Please remember that you may be removing the non-performing student from valuable academic lessons. Any work missed will have to be made up.
- Siblings may only attend performances with the permission of the teacher who is hosting the show. Some performances are not intended for an audience that includes siblings.
- Siblings should only attend performances if their teacher is not conducting critical academic instruction.
- A written note requesting permission must be received by both teachers at least two days prior to performance. Last minute requests are extremely disruptive and will not be honored.
- Siblings may not remain in performance classrooms for any subsequent classroom activities or parties. These events are designed for the participating students, not their siblings. Siblings must return to their assigned classroom at the conclusion of the performance.

Field Trips *Roads Scholars*

All field trips at Oak Hills are voluntary. No child is required to participate in an off campus field trip, and any requested payments for field trips and or buses are voluntary and considered a donation to the school district. If the parent does not sign the consent form for the field trip and return it to the teacher by the stated time, the student will be assigned to another class for the period of the trip. If a bus trip is arranged, parents do not have the option to drive and follow the bus or transport their own student. When using parent-drivers, all children must leave and return with their class as assigned.

Please note the following additional guidelines regarding field trips:

- When parent drivers are used on field trips, they are required to fill out the proper forms in advance and show evidence of minimum limits of liability insurance not less than \$100,000 per person/\$300,000 per occurrence. A copy will be kept on file. The driver's insurance will provide primary coverage and the district insurance will provide secondary coverage.
- If driving, the driver's car must be in excellent mechanical condition and a seat belt must be available for each student. Students are not permitted to sit in the front seat. Children are safest in the back seat. The car must have enough gasoline to complete the trip without making a stop for gas. Parent drivers are responsible for ensuring that children are safety belted and behaving appropriately in the car at all times.
- Appropriate car seats must be used as required by law. Parents of students who require a car seat or booster are responsible for providing the appropriate car seat and making sure it is installed correctly in the drivers' vehicle.
- Adults who attend field trips should plan to supervise students at all times. Adults are to help keep students safe and orderly. 100% of their attention is to be devoted to the supervision and safety of the students.
- Siblings who are not part of the participating class are not to attend field trips.
- When driving on a field trip all cars must go directly to the destination and return directly to school on the return trip. **IT IS NOT PERMITTED TO STOP FOR FOOD, DRINKS, ETC. OR VARY FROM THE PRESCRIBED ROUTE.**

Invitations, Flyers and Birthdays

Party invitations and flyers announcing community activities are not to be distributed at school. Public announcements can be made in the Oak Hills Bulletin.

Balloon bouquets, flowers and extreme celebrations are not permitted. In keeping with the District's Wellness Policy, food items should not be used in conjunction with birthday celebrations. Please check with your individual teacher for appropriate alternatives.

Food Service

Snacks can be purchased at morning recess and a full hot lunch can be purchased at lunch recess. Checks should be written to *OPUSD Food Services* and can be placed in the box in the office.

Lunches

For liability and safety reasons, parents may not provide lunch for students other than their own. Parents are discouraged from bringing food to the school, as it is disruptive to the classroom and overall learning environment. Please arrange to send your child to school with a lunch you provide or make sure your student knows he/she will be purchasing lunch at school. If purchasing a lunch, please make sure your child has money on their lunch account. These arrangements should be made at home prior to school.

Waste Reduction Policy

Oak Hills encourages a policy to aggressively reduce the amount of waste generated by lunch and snack times on campus. We believe that as a school we have the responsibility to teach children and model for them earth friendly habits. Therefore, the following guidelines are established:

- Students who bring lunch or snacks to school should use only a re-usable lunch box.
- All food in this lunch box should be packaged in re-usable containers. If plastic bags are used, they should be taken home and used repeatedly for the life of the bag. Napkins should be cloth and re-usable.

- Students should avoid bringing food to school that is overly packaged. Parents are encouraged to purchase food in larger quantities and then use smaller re-usable containers to send food items to school.
- Drinks should be in re-usable or recyclable containers. Glass containers are not allowed for safety reasons. The preferable method is to send drinks to school in a thermos or other reusable container. Avoid straws and small box drink containers if possible.
- Students will be assigned to monitor recycling containers daily. They will remind peers to sort their waste and not to throw away re-usable containers.
- Oak Hills has a water filtration system that utilizes re-usable containers sold through the PTA or any other re-usable water bottle.

School Supplies

We ask that you make a donation towards the necessary classroom materials that have been provided for our quality instructional programs. These funds will be used for paper, tag board, laminate, consumable science materials, paints, pens, pencils, notebook paper, folders, crayons, markers and many more items. The school has purchased these items for your child in bulk at wholesale cost. This program saves money and means you will not need to provide these materials on an ongoing basis. Your participation is voluntary, and your contribution is considered a donation.

District Programs

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) provides a forum in which staff, administration, and parents of Oak Park Unified School District (OPUSD) can discuss issues and recommend action regarding special education programs and services in OPUSD in order to:

- Advise the OPUSD Board of Education regarding the present status and areas of needed improvement in special education;
- Investigate, address and propose recommendations for urgent issues that have arisen; and
- Educate and inform the public, the administration, the staff, and the Board of Education regarding the laws and best practices pertaining to special education.

Gifted and Talented Education (GATE)

The purpose of the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Program is to recognize the performance capabilities of gifted students, as well as to address the unique needs and differences associated with having these abilities. The GATE Program provides gifted learners with qualitatively differentiated curriculum experiences; focusing on basic skills, higher level thinking, inquiry, problem solving and creativity. Classroom instruction for GATE students differs in pace, depth and complexity of study and considers individual learning styles, social-emotional needs, as well as exceptional abilities and special needs. Each school has a GATE Coordinator to assist in the student identification process and to provide information and support to teachers and parents. Regular meetings for parents and school district staff are conducted at the district office.



ESPECIALLY FOR THE STUDENTS

Student Rights

A right is something that belongs to you inherently and cannot be taken away from you by anyone. In turn, students must remember that others have these rights as well, including teachers and classmates.

1. **The right to be safe at school.** This means that no one should intimidate or make students afraid to be at school. Oak Hills shall be a safe and comfortable place for everyone.
2. **The right to be respected and treated with kindness at school.** This means that no one should make fun of students or hurt someone's feelings intentionally. No one may embarrass anyone else.
3. **The right to be heard.** This means that all students will have the opportunity to tell their side of the story before receiving consequences for breaking a rule. If a student feels that one or more of their rights have been violated they should tell their teacher, campus supervisor or principal.
4. **The right to be yourself at school.** This means you should not be treated unfairly because you look different, talk differently, take a little longer to get the right answer, or are different in any other way. You can be an individual.

Student Responsibilities

- 1. Do not keep others from learning.** Students come to school to learn. If someone is being kept from learning by distractions, then they are being deprived of something that is their right. All classroom rules must be strictly obeyed.
- 2. Come to school every day unless you are sick.** Parents are required by law to send their children to school from ages 6 – 18. The only valid reason for an absence is illness.
- 3. Be on time for school and classes.** Parents are required by law to have their children to school on time every day. Students must be in line by the designated time. Students who arrive after the class starting time are tardy and must report to the office.
- 4. Students are expected to follow all legal, reasonable direction by any staff member.** Staff members include the principal, teachers, yard supervisors, custodians, instructional aides, office staff, librarians, and any specialists. Students should comply without being argumentative or disrespectful. Violation of this rule is known as defiance and is treated very seriously.
- 5. School property is to be respected.** All students will respect all school property as it belongs to all of us. The repair or replacement caused by the destruction or damage of school property will be the financial responsibility of the student's parent/guardian.
- 6. Students will act appropriately at assemblies, special events, and when on field trips.** During these activities it is often difficult to behave at your very best; however, these events are when your very best behavior is expected the most. This includes evening activities.
- 7. Behavior going to and from school will be excellent.** The school rules apply on the way to school and on the way home.
- 8. Students will adhere to the dress code.**
- 9. Students will respect all adults working on campus.** Students will show all adults proper respect, including parent volunteers. Parent volunteers will not be responsible for disciplining students. Teachers and staff will handle all discipline.

School Spirit

We refer to our school as a "Learning Community." This means that all of us including parents, staff, and students, are working together to help each other learn and grow.

One way to show our unified spirit is by wearing our school shirts. Please remember to wear your Oak Hills shirt every Thursday. The PTA has shirts available for no cost to families in need. Just contact the office.

The school mascot is the Coyote. The school motto is "A special place to learn, grow and succeed." If you are new to Oak Hills, you will soon learn our school song. Be sure to sing it with pride!

Participation in Extra Curricular Activities

Students are encouraged to participate in any and all extra curricular activities offered at Oak Hills. Please remember that students participating in these activities must attend school on the day of the activity. Students are expected to follow all school rules while participating in these activities.

Kids with Character

The OHES "Kids with Character" program involves a monthly, school-wide theme with various activities that teachers can individually structure to match what is happening in their classrooms. Character traits for each month are:

September	Respect
October	Friendship/Kindness
November	Responsibility
December	Honesty
January	Fairness
February	Determination
March	Acceptance
April	Cooperation
May	Citizenship

School Service

An important aspect of a child's educational experience at Oak Hills is School Service. All students are engaged in age-appropriate school service projects as part of their daily routine. These activities may include:

- Cleaning their own classrooms on regular basis – including wiping tables and cubbies.
- Cleaning up the lunch area every day so that it is ready for the next group of students.
- Working in teams to help sort recyclables and to enforce the waste reduction policy.

Students can also work on various special projects throughout the year.

Student Government

One of the important aspects to establishing a positive school climate is an effective and active student government. That has been a tradition at Oak Hills and the organization is set up as follows:

A president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and publicists will be selected from the members of the Student Council and will be known as the Executive Officers. The Student Council is made up of two representatives from each classroom in grades 2 – 5. Student Council will also have members-at-large, who are students who ran for a representative position, but did not get elected. Classroom teachers must approve all Student Council members in order to be eligible to be part of Student Council. The Student Council will meet twice each month unless more meetings are required at certain times of the year.

Qualifications:

President:	5 th grade
Vice President:	5 th grade
Secretary:	2 nd - 5 th grade
Treasurer:	2 nd - 5 th grade
Publicist:	2 nd - 5 th grade

All students must be in good standing in terms of behavior, academics and have approval from their teacher and parents.

District Contact Information

Oak Pak Unified School District
5801 Conifer Street
Oak Park, CA 91377
818-735-3200

SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Tony Knight
818-735-3206

ASST. SUPERINTENDENT BUSINESS SERVICES

Mr. Martin Klauss
818-735-3210

ASST. SUPERINTENDENT EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Dr. Leslie Heilbron
818-735-3250

SEAC

Special Education Advisory Committee
Director of Pupil Services
818-735-3208

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Allen Rosen
Mrs. Mary Pallant
Mrs. Barbara Laifman
Mrs. Sepideh Yeoh
Mrs. Jennifer von Schneidau

OTHER SCHOOL SITES

Brookside Elementary
818-597-4200

Medea Creek Middle School
818-707-7922

Oak Park High School
818-735-3300

Oak View High School
818-735-3217

Oak Park Neighborhood School
818-707-7742

Red Oak Elementary
818-707-7972

Oak Hills Elementary School
Policy and Regulation Form
Acknowledgement of Receipt of Information

PRINT & RETURN THIS PAGE ONLY

Thank you for taking the time to thoroughly read this School Handbook. All Oak Hills students and parents are responsible for reading and acknowledging that they understand the content of the School Handbook every year. This page must be printed, signed and returned to the school before students attend class.

**PARENTS/GUARDIANS ARE REQUIRED TO SIGN AND
RETURN THIS FORM AT REGISTRATION**

I have read the 2014-2015 Oak Hills Elementary School Handbook and have carefully reviewed and discussed it with my student. We are aware of our rights, responsibilities, and all school rules, codes, and procedures for discipline.

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____

PARENT SIGNATURE: _____

Date: _____