

Rancho Elementary School Handbook



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It is important to read this handbook as we are all responsible for knowing and following school rules and procedures.

Welcome to the 2018-2019 school year! This handbook was prepared to provide our students and parents/guardians information about our school. Over the years, Rancho Elementary has established a reputation for outstanding educational achievement as well as positive school spirit and strong morale. The cooperative partnership between school, home, and the community makes this possible.

The procedures and rules, as outlined in this handbook, have been developed to allow the school to operate in an orderly, safe, and secure manner. Your cooperation in abiding by these procedures and rules will allow the staff to concentrate on providing the best possible educational experiences for your child. The spirit and enthusiasm of all—students, parents, and staff—ensure an outstanding school community.

Please review the “School Rules” section with your child and refer to this handbook throughout the year for helpful information about Rancho Elementary.

VISION

Every child will learn and grow in a highly enriched environment with rigorous standards and integrated learning practices. We commit to high personal standards, instill meaningful lifelong skills, foster responsible connections, and inspire positive impacts within our global community.

MISSION

Rancho Elementary School is committed to a culture of learning that promotes a growth mindset and motivates each and every student to maximize his or her potential. Our staff, students, and parents model and foster a positive and collaborative educational environment. Together, we will strive to instill in each student a sense of responsibility, citizenship, and pride in achieving academic excellence.

EAGLE PLEDGE

I pledge to respect the other children and adults at my school. I will always take care of school property and keep it clean. I will always dress appropriately for school. I promise to be safe and responsible and think before I act. I will always do my best because I am proud to be a Rancho Eagle. Remember to be safe, respectful, and responsible.

PARTNERS IN SAFETY

The most important school concern? The safety of our students.

Parking

The circle is for drop-off and pick-up only as evidenced by the white paint. Emergency vehicles need access to the circle at all times. Labeled parking spaces in both parking lots are for STAFF ONLY. For parking, choose an available parking spot that is not a staff parking spot. Thank you for not parking in staff spots – even “for a second.” All staff members need to be able to arrive on time, prepared and relaxed.

Drivers who park illegally, especially, in handicapped areas will be ticketed by the Novato Police or California Highway Patrol.

Routes

3rd to 5th grade students may walk or bike to/from school. TK through 2nd grade students may walk or bike to/from school when supervised by an adult. Students must wear a helmet. Establish the safest route to/from campus for your child who may be walking or riding a bike.

Students in grades 1st-5th should not arrive to school before 8:00AM. At 8:00AM, students will be escorted to and supervised on the primary yard.

Traffic around schools can pose a safety problem, especially at the beginning and end of each school day. Our goal is to improve safety for our students. Observe the following rules when unloading and loading Rancho Elementary student:

Drop-off, Kiss & Go

- ✓ Supervisors may be on duty to assist drivers. Respectfully follow the Supervisors' directions. They are "on duty" to keep traffic flowing safely.
- ✓ Enter the Kiss & Go Circle only when your children are ready to exit the vehicle. Please plan ahead and be mindful to ensure school supplies are in the car (not in the trunk), so that children can exit quickly.
- ✓ Pull forward all the way before unloading, even if there are no cars behind you.
- ✓ Unload only from the passenger side of the car.
- ✓ Unload **QUICKLY** in the Kiss & Go Circle.
- ✓ Drivers must remain in the car.
- ✓ Do not park in the Kiss & Go Circle and/or leave car unattended. The Kiss & Go is for loading and unloading only.
- ✓ Exit the Kiss & Go Circle promptly after unloading children.
- ✓ If you are walking your child into the school, you are welcome to park in any open space. Please reserve STAFF ONLY spots for the staff members to whom these spots have been assigned.
- ✓ Do not park in the spaces designated for the Youth Bus or YMCA.

Pick-Up, Kiss & Go

- ✓ If you would like to greet your child at pick up, you must park in an approved parking space prior to leaving your vehicle.
- ✓ Parents may wait for students outside of the school corridors. There is no waiting in the interior of the school outside of classrooms.
- ✓ Pull forward all the way before picking up, even if there are no cars behind you.
- ✓ Students need to enter the car from the passenger side only.
- ✓ Load **QUICKLY** in the Kiss & Go Circle.
- ✓ Drivers must remain in the car.
- ✓ Do not park in the Kiss & Go Circle and/or leave car unattended. The Kiss & Go is for loading and unloading only.
- ✓ Exit the Kiss & Go Circle promptly after picking up children.

AFTER SCHOOL SUPERVISION: We do not have the personnel to watch or take care of children after dismissal. All children must be picked up no later than 3:15PM Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. On Wednesday, students in grades 1st-5th should be picked up by 2:25PM. If, for some reason, parent/caregivers are running late, call the school and we will make arrangements for children to wait in or outside the office. Remember, our office closes at 4:00PM.

TO AND FROM SCHOOL: Speak to your child about going straight to school in the morning and straight to the designated pickup area after school where he/she will be supervised. Inform him/her to let the office know immediately if there are problems with strangers, etc., on the way to and from school. Let him/her know that we are here to help.

PARENT SUPERVISION BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL: Parents on campus before and/or after school are responsible for supervising their children in accordance with the school rules. The same orderly behaviors they demonstrate in school are expected of children before and after school. Parents are expected to be cautious and not to lose sight of their children.

Designated on campus pick up areas:

- In front of the school
- In back of the school by the shade structure
- On the playground area benches

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Office Hours

The school office is open Monday through Friday, 8:00AM to 4:00PM. Parents should call or e-mail the school to set up an appointment with a particular teacher, staff member, or principal.

Emergency Cards

Emergency cards must be completed and on file for each student. Each student is expected to have an emergency phone number where the school can reach the parents or someone with authority, in case the student is injured and requires doctor's care. IT IS MOST IMPORTANT to notify the office staff of any contact changes, so that we can contact you in case of an emergency. **Children cannot be released to individuals who are not on the child's emergency card.**

Custody

In most cases, divorced parents continue to have equal rights, such as access to information. If you have a court order that limits the rights of one parent in matters such as custody or visitation, bring a copy to the school office. Unless your court order is on file with us, we must provide equal rights and access to both parents.

Classroom Visitations

Parents are welcome to visit the school; however, they need to call in advance to make arrangements with your child's teacher. **School board policy requires all parents/visitors to sign in and wear a visitor badge while on campus.** While a guest on campus, cell phones must be turned off or placed on vibrate.

Classroom Interruptions

To limit classroom interruptions, set your day's plans with your children BEFORE sending them to school. For messages that are not of immediate urgency, leave a voice mail, send an e-mail, or a note for the classroom teacher. Should you have a message of an urgent nature, inform the office staff so that they may notify the teacher or student. All attempts will be made to deliver messages. **Forgotten lunches, etc. are to be delivered to the office.**

Books and Supplies

There is no charge for books used in the instructional program. However, in case of lost or damaged books, notices of cost will be sent home and payment will be expected.

The Library

Families, as well as students, are encouraged to use the school library. You are welcome to come in and browse. Books in the general collection may be checked out for two weeks.



Lost or Damaged Books

Lost books will be paid at the current cost of the replacement rather than the purchase price. Damaged books will be assessed by the Library Clerk and a fine will be charged for the amount of repair needed.

Student Belongings

Please **LABEL** garments, lunch boxes, and other belongings with your child's first and last name. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity at school breaks. Personal items such as toys, trinkets, etc. are not to be brought to school. Rancho is not responsible for lost or stolen items.



Cell Phone/Electronic Devices Policy

Cell phones are allowed on the Rancho Elementary campus. However, once students are on the school campus, phones must be turned off and left in students' backpacks. Students may ask permission to use the office phone. Students who violate the cell phone policy will have their phones removed and parents/guardians will be notified. All electronic devices must follow the same rules as cell phones. Rancho Elementary is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Celebrations/Birthdays

Students are not allowed to bring snacks to school to share with other students in celebration of birthdays, etc. Your child's teacher will share with you how birthdays will be celebrated. Rancho teachers have the right to refuse all food items brought to their classes without prior permission. Flowers and balloons are also not to be delivered to the school.

Medication

Children may take medication prescribed by a physician and get help from school personnel during the school day if

1. The office has a written statement from the physician detailing the medication name, method, amount, and time schedules by which the medication is to be taken.
2. Parent, guardian or caregiver submits a written statement indicating his/her desire that the school district allocate the medication.
3. Parent signs a release statement on a special form available from Rancho Elementary.

Students may be allowed to self-administer an asthma inhaler or Epipen injection if the parent has completed a form with all of the above information and confirmation from the physician stating the following:

1. It is necessary for the student to carry the medication

2. Student has been trained in the use of the medication
3. Student is able to self-administer the medication
4. Parents and physician must complete and sign Authorization to Administer Medication/Treatment and medication must be in original container.

If your child is on a continuing medication regimen for a non-episodic condition, you are required to notify the school office of the medication being taken, the current dosage, and the name of the supervising physician.

Medications include prescription medications and over-the-counter medications including but not limited to Tylenol, cough drops, cough syrup, vitamins, etc.

Medications must be picked up before the end of the school year or the following week. Otherwise, the medication will be discarded.

New medication forms must be filled out yearly.

Lunch

Each student is assigned a 4-digit ID number, which are the last 4 digits of their permanent ID number. Students will enter their lunch ID number in a keypad each time they purchase items in the lunchroom. Please make sure that your child **memorizes** and keeps his/her lunch ID number confidential.

Pre-payments are accepted and encouraged. Place all checks and cash in an envelope. To expedite the lunch line, envelopes should be dropped off at the front office before lunch. Make sure that your child's name and lunch ID number is written on the check or on the envelope, if cash is sent. Credit card payments are also accepted online at www.mynutrikids.com. Parents may also check on student activity and balances at this site. The amount of pre-payment deposit is entirely up to each family; it can range from one week, one month, or even a year. Balances will transfer from school to school. The POS will record the purchase and charge any appropriate amounts to their account. Students will be reminded when more money will need to be deposited into their account. Reduced priced and free lunches are available for eligible students. Forms can be picked up at the school office or accessed online at www.nusd.org. For additional information, contact the FANS website at www.nusd.org.

If your child brings lunch to school, use reusable containers—no glass and, if possible, no baggies. **Soda and candy are not allowed. Nut free zones must be honored.**

Animals on Campus

Dogs and other animals are not permitted on school grounds without prior permission from the site administrator. School grounds begin at the Arroyo Avichi park entrance.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

General Absences

It is essential that your child attend school every day or part of the day. Parents must telephone the school by 9:00AM if their child will be absent. **The 24 hour Attendance Hot Line number is 897-9082 ext. 700.** The school will utilize the auto dialer to call students' parents when the student is absent and we have not heard from the parent. **It is the parents' responsibility to respond to the school within three days.** Not all absences are excused. Review the information below to see what constitutes an excused absence.

Please keep children out of school when they are sick. A child should remain at home if he/she has swollen glands, a sore throat, rashes or sores, abnormal temperature, nausea, earache, headache, or lice. Contagious diseases should be reported to the office. Students have to be fever free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school.

Emergency telephone numbers are important, as the office staff will need to send sick children home. **Children cannot be released to individuals who are not on the child's emergency card.**

Leaving School Early

If you are going to be picking up your child before his or her regular dismissal time, as a courtesy send a note to the teacher. Arrive a few minutes before pickup time so that we may call your child down to the office. **We request that you limit this as much as possible due to the fact that it disrupts the education of all students.**

1. Notwithstanding E.C. 48200, a pupil shall be excused from school when the absence is:
 - A. Due to his or her illness
 - B. Due to quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer
 - C. For the purpose of having medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic services rendered
 - D. For the purpose of attending the funeral services of a member of his or her immediate family, so long as the absence is not more than one day if the service is conducted in California and not more than three days if the service is conducted outside California
 - E. For the purpose of jury duty in the manner provided for by law
 - F. Due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child of whom the pupil is the custodial parent
 - G. Attendance at an educational conference on the legislative or judicial process offered by a nonprofit organization
 - H. **For justifiable personal reasons, including, but not limited to, an appearance in court, attendance at a funeral service, observance of a holiday or ceremony of his or her religion, attendance at religious retreats, or attendance at an employment conference when the pupil's absence has been requested in writing by the parent or guardian and approved by the principal or a designated representative pursuant to uniform standards established by the governing board**
 - I. For the purpose of serving as a member of a precinct board for an election pursuant to Sec. 12302 of the Elections Code
 - J. Participation in religious instruction or exercises in accordance with district policy
2. A pupil absent from school under this section shall be allowed to complete all assignments and tests missed during the absence that can be reasonably provided and, upon satisfactory completion within a reasonable period of time, shall be given full credit thereof. The teacher of any class from which a pupil is absent shall determine the tests and assignments, which shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and assignments that the pupil missed during the absence
3. For the purposes of this section, attendance at religious retreats shall not exceed four hours per semester
4. Absences pursuant to this section are deemed to be absences in computing average daily attendance and shall not generate state apportionment payments
5. "Immediate family," as used in this section, has the same meaning as that set forth in Section 45194, except that references therein to "employee" shall be deemed to be references to "pupil." [E.C. 46014, 48205]

Lateness/Tardiness

Children are encouraged to establish a habit of promptness. Students are at a disadvantage when they enter late, as they frequently miss directions given by the teacher. **Tardies count towards truancy. Students will be marked tardy if they arrive at Rancho in Motion or enter the classroom after the bell has rung.** Children who arrive late must first report to the office before going to class. Students who are removed from school early or are tardy will not be eligible to receive perfect attendance.

Independent Study

Short-Term Independent Study may be an option for students who have **unavoidable** absences and will be absent for a minimum of five days (not including illness).

Short-Term Independent Study contracts will not be issued during spring standardized testing periods. Teachers must receive five school days notice for preparing an independent study contract. Parents are to contact the office regarding independent study. **All student work must be submitted to the school on the contracted day of return.** If all the work is returned with satisfactory progress, the student will maintain a clear attendance record. If the student's work

is unsatisfactory, or incomplete, the school can only grant excused days of absence for the amount of satisfactory work returned. The additional days of absence will be considered unexcused, and will count towards truancy. Although a student may satisfactorily complete an independent study contract, the student will not qualify for perfect attendance.

SCHOOL-WIDE HOMEWORK PLAN

Homework at Rancho Elementary is intended to assist students in the following:

- Develop responsibility
- Provide a structure for maintaining mastery of the skills and knowledge taught in the classroom
- Encourage self-discipline
- Prepare students for classroom participation and activities
- Develop independent study habits
- Reinforce and extend school learning experiences
- Provide practice, review and application of basic skills
- Develop organizational and time management skills
- Stimulate pride in work
- Stimulate creativity and imagination while fostering student initiative
- Stimulate critical thinking and problem-solving
- Provide for the application of learning to real-life situations

Homework is intended to be an independent student activity. Parents can help by providing a quiet environment and uncluttered space for children to work. If a consistent study time is established, students are more likely to work efficiently and to practice good study habits. At the annual fall *Back to School Night*, teachers will discuss student homework requirements and expectations related to parent support.

Children are expected to come to class with their work neatly and carefully completed. If a child is frequently unprepared, parents will be notified so that they, with the teacher, can help the student develop a plan for improvement. If child is consistently having a difficult time with the assignments at home, parents should contact the teacher.

Students at Rancho Elementary will have homework on a daily basis (Monday – Thursday). The subject matter may vary, but homework will be related to class work or to reinforce and practice prior learning. Homework should be done independently with parental guidance and support.

It is recommended that all students in grades Transitional Kindergarten through 5th Grade read or be read to on a nightly basis, typically Monday through Thursday. Total time recommendations for reading and homework are as follows:

- Kindergarten – 25 to 30 minutes nightly
- First Grade – 25 to 30 minutes nightly
- Second Grade – 30 to 40 minutes nightly
- Third Grade – 30 to 40 minutes nightly
- Fourth Grade – 45 to 60 minutes nightly
- Fifth Grade – 45 to 60 minutes nightly

Consequences for incomplete or non-returned homework may include

- Homework alert
- Failure to bring back signed homework alert with completed homework will result in a classroom consequence
- Failure to return homework alert after third day will result in parent notification
- Repeated failure to return homework will result in further consequences

Students must take homework with them at dismissal time; the office is not to be disturbed if homework is forgotten. Returning completed homework to school is the student's, rather than the parent's, responsibility. This is part of our mutual goal to teach children personal responsibility.

When a child is home sick, they need to rest and recuperate so they can return to school quickly. It will not be necessary to request homework during short absence periods. Teachers will make individual decisions as to what work must be completed when children return. They will contact families directly if there is anything a child misses or needs to make up. Homework will not be faxed.

If your child is going to be absent two or more days and you want homework for your child, it is important that you call the office by **9:00AM** to receive homework for the day. The homework will be in the office after **2:45PM**.

HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Reporting Student Progress

The staff at Rancho makes every effort to keep parents well informed about their child's progress. In addition to ongoing evaluations of individual work, formal reports to parents are written three times during the school year. In these reports, academic progress, effort, attitude, and study skills are evaluated.

Fall Report:	Parent Conferences	Report Card given at Parent/Teacher Conference
Mid-Year Report: in March:	Report sent home with child	Conferences on an as needed basis
End of Year Report:	Report sent home with child	

Friday Folders

Regular communication between school and home will happen through the "Friday Folder." Return this folder with your child each Monday.

Friday Flash

The *Friday Flash* is our weekly Rancho PTA Newsletter that is distributed electronically. It will contain news on what is happening at Rancho and upcoming events. This is an extremely valuable communication tool between school and home. Please watch for it weekly.

School Website

Access our school website at <http://rancho.nusd.org/> for the latest information.

Twitter

Receive daily highlights by following us on Twitter [@Rancho_Eagles](https://twitter.com/Rancho_Eagles).

Contacting Teachers

Methods of contacting teachers include note, voicemail, or e-mail. Teachers will make all attempts to reply within 24 hours.

Back to School Night

This evening provides parents with important information regarding curriculum and teacher expectations. Therefore, children should not be in attendance.

Open House

Families are invited in the spring to visit their child's classroom. Children are welcome to attend Open House.

Concerns or Complaints

Step 1: When someone has a concern or complaint, he or she is expected to **first** contact the person against whom the complaint is lodged and attempt to resolve concerns.

Step 2: If a problem is not reconciled after utilizing Step 1, a parent may request a meeting with the principal. The principal will try to reconcile the issue on an informal level between both parties. If the parent continues to feel that the issue is unresolved, the principal can assist the parent in following a formal process.

CAMPUS AND FIELD TRIP SAFETY

Closed Campus

Rancho Elementary is a closed campus to ensure the protection of students. During the school day, students will only be permitted to leave the school premises in the company of a parent, guardian, or an authorized adult. Other than the usual dismissal time, the parent or authorized adult must sign the student out at the office. If a student arrives at school after the start of the school day (8:40AM), he or she must report to the office and sign in before going to the classroom. Our goals are to protect instructional time and provide a safe environment for Rancho students. Visitors, including parents, must check into the office to leave messages, lunches, etc. **school board policy requires all parents/visitors to sign in and wear a visitor badge while on campus.** While a guest on campus, cell phones must be turned off or placed on vibrate.

Field Trips

Individual classes may take field trips during the school year. Parents must sign the Field Trip Permission Form sent home in order to allow children to attend the field trip. Parents **always** have the option to deny permission for a particular field trip; children will remain at school to do assignments.

Drivers

When transportation is provided by a parent the following is required:

- Parent driver must complete the "Parent Driver" form with required documents attached to the office at least 10 working days prior to the field trip. Once these forms are on file and approved, the parent is certified to drive for the entire school year. However, it is the parents' responsibility to notify the school of any changes regarding vehicle information.

All passengers must use their seatbelts at all times, one passenger per seatbelt. SB929 requires that children **younger than** 8 years old must ride in safety/booster seats, unless they are 4' 9" in height. The California Highway Patrol website also states that CHP will look for children to be seated in the back seat. Please be aware that when your child attends a field trip using private vehicles, a safety/booster seat will need to be provided if he/she is **younger than** 8 years old unless they are at least 4' 9" tall.

- Parent driver must conduct a thorough vehicle inspection prior to the trip. The inspection should include gas, lights, horn, turn signals, brakes, tires (including spare) and emergency tools.
- Parent drivers are expected to travel to and from destination points with no side trips.
- The parent driver is responsible in the event of an accident or injury resulting from the use of their vehicle. The District accepts no responsibility for damage or loss to the vehicle resulting from use on the trip.

Fingerprinting Procedures

All outside presenters and local after school program consultants are required to be fingerprinted through the Marin County Office of Education. Classroom volunteers are also required to be fingerprinted and required to have current TB test results on file in the school office.

SAFETY/EMERGENCY PLAN

The school has a comprehensive safety plan designed to offer maximum protection for our students in case of emergencies. Fire, earthquake, and lockdown drills are held on a regular basis.

The school and school district work closely with the Novato Police Department on all safety issues affecting students. The Novato Fire Department provides emergency and first aid training and inspects schools regularly.

In the event of an emergency, parents are to report to the Student Release area in the Kindergarten play yard. Johnson Street will be blocked off for Emergency Vehicles ONLY. Students will be released to parents based on school procedure guidelines.

We do ask your help in the following areas:

1. **DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL.** We must leave phone lines open for emergency calls.
2. Listen for the telephone message that will be sent by Rancho Elementary. This message will outline specific instructions for parents/guardians and will be sent to all phone numbers listed on the emergency card.
3. Park in designated parking spaces. Leave the road clear for emergency vehicles.
4. Tune in to local radio stations and television.
5. Reinforce with your student the importance of following directions of school personnel, in case of an emergency.

Emergency Procedures for Disasters

Fire Drill: Alarm will automatically be activated in each classroom with corresponding strobe lights. All students and staff will exit outside classroom doors and quickly walk to designated spots on the playground area. The teachers will immediately count all students to confirm attendance and location of each student. Teachers will hold up cards to designate that all students are accounted for. "Check" cards will be held up indicating missing students.

Earthquake: Duck and cover exercise will be used in the classrooms. After the shaking has discontinued, and on direction of the school administrator, students will follow fire drill procedures.

Lockdown: In the event that the school needs to be in "Lockdown" mode, the principal or designee will make that announcement. Teachers will ensure that the inside and outside classroom doors are locked and blinds are closed. Students and teachers will take cover under their desks and stay away from doors and windows. Teachers will place a "Green" sign in the window if students are all accounted for and "Check" sign if a student is unaccounted. Teachers will e-mail the office with an "Okay" or "Need Help" in the message line.

Tornado: Students will hide under their desks or move away from glass windows.

RANCHO SCHOOL RULES

Rancho is a wonderful school, a safe place to learn and grow. To maintain this environment we have school-wide rules. It is important for all students and parents to understand and support these rules. Our three primary rules are Be Safe, Be Responsible, and Be Respectful.

Students will be responsible for:

- Being good learners and obeying all school rules
- Following the directions given by teachers and other adults
- Being respectful, polite and kind to other students and adults
- Being on time to class and ready to learn
- Respecting other people's things and school property

RECESS provides students with a time to play after long periods of study in class. Although this time is set aside for play, it also provides many learning opportunities. Students need to learn to use this time wisely, play fairly, organize games, improve their skills, and resolve conflicts that may arise. They also have the responsibility for knowing the rules, using equipment properly, and playing safely.

Dos

- Use the bathroom and get a drink before recess is over (five minute warning is given)
- Eat snack in designated area
- Remember, the first person in the waiting line for a game is the referee
- Walk to and from the lunch area
- Walk on the blacktop
- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- Pay attention when the Yard Supervisors blow their whistles
- Remember, the ball stays with the game
- Kick only soccer balls and rubber balls
- Play in designated areas in view of the Yard Supervisors and stay on the playground at recess. Out of sight is out of bounds.
- Keep your own place in line without cutting or allowing cuts
- Ask a Yard Supervisor for permission to go to the office or library
- Throw only balls – not tanbark, rocks, etc.
- All games are open to anyone who wants to play
- Show good sportsmanship and cooperate with others
- Use bats only under direct supervision of a teacher
- Rancho FOUR SQUARE and BALL WALL rules are in effect at all times
- Tennis baseball allowed on the Upper Yard only
- "Freeze" when the bell rings (stand still without talking, both hands on the ball, standing outside of the tetherball circle, standing outside of the playground equipment area, neutral position) and go to line when the whistle is blown three times

Dont's

- Bullying behaviors, actions, or words
- Biting, tripping, hitting, kicking, pushing, punching, or otherwise hurting another person
- Teasing or using threats or put downs (including gender, ethnic or racial)
- Using obscene language or gestures
- Retrieving balls that go over the fence. Secure permission from a Yard Supervisor.
- Climbing on the fence
- Pegging (throwing balls at others)
- Walking through other people's games
- Running on the blacktop or in the tanbark/play structure area
- Playing in the Quad area
- Football and rough play are **not** allowed
- Eating on the field or in the tanbark/play structure area
- Playing tag or chasing games

Yard supervisors monitor playground activities. If a conflict arises in the yard, we suggest students use the *Stop* message and/or Peace Path.

Additional School Rules

- Eat morning snacks in the designated snack area prior to playtime.
- Healthy snacks are recommended. Soda and candy are not allowed.
- Students are not allowed to share foods due to safety and health concerns.
- **Honor Nut-free zones.**
- Students may not be in a classroom without adult supervision.

- Chew gum at home—not at school.
- No loitering in corridors, bathrooms, behind or between buildings at any time.
- Students may not bring guns, knives, laser pointers, or other weapons to school.
- Heelies, skateboards, scooters, or rollerblades may not be used on school property.
- Students may not wear makeup.
- Wear tennis shoes for physical education classes.

DRESS CODE

We encourage pupils to come to school prepared to participate in their education. Inappropriate appearance and dress includes, but is not limited to:

- Garments such as short skirts, shorts, and dresses (shorter than fingertips), halter tops, bare midriffs, tube tops, net tops, over-sized tank tops, spaghetti straps (less than one inch in width), low-cut tops of any type, plunging necklines (front and/or back) and/or clothing that reveal undergarments.
- Clothing, jewelry, or accessories with slogans or pictures promoting the use of or involvement with drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or any controlled substance is prohibited.
- Garments, backpacks, etc., with suggestive, hate-related, obscene or sexually explicit statements or pictures will not be allowed.
- The wearing of clothing, jewelry, hair nets, bandannas on the head or in the pocket, or accessories which by virtue of their color, arrangement, trademark, or any other attribute, denoting membership in, or affiliation with, any gang that advocates drug use, violence, or disruptive behavior. Hats may not be worn inside buildings during school hours except for medical or religious reasons.
- Backless and/or open toed sandals or shoes are not allowed as they are unsafe on the playground and during PE. Students should wear closed toed and heeled shoes.

DISCIPLINE

Rancho Elementary students are expected to adhere to the following rules:

1. Be Safe
2. Be Respectful
3. Be Responsible

How can we be safe?

1. Obey authorized adults.
2. Keep personal property and toys at home.
3. Skateboards, roller blades or scooters are not allowed on school grounds.
4. Students arriving or leaving school via any means other than busing or parent drop-off and pick up must give the office written notification.
5. Never bring dangerous objects or weapons to school.
6. Follow the rules even when adults aren't present.
7. Use playground equipment appropriately.
8. Do NOT play in or enter empty classrooms or hallways.

How can we be respectful?

1. Take care of others and respect their property.
2. Take care of school property.
3. Dress appropriately.
4. Listen and obey authorized adults. Always ask permission before leaving an area.

How can we be responsible?

1. Think before acting.
2. Always do your best
3. Tell an adult if someone is being unsafe or if there is something dangerous.

How Can We Be Safe, Respectful, and Responsible During Lunch?

1. Line “cuts” will not be allowed.
2. Use quiet voices when talking to a neighbor.
3. Listen with your whole body when an adult is giving directions.
4. Students are to remain seated while eating.
5. Food or any other object should not be thrown during lunch.
6. Students are not to share food or ask another student for food or milk.
7. During rainy day recesses, students are to play games, read, or watch a video during recess time. Lunch is to be eaten during lunchtime.
8. Lunches are to be placed in the red bins.
9. Nut-free zones must be honored.

Consequences

- Loss of activity/redirected other recess location (i.e. blacktop, field, play structure)
- Referral to the teacher; follow-through with parent contact
- Completion of a Behavior Incident Report
- Restorative Justice Circle
- Community Service Responsibility, writing assignment and/or letter of apology
- Suspension
- For a dress code offense, the pupil may be sent home to change into acceptable clothing with parent notification

Students who are sent to the office for behavioral incidents or other rule infractions will have an opportunity to speak with the principal. Students may participate in conflict resolution, if applicable. Students may be suspended for fighting, profanity, disobedience, threats, gender, ethnic, or racial remarks. A conference with the principal will be held prior to the child returning to school. Students will be suspended from school for additional rule infractions according to the California Education Code.

Green Team

Rancho supports reducing, reusing, and recycling. Our Green Team members ensure that students know how to recycle and compost after eating lunch.

How can you help?

1. Recycle and compost at lunchtime.
2. Pack a No Waste Lunch. Send food in reusable food and drink containers (*bye-bye baggies*).

Eagle Cards

Eagle Cards are earned for participation in school activities and events, academic progress and exceptional character. When a student earns 5 cards, his or her photo is displayed in the Hall of Fame; 10 cards earn a pennant awarded by the principal; 20 cards earn a Golden Eagle certificate.

Eagle Eyes

Eagle Eyes can be earned for modeling and providing exemplary models of our school rules: Be Safe, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible. Eagle Eyes may be exchanged at the Student Store for school tools.

Classroom Positive Behavior Reinforcement

- Classroom privileges
- Teacher praise and Eagle Cards
- Letters/phone calls to parents

SUSPENSION - PARENT/STUDENT RIGHTS

Our intention is that our school environment be a positive and successful one. At times, it may become necessary to suspend a student from school. According to NUSD Board Policy, 5114(c), and California Education Code, 48900, students may be suspended from school for any of the following reasons.

1. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
2. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object.
3. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance.
4. Unlawfully offered or arranged or negotiated to sell any controlled substance.
5. Committed robbery or extortion.
6. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
7. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
8. Possessed or used tobacco, except as permitted under the regulations of this school district according to Education Code Section 48901 (df.5131.6-Drugs, Tobacco, Alcohol).
9. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
10. Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Section 11364 of the Health and Safety Code.
11. Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
12. Has committed sexual harassment as defined in Education Code 48900.2 section 212.5.
13. In the event of suspension, parents and pupils have the right to due process, (Education Code 48911, 48914, 48915) and to review the student's records. In the event of suspension, a parent conference with the principal may occur before the student is readmitted to school.

Sexual Harassment Policy

The Novato Unified School District is committed to providing an educational environment free of unlawful harassment. The District maintains a strict policy prohibiting harassment of students because of sex, race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, age, physical or mental disability, blindness or severely impaired vision or any other basis protected by federal, state or local law ordinance, or regulations. **All such harassment is unlawful.** Irrespective of law, the District believes that all such harassment is offensive. Unlawful harassment in any form, including verbal, physical and visual conduct, threats, demands and retaliation, is prohibited. Violation of this policy by an employee may result in discipline, which may include discharge, depending on the seriousness of the violation. Violation of this policy by another student may result in discipline, which may include suspension or expulsion, depending on the nature and seriousness of the violation. (See Education Code Sections 48900 and 48900.2)

The student has the right to an informal conference with the principal or certificated principal designee prior to a suspension, at which time he/she has these rights:

- To be informed of the charges against him/her and the evidence used as a basis for the charges
- To present his/her side of the incident and any supporting evidence of testimony

The parent or legal guardian has the right to:

- Oral notification at the time of suspension (school personnel will make a reasonable effort)
- Written notice following the suspension
- Request a conference with school personnel

The principal may suspend a student under an emergency situation where the principal determines that the situation constitutes a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel.

Any student in grades 4th and 5th who engages in the sexual harassment of anyone in or from the school may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion as specified in School Board Policy 5149. Any employee who permits or engages in sexual harassment may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. If a student feels that he/she is being harassed, the principal, teacher or other adult at the school should be told immediately.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as aggressive or unwanted and unwelcome behavior by an individual or groups of individuals who ridicule, harass, humiliate, or intimidate another while on school grounds, at a school sponsored activity, while traveling to or from school, on a school bus, during any activity related to school attendance, or that is directed against school district personnel or students and that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to have the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder, and invading the rights of either school personnel or students by creating an intimidating or hostile environment. Typically, the behavior is repeated over time and includes the use of hurtful words and/or acts.

Bullying types include verbal, non-verbal or emotional, physical, and cyber bullying. Cyber bullying is bullying that is committed by means of an electronic act, the transmission of a communication, including but not limited to, a message, text, sound, or image by means of an electronic device, including but limited to, a phone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager. Sending insulting or threatening messages by phone, e-mail, Web sites, or any other electronic or written communication is prohibited.

The Rancho School administration and faculty are fully committed to protecting all students from bullying, racism, harassment, or sexual harassment of any type. The administration trains the staff every year about the NUSD board policies that address bullying and harassment. The Rancho School administration and faculty will be proactive and enforce the board policies that address harassment and bullying and, to the extent possible, shall focus on prevention of bullying by establishing clear rules for student conduct and strategies to establish a positive, collaborative school climate.

If students or staff witness or hear of any type of behavior related to bullying, racism, or harassment, the student or staff member must report the incident to the administration immediately. Once the incident is reported to the administration, the administration will investigate the incident and take appropriate steps to mitigate the situation. A No Bully Solution Team® is a district-supported practice utilized to restore the positive relationship between the bullied student and the bully and maintain a positive school climate for all students. Solution Teams are available to any student and have proven to be a successful intervention in ending bullying. Under the guidance of a trained adult, a group of students are brought together to solve the bullying of one of their peers. Solution Teams are non-punitive and build upon empathy to solve the problem.

Students found to have violated the harassment/bullying policy will earn appropriate consequences based upon the findings in the investigation that range from No Bully Solution Team®, restorative justice, peer court, school detention, school suspension, and expulsion. Consequences and solutions are varied depending on the developmental age of students and the history of problem behaviors.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Parents who have a concern about their child, whether or not it is school-related, are encouraged to speak to their child's teacher, who may wish to refer the particular concern to the school's Student Success Team (SST) for a more comprehensive review. The Student Success Team, which meets regularly, is made up of the principal or an administrative designee, school support staff, regular education teachers and parents.

As a result of noted concerns, the SST may recommend interventions in support of the student's success. Assessment for special education eligibility and support may be considered when a severe discrepancy between ability and achievement is suspected.

Support personnel are available to serve the needs of Rancho students. They include the:

- Community Liaison – available for students and their families to network with outside agencies
- English Learner Para-Educator –available for students who are non-English speaking or who have limited English proficiency.
- Speech and Language Specialist – assists children with speech and language needs.
- Resource Specialist – assists students who have identified learning disabilities.
- School Psychologist—works with our staff to assess students' needs.

Resources available to Rancho Students include:

- Library, PE, Technology
- Music: Fourth grade students are taught to play the ukulele and 5th grade students have the option of learning to play a musical instrument.
- GATE instruction (Gifted and Talented Education Program) for identified students.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Student Leadership provides an opportunity for students to participate in the operation and improvement of their school and also provides leadership opportunities for students. Under the guidance of faculty advisors, Student Leadership hears and considers ideas from officers and classroom representatives from grades 3rd-5th about student activities, programs and facilities at Rancho.

Student Leadership officers and representatives are model students. They are held to a high standard both academically and behaviorally. In order to participate in Student Leadership, a student may not have more than **one behavior notice** in a school year, **have been suspended**, or receive **more than two homework alerts** in any trimester. Fifth grade students are expected to set the example for other students, especially 5th graders in a position of leadership. Students may not have any referral slips for misbehavior to be a Student Leadership Officer. Students with five referrals may not participate in the year-end Swim Party. In order to be a Student Leadership Officer, students may not have been suspended during the academic year.

SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL

The School Site Council (SSC) is elected from the parent and faculty body, representing an equal number of staff and parent members. The School Site Council revises Rancho's Single Plan for Student Achievement (school plan) annually and submits it to Novato Unified School District (NUSD). The school plan outlines goals and activities for the year and benchmarks progress. The Site Council works collaboratively to make decisions about how state allocated funds will be spent to support the school plan. SSC meets once a month. All meetings are open to the public. Agendas and minutes are posted on the school office window and in the School Site Council binder in the front office.

CHILD CARE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The YMCA, a private childcare provider, offers childcare on the Rancho campus. Hours during the school day are 7:00AM to 6:30PM for grades TK-5. Scholarships are available to eligible families. Call (415) 898-6061 for information. Please do not inquire with Rancho Elementary School staff, as we do not have information about the program.

Rancho offers a variety of after-school programs. Classes are offered throughout the school year and enrollment materials can be found in the school office and publicized via the *Friday Flash*.

PTA

Rancho School PTA is an organization of parents, teachers, staff and administrators who support the school and students. Their mission is to enrich the educational experience for all children, to support the teachers and staff, and to provide opportunities for increased parent involvement in the school. They also provide a forum for parents to learn about issues affecting the school, such as school district policies and finance.

The PTA has pursued this mission through a variety of programs such as sponsoring numerous field trips and assemblies for students at every grade level. These field trips give children the opportunity to experience something outside the classroom that makes their lessons come alive such as visiting the Lawrence Hall of Science, the Chabot Space and Science Center, the Audubon Society, Guide Dogs for the Blind, the state capitol and experiencing live theater. PTA also sponsors a variety of after school enrichment classes giving students the opportunity to study art, chess, science, engineering, Spanish, dance, and more.

The PTA and School Site Council have also funded the technology lab, playground equipment, picnic tables, shade structure, emergency preparedness supplies, a library book cart, and the installation of a Memorial Garden. In addition, they have organized activities for families to enjoy together including family picnics. Each year the PTA provides a wonderful recognition lunch for the teachers and staff of Rancho Elementary to thank them for their dedication to the education of their children.

A strong PTA is vital to the continued health of the school. They work hard to ensure that each child receives maximum benefit from the funds and volunteer efforts. This is a voluntary organization. Membership dues are one of their main sources of income to support programs. A variety of fundraisers held throughout the year serve to further support the PTA in their efforts.

The Rancho PTA Board meets monthly. Specific dates and times will be provided in the "Friday Flash," Rancho's weekly newsletter. All parents are invited to attend and are encouraged to become PTA members.

The PTA sponsors numerous events throughout the year for the benefit of our children. We hope you will lend your support.

Volunteer Programs

We have a dynamic Volunteer Program at Rancho. If you are interested in helping in the classroom, the computer lab, the library, or with other programs one or more hours per week on a regularly scheduled basis, please contact our Office Manager, Carole Mencarelli. Volunteer parents are expected to keep everything that happens within the classroom confidential. Parents are invaluable in the classroom. Volunteers must sign in at the office and wear a nametag whenever they are on campus. Rancho parents make it happen!

Dads on Campus

Dads on Campus (DOC) invites positive male role models (dads, grandfathers, uncles, and other father figures) to volunteer at least one day during the school year. DOCs might assist with the Kiss 'N Go Circle, read with students, help teachers prepare projects, engage with kids at recess, eat lunch with students, or assist students with a variety of activities in his child's classroom and other classrooms.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Novato Police Department	911 (emergencies) (415) 897-4361 (information) (415) 472-0911 (use if calling by cell phone)
Marin County Sheriff	(415) 479-2311 (emergencies) (415) 499-7250 (information)
Novato Fire Protection District	911 (emergencies) (415) 472-0911 (use if calling by cell phone) (415) 878-2690 (information)
Novato Community Hospital	(415) 897-3111
Novato Parks and Recreation	(415) 897-4323
Novato Library	(415) 898-4623

Rancho Map

