

The Phoenix Ranch School Parent / Student Handbook



2011-2012 Academic Year

The Phoenix Ranch School Mission Statement

The Phoenix Ranch School is dedicated to inquiry-based academic excellence, and the development of well-rounded, confident children who flourish within a safe and secure environment.



Since 1982

Hallmark of Excellence

- Tradition and Innovation in Education
- Differentiated Instruction to Support Student Learning
- Qualified Professional Faculty
- Small Classes
- Parent Partnership
- Excellent Communication
- Caring and Supportive Environment

*Accredited by
National Association for the Education of Young Children, The National Private School Association and The American Camp Association*

The Phoenix Ranch School and Camp

The Phoenix Ranch is a private independent school dedicated to academic excellence and the desire to meet the needs of each child. Since 1982, owners Frances Alascano and Amy Brown have dedicated their professional careers to the field of education and the creation of a unique and exceptional school and camp.



We have gathered a team of dedicated teachers with appropriate credentials who share our vision of education. The curriculum and textbooks observable in all classrooms reflect the standards established by the State of California. Each teacher is responsible to be knowledgeable on grade level standards, and to challenge students to exceed all benchmarks. In addition to an excellent faculty, and the commitment to California State Standards, the Phoenix mandates small group teaching as the primary tool of effective instruction. In each classroom, students are arranged in homogeneous and heterogeneous groups to facilitate the teacher in meeting individual needs.

All students enjoy the enrichment program that the Phoenix Ranch School offers. Music classes are presented to all grades. Spanish and physical education classes for students in kindergarten through middle school are part of the core curriculum. A qualified teacher conducts each program, using quality materials and supplies. Our school facility includes comfortable and well-equipped classrooms (incorporating computer technology), a library, play equipment, basketball court, swimming pool, playing fields, outdoor lunch areas, and more.

Small group instruction within the classroom allows your child the necessary teacher interaction needed for success. Classroom size is limited to 12:1 in preschool, 20:1 in lower division (kindergarten through second grade), 22:1 (third through fifth grade) and 24:1 in middle school (sixth through eighth grade).

The Phoenix offers a myriad of programs to meet the needs of our students and families. Extended care hours assist working parents, and winter, spring, and summer day camps present families with wonderful options during times when school is out of session. Lunch and snacks are provided for students in preschool and an option to purchase lunch is available for all students in kindergarten through eighth grade. After-school activities are abundant and include workshops and sports leagues, as well as participation in our school orchestra or choir.

The Phoenix Ranch Camp is an outstanding program for children ages 5-13 years old. Well-supervised activities include go carts, sports, archery, crafts, swimming and more. The American Camp Association accredits our summer camp.

Welcome to our school and camp!

Best regards,

Frances P. Alascano B.S., M.A.Ed
Executive Administrator /Owner

Amy S. Brown B.A., M.A.Ed
Principal/Owner

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Admission Information

Preschool Admission (2.9 years through 5 years of age):

The Phoenix Ranch School welcomes children 2.9 years of age or older, potty-trained, and able to learn and play harmoniously within a group of similar-age children and under the supervision of one qualified teacher. The Phoenix Ranch conducts three preschool classes and three pre-kindergarten classes. Pre-kindergarten students must be four years of age by December 1st or older. New parents and students are invited to arrange an interview and personal tour with our Preschool Director, Mrs. Cathie Shultz, or Assistant Preschool Director, Mrs. Vickie De Leon. Tours are typically conducted Monday through Friday from 9:00 A.M. until 11:30 A.M. You may arrange a tour by calling the Main Office at (805) 526-0136 or attend one of the scheduled Open Houses. California State Law requires that forms completed and signed by parents or guardians must be received prior to attendance at school (required forms available in Main Office or online at www.phoenixranch.org). A student formally begins school when required forms and fees have been submitted.

Admission (Kindergarten-5th Grade) and Middle School (6th through 8th Grade):

Welcome to the Phoenix Ranch School Admission Process. The process begins with a personal tour and interview. Admission is based on the successful completion of the previous grade (2.0 G.P.A. or higher; no behavior related concerns) and The Phoenix Ranch Placement Assessment. In addition, admission to kindergarten will require that a student will be 5 years of age by December 1st*, and all students must complete the previous grade (no skipping grades*). *Exceptions include administrator assignment based on assessment, recommendations from previous teachers, administrative approval. Applications for admission are accepted each March through June for the following academic year. To schedule your child's placement assessment, please call the Main Office (805) 526-0136 to arrange a time and date. We are testing entry-level skills for the applied grade level. The admission application fee is \$35.00 (non-refundable). California State Law requires that forms completed and signed by parents or guardians must be received prior to attendance at school (required forms are available in the Main Office or online at www.phoenixranch.org). A student can formally begin school when required forms and fees have been submitted.

Athletics

The Phoenix Ranch School is a member of the San Fernando Valley Private School League. To participate, players pay \$140.00 per season and sign the Athletic Participation Agreement. The fee covers rental uniforms (to be returned at the end of season play), equipment, and sport insurance needed for practices and games. Our teams will be playing games against other private schools in Ventura County and San Fernando Valley. Parents are responsible for arranging player's transportation to and from games. Please let the front office know about your carpool arrangements. A team snack schedule will be distributed by a volunteer during the first week of practice. Parents of players will share snack responsibility (fruit and/or crackers, and water or fruit drinks). Communication between parents and coaches will be done by email. Parents must check their email prior to games. Game and practice schedules, as well as maps to game locations, are posted in the Main Office. **Our Purpose Statement:** The Phoenix Ranch Athletic Program exists to provide our students an opportunity for participation in interscholastic athletics in an environment that encourages the achievement of athletic excellence. In addition, we promote core values that exemplify good sportsmanship and citizenship. We are committed to instilling in every student-athlete fundamental life-skills that are critical to living a productive and healthy lifestyle. We believe that in doing so we are preparing our student-athletes to reach their full potential as they continue to the next stage of their academic, athletic, and personal lives. Participating students and parents must sign sportsmanship and conduct agreements prior to play. **Core Values:** • Teaching the fundamentals of the sport • Competing with character • Displaying sportsmanship and citizenship • Achieving fitness and wellness through sport • Promoting cooperation, respect, & teamwork

Team Sport Calendar

Fall: Boys' Flag Football & Girls' Basketball

Winter: Boys' Basketball and Girls' Soccer

Spring: Boys' and Girls' Volleyball and Boys' Soccer

Attendance (Absence, Tardiness, Vacations)

California Education Code Re: Absent and Tardy Students

Absence as defined by the California Education Code Section 48260-48273 states: "Any pupil subject to compulsory full-time education who is absent from school without a valid excuse three full days in one school year, or tardy or absent for more than any 30 minute period during the school day, without a valid excuse on three occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof, is a truant and shall be reported to the attendance supervisor or to the superintendent of the school district."

Unexcused Absence: The school policy on make up work and tests for unexcused absence (family vacation, elected time off from school) is as follows: Students may be given books and guidance on reading, as well as information on big

assignments and due dates before an unexcused absence (family holiday or vacation). No worksheets will be given. When a child returns from a vacation or unexcused absence, he or she is given 72 hours (3 school days), to turn in all missed work or take any missed tests. The teacher and the child will arrange a testing schedule, so that not all tests or assignments occur or become due on the first day back. The new class work and homework requirements will continue.

Excused Absence: In the event of illness (excused absence) teachers will assist in providing class work or summary sheets of teaching conducted on the child's missed day(s). The 72 hour rule will remain in force to help the child. New work is immediately upon the child when he or she returns. Therefore a child who has missed school, due to an excused absence, will test and submit all necessary missed work within 3 days of return. Students who miss 3 or more days must present a doctor's note, upon return, stating the reason for illness and that the child is well enough to return to school.

A child who has accumulated more than 20 days of absence is in jeopardy of retention. Occasional absence due to illness is to be expected, but frequent absence in favor of staying home or going on a family vacation or holiday is not recommended, and is in breach of state truancy laws. Please read carefully the portions of this letter in regards to teacher's obligation to provide work for unexcused absent days, and the 72 hour testing procedure, followed in all grades for excused or unexcused absence.

Reporting An Absence: If a child is ill and cannot attend school, parents will call the Main Office at (805) 526-0136 by 8:30 A.M. to report the absence. If a child is absent 3 or more days, due to illness, a doctor's note declaring the child to be in good health and able to return to school is required. In the event that a child has been sent home with a lice infestation, a parent or guardian must bring the child to the Main Office, after treatment and removal of lice or nits, before readmission to school. Information on lice treatments is available in Main Office.

Tardiness: Tardiness at the Phoenix Ranch School is defined as a student who arrives anytime after 8:30 A.M. Students may go directly to their classes between 8:30-8:40 A.M., and will be marked tardy. At 8:40 A.M. students not present are marked absent, and students must be admitted to school through the Main Office. Parents will come directly to the Main Office after 8:40 with their child, and sign them in. Parents should turn in the lunch or milk order at that time. The office will give the child a "late admit slip" which will accompany the child to the classroom. If you know you are going to be late (after 8:40) call the Main Office at 805-526-0136.

Vacations: Payment is required through any absence for enrollment to be continued. See Unexcused Absence (above) for more information regarding vacations during school year. A vacation credit is reflected in the preschool tuition, therefore payment must be received during all vacations and absences.

Birthday Celebrations at School

The Phoenix Ranch School invites parents to bring a snack to share with classmates during morning recess or at the end of the day (2:30 P.M.)*. All items must be store-bought (bakery or grocery store). We will serve the snack but would appreciate any paper plates or napkins you send, as well as serving and eating utensils, if necessary. Parents may come to lead the song and serve the snack, if desired. Small party favors are allowed. Actors (Spiderman, etc.) or other teachers (karate, etc.) are not allowed at these celebrations (these are 15-20 min. in length).

**Upon occasion parents prefer to provide pizza or lunch for the class and celebrate at that time. To do so please communicate with your child's teacher, check on lunch time for your grade level, and work with local caterers to deliver on time. Again, no home made food items are allowed. All items must be made in a store or restaurant. Teachers enjoy their personal break when their students are at lunch, so your child's teacher may not attend a lunchtime celebration. Parents may select one time for a celebration, not recess and lunch and afternoon.*

Suggestions for birthday snack: Lightly iced cake or cupcakes* (most store bakeries will prepare the cakes or cupcakes to your specifications, such as light icing), eatable fruit display (these have become very popular), fruit and cookies or crackers, etc. No candy please. We do not allow lit candles, due to safety precautions.

Invitations for Private Birthday Parties

The Phoenix Ranch School cannot release student addresses or contact information. We can assist by mailing your stamped invitations. Please contact the Main Office at 805-526-0136 for more information and assistance. Invitations that are to be distributed by the teacher in class must be for the entire class (all the girls OR all the boys is also appropriate). If you are not inviting all the students, all the boys, or all the girls in the class, the invitations should be mailed. Children are hurt when they feel isolated or excluded, so please be sensitive to our request.

Campus Visitation (Visitors on Campus)

For the safety of our children, The Phoenix operates as a closed campus. Parents and other visitors are welcome on the campus and are of help to the School when assisting teachers or staff with planned school projects and scheduled classroom activities. All visitors must sign in the Main Office and obtain a visitor's badge, before entering the campus. Parents and visitors may park in the lot on Oak Road, or in the Administrative Lot if doing business in the Main Office (10 minute parking).

Parent observations are limited to one visit for no more than two hours per semester. Classroom volunteers are arranged

with the teacher prior to attendance. Each class may have one parent volunteer per day. A parent may volunteer twice each week not to exceed 4 hours per week. Volunteers must register (sign-in) in the Main Office, wear the assigned Visitor's Badge, and sign-out when leaving. Volunteers may be requested on class field trips and on special occasions.

Cell Phones Policy (Items from Home)

An electronic device is defined as any mechanical or electrical contrivance that is capable of playing, recording, storing, or transmitting sounds, images, or data, including but not limited to cell phones or Ipods. **These devices may not be brought to school.** Students experiencing an emergency may come to the Main Office and request emergency phone use. Cell phones, Ipods, or other electronic devices found on students will be confiscated and returned to a parent or guardian only. Devices not recovered after 30 days will be donated to a local charity. The Phoenix is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen items brought from home. Use of a cell phone during the school day will result in disciplinary action. Use of a cell phone includes but is not limited to the receiving and transmission of voice messages, text messages, photographic images, or playing of games. The policy restrictions apply during field trips or at any time the school or its agents are acting in "loco parentis". The student council does celebrate specific Ipod days with specific restrictions as to day and use.

Computer Use Rules

The Phoenix Ranch School has computers located in all K-8th grade classrooms. Computers have been inhibited with a filter program entitled Iprism.

The program limits access to inappropriate material however all students will be responsible and follow guidelines set forth by the school. Computer use rules will be reviewed by each classroom teacher.

- Students may only use the Internet for relevant research, as designated by the teacher, and may at no time browse or search the web for personal interest.
- No student may use email or social programs (Yahoo, MySpace, Facebook, etc.). An exception that would require teacher approval would be sending email for a response as part of a school report or school research.
- No food or drink is allowed near computers.
- A teacher must be present for student use.
- All equipment including computers, printers, scanners, headphones, monitors, televisions, etc. must be handled with utmost care. These are expensive pieces of equipment and costly to repair.
- Tampering with the computer hardware (monitors, mouse, CPU, etc.), software, or cabling is not permitted.
- Software may not be brought from home or anywhere outside the school and used in school computers.

Contact Information

Main Office Number (School or Camp): (805) 526-0136 Fax Number: (805) 526-5002

School Owners: Frances Alascano, Administrator and Amy S. Brown, Principal

Cathie Shultz, Preschool Director / Wendi McAdam, Coordinator / Futura Spears, Camp/ Club Director / Mychael De la Torre, Assistant / Teri Allen, Office Manager / Anie Villepontoux, Head of Accounting / Tami Garcia, H.R. & Accounts Payable / Charlene Todd, Secretary

All staff and faculty can be reached through email by using first initial and last name followed by phoenixranch.org. Example: cshultz@phoenixranch.org.

Emergencies and Evacuation (Fire Drill Information)

In the event of earthquake, fire, power failure, or other emergency, The Phoenix Ranch School is prepared as follows: Fire drills are conducted monthly and require that all students line up outdoors and remain with their teacher until the all-clear signal has sounded. Earthquake drills are conducted monthly. Students move under desks or tables and hold on to table legs, protecting their head and neck. If evacuation becomes necessary, we will walk or transport students in hired vehicles or private cars to Simi Valley High School (Cochran/Stow) or as directed by emergency services. The Phoenix subscribes to an emergency telephone service, "Connect-Ed" which allows the School to contact parents in the event of any emergency, and is also used for general announcements via your registered phone numbers.

Extended Care (After School Program for Students in K-8th Grade)

This pre-registered service includes morning extended care from 6:30-8:30 A.M. and afternoon care from 3:15-6:30 P.M. Morning care is presented in Room #10 Oak Hall, West Campus for all students K-8th from 6:30-7:15 A.M. At 7:15 A.M. students in grades 3rd-8th move to Room #3 Yosemite Hall, East Campus. At 8:00 A.M. students are released to supervised outdoor play. Afternoon extended care (called "Ranch Club") is a recreation program that includes a study hall period for homework. Cost is \$1250.00 per year for morning and evening care. Parents of students in preschool, elementary, or middle school, picking-up after 6:30 P.M. will be charged \$10.00 per child for the first ten-minute period (6:30-6:40 P.M.), and \$2.00 per minute after 6:40 P.M. **Extended Care at Preschool:** Parents of enrolled preschool students pay a monthly fee that includes full care from 6:30 A.M.- 6:30 P.M. for full day enrollment and 6:30 A.M. until 12:30 P.M. for half-day enrollment.

Financial Obligations

Preschool Payment Plans, Financial Obligations, and Policies

- 1) **Payment Methods:** All preschool programs are assessed on month-to-month use:
 - a) **Preschool Monthly Payment Plan** — Payments are due on the first of each month and delinquent on the sixth.
 - b) **Preschool Semi-monthly Payment Plan** — Payments are due on the first and fifteenth of each month and are delinquent if not received by the fifth and twentieth respectively. Semi-monthly payments are calculated at a 5% higher rate.
 - c) **Annual Payment Plan** — Elect to pay in full by August 1 and receive a 3% discount—full payment is to be made by check or money orders only.
- 2) **Enrollment Withdrawal, Contract Termination, Contract Amendment:**
 - a) **Preschool Withdrawal** — To withdraw from the preschool program, a one-month written notice in advance must be given. Enrollment for preschool/ pre-kindergarten is month to month. If the one-month notice is not given, the parent is responsible for the following month's fee.
 - b) **Contract Amendment** — The Phoenix Ranch School contract may not be amended or altered in any way except by a written amendment executed by school administration. Handwritten or printed alterations written into the Contract, when delivered to The Phoenix Ranch School by parent/guardian, shall be of no legal force or effect.

Elementary and Middle School Payment Plans, Financial Obligations, and Policies

- 1) **Elementary and Middle School Payment Methods:**
 - a) **Ten-Month Payment Plan**—Tuition is divided into ten equal payments; the first payment is due August 1 and last payment is due May 1. Fees are not assessed on a time for service basis, but rather on the total school days (182).
 - b) **Special Payment Plan** for Continuing Pre-kindergarten Students (Transitioning to Phoenix Ranch Kindergarten):*
 - *Nine Month Payment Plan: Due first of each month, beginning September 1 ending May 1
 - *Special Payment Plan is designed to assist with the elimination of a double August payment when transitioning from preschool to elementary.
 - c) **Annual Payment Plan** — Elect to pay in full by August 1 and receive a 3% discount— full payment is to be made by check or money orders only.
- 2) **Enrollment Withdrawal, Contract Termination, Contract Amendment:**
 - a) **Elementary/Middle School Contract Termination** - Enrollment and tuition for kindergarten through eighth grade is based on a full year or ten month contract, and cannot be terminated at will. Termination of enrollment may result however if payment is not received within thirty days of the due date. Termination does not relinquish your financial obligation. If by mutual agreement, a contract is terminated or amended, a fee of \$250.00 will be charged.
 - b) **Contract Amendment** — The Phoenix Ranch School contract may not be amended or altered in any way except by a written amendment executed by school administration. Handwritten or printed alterations written into the Contract, when delivered to The Phoenix Ranch School by parent/guardian, shall be of no legal force or effect.

School Financial Policies and Procedures:

- 1) **No Refunds** — There is no reduction or refund of fees due to vacations, holidays, absences, illnesses, missed lunches/trips, or other causes.
- 2) **Late Fee** — A \$15.00 late fee will be assessed for each payment not received by the 5th of each month.
- 3) **Finance Charge** — A finance charge of 1½ % is charged on the unpaid balance on payments not received by the 20th of the month.
- 4) **Returned Checks** — Returned checks are charged a \$20.00 fee. Checks that do not clear on the second attempt are charged an additional \$20.00. NSF checks must be replaced with cash, money order, or certified check within 5 days.
- 5) **Extended Care** (Optional Program) for Kindergarten through Eighth Grade — A.M. Care is from 6:30 A.M. to 8:00 A.M. and After-School Care is from 3:00 P.M. to 6:30 P.M. Any child not registered for before or after-school care, (before 8:00 A.M., or after 3:20 P.M.), will be placed in Extended Care.

We reserve the right to modify the Credit Card payment option and above policies and procedures. (See Tuition schedule for charges.)

Discount Rates:

- 1) **Annual School Tuition Discount** — A 3% discount is given on tuition only, if payment is paid in full by cash or check by August 1 for the coming school year. Families paying in full with multiple children receive a 3%

discount on the first child and siblings in the same household receive the 10% discount. There are no multiple discounts given and no combining of discounts (the maximum discount given is 10%).

- 2) **Sibling Discount** — A 10% discount is given to siblings that reside in the same household. Sibling discounts are applied to the lowest based tuition.
- 3) **Summer Camp Discount for Phoenix Ranch Students** — A 10% discount may be applied to summer camp day fee for Phoenix Ranch students, kindergarten through eighth grade. A 5% camp discount may also be applied to those siblings not attending The Phoenix Ranch School residing in the same household. Camp discounts do not apply to optional programs. Optional programs for camp include lunch, extended care, enrichment classes, and trips. See Administrative and Tuition Fee Schedule.

Food from Home Policy

All food and snacks brought from home for parties or special events must be prepared in licensed commercial kitchens. The Ventura County Health Department considers school a commercial enterprise and as such, we cannot serve homemade foods, pastries, desserts, etc. All foods brought to the school must be cooked in a commercial kitchen, licensed by the Ventura County Health Department. Therefore, all donated foods, for parties, etc. must be purchased from a commercial restaurant, market, or bakery. It is considered the safest approach when serving large groups of people and is in the best interest of all our children.

Fundraising

The Phoenix participates in two major fundraising events each school year. In the fall, students take home the **Fall Fundraiser** brochure and attend the Fall Fundraising Assembly. A wide selection of gift items is available for purchase including wrapping paper, boutique items, cookie dough, etc. The program includes prizes and incentives for the students for participation. Under no circumstances should students or families sell door-to-door or to strangers. We thank you for your support and purchases within your circle of family and friends. Items to be purchased for the classrooms or campus, from fundraiser proceeds, are pre-identified by the school. Participation is completely voluntary.

The second major fundraiser is the **Annual School Auction** presented at the Great Brain Fair in May. Classes create beautiful items for live auction and local stores, businesses, and school families donate items for the silent auction. Items to be purchased for the classrooms or campus, from fundraiser proceeds, are pre-identified by the school. Participation is completely voluntary. Families are involved and hopefully present at the school fair; participation in the auction is optional.

Family Fun Night is a monthly gathering of interested families at a local eatery. This is fun for all and provides a 10%-20% of sales donation to the school. We will present a free ice cream social for all our children and families in June, using some of the proceeds and thanking you for your support and participation. The remaining proceeds will purchase designated classroom or campus items.

The Phoenix Ranch School participates in the **eScrip** program to help raise funds for the School. By registering your credit cards and Von's grocery store cards, a percentage of every sale is returned by select vendors to the School. To participate in eScrip, please register your cards at www.escrip.com on an annual basis. The School's eScrip Group ID is 151761972. Profits from eScrip will be applied to designated classroom or campus purchases or improvements.

Gratuities

No gratuities or expensive gifts may be given to faculty, staff, or camp counselors.

Health and Safety (Illness, Injuries, Medications)

As a courtesy and service to our families, the Phoenix Ranch School and Camp provides a Health Office that is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 A.M. to 6:30 P.M. At any time emergencies will be handled by our Health Office Supervisor or any one of our teachers or staff certified in CPR and First Aid (all faculty is certified annually in first aid/CPR). In the event of an emergency a parent will be called. If the parent does not respond within one hour student will be transferred to a local medical facility for emergency treatment, and if life threatening, 911 will be called immediately.

Dispensed Medication at School/Administered by School Staff

All medicines to be administered by school staff must be accompanied by a doctor's prescription with written directions from the parent. As per state regulations, we may not administer any "over-the-counter" medication (such as Tylenol or cough syrup) without a doctor's prescription. If your child needs a prescribed medication to be administered during school hours the policy is as follows: Bring the medicine, with prescription label, to the Main Office or to the director of morning care from 6:30-8:00 A.M. Complete the *Medication to be Administered Form*. Parents are to collect medication from the Simi Hall first aid office, at the end of the day.

Injuries at School

If a child is injured at school a CPR/Red Cross certified staff member will administer primary first aid. Slight injuries and other incidents are reported on The Phoenix Ranch 'Injury Report' form. This form will be sent home with your child. All

injuries that are more than minor cuts or abrasions will be handled as follows: 1) Parent is called immediately. 2) Student is transferred to Simi Doctors Medical Clinic for emergency treatment. 3) If life threatening, 911 will be called immediately. If parent does not want this procedure followed parent must provide Phoenix Ranch with written instructions indicating what procedures or medical treatment the parent desires. Children cannot be transported to their personal physician.

Lice Infestation

In the event that a child has been sent home with a lice infestation, a parent or guardian must bring the child to the Main Office, after treatment and removal of lice or nits before readmission to school.

Illness at School/Return to School Following Illness

Sick students are not admitted to school. Alternative arrangements must be made in case your child becomes ill. An ill child must stay home for at least 24 hours after a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine). Students who appear to have flu-like illness will be sent to the Health Office until they can be sent home.

- Doctor's recommendations emphasize basic steps in cold/flu prevention: stay home when sick, wash hands frequently with soap and water, cover nose and mouth with tissue when coughing or sneezing (or shirt sleeve or elbow if no tissue is available).
- Routine Cleaning: School staff will routinely clean areas that students and staff touch often.
- We will conduct active fever and symptom screening of students upon arrival at school. School staff will look for symptoms suggestive of infection, such as fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches and fatigue. Any student who has at least 2 of these symptoms will be separated from the others, and sent home as soon as possible.

Holidays

The school and camp are closed on all national holidays as well as the day after Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve. The school may choose to close the day before and/or after any holiday that occurs on a Tuesday or Thursday. See *School Calendar*.

Hours of School

Preschool and Pre-kindergarten Classes: Preschool classes begin Tuesday, September 6, 2011. Hours: 6:30 A.M.– 6:30 P.M. Monday through Friday. Classes start 8:45 A.M. Children arriving late to school or absent should have Parent call the Main Office at 526-0136. Half-day students must be picked-up by 12:30 P.M. Lunch is served at 11:40 A.M. Morning and afternoon snacks are provided

Kindergarten through Fifth Grade Classes: Classes begin Tuesday, September 6, 2011. Hours: 8:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. Parents of children arriving late to school or absent should call the Main Office. Extended Care hours are 6:30-8:30 A.M. and 3:00(3:15) -6:30 P.M.

Middle School Classes (Sixth through Eighth Grade): Middle School Hours: 8:30 A.M. to 3:15 P.M. Parents of students arriving late to school or absent should call the Main Office. Extended Care hours are 6:30-8:30 A.M. and 3:00(3:15) -6:30 P.M.

Library Information

The Phoenix Ranch School Library is located in the Main Office. Teachers sign up for library use as a drop in reading center, research center, and resource for leveled reading. The library contains fiction and non-fiction books and magazines, as well as encyclopedias and resource materials. Children in preschool through eighth grade will find materials at age/grade level. The library also houses several computers for research and typing.

Lunch, Snacks, and Assigned Lunch Hours

Morning Snacks: Preschool children will eat one snack in the morning at 8:30 A.M., and one snack in the afternoon at 3:00 P.M. Snacks could include juice, fruit, crackers, applesauce, cheese, pretzels, raisins, etc. Preschool snacks are provided and included in the monthly fee.

Students in elementary and middle school are encouraged to provide a nutritious morning snack to be eaten at recess.

Lunch: Preschool children eat a provided lunch which will include a main entrée, side dish, and fruit and/or vegetable, and milk. A month menu is published with details. Lunch is included in the monthly fee for full time or part time students. **Elementary and middle school** students may purchase a catered lunch for \$865.00 per year, or on a daily basis using lunch coupons purchased in the Main Office. Ten lunch coupons are sold for \$50.00 and may be used on any school day, except on most field trip days. Students present one coupon to their teacher at morning attendance. A menu is distributed monthly (copy available online at www.phoenixranch.org or in the Main Office. Lunches may not be billed, however, it is the policy at The Phoenix Ranch School that all children will eat lunch, therefore, if no lunch (or lunch ticket) is submitted, a lunch will be provided and parents will be charged \$6.0

Lunch Times

- Preschool - 11:45-12:20
- Kindergarten, First, and Second Grade - 12:35-1:20
- 3rd-8th Grades – 11:45-12:30

Parent Code of Conduct and Family Commitment

The Phoenix Ranch School, using administrative discretion, may at any time refuse or terminate service due to parental/guardian behavior, that is deemed detrimental, disruptive, or threatening to staff or the environment. The Phoenix Ranch School is a community working together to provide excellence and balance in all areas of a child's education. Parents are required to review this handbook and are urged to clarify any questions before each student begins school in the fall. The family's commitment to the policies and procedures of the School was agreed upon during the application process and upon enrollment. The student and the student's parents agree to abide by the School's policies, rules, and regulations, as may be adopted or amended from time to time. The acceptance of the student for enrollment in any school year shall not obligate the School to accept the student in any succeeding year. This handbook is designed to be a guide and does not cover any and all eventualities. We ask that parents and students interpret these guidelines in the spirit of rules intended to help the smooth running of our school community. All matters of dispute can be brought to the attention of the Administration. The administration reserves the right to use their discretion in all matters and to make changes to this handbook as necessary.

Parking and Carpool Information

Parking is available on both the East and West Campus. Parents are encouraged to park in the lot on Oak Road. Numbered parking spaces on east and west campuses are assigned to faculty and staff; please do not park in a numbered space, in a red zone, or in front of Simi Hall. The Administration Building parking lot is for business purposes only. No drop-off or pick-up of students is allowed from the Administration parking lot. Handicapped parking spaces are for the sole use of persons with physical disabilities. **Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures (Carpool Zone):**

- **Preschool** – West Campus Carpool Zone. A preschool staff member will greet students in the carpool zone from 8:00-8:30 A.M. ONLY. Otherwise parents must escort their child.
- **K-1st Grade** – West Campus Carpool Zone. A staff member will greet students in the West Campus designated carpool zone from 8:00-8:30 A.M. and 3:00-3:15 P.M.
- **2nd-8th Grades** – East Campus. A staff member will greet students in the carpool zone in front of the East Campus parking lot.

To use the Carpool Zone (available from 8:00-8:25 A.M. and 3:00-3:20 P.M.) do not park, but remain in your car. A staff member will assist your child from the car. Parents arriving after 8:25 A.M. must park in the Special Event Lot and escort their child to the classroom.

- Families with two or more children assigned to different drop-off zones will use the West Campus Carpool Zone. A crossing guard assists with Oak Road crossing from 8:00-8:25 A.M. No child may cross the road without an adult. The pick-up procedure is in effect 3:00-3:15 (3:20 6th-8th), and is the same as morning drop-off. At 3:20 any remaining students will be escorted to extended care, and emergency care charges assessed.

Preschool Sign In/Sign Out / Rest Time

California requires that all preschool/pre-kindergarten children must be signed-in and out daily by a parent or legal guardian. Sign in may occur at morning carpool (8:00-8:30 A.M.) in front of Simi Hall with a designated preschool teacher/director. If a teacher/director is not present, or after 8:30 A.M., preschool students must be escorted to their classroom and signed-in and out of school by a parent or guardian (18 years or older). Each classroom in Simi Hall has its own sign-in/out green book placed on the reception counter as you enter each room. The parent must bring their child to the teacher to acknowledge that the child is present. Full day preschool students rest for 1-2 hours each day, as required by the State of California Department of Social Services. Mats are provided at school. Parents provide a clean crib-sized sheet and small blanket, to be used daily. Sheets and blankets may be brought and stored at school Monday through Thursday, but taken home on Friday to be laundered and returned the following Monday. Kindergarten students have a 15-30 minute rest time. Parents must provide a towel to be used for rest time. Towels go home Friday for laundering and returned the following Monday.

Photographs and Digital and Electronic Media

Pictures of enrolled Phoenix Ranch students and campers may be used in school or camp brochures or other promotional materials (fliers, website, signs, etc.). The Phoenix Ranch School and Camp may use photographs of an enrolled student or camper for these purposes without requiring prior consent from the parent/guardian and without compensation.

Playground and Play Equipment Rules

Students are to be respectful of peers, playground supervisors, and school property, No hitting, pushing, fighting, combat play, or tackle sports are permitted. Students who are eating must do so while seated at the lunch tables or benches. No eating and playing on the sport's field or play equipment. Students are reminded to throw away all personal trash. Rules vary on different apparatus on the playground. Teachers, lunch supervisors, or after school counselors will review rules regularly. General play equipment rules include: Use equipment slides by facing forward, sitting up, and sliding down one at a time (no climbing up the slide). Two at a time on the monkey bars moving in the designated direction (no sitting or climbing on top of the monkey bars), kickball, soccer, and other large area sports must be

restricted to the West Campus field. Basketball and volleyball are played on the East Campus Sports Court. Handball and gaga are sports activities with specific rules. Rules are posted and reviewed by teachers or staff prior to participation.

Recess Periods

Preschool children have outdoor play and snack in the morning hours as part of their regular rotation. See your child's classroom schedule for outdoor play and morning snack schedule. Students in Kindergarten through eighth grade have a recess or nutrition break daily as follows:

- Kindergarten – 10:00-10:30 A.M. (East Campus)
- First & Second Grade – 10:00-10:20 (West Campus)
- Third & Fourth Grade – 9:45-10:00 A.M. (East Campus)
- Fifth thru Eighth Grade -10:35-10:45 A.M. (East Campus)

Referral Recommendation Procedure

When staff members have concerns about a child and feel it would be beneficial for an evaluation of the child's development, they are obliged to convey this information to the preschool director or principal. The director or principal will observe the child and contact the parent to arrange a conference. If the director or principal believes a referral is necessary, a list of referral options will be presented to the parents at the time of the conference.

Release of Children to Adults Other Than Parents

The Phoenix Ranch School will release students to their parents or adults indicated on the Authorization to Pick Up form. The Phoenix will release a child to an adult other than a parent (other than listed on the authorization form), under the following circumstances:

- The parents sent a note or made a phone call to notify us of the adult picking up.
- If the parent has called or sent a note authorizing this adult, we will check for verification of this person's identity.
- If the parent has not called or written in advance – the adult must be sent to the Main Office. At the Main Office, the parents will be called for clearance.
- If the parent cannot be reached – the child MAY NOT BE RELEASED until parental consent can be verified.

Release of Personal Information

No release of personal information beyond name and address information used by the school for mailings may be made without the following conditions being met:

- 1) Consent from the parent
- 2) In the case of extreme emergency: children's health or safety is jeopardized

Special Needs Policy

It is not the policy of the Phoenix Ranch School to accept "special needs children." Special needs children are those children who have been identified as needing more supervision than provided at The Phoenix Ranch School (1:12 in preschool and 1:25 in elementary or middle school) or a child whose needs are such that they require the hiring of special staff or the special training of existing staff in order for that child to successfully participate in our school program. To enroll at the Phoenix a child must be physically in good health, cognitively able to follow and understand direction for their age level, and emotionally be able to conduct him or herself harmoniously in a group without infringing upon the right of others.

Standardized Testing Information

Students in first through eighth grade participate in the SAT X (Stanford Achievement Test, 10th Edition). The testing will be held in late May or early June. Results are mailed to parents during the month of July. The SAT is a national standardized test that provides important information for parents and for the school regarding the progress of students and effectiveness of teaching and curriculum. The Phoenix Ranch School typically performs in the top 75th-85th percentile in the country. The SAT tool is different than is currently presented in the public schools in California which is comparative only to other students in California. The SAT does provide us with a derived score for reading level referred to as a "Lexile Score". A lexile number allows us to match reading materials with ability. Our teachers use the lexile in assigning initial skill level groups but parents can use the score and find appropriate books for reports and pleasure reading. For more information on lexile based reading opportunities please refer to: www.lexile.com.

Student Code of Conduct (Behavior Contract)

Each student in preschool (signed by parent) through eighth grade must acknowledge the school policy regarding personal behavior. The Behavior Contract is as follows:

The Phoenix Ranch School Student Behavior Contract is designed to protect student rights and to inform students and parents of acceptable classroom behavior and the consequences of misconduct. The school response to misconduct will be a measured response and will include a parent conference with the student's teacher, or director, and/or school administrator/principal. The Phoenix Ranch School teachers, staff, and administrators will at no time inflict corporal punishment. All students enrolled in K-6th Grade at The Phoenix Ranch School will be held responsible for the content and intent of this document.

The Phoenix Ranch School Student Rights Statement

The Phoenix Ranch School faculty and staff will protect each individual student's right to:

- Learn and play in an environment free of violence
- Learn in a classroom free of constant disruption
- Learn and play in a non-threatening, safe, and caring environment
- Participate in all school activities without prejudice or harassment of any kind.

Students will arrive at class on time, prepared and ready to learn each day (with homework).

Students will be polite and respectful to teachers and staff. Students will cooperate and follow instructions. Absences as well as tardiness will be reflected on the report card. Students will receive a grade in work habits and cooperation that will reflect their effort in these areas. Students who are impolite or disrespectful to faculty or staff will be spoken to. Subsequent disrespect will involve a parent conference and written documentation and may involve removal from the classroom, detention, missed special activity participation, and/or a 1-2 day suspension.

Students will raise their hand to be recognized and may not inflict disruptive behavior on his or her classmates.

Disruptive behavior prevents the teacher from teaching and other students from learning. Frequent disruptive behavior will result in a poor grade in work habits and self control. Ongoing disruption will also result in written documentation and parent conferences followed by detention, removal from the classroom, and/or missed special activity participation. If a student is unable to control her or himself after implementation of some or all of the above named remedies, a suspension of 1-2 days or expulsion may result.

Students will work and play cooperatively together and not hurt others. No bullying allowed.

Hurting others physically is contrary to our Student Rights policy regarding a violence free environment. Students who hit others will be removed from the group for a period of time in relationship to the assault. A child who has difficulty playing cooperatively will receive a poor grade in self-control. An intentional somewhat serious assault will automatically involve a parent conference, written documentation, and may require removal from school for the day or additional days at the discretion of school administrators and in measure to the offense and the age of the child. Repeated hitting or continual hurting of others is intolerable and the reaction may include an automatic suspension of 1-3 days and possible expulsion. Bullying is not allowed and students are required to pledge yearly, not to bully. Students are counseled on what constitutes bullying, how to avoid it, and how to report bullying.

Students must use acceptable language and must not spit.

Inappropriate language is not allowed at school. Students who are spitting or using foul language will be reprimanded by the teacher or counselor. Additional inappropriate language or behavior will be reflected on the self control portion of the report card and may result in written documentation, parent conferences, detention, missed special activity participation, and/or a suspension of 1-2 days.

Students will care appropriately for all schoolbooks and property.

Destruction of property, including the facility, textbooks, or supplies is forbidden. Parents will be held financially responsible for defacement or loss of materials including textbooks. Students who deface school property may be subject to a parent-supervised clean up day(s), detention, and/or a suspension or expulsion.

Students must remain with a teacher or counselor at all times at school or Club.

It is forbidden for any student to leave the facility at any time without a parent or parent-designated adult. Students may not run away or hide. If a student should run away from the school facility, parents will be contacted immediately then the Simi Valley Police Department. The Phoenix Ranch School is unable to physically restrain a child and therefore can only talk to the student and monitor his or her movement, if possible. This behavior is a very serious concern due to the threat to child safety and could result in expulsion.

Students will be honest and truthful in the classroom, in school, and in Club. Cheating or stealing is not permitted.

Plagiarism is not permitted.

Students caught cheating in school will earn a poor grade in work habits and may suffer additional consequences including written documentation, parent conference, detention, missed special activity participation, or suspension after consideration of the age of the child and the number of offenses. Stealing is a serious crime. If a student steals, a parent conference will be called and the child may be sent home, possibly with a 1-2 day suspension or expulsion (if there are repeated thefts). The student will also be responsible to return the stolen item(s) and write an apology. Plagiarism occurs when children are researching a topic or writing and he or she uses the exact words of an author without crediting the author. Teachers from first-sixth grade explain plagiarism and teach students how to re-write the author's words or give credit where credit is due. Parent drafted work is a form of plagiarism. Parents may give advice and some help but must not write reports, homework, or other assignments for their children. If an assignment has been submitted that is clearly plagiarized, the student will re-write the assignment and will receive a lower grade.

Students will be treated fairly, without prejudice, and with courtesy.

No child will receive unfair or prejudicial treatment from the faculty or staff. All students should demonstrate common courtesy toward each other. In an effort to create a harmonious environment students will receive good citizenship awards for helpful and kind behavior toward other students in addition to good grades in citizenship on the report card. Continuous harassment or teasing between students will result in a poor citizenship grade, parent conference, time-out from activity, and/or detention.

General Information

Solving Problems at School – All students must learn to solve problems through appropriate means. In response to a threat, teasing, or injury, students should TALK—USE YOUR WORDS, GET HELP FROM TEACHERS, COUNSELORS OR ADMINISTRATORS AND OR WALK AWAY.

Documentation – Parents will be notified of the above incidents on one of two standard forms: The Incident Form will recount a minor accident or a minor type of incident. The second form is the Office Referral Slip. The referral slip is a communication from administration (the principal's office) and reflects a behavioral concern. Parents will sign and return the slip. Both forms are documented in the student's file.

Signing the Agreement: The parent and child signatures below indicate agreement to The Phoenix Ranch School and Camp rules and consequences of misbehavior. Please return the bottom portion of this agreement with your enrollment contract at the time of registration. Non receipt of the contract does not nullify the agreement's intent. All Rules will be upheld whether or not the agreement is signed. Signing however will show good faith and the willingness of all students to cooperate and be educated within a harmonious environment.

Student Council Information

The Phoenix Ranch School Student Council is composed officers and representatives circulating among the classrooms, reporting on activities and getting feedback, as well as planning and presenting the monthly assemblies, dances, school special events, and more. The council meets monthly (subcommittees meet an additional time each month) at 2:15 P.M. (7th period). Nominees must meet requirements for each office and have teacher signatures and the desire to work hard, speak in front of a group, work on a team, and share ideas (while maintaining a 2.5 GPA).

3-Step Student Council Application Process

1. Complete an application (below) and return by Wednesday, September 22, 2010 to the Main Office. Applications will not be accepted after 5:00 P.M. The application requires a teacher and parent signature.
2. Present a speech and campaign on Monday, September 27 at 10:00 A.M., in the Assembly Area.
3. Elections will be held on Tuesday, September 28 in the morning. Candidates meet at 2:15 P.M. for results.

Student Body President (Eighth Grade Only): Leads meetings, assemblies, guides the council, promotes school activities, etc.

Student Body Vice-President (Eighth Grade Only): Assists the president or acts on her or his behalf if the president is unable. The V.P. is appointed to the person with the second most votes for president.

Secretary (5th-8th Grade) Takes notes (minutes) at all meetings, responsible for correspondence, activity fliers, posters, promotion, etc.

Treasurer (5th-8th Grade) Responsible to track all funds that student council accepts and work with the school bookkeeper. The treasurer will, collect and submit all monies, review account with the president.

Historian (5th-8th Grade) – Must have a camera and be responsible to take pictures at school events.

Sergeant-At-Arms (5th-8th Grade) – This office is responsible to open all assemblies and special events with a trained honor guard (flag protocol). The Sergeant-At-Arms will also, assist with council protocol, and special events.

School Mascot (5th-8th Grade) – This cheer king or queen leads us in cheers, demonstrates enthusiasm for our school, and represents us at many different events including assemblies, special events, etc.

Substance Abuse Policy

The Phoenix Ranch School abides by the laws of the United States and the State of California. At no time does the Phoenix condone the use, possession, distribution, or sale of tobacco, drugs, and/or other harmful substances or paraphernalia as it creates a hazard to the welfare of students, faculty, and families of the School. Evidence of alcohol, tobacco, or drug use by a student will result in parent and/or authority involvement

Uniform Dress Code and Hygiene

All students are to arrive at school well groomed. Hair must be clean, and long hair must be pulled back into a ponytail or braids. No unusual hair colors (blue, pink, etc.). Inappropriate jewelry should not be worn, including but not limited to dangle earrings, jewelry in other body piercings, bracelets, anklets, bulky necklaces, etc. Students must wear neat and appropriate clothing. Elementary and middle school students in uniform daily, and must wear appropriate attire on Free Dress Days. Free dress days include appropriate attire that is defined as clothing that is clean, not torn, and free of inappropriate words* or logos, with tennis or other closed-toe shoes (no beachwear), no tank tops or strapless tops, no short-shorts, or short skirts or dresses. Only the Phoenix Ranch School hat is acceptable for outdoor wear. No hats may be worn in class. Dennis Uniform Company is our uniform provider for children in kindergarten through eighth grade. Contact Dennis Uniform at (818) 887-5376, or come to the Main Office for uniform shirts and spirit shirt orders (805) 526-0136. Dennis Uniform comes on campus in mid-August to assist parents See the Uniform Handbook for complete uniform details by grade. ** Inappropriate written messages, pictures, or symbols on clothing which portray ideas that are hostile or adverse to the health, safety, and welfare of students such as messages that relate to drugs, profanity, alcohol, or violence.*

Items to be purchased from Dennis Uniform Company only:

- Pants and walking shorts (khaki only)
- Skorts (khaki or plaid)
- Jumper or skirt (Campbell plaid only)
- Green polo shirts (navy for middle school), sweatshirts (crew only)
- White button down shirt with school logo
- Sweater (green* cardigan, vest, pullover) / M.S.-navy*
- Jacket (Polartec or waterproof jacket)
- Hair accessories (Campbell plaid)
- White tights, anklets or knee-highs (white or black leggings from Dennis)
- Campbell plaid crisscross *optional*/ties for girls and/or clip-on ties for boys are worn with white shirts.
- Middle School Uniform Includes P.E. Wear in physical education): Dennis Uniform Company

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Academic Code of Conduct

Standards for Academic Integrity: The Phoenix Ranch School sets high standards for academic integrity and honesty. The following situations of academic dishonesty may include but are not limited to:

- Using another student's paper or notes without teacher permission.
- Giving or receiving help on a test or quiz.
- Turning in homework that is not his/her own work.
- Giving or receiving answers on homework assignments.
- Plagiarizing a paper or assignment.
- Possession of an unauthorized previous test and/or materials which would give the student an unfair advantage.
- Talking or distracting other students in a testing situation.

Consequences for Academic Dishonesty

First Offense: The students will receive a "zero" on the test or assignment which necessitated this action. A letter will be sent home and placed in the student's file. A referral will be written for a detention to be assigned (Middle School only).

Second Offense: The above action will be repeated and the student will have a one-day suspension.

Third Offense: (Middle School Only) necessitates a faculty review and possible expulsion.

Academic Probation

The Phoenix Ranch School requires all students in third through eighth grade to maintain a 2.0 GPA (see the grading standard table below for grade point equivalents). There is no social promotion. The ramifications of a report card with a grade point average below 2.0 are of concern. As per school regulations, students who fall below a 2.0 GPA and/or students who have earned 3 or more *N's* in two or more quarters, are likely candidates for retention or become ineligible for continuation into the next academic year.

It is our sincere wish that each student at The Phoenix Ranch School finds academic success and we can help through our Resource and Referral Program and assistance with outside resources (educational testing, qualified tutors, etc.). In upper grades and middle school, homework is posted on www.Engrade.com. All teachers have school and Engrade email addresses and will respond to parent inquiries and concerns promptly. Monday newsletters outlining the week's homework and Friday's Communication Folder keep students and parents informed.

Engrade (Online Grading Program)

The Phoenix Ranch School uses an online program called Engrade (www.engage.com) for students in 1st through 8th grade. It not only allows you to communicate easily with your child's teacher, but you can also check your child's nightly homework assignments and grades, at any given time when you log onto the website. Lists of assignments that go into each reported grade are provided, to show how the final grade is calculated. Grades will be updated frequently so that you may keep current with your child's progress. Each student has an assigned individual ID number that will be given to parents at Back to School Night. Parents create a free Engrade account as follows:

Please do not share your child's ID number with anyone else to protect their privacy.

- Go to <http://www.engage.com>
- Click on the green button on the main page to sign up. It only takes a few minutes.
- Engrade is a great communication tool between you and your child's teacher. If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

Field Trips (Overnight Excursions)

Field trips, including overnight science camp and the Washington D.C. trip, are designated to integrate information from many different academic content areas into a hands-on, multi-sensory approach to learning beyond the normal classroom environment. Trips reflect California State Content Standards and typically begin or conclude a unit of inquiry or study with important content information and application.

- Pre-kindergarten students have two or three trips planned per year. One trip is a walking trip, one is a city bus trip, and a third optional trip is sometimes offered to a performance. Parents are needed on these excursions.
- Kindergarten through Eighth Grade Students will have three to four excursions planned each academic year. A list can be provided by your child's teacher. Transportation is usually by hired school bus, but on occasion parents are requested to drive their children (parents may form carpool groups on their own.)
- A science camp experience is part of fifth grade. This year our fifth grade students will return to Rancho Allegra in Santa Barbara. Seventh and eighth grade students will participate in a travel week to Washington D.C. More information will be presented by the teachers at Back-to-School Night in September.

Traditionally, field trip cost can range for \$10.00-\$25.00 or more.

Buses are contracted through Southwinds, a school bus company that has provided us with safe and excellent service

and qualified drivers for several years. Most buses do not have seat belts; not required in the State of California. Parents who wish to drive their children on a trip may do so; however the fee will remain unchanged, to assist us in paying for the bus and cover any admission cost. Parents are not permitted to transport other children from the class, or bring younger or older siblings on field trips. Parents are required to sign a permission slip to allow their child to attend a trip. There are no alternative arrangements for class field trips in K-8th. Parents may not opt to leave their child back at school. Because trips assist us in meeting the State Standards, attendance is required.

Grading Standard

Kindergarten student's work is reviewed by the teacher. Kindergarten teachers conduct frequent assessments to determine knowledge acquisition. Students in kindergarten through second grade are evaluated using a generalized grading scale. Generalized Grading Scale:

E = 90-100% **S+ = 80-89%** **S = 71-79%** **S- = 60-69%** **N = 59% and below needs to improve**

Students in third through eighth grade will have graded work that follows a traditional grading scale. The faculty is advised to follow best practices when grading student work. The use of rubrics for student writing or major assignments is mandated. Rubrics outline assignments and clearly delineate the requirements associated with a score that will equate with a grade. Faculty will use a point system that is explained to the children and parents. All teachers implement a point-value system for all graded work. Points will equate with percentiles and your point/percentile break down will remain constant throughout the year. Deviations from this scale will be discussed with parents and students in the first week of school. The faculty will use Engrade.com to record their grades; parents will be given passwords to access Engrade. Most teachers apply the following percentile equivalents:

A = 96-100% A+, 93-95% A, and 90-92% A- **B** = 86-89% B+, 83-85% B, and 80-82% B-

C = 76-79% C+, 73-75% C, and 70-72% C- **D** = 66-69% D+, 63-65% D, and 60-62% D- (Below 60% - fail 'F')

Homework Policy and Agenda Book

The Phoenix Ranch School assigns homework in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade as follows:

Pre-Kindergarten – Homework Boxes contain full learning activities and are assigned weekly.

Kindergarten – Homework is assigned to be completed at home with parents two evenings per week.

First through eighth grade students will be assigned homework Monday through Thursday, which may not include book reports, or special reports or assignments. Homework times is as follows:

1st Grade – 10-15 min. per night 2nd Grade – about 20 min. per night

3rd Grade - about 30 min. per night 4th Grade – about 40 min. per night

5th Grade – about 50 min. per night

6th-8th Grade – about 60-90 min. per night.

The school has provided each student (5th – 8th grade) with an agenda book. The agenda book will be used to record homework and special assignments. It is mandated that the agenda book be placed in each student's 3-ring binder and be kept up to date. No replacement agenda books are available.

Parent/School Communication and Conferences

The Phoenix Ranch is committed to outstanding communication between the school and parents.

- School-wide all teachers present a Monday Newsletter that outlines activities and homework, if assigned, each week.
- In preschool, parents will see general notes written daily on the parent-communication board, and personal notes and school communications placed in the classroom file box (a file for each student), located in each room. Most art projects, school menu, parent communications, and other fliers will be found in the file box. Parents will check the file at the end of each school day.
- In kindergarten, students take home their Communication Folder each day and return it the next school morning.
- In first through eighth grade, each student is provided a Communication Folder. Monday through Thursday work is graded and kept by the teacher. On Friday, all student-graded work is placed in the Communication Folder. If there is work to sign and return, or a field trip form going home, that information will be placed on the side of the folder that says "Return to School". Parents sign the back of the folder and return it on Monday (or first school day of the week).
- Middle School Students will have their Honor Card sent home each Friday (in the "Return to School" section) and the homeroom teacher will collect it (with the folder) on Monday in period 1 (to be kept in the student's homeroom). The Communication Folder is the responsibility of the homeroom teacher.
- Parent-Teacher conferences are mandated with the release of the first report card and as requested by parents or teachers, at any time during the school year. Other forms of communication with parents include Engrade, Connect-Ed, The Phoenix Flame (school newsletter), The Phoenix website: www.phoenixranch.org., teacher phone calls, emails, etc.

Report Cards, Progress Reports, Skills Development Surveys

The Phoenix Ranch School faculty is involved in assessment of skills on a daily basis. Formal evaluations include report cards and progress reports. Progress reports are sent home if there is a change in grade at mid-reporting periods or as deemed necessary by the teacher. Parent conferences are planned at the conclusion of the first report card in K-8th and as requested by teachers or parents in all grades and programs.

Preschool Students (including pre-kindergarten), are formally evaluated twice each year, in the winter and spring using the Skills Development Survey. Parent-teacher conferences are conducted after the *Survey* and upon request.

Kindergarten Students – Are assessed three times per year (trimester report card). A parent-teacher conference is arranged with release of the first report card and upon request.

Students in 1st through 8th Grade– Are formally evaluated quarterly. A parent-teacher conference is arranged with release of the first report card, and upon request.

Elementary / Middle School Reporting Periods

Kindergarten (Trimester)

#1 Ends November 30, 2011 (released at Parent Conferences TBA)

#2 Reporting Period Ends March 16, 2012 (sent home 3/23)

#3 Reporting Period Ends June 15, 2011 (sent home on 6/14)

First through Eighth Grade (Quarterly)

#1 Ends Nov. 4, 2011 (released at Parent Conferences TBA)

#2 Reporting Period Ends January 27, 2012 (released on 2/3)

#3 Reporting Period Ends April 5, 2012 (released on 4/13)

#4 Reporting Period Ends June 16, 2012 (sent home on 6/15)

Resource and Referral

This program is conducted on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:15-4:15 for identified students in first through eighth grade. Each division will assign a teacher to conduct the prescriptive program designed by the student's classroom teacher. Identified students have typically performed in or below the 40th percentile on SAT testing in math or reading, or have been recommended for the program by their teacher. Middle school students may use Resource and Referral for assistance with math or other subjects, on an occasional basis, with teacher's permission. Students who have tests to make up may be assigned Resource and Referral time to test under the supervision of a teacher. There will be 24 weeks of Resource and Referral (check the School Calendar for exact dates)

It is the responsibility of the child's teacher to assess and assign a student. The classroom teacher will write a prescriptive program to be implemented at Resource and Referral, and evaluate student progress periodically.

Textbooks and Lockers

The Phoenix Ranch School provides a variety of curriculum support materials including consumable and reusable books. Consumable books such as language arts books (L.A.B), letter books, phonics books, Singapore Math workbooks, etc. are written in by the student. The consumable books are sent home when complete or at the end of the year, or pages are removed for use and sent home each week in the communication folder.

Reusable textbooks are used in first through eighth grade. These books are usually very expensive and must be used with care; the cost for replacement is considerable. In third through fourth grade textbooks are occasionally sent home for homework or test preparation. In fifth through eighth grade textbooks will be sent home regularly. As often as possible, The Phoenix Ranch School will send home any extra textbooks to be kept at home for the school year (must be returned in June), to assist in the transport of books back and forth from school to home. Parents pay a book rental fee as part of the registration fee which includes the use of reusable textbooks. Students may not write in or deface non consumable textbooks, and parents will be responsible to replace lost, stolen, or damaged books.

Lockers are provided for students in second through eighth grade. Small lockers are assigned to the second and third graders for lunch bag storage and small books or small back packs. Large lockers are assigned for fourth through eighth grade students for the storage of books and lunch bags, and physical education gear (middle school). Students are asked to sign a locker agreement regarding the use of lockers. Locks are permitted for middle school students only and must be combination locks with a copy of the combination left in the Main Office. No personal items (toys, electronics, etc.) should be kept in the lockers. The Phoenix is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen items brought from home such as games, electronic devices, cell phones, etc.