

The Phoenix Ranch School Parent / Student Handbook



2017-2018 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.



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. 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 preschool through middle school are part of the core curriculum. A qualified teacher conducts each program, using quality materials and supplies. Our school has two campuses in Simi Valley. The East Campus is located at 1845 Oak Road, and the West Campus is located at 4974 Cochran Street. Each facility includes comfortable and well-equipped classrooms (incorporating computer technology), a technology lab, an art lab, a music room, 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, 18:1 in Transitional Kindergarten, 20:1 in lower division (kindergarten through second grade), 22:1 (third through fifth grade) and 25:1 in middle school (sixth through eighth grade). At times class size may increase by one or two students, in the event that we exceed our limit as defined an aid will be assigned to the class.

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 transitional kindergarten through eighth grade. After-school activities are abundant and include workshops and sports leagues, as well as participation in our school orchestra or glee (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,
Amy S. Brown B.A., M.A.Ed
Principal

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Admission Information

Preschool Admission (West Campus: Infant through 5 years of age / East Campus 2 years through 5 years of age):

The Phoenix Ranch School welcomes preschoolers who are ready to learn and play harmoniously within a group of similar-age children and under the supervision of one qualified teacher. The Phoenix Ranch conducts infant, toddler, preschool, and pre-kindergarten classes.

Admission (Transitional Kindergarten-4th Grade) and Middle School (5th through 8th Grade):

Welcome to the Phoenix Ranch School Admission Process. The process begins with a personal tour and interview. Admission is based on age requirements or the successful completion of the previous grade (2.0 G.P.A. or higher; no behavior related concerns) and The Phoenix Ranch Placement Assessment.

Athletics

The Phoenix Ranch School is a member of the San Fernando Valley Private School League. Mr. Cesar Silva is the Phoenix Ranch School Athletic Director. Mr. Silva may be contacted at (805) 527-7764 or (805) 526-0136. To participate, players pay \$125.00 for each sport per season. Parents of players must 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. The Phoenix does own a mini-van which can assist with some transportation to games however parents are responsible for arranging player's transportation to and from games (see your child's coach or contact Mr. Silva for more information). 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 & Girls' Soccer

Spring: Boys' & 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." Children who are absent more than 8 days in any trimester will receive a reminder and a parent meeting will be arranged with the parent, teacher, and principal. Students who miss more than 27 days (15% of the school year), are in jeopardy of retention. Reminders will be sent each trimester and parent meetings will be arranged.

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 enforce. New work is immediately upon the child when he or she returns so we need to put away older work as quickly as possible. 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 27 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 Absence: If a child is ill and cannot attend school, parents will call the Main Office: East Campus (805) 526-0136 or West Campus (805) 527-7764 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. 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.

Students in middle school (6th-8th grade), with over 3 unexcused tardies in each trimester, will remain in the Main Office until the end of the first period each day she or he is tardy (after 8:40 AM). A parent meeting will be arranged. Note that in the instance described above – the fourth tardy offense and beyond, in each trimester, the student will receive a zero score on class work for the first period on that day.

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 tuition for preschool, 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 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 (for about 15-25 min.). Small party favors are allowed. Actors (Spiderman, etc.) or other teachers (karate, etc.) are not allowed at these celebrations.

**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.*

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, emails, or any contact information. We can assist by mailing your stamped invitations. Please contact the Main Office: East Campus 805-526-0136 or West Campus 805-527-7764 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 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. Preschool parents volunteering in the classroom may sign in at the Preschool Office. Parents and visitors may park in the lot on Oak Road, or in the Administrative Lot if doing business in the Main Office. 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 2 hours per week. Volunteers must sign-in in the Main Office (or Preschool Office), wear the assigned Visitor's Badge, and sign-out when leaving. Additional volunteers may be requested on class field trips and on special occasions.

Campus Security (Security Guard, Gate Codes, and C.C.T.V.)

On the East Campus, a qualified security guard monitors pedestrian and motor traffic entering the school campus via Oak Road, and additionally conducts several campus sweeps/patrols throughout the day. On the West Campus, Mr. Silva, Mrs. McAdam or other designated employee welcomes students in Carpool from 8:00-8:25 and covers check-out carpool from 3:15-3:30 daily. Many of our maintenance staff are security guards (Guard Card certified). Vehicle access to our campus requires that a school parking decal or parking pass be exhibited in the front windshield (passenger side). Cars without the decal or parking pass will be stopped and directed to the Main Office. Gate Codes are required to enter the campus. The code changes once or twice each year or more often if deemed necessary by administration. Parents receive the security code from the Main Office (as well as parking decals). Campus security is also provided by closed-circuit cameras placed at many outdoor locations. Monitors are located in several areas around campus for surveillance purposes by key personnel and security guards.

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 preschool or elementary school TK-4th**). Middle School students who bring a cell phone to campus must check it in as instructed and may have access at the end of school. Phone internet access may not be used on campus at any time. Elementary 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".

Computer Use Rules / Technology Information

Phoenix Ranch School has computers located in the Technology Lab and in all Preschool-8th grade classrooms. Computers access to internet have been inhibited with a filter program. Students in fifth through eighth grade will bring their computers to school daily. All computers purchased by families for school use, must have parent controls with appropriate filter and other downloads. The computers designated for school use may not be used for any other purpose, therefore no game downloads, Facebook, or other apps may be uploaded to the school use computer.

The "Smooth Wall" filter limits internet 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 (Twitter, 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.
- Students may not use any other student's computer.
- Students will be trained on Google Docs to access agenda (homework), and to write and send documents (essays, assignments, etc.). No zip drives may be used on school computers.

Contact Information

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

*Main Office Staff: Teri Allen - Director of School Operations / Sylvia Fierro - Secretary / Karen Thyer - School Bookkeeper
Amy S. Brown, Principal / JJ Shaules, Preschool Director
Pat Aguilar, Lower Division Head (TK-2nd Grade) / Mychael de la Torre, Upper Division Head (3rd-4th Grade)
Nicole Marshall - Afterschool Club Director*

WEST CAMPUS: Main Office Number (School or Camp): 805 527-7764 / Leah Pohlman - Secretary

*Amy S. Brown, Principal / Vicky de Leon, Preschool Director / Wendi McAdam, Middle School Vice-Principal
Cesar Silva, Athletic Director and Camp Director / Sam Lee, Afterschool Club Director*

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

Emergencies, Evacuation (Fire Drill Information), and Lock Down

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 preceding or following a fire drill. 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 Great Shakeout provides another opportunity each year to review or procedures. The Phoenix subscribes to an emergency telephone service, 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. Once or twice each year the school will conduct a lock-down drill during which time the children will be brought indoors and the doors will be locked. Faculty will participate in a new 'Lock Down-Live Shooter' training session this school year (2017-2018).

Extended Care (*Early/Late Care and Program for Students in K-8th Grade*)

Morning care is offered from 6:30-8:30 AM and afternoon care from 3:15-6:30 PM. Morning care rooms are assigned on each campus. At 8:00 A.M. students are released to supervised outdoor play wherein most faculty members are present. Afternoon extended care (called "Ranch Club") is a recreation program that includes a study hall period for homework. Parents may use morning or afternoon care as needed at no additional cost during the school year (unless otherwise noted: early closure due to a special event, etc.). **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) All preschool programs are assessed on month-to-month use. Payments are due on the first of each month and delinquent on the sixth.
- 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).
- 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 and administration fees forfeited. *Transitional Kindergarten students are on a month to month contract.
 - 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) **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 \$25.00 fee. Checks that do not clear on the second attempt are charged an additional \$25.00. NSF checks must be replaced with cash, money order, or certified check within 5 days. Parents may use the Credit Card payment option or ACH option for payment of monthly tuition or special activities. Contact the Main Office for further information.

Discount Rates:

- 1) **Sibling Discount** — A 10% discount is given to siblings that reside in the same household. Sibling discounts are applied to the lowest based tuition.

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 a few 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. Participation is completely voluntary. The **Annual School Silent Auction** presented at the School Fair in April. Classes gather items for themed baskets, and individuals, local stores, businesses, and school families donate items for the baskets. Participation is completely voluntary. **Family Fun Night** is a gathering of interested families at a local eatery. This is fun for all and provides a 10%-20% of sales donation to the school.

Gratuities

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

Health and Safety (Illness, Injuries, Medications)

Many of our teachers and all directors are certified in CPR and First Aid. 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 a local doctor 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. We highly recommend salons or at-home service providers that specialize in lice/nit removal

Illness at School/Return to School Following Illness

Ill 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.
- 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 and at other times. See the School Activity Calendar for a listing of all minimum days and closed days.

Hours of School

Preschool and Pre-kindergarten Classes: Preschool classes begin Monday, August 21, 2017. Hours: 6:30 A.M.– 6:30 P.M. Monday through Friday. Classes start 8:30 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

Transitional Kindergarten through Fourth Grade Classes: Classes begin Monday, August 21, 2017. 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 until 6:30 P.M.

Fifth Grade and Middle School Classes (Fifth through Eighth Grade): Middle School Classes begin Monday, August 21, 2017. Hours: 8:30 A.M. to 3:15 P.M. Extended Care hours are 6:30-8:30 A.M. and 3:15-6:30 P.M.

Library Information

The Phoenix Ranch School Library is located in the Main Office. Teachers are assigned specific library hours wherein a volunteer librarian will meet with each class, read aloud to the younger grades and assist with older students. The library contains fiction and non-fiction books and magazines, as well as encyclopedias and resource materials online with Nook tablets. Children in preschool through eighth grade will find materials at age/grade level. Mrs. Kim Wilker is our school librarian. Mrs. Wilker works part time and is assisted by volunteers. Parents interested in volunteering for the library committee should contact their child's teacher.

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 or water. A monthly 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 bring lunch from home or participate in the "Choice Lunch" program. Choice Lunch is an online lunch program that delivers lunch daily to students who have purchased lunch on their website. The lunches are nutritionally sound and students are able to select from a variety of meals and snacks. To contact Choice Lunch please go to their website: www.choicelunch.com. The cost of the lunch is available at time of order and charged to your credit card. Items are delivered to the school in both refrigerated and heated carts for lunch service (milk, juice, or water are included in the order).

Lunch Times

- Preschool - 11:45-12:20
- TK – 2nd Grade - 12:35-1:20
- 3rd-4th Grades – 11:45-12:30
- 5th-8th Grades - 12:35-1:20

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** –Parents will park and escort children to the classroom and sign in accordingly.
- **TK–4th Grade** – East Campus Carpool Zone. A staff member will greet students in the designated carpool zone from 8:00-8:30 A.M. and 3:00-3:15 P.M.
- **5th-8th Grades** – West Campus Carpool Zone. A staff member will greet students in the carpool zone.

USE OF CARPOOL ZONE EAST AND WEST (available from 8:00-8:25 A.M. and East 3:00-3:30 P.M. / West 3:15-3:40 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 and escort their child to the classroom.

• **Crossing Guard** - A crossing guard assists with Oak Road crossing from 8:00-8:25 A.M. No child may cross the road without an adult. In the afternoon the guard is present from 3:00-3:20.

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 campers for these purposes without requiring prior consent from the parent/guardian and without compensation.

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 (18 years or older). Each classroom in Simi Hall has its own sign-in/out 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. Transitional Kindergarten students have a 30-45 minute rest time, and kindergarten students a 15-30 minute rest time. Parents must provide a towel to be used for rest time.

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 reviewed by teachers or staff.

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: • TK-Kindergarten –10:30-11:00 A.M. (West Campus) • First & Second Grade –10:10-10:30 (West Campus) • Third & Fourth Grade – 10:20-10:40 A.M. (East Campus) • Fifth thru Eighth Grade -10:25-10:40 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 school 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 parent sends a note or calls to notify us of the adult picking up. 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 and Confidentiality

Student information is confidential. Parents or legal guardians only are permitted access to information regarding any student including but not limited to the CUM file, classroom teacher grades or portfolio assessments or any assessment information. The classroom teacher, director, and administration does have access to student information. Files are kept in locations that are not open to general viewing but kept in areas and in containers labeled confidential or located within an office. No release of personal information beyond name and address information used by the school 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 are identified as needing more supervision than provided at Phoenix Ranch School (1:12 in preschool and 1:12-20 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

Preschool children and students in kindergarten through second grade do not participate in standardized testing. Those students are assessed using observational and anecdotal information by the teachers as well using instruments designed by the school and relating directly to the curriculum. Students in first through eighth grade participate in the SAT X (Stanford Achievement Test, 10th Edition). The testing will be held in May. 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. 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.

The Phoenix Ranch School Student Behavior Contract (Update 2017-2018)

The Phoenix Ranch School Student Behavior Contract is designed to protect student rights and to inform students and parents of acceptable school behavior and to identify the consequences of misconduct. The school's reaction to misconduct will be a measured response and will include a parent conference with the school principal or administrator and the teacher or director. The Phoenix Ranch School will at no time inflict corporal punishment or use inappropriate means (such as humiliation, intimidation, etc.) to gain pupil cooperation. All students in kindergarten through eighth grade are responsible for the content and intent of this contract.

The Phoenix Ranch 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 and bullying (a non-threatening, safe, and caring environment)
 - Learn in a classroom free of constant distraction
 - Participate in all school activities without prejudice or harassment of any kind
-

These following rules are part of the student contract and include information regarding consequences to the violation of established rules. The Phoenix Ranch School publishes annually a Parent / Student Handbook which outlines many school policies and procedures in detail. Parents are referred to the Handbook for more information, available in the Main Office or online at www.phoenixranch.org.

1) Students will work and play cooperatively without bullying, harassing, hurting, or threatening others (see Student Rights Statement).

- 1) Students who bully others (*intimidate or harass a person to make them do something*) will be confronted by faculty or staff. Students are encouraged to seek adult assistance immediately in response to a bullying, harassing, or hurting incident. An incident report will be completed and sent home with the offending child and parents notified. Subsequent acts of bullying or harassing may result in parent conference, suspension and/or expulsion from school.
- 2) Students who hurt others will be removed from the classroom or activity, incident report written, parent contacted, and possible suspension. Subsequent hurting incidents will result in parent conference, suspension, and/or expulsion from school.
- 3) Threat of violence is against the law and school policy. A threat of violence might include statements about hurting another person or entity (student, parent, teacher, student body, school, etc.) is taken very seriously. A threat of violence will result in action on the part of the school that may include involvement of police, suspension, or expulsion.

Bullying, harassing, threatening, and hurting behavior are in violation of The Phoenix Ranch School Student's Rights Statement (above). Response to these infractions will be measured in accordance with the age of the child, the frequency of incidents, and severity of the offense. These infractions are considered most serious and will be treated as such by administration. **A defined protocol has been established in response to concerns in hitting, bullying, threatening, and disruptive behavior. Please see your child's teacher for more information.**

2) Students will be treated fairly, without prejudice and with courtesy (see Student Rights Statement).

No child will receive unfair or prejudicial treatment from the faculty or staff. All students will 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, students who demonstrate good citizenship and act with appropriate courtesy will receive good marks in cooperation or citizenship on the quarterly report card (1st-8th). Violations of this Student Right may result in poor marks, parent conferences, and/or administrative reprimand.

3) Students will be polite and respectful to teachers and staff.

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 meet with the principal and/or teacher and receive an Incident Report. A subsequent violation will result in a parent conference. Continued disrespect may result in removal from the classroom/activity, detention, missed special activity participation, a 1-2 day suspension, etc.

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

The Phoenix Ranch School follows the State of California Education Code Section 48260-48273 explained in the Phoenix Ranch School Parent / Student Handbook. Frequent tardiness is a disruption to the classroom and will be treated as such. In addition to missing class work, students are

disrupting the learning of others. Students must come to school well rested, fed, clean, and dressed neatly in the school uniform, with all required materials. Parents will be contacted in the event of a uniform infraction.

It is now the policy of the Phoenix to require **middle school students to arrive on time at 8:30 AM** or present an excused tardy slip from the dentist, orthodontist, doctor, etc. Students who arrive late, after 8:40, and unexcused (after 3 unexcused tardies) **will be detained in the Main Office until passing period** for their second period class, and will receive an unexcused absence in the first period class.

5) Students will raise their hand to be recognized and may not inflict disruptive behavior in the classroom.

Disruptive behavior prevents the teacher from teaching and other students from learning. Frequent disruptive behavior will result in a poor grade in cooperation/citizenship, Incident Report filing, parent conferencing, and removal from the classroom, missed activities, and/or suspension. Constant disruption violates the Phoenix Ranch Student Rights Statement (see above). **New protocols have been written that clearly define the consequences of classroom disruptions. See your child's teacher for more information.**

6) Students must use acceptable language and must not spit.

Inappropriate language is not allowed at school. Students who are spitting or using unacceptable language will be reprimanded by the faculty or staff. Continued infractions will result in a poor grade in cooperation or citizenship (demerits), parent conference, and possible suspension.

7) Students will care appropriately for all school books and school property including technology equipment.

Destruction of property, including the school facility, textbooks, equipment (including technology equipment), 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 suspension or expulsion.

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

It is forbidden for any student to leave the campus 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 or supervising personnel, parents will be contacted immediately then the Simi Valley Police will be notified. Phoenix Ranch School is unable to physically restrain a child and can only talk to the student and monitor his or her movement, in the event that the child is attempting to leave the campus. This behavior is a very serious concern due to the threat to child safety and may result in expulsion.

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

See the Parent/Student Handbook "Academic Code of Conduct" for information regarding cheating, plagiarism, and dishonesty. Consequences are clearly defined and include: zero points on the worksheet, test, or project (no retest or resubmit will be allowed), parent will be contacted, and possibly additional consequences (written documentation, parent conference, detention, missed special activity participation, or suspension). The consequences will include consideration of the child's age and possible reoccurrence of this infraction. Stealing is a serious crime. In the event that a student steals, the teacher or administrator will contact the parent, an incident report will be written, and the student will be responsible to return the stolen item(s) with a handwritten apology. Reoccurrence will be treated very seriously and will result in suspension or possible expulsion. Plagiarism is not permitted, and will be prosecuted as follows: the student will receive zero points on the assignment and may not resubmit, parent will be contacted, and a parent conference with the teacher and child will be arranged. To copy, cut and paste, or directly use material from a book, magazine, online source, or other source, without identification of the writer/source is forbidden. Students are reminded to appropriately identify ownership of writing through citations (use of quotes, recognition of author, footnotes, and/or bibliography).

10) Students will use good digital citizenship. Use of technology has expanded into all parts of our lives. Students will use technology including computers, Internet use, portable reading devices (such as our Nook Tablets) as directed by administration and will not use programs or sites that are inappropriate.

Students will not use the computers to email, or view websites that have inappropriate content or use the computer in any manner that is not explicitly described by the teacher. The Phoenix Ranch School has installed Internet filters that limit access to inappropriate material but it is acknowledged that it may be possible to gain access to inappropriate sites using backdoor and other means. Students must treat all school equipment with care, especially all technical equipment including classroom Eno Boards and projectors and computers (desk top and lap top), as well as other teaching tools.

- The use of technology in harmful ways has caused us to consider the term **Digital Citizenship**. Teachers will discuss this topic in all classes from third through eighth grade. Discussion will include appropriate and inappropriate uses of texting, social website use, phone, game, and other technology devices. Students may not email or text other students and use inappropriate or hurtful words or language, or send pictures over the internet of other students. The use of phones, texting, social websites, and game sites occur off campus yet we are impacted by the results of inappropriate language, hurtful content, and other postings to students' personal devices. Inappropriate content brought to the attention of the teacher or principal will result in a parent meeting at school and additional consequences if this inappropriate behavior continues.

The Phoenix Ranch School Student Behavior Contract is designed to protect student rights and to inform students and parents of acceptable school 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, or principal. Response protocols have been written and may be reviewed with your child's teacher. Phoenix Ranch School teachers, staff, and administrators will at no time inflict corporal punishment. All students enrolled in TK-8th grade at Phoenix Ranch School will be held responsible for the content and intent of this document.

Middle School 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. 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 and return to the Main Office. Applications will not be accepted after 3:00 P.M. The application requires a teacher and parent signature.
2. Present a speech and campaign.
3. Elections will be held in the morning. Candidates meet 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 (6th-8th Grade) Takes notes (minutes) at all meetings, responsible for correspondence, activity fliers, posters, promotion, etc.

Members at Large (6th-8th grade) Students will be elected to council to serve the school by planning and presenting events, dances, Red Ribbon Week, and more.

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.*

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 from another student 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 Sacramento and Washington D.C. trips, 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.
- TK-Kindergarten through Eighth Grade Students will have three to five 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 go to science camp this year. Sixth grade students will attend Nature Bridge, and seventh through eighth grade students will participate in travel to Washington D.C. and Williamsburg trip. More information will be presented by the teachers at Back-to-School Night in September.

Traditionally, field trip cost can range for \$15.00-\$35.00 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. We do request buses with seat belts if available; seat belts are not required for buses, 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

Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten/Transitional Kindergarten students are assessed twice annually using the Skills Development Survey. No grades are assigned. The tool assesses child development only. In addition, teachers monitor student progress daily through observation; they also develop a student portfolio (student artifacts that are accumulated to identify growth and progress). 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

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.

Transitional Kindergarten – Homework may be assigned, on occasion by the teacher, for the student and parent together.

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 information about Google Docs homework app/agenda online.

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 projects, 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 and the homeroom teacher will collect it (with the folder) on Monday (to be kept in the student's homeroom – 1st period class).
- Parent-Teacher conferences are mandated and arranged in the first trimester 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 through Eighth Grade– Are assessed three times per year (trimester report card). A parent-teacher conference is arranged in the month of November 2012 and by arrangement. Progress reports are sent home in mid trimester in first through eighth grade.

Elementary / Middle School Reporting Periods

Kindergarten through Eighth Grade (Trimester)

#1 August 21, 2017 through November 9, 2017 (report cards released November 17, 2017)

#2 November 13, 2017 through March 2, 2018 (report cards released March 9, 2018)

#3 March 12, 2018 through June 6, 2018 (report cards release June 6, 2018)

Resource and Referral

The Resource and Referral program is redefined this year to reflect our newest information on RTI (response to intervention). We understand that 85%-90% of our students' learning needs are met through the core curriculum and regular classroom instruction. We also understand that the core curriculum must be presented in a differentiated style that will reflect different learning modalities and ability levels. In preschool, identification of students that require additional instruction or emotional support is the job of the classroom teacher, but may include pre-admission information from the parent shared with the director or administrators. Teachers will provide additional instruction and support as needed and will share strategies and gain instructional guidance from the director and administration. Lesson planning must include information on curriculum plans to meet the needs of all children, including those children in need of additional support.

We will continue to address the needs of a small percentage of students in first through eighth grade through a variety of instructional methods, including Resource and Referral. Resource and Referral is conducted on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:15-3:45 for identified students. Each teacher will conduct a prescriptive program for their students in need of special instruction. Middle school students may use Resource and Referral for assistance 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 23 weeks/46 sessions 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 that will be altered to meet changing needs. Teachers will identify successful instructional strategies to be implemented at Resource and Referral and evaluate student progress continuously.

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.