

2010-2011 Parent and Student Handbook



COURTYARD
S C H O O L
DEVELOPING SCHOLARS, ARTISTS & LEADERS

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www.courtyard.org

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*Developing Scholars, Artists, & Leaders
Through Academics, Culture, & Community*

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Important Contacts:

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Office Manager	Kate Adam	kadam@courtyard.org

Faculty

Transitional Kindergarten	Jennifer Mattson	jmattson@courtyard.org
Kindergarten	Diane Gross	dgross@courtyard.org
First Grade	Scott Beauchamp	sbeauchamp@courtyard.org
Second Grade	Natalie Ararou	nfernandez@courtyard.org
Third Grade	Kirsten Boyd	kboyd@courtyard.org
Fourth Grade	Dorothy Steinman	dsteinman@courtyard.org
Fifth Grade	Gretchen Johnson	gjohnson@courtyard.org
Sixth Grade	Jeff Gephart	jgephart@courtyard.org
Physical Education TK-5	Jerald Baker	mrjerald@courtyard.org
Performing Arts TK-5	Kristi Muraoka	kmuraoka@courtyard.org
Athletic Director	Jerald Baker	mrjerald@courtyard.org
Spanish	Stephanie Saranillo	ssaranillo@courtyard.org

After School Programs

Hip-Hop and Jazzerettes	Christie Pace	939-1685
Martial Arts; Dragon Fire	Lois Skidmore	lksdragon@sbcglobal.net
Piano	Draga Djordjevic	ddjordjevic2yahoo.com
Guitar	J. Phillips	600-8131

MISSION STATEMENT

Courtyard School's mission is to develop scholars, artists, and leaders in a safe and nurturing environment that supports students and their families. Through small class sizes and personalized attention, our students are provided an excellent academic foundation that emphasizes creativity, art, science, athletics, and community service. Courtyard is committed to teaching children the values of tolerance and respect, and to fostering a love of learning by making school a place where children want to be.

NOTICE OF IMPLIED INTENT

The registration of a student at Courtyard School is deemed an agreement on his or her behalf by his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) to comply with all policies, rules, and regulations of the school as set forth in this handbook. Courtyard reserves the right to make revisions in policies, rules, and regulations as deemed necessary by the school administration and the board of directors. Observance of any change is immediate upon notice of such change to the student and parent body.

STATEMENT OF ACCEPTANCE AND GOOD STANDING

Courtyard School admits students of any race, color, ethnic or cultural origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Courtyard does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, ethnic or cultural origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, athletic, or other school sponsored or administered programs.

Courtyard reserves the right to dismiss students at any time for infractions of regulations, unsatisfactory academic standing or other reasons that affect the welfare of the individual student or the school community. The administration reserves the right to refuse registration or re-registration when, in the opinion of the administration, participation of the student in the school program is not in the best interest of the individual student or the school community. Further, the administration reserves the right to terminate a student's enrollment when either parents or the student fails to support school policies. A student is in good standing when one is not subject to dismissal for academic reasons, has a record of satisfactory conduct, and has met all financial obligations to the school or has established satisfactory arrangements for their discharge with the school administration.

ABOUT COURTYARD

Courtyard School, a non-profit, public benefit corporation, was founded in 1982. The school serves students in transitional kindergarten through sixth grades. Courtyard owns its facilities located at 24th and C Streets. Because of its proximity to the downtown area, there is convenient access to excellent parks, public transportation, government offices, and museums and exhibits.

Our non-profit taxpayer identification number is 94-2796280.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Courtyard Board of Directors is composed of twelve members from the Sacramento community and the parent body. The board is committed to the pursuit of the educational objectives and fulfilling the Mission Statement of Courtyard School. Donating their time and efforts, the Board Members are responsible for setting policy, and providing administrative and executive assistance to the executive administrators of Courtyard.

PRINCIPAL/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MODEL

Courtyard School operates with a Principal, Executive Director model of leadership. The Principal/Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors and is expected to lead in all aspects of school operation—curriculum development, fiscal operations and business management, community development and fund-raising, and facilities management. An Admissions Director and Office Manager assist the Principal/Executive Director. Together they engage, motivate, and supervise a staff of approximately 9 faculty, 8 extended care leaders, and 4 staff. The Board of Directors is comprised of professionals—community leaders and parents—who set policy and provide professional service assistance to the Principal/Executive Director.

ADMISSIONS

Applicants to all grade levels are evaluated using grade appropriate testing materials, cumulative file records and teacher observations. All families interested in Courtyard School are encouraged to meet with the Admissions Director and arrange for a school tour and an assessment for their children.

ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

Courtyard School is a member of the PAL League. Students in 5th and 6th grades may participate on J.V. teams. Students in grades kindergarten through 4th grade may participate in the Little Dribblers basketball program. Parents or guardians must sign permission agreements and liability waivers for their students to participate as members of athletic teams. Families are responsible for costs related to league participation, uniforms, and certain aspects of personal equipment. Students must maintain an acceptable academic standing in order to participate in these team activities—generally players must maintain a 2.5 grade point average (or satisfactory/meets expectations) and may not have a “D” or “F” (or needs improvement or fails to meet expectations) in any subject unless the teacher has signed-off on an academic improvement plan. As citizenship, appropriate conduct, and responsibility are an integral part of the athletic program, players may be deemed ineligible to participate if they have excessive detentions, unsatisfactory citizenship grades, or unsatisfactory school or team attendance.

ATHLETIC PROGRAM FEES

Extracurricular athletic programs at Courtyard School are self-supporting. While our coaches are volunteers and the school provides the majority of the equipment and the use of team uniforms, members of the teams pay are required to pay an athletic participation fee. These fees are assessed per sport by season and are collected at the beginning of each season of play. Team members pay additional fees when the teams participate in tournaments. Sometimes teams may hold fundraisers to purchase necessary additional equipment and supplies. Students must be current in paying their sport assessment to play in the games.

ATTENDANCE

Law in the State of California mandates compulsory school attendance by all children between the ages of six and sixteen. The responsibility for compliance with this law rest with the parents, but Courtyard School is obligated to maintain an accurate record of daily attendance for each student and report abnormal attendance issues.

ABSENCES

Students need to be in class each day unless they are ill. If your child is going to be absent, it is very important that the office be notified as soon as possible. Regular attendance and being on time to school are two things that help children keep up with academic learning and maintain a positive attitude toward school. Medical notes will be required after missing 3 or more consecutive days, or after a total of 10 days throughout the academic year. Please

provide a signed note from your health care provider to the office whenever possible. Students are responsible for completing class work and assignments that they miss during their absences. Generally, students have the same number of days that they were absent to complete missed work.

Vacations and other optional absences can interrupt the classroom learning process. We ask that whenever possible, parents schedule vacations for time when school is not in session. Should it be necessary for your child to be out of school for more than two days, an independent study agreement should be arranged directly with your child's teacher regarding missed work. In the case of a non-medical prearranged extended absence, independent study arrangements must be made and approved by administration prior to the absence for attendance documentation purposes. Please allow one week in advance for teachers to prepare plans and submit administrative approval. Generally, work that is missed due to a vacation should be returned completed upon the student's return to school. Additional work may be assigned upon the student's return to catch up with classroom progress.

TARDIES

Academic instruction begins promptly at the start of the school day at 8:30 a.m. Students should arrive at school early enough to be in line to enter class by 8:30 a.m. Tardy arrival to class often causes the student to miss instruction and may delay the rest of the class if the teacher has to repeat instructions. Please do your best to respect the learning environment and make sure that your children are not late for the start of school. Students arriving after the start of class must be checked in by their parents in the office. Attendance and lunch counts are taken promptly at the start of the day.

Parents are asked not to pick up their child before the end of the academic day (3:00 p.m.) unless necessary. Early pick-up interrupts classroom instruction and often requires the teacher to stop instruction and learning activities to give individual directions regarding homework and missed instruction.

CLOSED CAMPUS

Courtyard operates a closed campus. As such, children may not enter or leave campus without signing in or out. Annually, parents must complete an authorization form indicating the individuals allowed to sign-out and pick up their students. No student will be released to any individual unless Courtyard has this written authorization on file.

When student are picked up during the school day a parent or other authorized adult must sign them out in the office before picking them up from the classroom. When students are picked up after school their parent or authorized adult must make sure that an EDC leader is

notified and they are signed out on the daily sign-in/sign-out sheet. Parents or authorized adults must come onto campus to pick students up. Students may not leave campus to join an adult who is waiting for them in a car or off campus.

COMMUNICATION

The Courtyard staff works in partnership with parents and guardians to provide the best possible education experience for all of our students. We are committed to building this partnership through open and consistent communication between faculty, administration, parents and students. The Courtyard administration provides school-wide information at its website (www.courtyard.org) and strives to include all current and relevant information concerning the school calendar, school-wide events, lunch menus, Extended Day Care, the Board of Directors, and PTO.

The administration publishes a twice-monthly newsletter called the Cougar Chronicle. Generally, the newsletter comes out on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. The newsletter is sent home to parents both in their parent files and by e-mail. The newsletter provides information about many school related events and issues. Parents are strongly encouraged to read the newsletter to keep informed about what is going on at Courtyard School. Classroom teachers also provide parents with newsletters and e-mail bulletins to keep them informed about class specific events and information. Typically, these newsletters are sent home on a weekly basis. Appointments with the principal and the admissions director can be made by contacting them directly by phone, e-mail or in person.

We encourage parents and students to communicate directly with their teachers both informally and formally. All teachers have school e-mail and voice mail addresses and will try to respond to parent inquiries within twenty-four hours. At the beginning of each school year, teachers notify parents of their office hours when they will be available to students and/or parents to meet to discuss any issues or provide assistance or guidance on assignments. Concerns related to classroom specific matters such as grading, student performance, behavior, discipline, or other student/teacher matters should first be discussed between the teacher and parent either informally or in a scheduled conference. If issues are not resolved at this level, then the parent or teacher may request a conference with the principal.

CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for all students at the end of the first trimester. The purpose of these conferences is to review the students' report cards and discuss academic progress. Additional conferences can be arranged between the parent and the teacher on an individual, as needed, basis. To schedule a conference contact your child's teacher.

COURSE OF STUDY

The curriculum at Courtyard School closely follows the course of study for each grade level outlined by the California State Department of Education in the framework document and content standard manuals for each subject area. Through field trips, hands on activities, guest speakers, projects, and other enriching activities the curriculum is greatly enhanced to offer exciting learning opportunities and challenges to students. In addition to the core curriculum in reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies and science, all Courtyard students are provided instruction in Spanish, performing arts, visual and creative arts, and physical education.

DAILY SCHEDULE

6:30 a.m.	Extended Day Care opens
7:50 a.m.	Breakfast service ends
8:00 a.m.	Outdoor play time for all students
8:30 a.m.	Classes begin for all students
10:00-10:15 a.m.	TK-1 recess
10:15-10:30 a.m.	2-6 recess
11:30-11:55 p.m.	TK-2 lunch and 3 -6 recess
11:55-12:15 p.m.	3-6 lunch andTK-2 recess
3:00 p.m.	Academic day ends for all students
3:00 – 3:25 p.m.	Recess and snack
3:30-4:15 p.m.	Study Hall grades TK-4
3:30-4:30 p.m.	Study Hall grades 5-6
4:15-5:45 p.m.	Club Time
6:00 p.m.	School closed

DISCIPLINE

A major goal of the faculty and staff of Courtyard School is to provide a safe and positive learning environment for children. This learning environment extends from the classroom to the playground, to the main building and to all other areas of the school.

Learning appropriate behavior is an important element in establishing a safe and positive environment at Courtyard. Teachers and EDC staff members have the primary responsibility and authority in matters of discipline. Each teacher has a copy of his/her classroom rules posted for students to see. These rules are explained to parents by each teacher at Back-to-School Night.

Each student is responsible for his or her own behavior. Teachers, parents, and all Courtyard staff are responsible for working as a team to teach and support appropriate behavior and to discourage inappropriate behavior. The team will communicate about school behavior (positive or negative) specifically and routinely. It is the goal of the staff at Courtyard School to help students see that behavior is a choice and that they have control over how they react to a situation. Given this, students will be required to take responsibility for their actions.

1. Behavior Management within the Classroom:

Teachers, teaching assistants and EDC leaders will be responsible for handling individual behavior issues to the extent possible in the classroom according to their own classroom management plans.

If a pattern of inappropriate behavior is observed, the student and the parent(s) will be informed and the appropriate intervention plan will be discussed and implemented.

If the pattern continues, the student, teacher and/or administrator, and the parent(s) will meet to discuss the specific behaviors and agree on further intervention.

2. Behavior Management beyond the Classroom:

When inappropriate behavior is such that it cannot be managed in the classroom or on campus by teachers and/or EDC leaders, the student will be directed to the Principal's office for intervention. Intervention by the Principal in situations involving student behavior may be handled on a formal or informal basis. Being formally referred to the Principal's office for inappropriate behavior or persistent misbehavior is a serious consequence and is considered to be the last step in a multi-step process of behavior management. If this becomes necessary, the parent(s) will be notified and appropriate consequences will be outlined. Behavior will be managed by the Principal on a case-by-case basis including, if necessary, suspension or expulsion from school. (Please note that behavior interventions,

especially with younger children, are often handled on an informal basis and do not necessarily indicate a significant behavior problem.)

- Suspensions may range from one to three school days.
- Repeated suspensions or behavior that is considered harmful to self or others may result in expulsion after a full review by the Principal.
- Missed work due to suspension is required to be completed.
- Parents may appeal an expulsion to the School Board. Students facing expulsion will not be allowed to attend school until a final decision is made by the School Board.

DRESS POLICY

The spirit of the Courtyard Dress Code suggests a certain level of formality during the academic day and at designated school functions and outings. It attempts to balance individuality with consideration of the school and community expectations. While the intent of the dress code encourages individual freedom of expression, certain guidelines must be in place in order to promote an atmosphere that will further the mission of Courtyard School and create an environment most conducive to learning.

Specifically, the dress policy seeks to promote an atmosphere conducive to work rather than leisure, cultivate a productive instructional environment, advance a greater awareness of successful dress, encourage students to develop responsible attitudes toward their personal appearance, promote a positive spirit at Courtyard School, and provide students opportunities to take responsibility for their actions and make wise choices.

As it is impractical to list all items of clothing and styles of dress which may be inappropriate, the school reserves the right to make decisions regarding the appropriateness of both dress and appearance. Recognizing that some decisions are necessarily subjective, the position of the school is final in each case. Students who come to school with inappropriate dress will be asked to call home for a change of clothing.

When participating on a field trip, students are requested to wear a clean neat shirt or jacket with the Courtyard logo—Courtyard polo, t-shirt, jacket, or sweatshirt to appropriately identify the student as part of the group and to proudly reflect the fine, well-behaved, and extraordinary students attending our school.

General Courtyard School Dress Expectations

It is expected that students will dress in a neat, clean and presentable manner at all times. Clothing should be clean, safe, modest and in good repair (free of holes, tears or frayed hems). Jewelry should be kept to a minimum as outlined in this policy. Shoes must be worn at all times and be safe. Students are encouraged to wear flat, comfortable and age-

appropriate shoes designed for active movement and multiple activities. Shorts and skirts should be 3 inches above the knee or longer. All clothing must fit properly and be worn in the manner intended.

Personal Hygiene/Grooming

Students should come to school with a presentable appearance each day. This includes brushed teeth, washed face and combed hair.

Make up

Light makeup and nail polish are acceptable for older students as allowed by parents. Nail polish is acceptable for elementary age students to wear. Make-up and nail polish are to be left at home.

Hats and Sunglasses

It is common courtesy that hats, caps, sunglasses are not worn indoors; therefore, when students enter the building they are to remove them. These items may be worn inside the building as part of a designated dress up day as dictated by the school. Students are encouraged to wear hats for sun protection and on special occasions as directed by the classroom teacher.

Jewelry

Courtyard will not be responsible for the loss or theft of jewelry items. It is highly recommended that students not wear or bring any items of value on campus or on field trips.

Examples of Inappropriate Dress

There are certain styles of dress that are inappropriate and not conducive to fostering an appropriate learning environment. Outlandish clothing, including but not limited to oversized clothing, is not acceptable. Wording, logos or advertising on clothing which is offensive, degrading to any particular gender, ethnicity, religion or persons, or that advocates violence, illegal activity, or the use illegal or inappropriate substances is also not acceptable. Bare midriffs, undergarments showing, visible tattoos, tight fitting or revealing clothing such as spandex or bike shorts, clothing that has spaghetti straps, tank tops, halter or tube tops, backless dresses are also not acceptable.

High heeled shoes (higher than 2 inches), backless and open toed sandals are not appropriate for school. Dangling earrings, chains and bracelets are not acceptable at school as they may be dangerous or distracting. Visible body piercing jewelry must be limited to the ears.

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

In compliance with Courtyard's philosophy of community, personal electronic equipment such as boom boxes, personal music players (CD players, iPods, MP3 etc), personal televisions, pagers, blackberries, etc. are not allowed to be used at school. California law provides that cell phones are allowed on campus, but must be put away and turned off. Students are allowed to use cell phones with teacher permission. Students may not use cameras, including those on phones, to take pictures of other students without the permission and supervision of staff.

The use of this equipment is not appropriate during the school day and during the after school program may isolate students from interacting with other children, create property issues, and be subject to loss, theft, and damage. While on campus, students may share using the school computer resources and audio/video equipment as part of the EDC program. When appropriate, teachers or EDC leaders may approve the use of personal electronics for particular circumstances or events. Students bringing this type of equipment to school without permission will be asked to take the equipment home and not to use it while at school; noncompliance with this policy could result in the confiscation of the equipment or disciplinary actions.

EXTENDED DAY CARE PROGRAM

The Extended Day Program at Courtyard School is designed to offer a comfortable blend of an at-home play atmosphere and an activity program bursting with indoor and outdoor projects. The Extended Day Program is included in the Courtyard School tuition.

The Extended Day Program is open and available to all Courtyard children Monday through Friday, 6:30 - 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 - 6:00 p.m. Children in the Extended Day Program will have a variety of choices daily including clubs, athletics, crafts, and games. Some activities rotate on a weekly basis. Additionally, school-affiliated club groups, yearbook, and student council meet on campus as do non-affiliated activities such as scouts, music lessons, dance, gymnastics or karate. Study Hall is an integral part of the after school program and all students are expected to use this time for homework and to obtain peer, teacher, or leader assistance. Study Hall activities for students in Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten are selected by the EDC leader in charge of each class.

FEES AND PAYMENT

Courtyard School relies almost entirely on tuition to operate the school and pay its financial obligations. Therefore, it is essential that tuition payments be made on time and in full in accordance with your chosen payment plan. We set tuition yearly estimating operating costs,

allowing for staff merit and pay increases, and anticipating enrollment. We contract with faculty based upon these projections.

TUITION AGREEMENTS

Tuition agreements will be sent to families in the spring of each year. All tuition agreements must be signed by parents or guardians and accompanied by the payment (or electronic fund transfer agreement) of the Registration Fee.

FEES

Registration Fee: This is an annual non-refundable fee that is paid at the time that a student is re-registered for the coming school year. For the 2010/2011 school year the Registration Fee is \$425.00

Tuition:

Tuition is set on a scholastic school year of 9.5 months for Grades 1 through 6 and 10.5 months for Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten. Parents may choose from a number of different payment options for tuition payments. These options include the Annual Payment Plan, the Trimester Payment Plan and the Monthly Payment Plan. Courtyard offers a Multiple student Discount and a Tuition Assistance Program. For details about the different payment plans and tuition rates please refer to the 2010/2011 Tuition Agreement and Financial Policies form.

Tuition Late Fees or Returned Payment Fees

A late fee of \$50.00 will be assessed for payments not received by the 1st of the month following when the payment is due. A \$50.00 fee will also be assessed for returned checks or EFT payments (fee will increase by \$50 for each subsequent action). In addition, tuition that is more than one month in arrears is subject to a 1.5% monthly interest fee. If you anticipate a problem making your payment on time, contact the Principal before the payment is late.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an integral part of the curriculum at Courtyard and are an important extension of the classroom learning experience. Parents are invited to assist in chaperoning and providing transportation for these trips. Parents who chaperon students are asked to abide by the standards set by the faculty who lead the trips. For some field trips there are limitations on the number of parent chaperones that may participate. In these cases the teacher will determine how parent chaperones will be selected.

At the beginning of each school year, general permissions slips, called “Walking Papers” are sent home. These allow students to participate in walks to the park or nature walks in the spring and fall. Field trips beyond the immediate community have their own permission forms. These forms are sent home by the teacher in advance of the trip. The forms contain instructions to the parents, the destination, and purpose of the trip, and information about fees, etc.

FIELD TRIP FEES

Fees for specific field trips or extra activities will be collected on an activity-by-activity basis and must be paid for before the activity occurs. The teachers will communicate all planned field trips including payment due dates. Field trip fees will not be electronically transferred or billed through the main office. Major pre-planned field trips will be discussed by the participating class months prior to the activity—typically these are annual trips and are discussed and planned early in the school year. Fees for annual trips will be collected in two or three installments. The grade level teacher will provide parents with a schedule for the payments. Courtyard financial accounts must be current in order for students to participate.

FIELD TRIP ATTIRE

Field trips are an integral part of the curriculum at Courtyard. The field trip dress policy is designed to facilitate a standard of behavior that is conducive to the orderly operation of the trip.

While participating on field trips, students are expected to wear clothing that is both appropriate to the nature of the trip and which reflects positively the image of Courtyard School. Students will be expected to wear clean neat attire on field trips.

Since the nature of each field trip will be different and the type of trip will dictate the type of clothing to be worn, each teacher will outline the standards in pre-trip information. A variety of clothing items may be purchased with the Courtyard logo through the school at the beginning of the school year.

FIELD TRIP—TRANSPORTATION BY PARENTS

Parents who volunteer to provide transportation in their private automobile assume a great responsibility. In order to be approved to drive they must first submit the proper proof that they have adequate insurance coverage (see below) and that they have been free of accidents or other serious driving violations for a specific period of time. To insure the safety of

students and staff, only those individuals who have submitted the proper forms and who meet the clearance criteria will be allowed to drive on a field trip. Parents who wish to drive only their child are exempt from these requirements.

All driver information will be reviewed by the Principal. Courtyard School reserves the right to deny field trip driving duties to any driver deemed unsafe.

- The individual's own automobile liability insurance will always be considered as primary coverage. The school's policy will provide coverage for excess damages over and above the individual's primary coverage.
- All travel by private car requires prior approval by the Principal in order to establish that the activity is part of the school's program.
- Courtyard does not provide collision, comprehensive, etc., insurance coverage to cover damage or loss to an employee's or volunteer's vehicle.

In order to transport students in a private vehicle, all drivers must submit the following:

- A photocopy of the complete automobile insurance policy showing all coverage limits.
- A driver's license photocopy.
- A DMV printout showing driving record to date (valid for one year).

Additionally, drivers must certify the following:

- They have insurance coverage which includes an at least \$100,000/\$300,000 bodily injury liability coverage and at least \$50,000 property damage coverage.
- They agree to follow the laws related to car seats, boosters, and seat belts appropriate for the age and size of each of the children transported and ensure that each child is appropriately seated at all times.
- Their automobile is regularly maintained and kept in good operating order.

FIELD TRIP REFUND POLICY

Field trips are an integral part of the Courtyard curriculum and are designed to enrich the academic and social experiences of students.

Field trips are planned well in advance and space must be reserved by a deposit. To secure the best possible price we often use discounted rates based on a minimum number of students and are therefore bound by the timelines and policies of the contracting organization. The per person trip price is typically calculated proportionally to the number of students participating. Once a cost is established, any deviation from the number of participants increases the price of the trip for all participants. For these reasons all fees are due upon request and once paid are non-refundable.

FOOD SERVICE

Courtyard strives to provide a healthy, balanced environment for children. This part of our mission extends to the food services. We encourage children to eat a balanced meal and to drink milk or water with their meals. Students arriving before 7:50 a.m. are provided breakfast. This usually consists of toast, juice and cereal and a variety of other breakfast items. At mid day a school lunch is provided for all students, as is an afternoon snack at 3:00. A lunch menu is posted monthly on the Courtyard web site. A “basic” entrée item is available for children who do not want the main menu entrée. A vegetarian option is also available which may include the basic entrée. Once or twice a month a “Brown Bag Friday” is scheduled when parents are asked to send their children to school with a home lunch. A basic lunch is available for students who do not bring a home lunch on these days. Children are encouraged to bring their own snacks for morning recess.

Courtyard School is designated as a peanut and peanut product free campus. In order to protect the health and safety needs of our students, please do not send peanuts, peanut butter, or other peanut-products to school. Parents who bring in treats for birthdays, or provide cookies or other foods for school events must make sure that the foods are free of peanuts and peanut cross contamination.

At Courtyard, we discourage the consumption of sodas and “junk food” at all times. If additional beverages are sent, please make healthy choices such as water or low-sugar juices. Sodas are not allowed on the playground or in the lunchroom. Glass bottles are also not allowed. Individual teachers may also provide specific classroom policies on snacks and beverages during the academic day within their classrooms.

Special Dietary Needs

Courtyard School provides a healthy hot lunch to all students each day. A menu is distributed at the beginning of each month so that parents and children can plan their meal needs accordingly. While we cannot provide customized lunches, we can make slight modifications for children with special needs (such as certain food allergies).

Families with children having special dietary needs should complete the Special Dietary Needs form to help us make your child's meal experience as pleasurable as possible.

GETTING THE MOST FROM A COURTYARD EDUCATION

Encourage your child to enjoy learning and to whole-heartedly participate in a variety of school-related activities.

1. Ensure that your child arrives to school on time and signs in.
2. Notify the school office before 8:00 a.m. if your child will be absent.
3. Keep your child at home when he/she is sick.
4. Sign your child out each day.
5. Inform the school if anyone other than you will be picking up your child.
6. Make time to discuss class and school work and to assist your child with his/her homework.

GRADING

Grades are reported three times each year. The assigned grades describe progress toward the educational goals and objectives that are based on the school's course of study.

In kindergarten through the second grade, marks reflect the developmental progress of the students in all academic areas, as well as social and living skills. The student's progress is noted with an E (exceeds expectations), M (meets expectations at this time), S (developing skills), or and I, (needs improvement). Teachers include comments to help guide improvement areas for parents and students.

Students in grades three through eight are assessed in each subject area with using a percentage grading system. Generally, grade percentage equivalents are as follows:

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = 0-59%

Teachers will provide students and parents with specific information about their grading expectations and policies. Generally, grades reflect completion of class work homework and projects, attitude and initiative, as well as mastery of objectives and/or test scores. A Mid-Trimester Progress Report will be sent to the parents of students who are achieving below a satisfactory level in a particular subject area. At grades 3-8, social behavior and living skills are also evaluated and reported with grades.

HARASSMENT POLICY

Courtyard is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from harassment in any form. Harassment of any student by any other student or employee is prohibited. The school will treat allegations of harassment seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

A charge of harassment shall not, in and of itself, create the presumption of wrongdoing. However, inappropriate behavior or substantiated acts of harassment will result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion or termination. Students found to have filed false or frivolous charges will also be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment or a school environment what is hostile or intimidating because of the individual's race, creed, color, national origin, physical disability, gender, or sexual orientation. Harassment can occur any time during school or during school related activities. It includes, but is not limited to, any or all of the following:

Verbal Harassment: Derogatory comments and jokes; threatening words spoken to another person.

Physical Harassment: Unwanted or inappropriate physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal movement or work.

Visual Harassment: Derogatory, demeaning, or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, and gestures.

Sexual Harassment: Includes unwelcome or inappropriate sexual advances, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Each child must file the health and emergency contact forms as required and health and shot records must be current and kept on file at the school. Students who have not filed all required information may not attend class until the information has been provided to the school.

Medication

Courtyard School will administer medications to children only under the following conditions.

- The medication is in the original container with the child's name printed by the pharmacy.
- A Medication Release Form is completed by the parent/guardian to include the name of the medication, the dosage to be administered, the time to be administered and the length of time that the child is expected to be on the medication. Medication Release Forms must be resubmitted at the beginning of each school year.
- In order for students to receive non-prescription medications at school the parents must provide a physicians instructions for administration of the medications.

Courtyard will not administer any medication without a parental medication release form and the physician's prescription on the medication.

Students may not administer medication to themselves unless prior approval has been granted by a physician and the school.

All medication, whether prescription or over the counter, must be stored in the office during the school day. Emergency medications, such as epi-pens and asthma inhalers can be kept in the classroom and taken on fieldtrips if this is necessary as indicated by a physician's instructions.

Contagious Diseases and Illnesses

The control of contagious diseases as well as head lice infestations depends in large part on the cooperation of our parent body. It is important that children be kept home when they are ill or contagious so that they do not expose others. Generally, students should not attend school for 24 hours if they have a fever or experience vomiting. When students become ill during the school day parents will be contacted and may be asked to pick their child up from school, depending upon the severity of the illness.

Please notify the school immediately if your child has contracted a contagious disease. The school will send written or e-mail communication to parents if there has been possible exposure to a contagious disease.

Physical Examinations and Immunizations

Physical examinations are recommended for children entering kindergarten. They are required by law for all first grade students.

The California Health and Safety Code have specific immunization requirements for every child attending California schools. It is required that a record of the child's immunizations be kept in the school files.

Emergency Drills

Emergency drills are held once a month to teach children the safest, quickest route from school buildings. Whenever a class leaves a room for an emergency, the children stay with their teachers until they hear the signal to return to class. A fire escape map, containing a primary and alternate route, is posted in each room of the school.

Emergency Preparedness

Detailed procedures for taking action in specific emergency situations are outlined in the School Emergency Preparedness Manual. Each teacher has a copy of this publication for use in emergency situations.

School Closure/Early Dismissal

In an emergency situation such as a power failure, flood, etc. it may be necessary to close school or dismiss students early. Should this occur, parents will be notified immediately through the school wide notification system. Parents should have an alternate day care plan available when school closure or early dismissal is necessary.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an integral part of the academic program at Courtyard School and is assigned to support classroom instruction, develop responsibility, and create opportunities for students and parents to work together. The amount of time spent on homework will vary with each child depending on his/her abilities. Teachers assign homework with a general expectation of the amount of time that it will take the students to complete the assigned tasks. The amount of time that students are expected to spend completing homework will increase each year. Students are strongly encouraged to spend their time wisely during Study Hall in order to complete as much homework as possible during this supervised time.

If you have any specific questions about homework, or your child is having difficulty completing the assigned amount of homework, please contact your child's teacher.

INTERNET USE

The Internet is an important and desirable source of information and every attempt will be made to insure its proper use at Courtyard School. With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. Courtyard School has taken precautions to restrict access to inappropriate materials, however, on a global network it is impossible to guarantee that users may not inadvertently come across material that may be inappropriate, offensive, or controversial.

To discourage the inappropriate use of on-line electronic services and preclude other misuses of the system, the following standards shall be in effect.

- Before using on-line services, the student and parent/guardian shall sign the School's Internet User Agreement indicating that the student understands and agrees to abide by specified user obligations and responsibilities.
- Staff shall supervise students while using on-line services. Students shall not be allowed access to on-line services unless under adult supervision.
- The system shall be used only for purposes related to education. Commercial and/or political use of the School's system is prohibited. Any use of the system for the purposes of encouraging the use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or the promotion of unethical or illegal practices is prohibited.
- Users shall not transmit or receive material that is threatening, obscene, disruptive or sexually explicit, or that could be construed as harassment or disparagement of others

based on their race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion or political beliefs.

- Users may download copyrighted material for their own use according to the provisions of U.S. copyright law.
- Users shall not read or alter other users' mail or files.

When using email for communicating it is understood that users will...

- be polite and use appropriate language in their messages to others;
- not reveal their own or anyone else's personal address, phone number, or password;
- recognize that electronic mail is not guaranteed to be private

LATE PICKUP AND FEES

Courtyard School closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. daily. In consideration of the safety of our students and staff, it is important that we lock the doors on time. Accordingly, the following late fee will apply for students picked up after 6:00 p.m. Unfortunately, there are no exceptions.

A late fee of \$10 will be charged for students picked up between 6:01 p.m. and 6:05 p.m. An additional late fee of \$5.00 will be charged per child for every five minutes, or portion, thereof, after 6:05 p.m.

Students participating in sports or other school sponsored activities that may have a duration beyond our 6:00 p.m. closing must be picked up in accordance with the agreement for that activity specified by the activity leader.

LIBRARY

Courtyard School maintains a library that contains works of fiction, non-fiction, periodicals, materials, textbooks, and other items for check out by teachers and student.

LOST AND FOUND

It is important that parents work with school staff to encourage their children to be responsible for their clothing and personal items. Lost and found articles are kept in the school library. To avoid loss of clothing, it is recommended that clothing be labeled with the child's name. Lost and found items not recovered after a certain period of time will be donated to a charitable organization.

OPTIONAL AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Courtyard contracts with private instructors for special after-school programs at an extra charge to parents. The activities offered vary from year-to-year depending on student interest. Information on these activities will be outlined in the Courtyard newsletter and on the website.

PARENT VOLUNTEER HOURS

Courtyard is a community comprised not only of faculty and students, but of all members of our families. Our goal is to continually maintain an affordable tuition level and operate as efficiently and effectively as possible. In order to support our school mission, supplement our administrative operations, afford our students additional programs and activities and build a strong Courtyard community, each family is required to work 35 hours annually. 10 of the Parent Volunteer Hours are to be spent supporting the activities of the Development Committee, the Recruitment and Retention Committee or one of the other Board Committees. There are many different activities that can be done to fulfill parent hour requirements. Hours can be spent stuffing envelopes for jog-a-thon, working on projects related to our facilities and buildings, helping in classrooms in centers, cooking at back-to-school night, or working on a fundraiser. Each family is required to complete a Parent Hours Log form. This form must be turned in to the office no later than May 15th. Families that do not return the form, or who complete less than the required number of hours will be bill at a rate of \$10.00 per hour. Families may choose to pay Courtyard School \$325.00 instead of working all the hours. There is a reduction of the required Parent Volunteer Hours for single parents. If you qualify for this reduction please contact the principal.

PARENT/TEACHER ORGANIZATION- PTO

The PTO is made up of parents and teachers of Courtyard School. It is a volunteer organization whose purpose is to help build the school community and support the school's educational and extended daycare programs. Its goal is to maintain open communication with all members of the Courtyard community. Both financial assistance and people resources come from the PTO. The PTO operates under the guidance of the Courtyard Board of Directors.

Active participation in this organization is on a volunteer basis but participation by all families is strongly encouraged to support committees and fundraisers sponsored by the PTO. The PTO meetings are held monthly. Participation in PTO activities counts towards the Parent Volunteer Hour requirement for each family.

PLAYGROUND RULES

Playground rules are established to insure the safety of children while on the playground and to promote a spirit of fair play. Rules are reviewed regularly with students both on the playground and in the classroom.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education is an integral and required part of the Courtyard curriculum. Students are expected to participate (which includes wearing the proper attire) each day that physical education is conducted. Students with a legitimate medical excuse will be excused only with a written note from a physician. In the absence of a written note from a physician, students will be expected to participate in physical education.

RETENTION & PROMOTION

Courtyard School retains the right to fail to promote a student to the next grade level if they do not make appropriate social and academic progress relative to their grade. Courtyard school believes that social promotion (passing a student up in grade) is unjust and irresponsible especially in a school of choice committed to strong academics. When a there is a concern, a Student Study Team (SST) meeting will be called as early as possible and will include teachers, administration, the student, and the parent(s)/guardians. This meeting is a proactive step to implement a Student Improvement Plan, offering intervention suggestions to families. Again, an SST meeting is meant as an intervention. Parents may be asked to provide proof of academic remediation through an established tutoring or academic remediation program.

Students may be recommended for retention on a case-by case basis, based on lack of academic progress toward meeting academic standards and/or missing significant subject matter coverage due to poor attendance. Attendance deficiency would be considered missing more than 2 weeks/ 10 days of school during an academic year without medical documentation. Early sign-outs and tardies may be counted as partially missed days. (See attendance section.)

STANDARDIZED TESTING

In April or May of each year students in grades 3-6 are given a state approved standardized test to assess their general academic progress. This testing is only one component of the academic assessment at Courtyard and shows general trends about student progress. Standardized test results should be viewed as representative of a student's general academic progress.

Courtyard students consistently score above the 70th percentile on standardized testing, with some achieving in the high 90th percentile ranking. The staff and Board are proud of the consistently high achievement of students in this area.

TEXTBOOKS

Courtyard believes that providing current, high quality textbooks and classroom materials is essential to a high quality education for our students. A portion of our school budget is dedicated for the purpose of purchasing new textbook and replacing consumable instructional materials. Textbooks, which are a substantial investment, are replaced on a predetermined basis expecting a certain “life cycle” for each text. As such, students are responsible for the condition of their textbooks; at the beginning and end of each year the texts will be inspected for condition. Parents will be assessed the cost of replacing a textbook in cases where the book has been lost, mistreated, defaced, destroyed or reflects a significantly worse condition than expected under normal use.

WITHDRAWING STUDENT

Parents must give Courtyard a 60 day written notice prior to withdrawing the student from school. If 60 days written notice is not received, Courtyard will charge the parents the full tuition amount for that 60 day period.

VISITORS

Visitors must check in with the school office before going to any classroom. Teachers are not able to confer with visitors when they are teaching, so it is best to schedule an appointment. Visits for the purpose of admissions should also be scheduled with an appointment.

Courtyard School
2010/2011 Student Handbook Receipt

*Please sign and return this page to the classroom teacher after reviewing the handbook.

I have received and reviewed the Courtyard Student Handbook.

Student(s) Signature _____ Grade _____ Date _____
_____ Grade _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____