

Cleveland Elementary School Parent Handbook

Cleveland Elementary is a community built around our shared values of **inclusiveness** and **responsibility**. We build an understanding of these values throughout the year at every opportunity and focus on rewarding positive behavior. This handbook will provide a basic understanding of our school wide expectations, please contact classroom teachers or the principal for further questions or clarifications.

Overall philosophy at Cleveland Elementary

At Cleveland we expect our graduates to be prepared academically and socially for success in their lives. We do this by teaching all students how to make values-based decisions in all situations, and implementing a rigorous common core curriculum with supports for all learners. Students will have the opportunity to work as a team to think critically about their own behavior and how to best implement our school wide values of inclusiveness and responsibility in the various scenarios they will encounter in school and beyond. Students will be taught by expert teachers who develop their practice to meet the needs of every individual student. Our teachers work collaboratively to develop lesson plans that require high level critical thinking as well as a mastery of basic skills. We see our school as a community of parents, students, educators, and other partners who leverage our diversity and want our students to learn to be the protagonists of their own lives and the bright future of our city and our world.

We believe that students are taught appropriate behaviors by making values based expectations clear and rewarding positive behavior, as well as providing opportunities to reflect on our choices, right our wrongs, and making a plan for the future. This is referred to as a “positive behavior intervention system.”

This handbook is written to provide some basic outlines of procedures, but more importantly to shine a light on how we use our values of inclusiveness and responsibility to make decisions at our school. Every situation is evaluated on its own per our values, and we strongly encourage modelling this type of critical thinking at home as well.

School culture and values

General Behavioral Expectations

As part of our positive behavior system, we have [developed expectations for every area of the school](#) based on our school values, and specifically teach and model the expectations in each area. [Students who meet expectations](#) receive verbal praise, RICH tickets (our school wide reward system), and other commendations. Students are chosen from each classroom on a regular basis who exemplify our school values and are honored in front of the entire school. Per our positive behavior intervention system, negative consequences are also assigned with the intention of teaching students to make better choices and to restore any harm that has been caused.

Each classroom will have expectations based on our shared values of inclusiveness and responsibility, as well as escalating positive and negative consequences. These will be explained to students on the first day and will be addressed in daily class meetings and regular trainings in each class. They will be explained to parents and families at back to school night.

Addressing Conflict

Conflict is a natural and necessary part of human interaction that students will learn to deal with in appropriate ways. Every family has their own cultural norms and methods of dealing with conflict, but we ask that all families support Cleveland's expectations in this area.

Students will be taught how to address conflict in a developmentally appropriate way in daily class meetings and larger settings. We ask that students use "I messages" to explain how they feel to classmates in times of conflict (for example: "I feel sad when the ball gets taken from me"), and to always seek adult help. At no point is it appropriate for a child to use aggressive physical force on another child or adult, regardless of "who started it." "Self defense" is never a reason for an aggressive act such as throwing a punch, as there are always teachers and other adults supervising and available to help. Conflict is always handled in a restorative model, as described in the next section. Students can be referred to staff for conflict resolution or can refer themselves.

Consequences/Restorative Justice

Our philosophy at Cleveland and in Oakland Unified is that negative behaviors can not be "punished out" of children. There is a tremendous amount of research that proves that punishment alone is not an effective strategy. Consequences are assigned on an individual basis based on the transgression and students involved. Generally, this escalates from a verbal reprimand to time out to parent contact. If it is a more serious or violent offense, other actions may be taken in communication with the family.

At Cleveland we use restorative processes to work through issues between students, with a student who has hurt another student being required to face the other student, listen to how they have negatively affected them, and explain how they will work to make it right. Although this is not the discipline system most of us have experienced as students, it is well researched and much more effective than traditional forms of consequences, which actually allow students to avoid the true consequences of their actions. For more information on the restorative justice model, visit <https://www.ousd.org/restorativejustice>.

Disciplinary actions towards students are confidential, and legally we cannot and will not share information about students to other students or parents.

Celebrations

Everyone in our community works hard for the success of our students, and it is important that we celebrate that! We have a number of school wide celebrations each year, as can be seen on [our calendar](#). There are individual classroom celebrations as well. If you'd like to celebrate your child's

birthday in their classroom, please contact the classroom teacher at least two weeks in advance—each classroom has their own policy based on class schedule and students' allergies etc.

Speaking to other parents and students

In building our inclusive and responsible community, it is critical that we model appropriate behavior for our students. Communications with other community members should be friendly, considerate, and empathetic. If you have concerns about the behavior of another child or adult at school, this should be addressed to the principal or other school personnel. At no time should a parent approach a child that is not their own with a behavioral concern.

Parent involvement

Parents and families are a key support for our students, and there are many ways to be involved on campus. We have a huge number of volunteer opportunities, including working in the garden, chaperoning field trips, working as a room parent, joining committees, and more. These opportunities will be communicated to parents on a regular basis, but you can always email ClevelandOaklandPTA@gmail.com to find out about opportunities. Additionally, like all schools in California, our school is governed by a School Site Council (SSC) that has five elected parent and community members, who are chosen at the first meeting in September. This group meets monthly and makes decisions related to school budget and goals, and reviews our data. These meetings are open to all and the agenda is always posted publicly.

General school policies:

Communicating with school staff

In building our inclusive and responsible community, it is critical that we model appropriate behavior for our students. Communications with other community members should be friendly, considerate, empathetic, and frequent.

Each teacher will have their own schedule and policy for communicating with families that will be shared at back to school night, but all staff members check their email daily

(firstname.lastname@ousd.org). In-person communication is always ideal, but schedules do not always permit that. Please reach out to schedule an appointment with staff ahead of time. At no time will teachers be available to speak on the phone or in person during instructional hours.

If your question or concern has not been addressed adequately by your student's classroom teacher, you can always contact the principal at peter.vantassel@ousd.org

School Calendar

Our school calendar is always available at www.tinyurl.com/ClevelandCalendar It is as up to date as possible, including all holidays, minimum days, school wide events, meetings, and most field trips. It is a google calendar so families can subscribe to it, sync it to your personal electronic calendar, or

download it as well. It is updated regularly. Every Wednesday is a minimum day. Students are dismissed at 1:30pm to allow staff time for planning and professional development.

Attendance

Children can only learn what we teach when they are in school. Class meetings take place first thing daily, so timeliness is extremely important to their positive experience at school.

Students should attend all day every day to the extent that their health permits. Absences are to be excused in writing with a note to the office. Absences due to illness, doctors appointments, funerals, or religious celebrations are considered excused per state law. All other absences are unexcused per state law. If a child will need to miss extended time for a different reason, independent study can be requested through the office with a minimum of two weeks notice unless it is an emergency situation. Families who miss 10% of the school year at any point or more than 10 school days will receive letters from the district and possible additional consequences.

Bell Schedule

[The bell schedule is available here.](#) Be sure to look at the school calendar to know when minimum days are besides every Wednesday.

What To Bring to School

Students should bring a backpack and any homework or school supplies assigned by the teacher. Any school supplies needed by any student will be provided by the school (including backpacks). If a medication is needed, indicate that on the emergency card and the medication will be stored in the office. Let the office know! **NOTHING** that is not a school supply should be brought to school—no sports equipment, no toys, no cards, no slime or any other trendy item. Anything that is not allowed at school but is brought will be confiscated and returned only to a parent or guardian. If an item that should not be at school is lost, school staff will not spend any time looking for it or investigating, nor will a student be allowed to miss class time to look for it. We strongly urge families to label student belongings with student names, and to regularly check the lost and found for missing clothes.

Electronics

Electronics of any sort should not be at school. If it is important to a parent or guardian that a student have a cell phone at school, it needs to be turned off and put away at all times. If it is taken out by a student, it will be confiscated and returned only to the parent or guardian. If there is an emergency, call the school and be sure that your student understands that they are to use the office phone not their own phone. This is a safety issue and there are no exceptions.

Visitors

Any and all visitors must come through the office before going anywhere else on campus to sign in and receive a visitors pass. It is essential that visitors never interrupt instruction in class or the essential and regular functions of the school day. If you are hoping to speak to a teacher or other adult when on campus, it is best to contact them ahead of time.

Homework

Homework is designed to allow students to practice the skills they have learned in class. It is also a way for families to engage and support their students about what they are learning. Homework is not part of a student's grade, but completing homework does support their progress and less practice usually equates to less progress. Each grade level develops their own homework policy that is the same across classrooms at that grade. Students who do not complete homework are not penalized by a loss of recess or other consequence, but it is important to remember that daily homework is part of each student's responsibility.

Meals

At Cleveland Elementary (and many schools in OUSD) this year, every student receives a free breakfast and lunch. Students and families can decide on a daily basis if they would like to bring their own lunch or eat a school lunch. Lunch menus are available online, all school lunches are nut free and there is always a vegetarian option available. It is important to remember if sending a lunch from home that many students have severe allergies. Please refrain from sending nuts or peanut butter in your student's lunch. Students have 40 minutes to eat and play at lunch time. Due to the fact that we feed over 400 students each day, we are unable to monitor individual students' eating habits.

Before and after school supervision

Before school supervision starts at 8:15 am. There is NO after school supervision outside of our after school programs. Students who are not picked up at the bell should wait in the office for their ride. Students are never to play on the yard or be in the library waiting for a ride or to walk home—there is no supervision and this creates safety issues and no guarantee that children have an adult to turn to for help or that would see any situation that may arise.

Intervention and support

We are committed to ensuring that every student has access to success in working with their grade level curriculum. As a result, we offer tiered supports for students in both the social/emotional side and academic side of the school experience. A more comprehensive map of our interventions is [available here](#), but tier one supports are available for all students in each classroom—notably class meetings, check ins, etc. Tier two interventions are for students identified with need and occur in

small groups. This can be in or outside the classroom, for example small reading groups and social skills groups. Tier three supports are typically out of the classroom and provided in a one-on-one setting, such as special education support or individual counselling.

All students are eligible for support, and any student with identified or suspected additional needs, be they health, academic, social, or other needs, should have a [Coordination of Services Team referral](#) filled out. Anyone can fill these forms out (including family members and the students themselves) and this will lead to assigning more support based on need and availability.

After School Programs

Cleveland offers two on site after school programs and works with dozens of off campus programs as well. Our Kids Club program is fee-based and first come first served. Our OASES program is grant funded and primarily accepts students based on identified need. Both programs are at capacity all year.

Kids Club

Our school-based afterschool program, Kids Club, serves to complement and enhance the school day through educational, physical, artistic, and social experiences in a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere. With a small student to teacher ratio (14:1) Kids Club provides children an opportunity to expand their learning, develop meaningful relationships with their teachers, and build community with their peers. The program also offers healthy snacks, homework help, outside play, and plenty of downtime to unwind and have fun.

Starting in January, Kids Club opens its wait list. Families who contact the program will have the option to be added throughout the following months. In March, Kids Club will begin opening registration. Current families are given a priority registration window. New enrollment will be distributed through a lottery system.

For more information please visit: <http://www.jccebay.org/kids-club-at-cleveland-elementary/>

OASES/EBAYC/Quest

For over 15 years of partnering with Cleveland Elementary, the QUEST After School Community thrives to strengthen and support our future heroes. (*Kindergarten - 5th*) Through our continuous efforts in supporting and complementing the PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) culture of responsibility and inclusiveness we pride ourselves in making sure all our students understand the importance of heroism and lifelong learning.

On top of our commitment to social and academic support, students participate in a variety of enrichment activities which promote self expression, family values, and physical health. This year our focus will be on multiMedia.

We are grateful for the continuous support of our families at Cleveland but are at capacity. We encourage families to sign up and be placed on our waitlist. During the first month especially, student enrollment in program fluctuates a great deal which increases the probability of waitlist students to be enrolled.

For more information and/or questions please contact: Assistant Director, Mr. Andrew Kodama: akodama@ebayc.org or Director, Mr. Mike Vista: mike@ebayc.org Hotline: 510-343-3556

Translation

If you need translation, we can generally provide it. We have full time staff members that speak Cantonese, Mandarin, and Spanish, and can arrange for help in other languages as well. Ask at the office or send an email to the principal peter.vantassel@ousd.org to request support (in any language). We send texts home that are automatically translated into the language that is indicated as the home language in our registration documents.

School Data

Our schoolwide data is publicly available through ousddata.org, caschooldashboard.org, ed-data.org. Additionally, other data is also shared at SSC meetings and other parent engagement opportunities.