

**Visalia Unified School District
MOUNTAIN VIEW SCHOOL
STUDENT/PARENT
HANDBOOK**

2007/2008



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Visalia, CA 93277
559-730-7783
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**Pam Merkel
Principal**

Office Hours: 7:30 AM – 4:30 PM

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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to Mountain View School! As we begin a new school year, I would like to encourage each of you to review with your children this important Student Handbook for the 2007-2008 school year. You will find it contains valuable information about the programs, schedules, procedures, guidelines, rules, and opportunities for parent involvement. This handbook is unique to Mountain View School, and we have tried to minimize duplication of information contained in the following documents provided by the school district:

1. **Visalia Unified School District Information Directory**
2. **Visalia Unified School District Student Conduct Code (K-6)**

These documents have been sent home with your students. Please keep all three documents handy for reference.

Our purpose in providing you this handbook is to help you to better understand the programs and services that are provided. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact our office staff at 730-7783.

We are happy to welcome you and your family into our Mountain View School community. We are eager to make the coming school year a valuable learning experience for your child.

Sincerely,

Pamela J. Merkel

Pamela Merkel
Principal

Schedules

REGULAR SCHOOL HOURS:

	<u>AM Kindergarten</u>		<u>PM Kindergarten</u>
Instruction Begins:	8:04 AM	Instruction Begins:	11:39 AM
Dismissal:	11:25 AM	Dismissal	3:00 PM
	<u>Grades 1-3</u>		<u>Grades 4-6</u>
Recess Ends:	8:15 AM	Recess Ends:	8:15 AM
Instruction Begins:	8:20 AM	Instruction Begins:	8:20 AM
Dismissal:	2:08 PM	Dismissal:	3:00 PM
		Early dismissal-Weds.	2:08 PM

MINIMUM DAY SCHEDULES:

PARENT - TEACHER CONFERENCE DAYS (MINIMUM DAYS):

November 13-26 and March 4-6

STUDENT/TEACHER MINIMUM DAYS:

Wednesday, November 21 Wednesday, June 4

DISTRICT STAFF DEVELOPMENT (MINIMUM DAYS):

Monday, September 24	Monday, March 3
Monday, October 22	Monday, April 21
Monday, January 28	Monday, May 12

SCHOOL IS NOT IN SESSION ON THE FOLLOWING DAYS:

Friday, August 31	Monday, January 21
Monday, September 3	Monday, February 11
Monday, November 12	Monday, February 18
Thursday & Friday, November 22 – 23	Spring Break, March 17-24
Winter Break, December 17 - January 4	Monday, May 26

Accidents at School

Students are required to report all accidents to their teachers immediately. If an accident occurs outside of a classroom playground, hall, etc., it should be reported to the nearest teacher or yard duty aide.

Appeal Process (Uniform Complaint Procedure)

The following steps should be taken in the order listed below if you have school-related concerns:

1. Appointment and conference with your child's teacher
2. Appointment and conference with the school principal
3. Appointment and conference with Area Administrator
4. Appointment and conference with the Superintendent of Schools or Designee
5. Appeal to the School Board

Arrival & Dismissal

As a courtesy, supervision is provided beginning at 7:45 a.m. each morning at the double gates in the circle drive entry. Students should NOT arrive prior to 7:45 a.m. Due to school safety issues, if students arrive prior to 7:45 a.m., parents will be contacted to pick them up. Once a student has arrived at school, he/she may not leave campus until dismissal or if a parent signs the student out at the office. In compliance with District Policy, a primary student (1st-3rd) may not wait after school for a P.M. kindergarten or upper grade (4th-6th) pupil. If students are having breakfast at school, they need to line up at the front-entry gate area, and then will be dismissed as a group to proceed to the cafeteria for breakfast. If students are not having breakfast in the cafeteria, they are not to bring food or beverages on the campus to consume before the first bell.

When bringing students to school or picking them up after school, we ask that parents not go to the classrooms or wait in the hallways and peek into the classroom windows. We are also asking that parents not wait in the areas between buildings between 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. as it disrupts the instructional process. Parents are invited to wait in the quad area by the office or outside the gates around the school at dismissal times. Before school, teachers are completing last minute preparations for classroom instruction and ask that this time not be interrupted. After school, teachers have been instructed to watch students exit areas as part of our school safety plan. While we ask that this time not be interrupted, we understand and appreciate that parents may need to speak with teachers. Please call the office in order to leave a message for a teacher to call you during his/her preparation time and/or to set up a time to meet. Parents

waiting with students (prior to 8:00 a.m.) are asked to wait at north gate area until 8:00 a.m. (when students are dismissed to playground) before entering campus with student.

Students arriving late should report immediately to their classroom or first class. Consequences, when appropriate, are handled within the classroom teacher's discipline plan. Students who are chronically tardy will be referred to the office and/or the School Attendance Review Board (SARB) at the District Office.

Attendance

ATTENDANCE AREAS:

Students shall attend the elementary school located in the area of residence of their parent/guardian, unless they have received approval to attend another school through the intra-district transfer process. Mtn. View's attendance area is bounded by Santa Fe Avenue on the east, Caldwell Avenue on the south, Walnut Avenue to the north, and Mooney Boulevard on the west.

Please refer to boundary map on Page 24 of this handbook.

Our District makes every effort to meet parent needs regarding the enrollment of pupils. In setting up classes, we give first priority for placement to pupils who reside in our elementary school attendance area. Students living outside the Mtn. View School attendance area, but within the Visalia Unified School District, must complete an intra-district transfer request if they desire to attend Mtn. View School. These requests may be picked up at any school site or the district office. If a student lives in the Mtn. View attendance area but moves during the school year, the student may stay for the remainder of the year, but parents must fill out an intra-district transfer request. The transfer request must be approved in order for the student to remain at Mtn. View School the following year. If you have questions regarding Mtn. View School boundaries, please call the school office.

IMPORTANCE OF DAILY ATTENDANCE

We are vitally interested in your child's attendance at school each and every day. When students are absent for any appreciable length of time, they miss the benefits of education. Students not only fall behind in their studies and miss concepts and relationships that are critical to understanding any subject, but they also miss important socialization concepts such as the capacity to understand and follow directions and to plan for the future. Make sure that when your child misses school, it is only for a legitimate reason. Babysitting and family outings are not legitimate excuses. We understand that vacations and special events may occur and children may miss school. Current Education Code is quite specific on what is an excused absence. Please let your child's teacher know as soon as possible to arrange for work to be completed and/or an Independent Study Contract. Thank you for your cooperation.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING ABSENCES AND REQUESTING HOMEWORK

When your child is going to be absent from school please:

- 1) Contact the school (730-7783) the first day of absence;
- 2) When student returns, please send a written note confirming reason for absence and dates absent;
- 3) Instruct your child to give absence verification note to his/her teacher; and
- 4) The absence note should include:
 - a) Date of the note;
 - b) Date or dates of the absence;
 - c) The child's first and last name;
 - d) The reason for absence; and
 - e) The signature of the person writing the note and his/her relationship to the child.

If the absence looks like it will be longer than **several days** and your child's condition permits, you may request schoolwork in order to minimize missed class time. **(Please notify the teacher a minimum of 24 hours before the homework is needed.)** Please see page 16 for Independent Study policies and procedures. Also note that when a student completes a Saturday School, one absence is cleared.

SUPPORTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is very important. Be sure to read all communications from school. School personnel might be trying to notify you about an attendance problem that you didn't even know existed. If you are worried about your child's attendance, please contact the school.

Frequent tardies or absences without proper excuses, or that exceed 10 absences per year, will result in disciplinary action which may include a referral to the School Attendance Review Board (SARB).

TYPES OF ABSENCES

EXCUSED: The only absences that are legally excused are:

- 1) illness
- 2) a medical appointment
- 3) a death in the immediate family. (One day if in California, three days if out of state.)

*Please check with your child's school prior to an absence for these reasons. Board Policy 5008.

UNEXCUSED: All absences other than those listed above are unexcused.

Bicycles, Rollerblades, Skates, Skateboards, and Scooters

Students who ride bicycles to school are expected to obey the laws for safe bicycle riding. Any student riding a bicycle to school must wear an approved bike helmet. Bike students living east of Court are encouraged to cross with the crossing guard at Beech and walk their bikes south and use Evergreen and La Vida Streets to ride home. Students with approved transfers living north of Walnut are encouraged to cross Walnut at the Court and Walnut traffic light.

Bicycles are not to be ridden anywhere on the school grounds at any time. They must be parked and locked in the bicycle area. **Bicycles must not be locked to other bicycles.** The loaning or borrowing of bicycles while at school is not permitted.

Skateboards, rollerblades, scooters and skates are not allowed to be used on the school campus. Since storage space is limited in classrooms it is recommended that students take measures to protect and secure them if brought to campus - a lock with a cable is recommended. Skateboards may be locked in the bike area. Students' names should be prominently displayed. If students choose to take skateboards, rollerblades and/or scooters into the classroom, and they arrive to school prior to 8:00 AM, they must proceed to the supervised line-up area and put their skateboards, rollerblades, and/or scooters next to the fence until dismissed to take them to their classrooms. Scooters must be able to fold up for transport on campus and storage.

Birthdays

Each child at Mountain View School is recognized with a card and pencil for his/her birthday by his/her classroom teacher.

If you wish to bring birthday treats for your child's class, you must have prior approval from your child's teacher. This procedure allows the teacher to schedule the time for the treats.

Children are discouraged from bringing birthday or other party invitations to school to hand out to their friends (unless all the students in the child's class are being invited). Doing so causes bad feelings for those children who do not receive invitations. Please let your child's teacher know in advance and allow for him/her to assist the procedure.

Bringing and Picking Students Up From School

To insure the safety of your children, it is recommended by the Police Department and school, that the following guidelines be observed:

- 1) Parents are encouraged to drop off and pick up students in the areas north or south of the circle drive. The area in front of and between the entrance and exit of the driveway can be hazardous for students.
- 2) Students can be dropped off at the south end of the circular drive at 7:45 AM. Students will be dismissed to the yard at 8:00 AM. Parents may enter campus at 8:00 AM, but may not enter playground or interfere with campus supervision.
- 3) **When picking up your students, please wait at the gate areas or the quad area by the office.** Teachers are expected to walk their students to exit areas, and, if parents are waiting outside classrooms, it interferes with this “Safe School” process. If you want to talk to the teacher, please call and make an appointment.
- 4) Parents are requested to observe safe driving habits in the circular driveway in front of the school, especially at dismissal times -- failure to do so can impede school buses coming and going, and result in children being forced to move between, behind, and in front of cars - some moving! **If you pull into the circular drive, you must either park along the south curb (north of the crosswalk only) or pull on through. You may not hold up traffic in the circular drive in order to wait for a child. Please note that if the transportation issues regarding the circular drive continue, VUSD transportation will close the circular drive to all but the school bus.**
- 5) Double parking is prohibited by law because it hampers the vision of drivers and pedestrians (children), hinders unobstructed progress of pedestrians, and impedes the flow of traffic. If this problem occurs, the Visalia Police Department will be called to issue citations.
- 6) Ample parking exists for dropping off and picking up children on Beech Street (which borders the school to the south), along the west side of Encina (next to the grass play area south of school), and in the parking lot next to Whitendale Park (southwest of campus). The advantages to parking in those areas are that there are no streets to cross or cars to dodge, and there is immediate access to school grounds. It is important to pick students up promptly after dismissal in these areas however, as trouble will occur when students are left unsupervised.
- 7) **Please observe red curb markings (i.e. no parking) and do not parallel park next to the red curb during school hours.**

8) Please do not park in the marked Handicapped parking spaces unless you are authorized and displaying a handicapped marker on or in your vehicle. We do have handicapped students on campus, and these spaces are required to accommodate their needs. If problems occur, the Visalia Police Department will be called to issue citations. Thank you for your cooperation.

Supervision is provided as a courtesy before school from 7:45 AM to 8:00 AM at double entry gates in circle drive and after school in all exit areas for the first 10 minutes after the dismissal bell rings. After 10 minutes, students will be directed to wait at the office. There will be no supervision provided after the first ten minutes. Responsibility will fall to the late parent.

Reminder! Since January 1, 1998, a school bus must display flashing red lights when loading and unloading students. Motorists may not pass the bus **in either direction** while the lights are flashing. There is a very high fine. Please observe this law for the safety of our children.

Bus Transportation

The District shall furnish transportation to those students at the various grade levels who live beyond the distances listed below. The distances shall be measured by using the most direct route from the student's residence to school.

- 1) Kindergarten & Grade 1-3 One Mile
- 2) Grades 4-6 Three Miles

SAFETY ON THE BUS

The safety of pupils transported to school in buses is a shared responsibility of the pupil and the school.

The bus driver has the responsibility for the safety and conduct of students riding the bus to and from school or to and from activities. Students are to obey their drivers at all times. Students are expected to help keep buses clean and neat. Students should know the arrival time of the bus and be ready. Drivers will make every attempt to be on time.

BUS RULES

- 1) Students are to obey their drivers at all times.
- 2) Students will board their assigned bus in an orderly manner at the scheduled time and only at the scheduled stop.
- 3) Students must be seated as directed by the bus driver.
- 4) Students are to remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- 5) Students may talk to each other in conversational tones (#2 voices) while the bus is in motion.

- 6) Students may not take live animals, open food items, glass objects, or other dangerous objects aboard the bus.
- 7) Students shall leave the bus in an orderly fashion.

BUS RIDING IS A PRIVILEGE - NOT A RIGHT!

Should a student disobey bus rules, a Transportation Conduct report will be issued from the Transportation Department. This report will be mailed to the student's parent/guardian, and depending on severity and number, could result in loss of bus riding privileges for a specified time.

- 1st Referral -----Warning; Telephone Call to Parent
- 2nd Referral-----Loss of Bus Privilege for One Day
- 3rd Referral-----Loss of Bus Privilege for One Week
- 4th & Subsequent Referrals-----Possible Loss of Bus Privilege for Remainder of School Year

Cafeteria Information

The cafeteria provides nutritious breakfasts and hot lunches every school day. Lunch money is collected each morning in the cafeteria before school, beginning at 7:45 AM. Students are urged to pay at the beginning of the week for the number of breakfasts and/or hot lunches desired for that week. If students are absent at the beginning of the week, they may pay for their breakfasts and/or lunches in the cafeteria before school on their first day back. Payment envelopes are provided in the cafeteria (next to the cashier). Students can drop their payment envelopes in the payment drop box, and the money will be credited to the student's account that morning. Students can then proceed directly to breakfast or to the playground. A payment drop box will also be in the office during the hours the cashier is not available. A weekly menu is printed in the Times Delta "Food Section" every Wednesday, and menus are sent home monthly.

Milk may be purchased at school to drink with lunches brought from home. Milk money is collected in the cafeteria before school and a record is kept of students who have paid. No arrangements exist for charging lunch or milk. **Checks for either hot lunches or milk should be made out to Mountain View School.** Regular lunch and breakfast prices have increased for 07-08.

Cafeteria prices for student meals are:	regular lunch	= \$1.75
	reduced lunches	= \$0.40
	regular breakfast	= \$1.10
	reduced breakfast	= \$0.30
	additional milk	= \$0.35

District policy students may “charge” up to 2 lunches. When student goes to the cashier on the 2nd “charged” lunch, cashier will give the student a note or put the note in the teacher’s box (to send home at the end of the school day) and attempt to contact the parent by phone. On the 3rd charge, a student will be served a nutritious snack until charges are paid. This is a sensitive area for students. We understand that if they have to charge it is not their fault. Please work with us in order to prevent this happening to your student.

Some families may be eligible for reduced price or free lunch. Contact the school for further information.

Change of Address or Telephone Number

In order to keep our files accurate, parents and students are requested to submit any change of address, telephone, or emergency contact numbers to the office. It is important to let the office know this information as soon as possible in case of an emergency situation involving your child.

Discipline and Behavior – Playground and Cafeteria

The school provides each student with the maximum opportunity to acquire an education. No student has the right to interfere with this opportunity by his/her actions, poor manners, or lack of consideration, or to endanger his or others' health/safety/property. All rules and regulations are developed and enforced with these thoughts in mind. School rules apply on the school grounds, going to and from school, and at any event where our elementary school is represented (regardless of location).

Students know what good conduct is and how to attain it. It simply means behaving at all times. Students who are able to keep the few simple rules that are established will be the ones who will enjoy school and will be considered good school citizens.

Each month, teachers are asked to choose Citizens of the Month based on the pillars of Character Counts and other desirable character traits: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, determination, tolerance, and courtesy. Students chosen by their teachers will be honored at monthly awards assemblies.

The goal of the school is to provide a learning environment where all students feel safe, and all persons are treated with respect and civility. Therefore, bullying will not be tolerated on campus. Bullying involves the intentional, repeated hurtful acts, words or other behavior. Bullying may be:

Physical: Punching, poking, hair-pulling, beating, biting.

- Verbal:** Name-calling, teasing, gossip.
Emotional: Rejecting, humiliating, ostracizing, berating personal characteristics.
Sexual: Harassment and actual abuse.
(Source: U.S. Department of Education)

Mtn.View School continues implementation of the Olweus Anti-bullying Program. Students and parents will continue to receive information throughout the school year.

District discipline policies are outlined in the **Visalia Unified School District Student Conduct Code Grades K-6**. Students who violate district or school rules and policies are subject to the discipline guidelines listed. Referral may be made to School Attendance Review Board if problems are chronic.

School-Wide Rules:

- 1. Respect yourself, respect others and respect property.**
- 2. Use only kind words and actions.**
- 3. Obey All Rules and Procedures For Your Safety and the Safety of Others.**
 - A. Walk at all times on sidewalks**
 - B. Freeze when the bell rings**
 - C. Take bathroom breaks and get drinks before the freeze bell.**

Procedures will be followed according to the plan in the event a student fails to meet these expectations.

Mtn. View School Student Rules

MOTTO: RESPECT FOR SELF, OTHERS, AND PROPERTY

Mtn. View Basic Safety Rule: No student should engage in any behavior or activity that may harm himself/herself or others.

GENERAL RULES FOR RECESS

- 1) Students are to walk to and from the playground with their teacher.
- 2) Students must be on the playground, not in classrooms & hallways.
- 3) Students get drinks and go to the restroom during recess.
- 4) Students must not play in the restroom or around the drinking fountains.
- 5) Nutritious snacks are to be eaten during the first recess of the day. Snacks must be eaten near the gate area. CANDY, SODA, HOT CHEETOS, DRY RAMEN, AND GUM ARE NOT ALLOWED. All trash must be put in the containers.
- 6) Equipment must be kept away from the benches and fences. The benches and the area around them are reserved for studying, visiting, and playing table games. No running in this area.
- 7) Flying objects (frisbees, etc.) should be played with in areas away from other organized games.
- 8) Electronic games, MP3 players, other audio equipment and permanent markers are not allowed.
- 9) Students must stop playing when the bell rings, wait until the whistle is blown, then proceed quickly to their line. Students are not to get drinks or go to the restroom after the bell rings and after the whistle is blown.
- 10) Students are not to bring toys to school. This includes outdoor game equipment (i.e. balls, bats, etc.)
Playground balls can be checked out between 8:00 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. Bats can only be used when classes are supervised by a teacher.
- 11) Students will play organized games in designated areas only.

RULES FOR PLAYGROUND SAFETY

- 1) Students must keep shoes on at all times while at school.
- 2) Students are not to throw dangerous objects such as rocks, dirt, or limbs from trees.
- 3) No forms of tackle or "gang-up" games are allowed. Tag games are discouraged because they often lead to fights or disagreements.
- 4) Knives, guns, toy guns, sticks, matches, lasers or other dangerous objects are not allowed on the playground or at school. (Refer to Student Conduct Code, Grades K-6)

EQUIPMENT SAFETY RULES

- 1) Students are not to push others off any equipment or to play around equipment.
- 2) Swings: Students are not to stand up in, push another student, swing sideways, run under, jump from, swing two to a seat and/or climb the frame.
- 3) Slide: One student at a time, seated, and facing forward, going down the slide.

CAFETERIA RULES

- 1) Students will observe good table manners while eating.
- 2) Students eating hot lunches will select a minimum of three (3) items.
- 3) Food will not be shared, thrown, left on the table or floor, or taken out of the cafeteria.
- 4) Students will talk quietly to their neighbors (#2voice level).
- 5) Students will leave their table area clean and place trash in containers provided.

Mtn. View School Student Dress Code

“Making Responsible Choices”

We, at Mtn. View School, believe that all students should wear clothing to school that fits well, reflects pride in oneself, is conducive to the learning process and demonstrates respect for school. Clothing MUST be neat, clean, without holes or rips and acceptable in appearance. Therefore, Mtn. View School has adopted the following dress code for all students.

- I. Attire that protects the health and safety of the student:
 - A. Shoes that are appropriate for school activities must be worn at all times. Shoes with cleats or spikes are not allowed. Shoes must have a back strap; No flip-flops, high heels, or skate shoes (“heelies”) are allowed.
 - B. All un-hemmed clothing is to be neat in appearance and not pose a danger to the student.
 - C. Acceptable sun-protective headgear is a full brim hat (that shades the face), with no logo or lettering, which is to be worn as intended to provide sun protection and is only worn outdoors. Unacceptable headgear includes all other hats, caps, bandanas, hairnets, etc. EXCEPTIONS: (1) Head covering may be permitted with written medical reason and a letter on file from a doctor. Medical reasons may include, but are not limited to, heat exhaustion, skin conditions, etc.; OR (2) During special event days as designated by the principal or Student Council.
 - D. Attire which may be used as a weapon is not allowed. This includes but is not limited to chains, wallet chains, and items with spikes or studs.

- II. Attire shall not interfere with the educational process:
- A. Sunglasses shall not be worn unless there is a verified medical reason and letter on file from the parent in the office.
 - B. Students shall not wear tube or halter tops, backless garments or see-through tops. Sleeveless shirts are allowed. Students shall not wear tank tops (tank tops are allowed only if worn with a t-shirt), spaghetti straps (skinny straps), fish-net or half-tops. The mid section of the body shall be covered at all times.
 - C. Shorts, skorts, and culottes must cover the underwear when sitting, standing, or bending.
 - D. NO BAGGING/NO SAGGING! Pants and shorts must fit at the waist, hips, crotch and thighs. A belt must be worn if pants are loose around the waist. Pants and shorts are too baggy if, when the pant seams are wrapped around the front of the mid-thigh, the seams touch.
 - E. Clothing will be worn as its design is traditionally intended. This includes, but is not limited to, bib overalls, belts, multiple belt buckles.
 - D. Underwear shall be worn and be covered at all times.
 - E. Jewelry: Small stud earrings (*in ears only*), small necklaces and bracelets are allowed. For safety purposes, no hoop earrings, body piercing jewelry, long necklaces or dangly bracelets will be allowed.
 - F. Makeup is not allowed at school, including lip gloss products.
 - G. Hair color is not allowed.
 - I Tattoos are not allowed. **Students are not to write on or purposely scratch any part of their body.**
 - J. Attire shall not advocate, advertise, denote or be recognized as gang activity or affiliation, crude or vulgar printing, slogans, symbols, designs or pictures depicting drugs, alcoholic beverages, tobacco violence, and graffiti, sexual suggest unlawful activity. Here is a partial list of items that are not to display any of the messages listed above: 1. Any apparel; 2. Jewelry; 3. Emblems; 4. Belts; 5. Badges; 6. Symbols; 7. Signs; 8. Accessories; 9. Notebooks.
- IV. Principal or designee shall have the discretion to prohibit any other attire that does not meet the criteria listed above.
- V. Principal or designee shall have the discretion to make reasonable exceptions to the above for SPECIAL DAYS OR SPECIAL EVENTS.

Any violation of the dress code will result in one of the following consequences:

Warning, notification to parent, student sent home to dress properly or wash color out of hair, in-school suspension, or other alternative consequences. For questions or clarification of any of the above, please call the Principal, Mrs. Merkel, at 730-7783.

Parents and staff are also expected to dress in a manner appropriate to the learning/professional environment while on campus.

Emergency Contact Card

When a student enrolls at Mountain View School, the parent or guardian must complete an emergency contact card. The information on this card is extremely important. Occasionally, it is imperative that the school reach the parent of a child because of illness, accident or because some other emergency has arisen. **Students will be released only to adults whose names appear on the emergency card.** This card is part of the packet that is sent out at the beginning of the year with your child. Return the emergency card and other cards promptly to your child's teacher. Please make sure to list at least **TWO** local emergency telephone numbers. **Please keep the school informed of any changes** in the information on the emergency contact card. If you have any legal documents that prevent an individual access to your child, it is extremely important that the school office have a copy of these documents.

Emergency, Disaster, and Civil Defense Procedures

An Emergency Plan is in place at Mountain View School. Be assured that our first priority will be the safety of our students. It would be helpful if families would discuss emergency procedures, including the route your students need to follow (if they are dismissed) to walk home and what to do if there is no one home when they reach there.

Please refer to The **Emergency, Disaster, and Civil Defense Procedures** located on page 23 of this handbook for further information.

English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC)

Schools with 21 or more English Learner (EL) students in attendance, regardless of language, must form a functioning English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC), or a subcommittee to an existing advisory committee, such as School Site Council. Mountain View School will establish an elected English Learner Advisory Committee which will advise the principal and staff of the school. This committee will be composed of parents of limited English proficient students and school employees who meet regularly (at least 4 times per year) to discuss proposed improvements in the school's English Learner Program. Meetings are always open to all interested persons. Dates of these meetings will be published in the school's monthly calendar. In addition, one ELAC committee member will be asked to represent Mtn. View School on the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC).

Homework

A VUSD Board Policy ((BP 6154.1 (a)) was approved at the end of the 2002/2003 school year. The Governing Board recognizes that to be effective, homework assignments should reinforce classroom learning objectives, providing independent practice of previously learned skills or information. Independent practice can consist of an extension of classroom activities. The Governing Board also recognizes that literacy activities outside the classroom directly correlate with student achievement and attainment of academic standards. In order to achieve this goal, it is recommended that time outside the instructional day should be spent in literacy activities in the following manner:

- K-2 Minimum of 20 minutes per day
- 3-4 Minimum of 30 minutes per day
- 5-6 Minimum of 45 minutes per day

In addition to the literacy practice above, other content areas can and should be included in Homework time based on the following recommendations:

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-----|--------------------------|
| K | Up to 10 minutes per day | 3-4 | Up to 25 minutes per day |
| 1 | Up to 15 minutes per day | 5-6 | Up to 30 minutes per day |
| 2 | Up to 20 minutes per day | | |

Health Services

Mountain View has a nurse on our campus two days weekly. At all other times, we have access to an on-call nurse for emergencies. Students who become ill or are injured at school will be sent to the office. The office staff will administer basic first aid. If more than basic first aid is required, people whose names are listed on the Emergency Contact Card will be called to pick up the student. If they are not available, the child will be taken to the emergency room at the hospital. Remember, an emergency telephone number of the student's family doctor must be on file at the school. Parents need to arrange for immediate pick up of their sick or injured child in order to prevent infecting other children and to provide the care a sick or injured child needs. Also, remember that there is limited space/facilities in the office for sick children.

Immunizations

All students of public schools in California are required by state law to have the following immunizations:

1. Poliomyelitis
2. Diphtheria and Tetanus Toxioids and Pertussis (DPT)
3. Measles (Rubeola)
4. Hepatitis B (6th Grade)

Students who are enrolling in Mountain View School from a school outside Tulare County must present written evidence of a tuberculosis (Mantoux - PPD) skin test results that are within one year of the date of enrollment. Failure to comply with immunization requirements will result in exclusion from school.

Independent Study

Independent Study can be made available to students who will be out of school five or more consecutive days, with the agreement of the teacher. We request that you contact your child's teacher at least five days before your leave date. The Independent Study contract will need to be explained to you and signed by the pupil, the parent, the teacher having responsibility for the general supervision of Independent Study, and the program administrator. The teacher will then coordinate academic work assignments and work products. All work is due on the date the student **returns** to school. The teacher will then evaluate the assigned work products per district policy and procedures. Under special circumstances (i.e. family emergencies, offsetting excessive absences) Independent Study may be necessary. Please know that it is not equivalent to the instruction your child would be receiving in the classroom as much of our instruction involves hand-on projects, group work, and teacher/student interaction and assessment. This type of instruction cannot be duplicated in a worksheet or question/answer page.

Instructional Time

Once the instructional day begins, classroom interruptions will be kept to a minimum. Rooms will not be called when parents deliver band/orchestra instruments, lunches, or call to leave non-emergency messages for students. Students will be directed to stop by the office for late items at recess or lunch times.

Insurance

The District does NOT carry a medical insurance policy for students. Individual accident insurance is offered through a group policy on a **voluntary, self-paid** basis for children whose parents waive it. The opportunity to take out this insurance will be offered annually at a set date early in the school year. The fee and information is to be returned directly to the company, not to the school.

Leaving School during the School Day

During the school day, no student is permitted to leave the school grounds without receiving permission from the office. Office staff will call for the student when parent arrives to pick them up. On leaving, parents need to sign their student out in the office. Children should not stop at the shops located near Walnut and Court when coming to or leaving school.

Library Media Center

The library media center is located in Room 70. Students are scheduled to use the library/media center on a weekly basis. Many of the books have been donated by parents and children. Any student who borrows a book assumes the entire responsibility of either returning the book to the library or paying for loss or damages. Book contributions are always welcome. We encourage families to donate a book on their child's birthday.

Lost and Found

We encourage and ask that you clearly mark any personal item brought to school with a name and phone number. The school cannot assume responsibility for student losses; however, if it is reported immediately, every effort will be made to help find lost items. Lost and found clothing will be taken to designated place. It is the responsibility of the student and/or parent to check for lost items. At the end of each month, unclaimed items will be given to a charitable organization.

Lunch Time

All students will have forty (40) minutes for lunch (exceptions will occur during Inclement Weather days, which includes extreme cold or hot weather, rainy days, and bad air days). We operate a closed campus, which means that all students remain on campus during their lunch period. Special permission will be granted to those students who bring a note that gives permission to go home or be picked up for lunch.

Medications at School

If your child regularly takes prescribed medication and you want your child to receive medication at school, it is necessary that a medication request form be completed and signed by you and your doctor. Necessary forms may be obtained from the office. This completed form is then kept on file in the school office. Forms need to be updated each year. State Law mandates that ALL medication is to be dispensed from the office by school personnel. All medications are kept in a locked drawer in the nurse's office. Medication must be labeled with the student's name and the precise dosage instructions in the original pharmacy container. *Please DO NOT send medications with your child, either in their backpack or in their lunch box.* **Short-term medication should be administered at home** (i.e. antibiotics, aspirin, etc.)

Parent Conferences and Progress Reporting

Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher at any time during the school year if they desire information on their child's progress or behavior. An appointment with the teacher may be made by sending a note with the student or by telephoning the school (730-7783) to leave a message for the teacher requesting an appointment. Appointments will be made for the hours before and after school. Instructional time will not be interrupted, including right before class starts and right after class ends. Formal parent conferences are held twice a year in the Visalia Unified School District. The first conference is scheduled for all students. The second conference is scheduled only if the teacher or parents find it necessary to hold a formal conference.

Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)

The PTA was originally founded as an organization of parents and teachers. Today, membership includes parents, teachers, school administrators, and interested persons in the community.

The PTA has several valuable functions:

1. The PTA is an added source of information and provides input to the school.
2. The PTA is a source of communication to the parents about their child's activities.
3. The PTA raises money to finance several valuable school/community activities.

It is important to know that the PTA is self-funded. No money for its operations comes from the school district. Your membership and participation assures that the PTA can continue its primary responsibility: Supporting the school program.

Parent Visitations to Classrooms

Parents are always welcome to visit their child's classroom. However, in order to achieve the purpose in observing, parents are requested to:

1. Make prior arrangements with the classroom teacher.
2. Enter campus through the office gate only, check-in at the office to receive a Visitor's Pass prior to scheduled visitation, and check-out through office.
3. Not interfere with the instruction time and/or the well being of students.

Parent Volunteers

Parents are an important part of the educational process. You can become directly involved by becoming a Parent Volunteer. Volunteers can be useful in many ways such as:

Classroom Assistant	Clerical & Secretarial
Tutoring	Volunteering in the library
Making Phone Calls	Serving as room parents
Working with small groups	School Site Council
Special Events	Babysitting
Making Materials at home	Traffic Safety Committee
Reading with students	
English Language Learner Advisory Committee	

Parents who wish to volunteer will need to attend an orientation with the principal and then meet with the teacher beforehand, familiarize themselves with District/Board Policies, and adhere to professional/appropriate dress. Information on the orientation will be shared at Back to School Night. Parents can sign up for various volunteer activities in their student's classrooms on Back to School Night.

Personal Belongings

Please do not allow your child to bring items to school that are not a part of the educational program unless specifically asked for by the teacher. Please refer to page 12 of this handbook and/or **Visalia Unified School District Student Conduct Code Grades K-6** for information about items that are never allowed at school. **Parents are urged to print or etch names on coats, sweaters, gloves, lunch bags, personal equipment, etc.**

Physicals (Admittance)

State Law requires that all students must have a physical examination within 18 months prior to entering the first grade. If you have any questions about the immunization and physical examination requirements, please call the school office or the Visalia Unified School District Health Office at 730-7580.

Pictures

Individual identification pictures will be taken annually. Pictures will be taken in the fall and spring at Mountain View School. Pictures must be paid for on the date pictures are taken.

Pupil Records

The cumulative record folder is the educational record required by State Law that is kept for each pupil throughout his/her school career. Parents may have access to any and all information in their pupil's folder by contacting the principal for an appointment to view such records

School Clean Campus

Much of the spirit and reputation of a school is reflected by its appearance. Mountain View School has always had the reputation of being a clean school. Every student needs to do his/her part by making sure his/her wrappers and trash are deposited in the trash containers provided.

School Site Council (SSC)

As a result of legislation passed by the State Legislature in 1977, Mountain View School has an elected School Site Council which advises the principal and assists the staff in administering our School Improvement Program. This Council is composed of parents, community members, and school employees who meet regularly to discuss improvements in the Mtn. View School educational program. Meetings are always open to all interested persons. Dates of these meetings are published in the monthly calendar and agendas are posted in the office prior to scheduled meetings.

Specialist Programs (Grades 4-6)

The Visalia Unified School District provides a very comprehensive music program in all elementary schools.

In Grades 4 and 5 students receive two fifty (50) minute periods per week of instruction that may include lessons on vocal music, music history, mechanics, or playing simple music instruments. In Grades 5 and 6, students have a choice of participating in regular classroom music or enrolling in band or orchestra. An informational meeting will be held at the beginning of the school year in which parents can learn about the instrumental programs. Once the programs begin, students will be expected to bring their instruments every day of band/orchestra class. Failure to do so will result in a written assignment.

Your child will receive special instruction in physical education this year during two fifty (50) minute periods each week. These are taught by a Physical Education Specialist with emphasis on physical fitness and the development of basic skills that can be used in a variety of group and/or individual sports. Students will usually do some running each P.E. period. A six-minute jog-walk is required in our State P.E. testing program, and we want to adequately prepare them for this activity. Students are encouraged to participate in the running, but can walk if they become tired. All students are required to participate in P.E. activities unless health reasons prevent participation. **A written note from parents will excuse a student (on a daily basis) from P.E. due to colds, etc. If a student needs to be excused for an extended period of time (more than one week), a doctor's note is required. P.E. instruction will be adjusted for "inclement" weather (i.e. rainy days, heat advisory days or bad air days).**

Students in Grades 4-6 will also receive health education instruction through the Physical Education program and their classroom teacher.

Student Government

The Mountain View School Student Council is composed of executive officers and class representatives. The President is elected from sixth grade, and a Vice-President is elected from fifth or sixth grades. When the President is absent, the Vice-President assumes the duties. A Secretary-Treasurer is elected from grades 5-6, and two Activities Commissioners are elected from fourth grade. The Council maintains the right to add officers as needed. In addition there are class representatives elected in grades three through six. All 3-6 grade students are eligible to vote in the Student Council elections. Elections are held twice a year. The first term is August-December. The second term is January-June.

The Council meets during the school year to discuss student activities, assist in school functions, and make recommendations regarding those activities. **All Student Council officers must maintain a satisfactory grade average and exhibit model behavior at school in order to remain on the Council.** Vacancies are filled by appointment of the Student Council upon approval of the school administration.

Suggested School Route

A map showing the suggested routes to Mountain View School is on the page 24. These routes were determined by a committee made up of representatives of the City of Visalia, the Visalia Unified School District, and various groups and organizations in the school district.

Please discuss with your child the safest route for him/her. Walking the route with him/her a few times would also be helpful.

Supplies and Textbooks

The School District provides the textbooks necessary for our educational program. Pupils are taught to take care of textbooks and to conserve supplies. Lost or damaged books must be paid for by the pupils responsible for the books.

Telephones

The school telephone is a business phone and is not to be used to make arrangements to go home with a friend, etc. These arrangements should be made at home the day before, not at school. Cell phones are allowed at school but must remain off and put away during the instructional day including recesses.

Transfers to Another School

If it becomes necessary for you to leave Mtn. View School during the year, please notify your child's teacher a few days in advance so that we can make your transfer speedy and efficient. When you leave, your child will be issued a transfer form that will introduce him/her to the new school he/she will be attending.

Unauthorized Persons on the School Campus

In compliance with the Visalia Unified School District Board Policy, the following procedure shall be followed:

School campuses are primarily for the education of pupils during the regular school day and immediately preceding or following the school day. Therefore, any persons other than enrolled pupils and personnel employed by the District are **not to be on campus during regular school hours without first securing permission from the school office**. Otherwise, they will be considered as being on campus on unlawful business and subject to the action and penalties of Section 626.8 of the California Penal Code.

As per California State Law and VUSD Board Policy, smoking is strictly prohibited on the school campus, including driveways, parking lots, and grassy areas surrounding the campus.

Emergency, Disaster, and Civil Defense Procedures

(Important – Please keep this for future reference)

The Visalia Unified School District has plans and preparations for major emergency situations. We believe that the reactions of the people in emergencies depend largely upon their training. Our school staff is trained, and drills are held regularly to make certain that the students understand emergency procedures.

We want your children to be as safe at school as they are at home in a serious emergency. School buildings have been designed with safety in mind, and inspections are regularly made to remove possible hazards. There are personnel trained in first aid. Our primary concern in the event of emergency is the safety and welfare of the students.

Your children should be instructed to obey the directions of their teachers and of the bus driver on the way to and from school (if they ride the bus). If walking, riding bicycles and skateboards, or rollerblading, they should be told to continue toward their destination (to or from school) when an emergency situation develops.

Your cooperation is asked in an emergency:

- * Please do not telephone the school. Telephones lines will be needed for emergency communication.
- * Please do not drive to school. Streets should be as open as possible for emergency vehicles.
- * Do tune your radio to the local station. Information and instructions for picking up students during or after an emergency will be given over the radio.
- * Your children should know the safest and quickest route home in the event that buses are unable to proceed as planned, making it necessary for students to walk home from school.

- * If you are not home during the day, your children should be instructed to go to a neighbor's or relative's home where adults are present. This procedure applies anytime it is necessary to dismiss school early. Please be sure to discuss this matter with a neighbor or relative.

- * You should review the above procedures with your children regularly, emphasizing that the regular means of getting home from school will be used except in an extreme emergency.

We assure you that our school will continue to work closely with the Tulare County Office of Emergency Services and will adjust our plans should changes be necessary.

