



Los Encinos School

***This handbook is subject to change per the enrollment agreement. The handbook will be updated prior to the beginning of each school year.***

# Parent/Student Handbook

2021-2022

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Statement of Philosophy**

Los Encinos is a small, independent, elementary school that provides a comprehensive educational program within a nurturing environment; our impact extends not only to the child, but also to the family. Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade Los Encinos students are encouraged to develop confidence, independence, and joy in learning. We recognize and honor individuality and believe that personal success motivates children toward realizing their fullest potential.

The Los Encinos faculty prepares students to become global thinkers and citizens, with a strong academic foundation and a passionate curiosity for learning. Teachers design and facilitate a broad range of experiences that engage students as critical thinkers and problem-solvers. Our school-wide integrated curriculum is rich in the humanities and stresses teamwork and cooperation. Building character and mutual respect are emphasized daily in our classrooms and in our service-learning program. A Los Encinos graduate welcomes the challenges of navigating in an increasingly complex world and seeks to find their place in our community and beyond.

A Los Encinos student . . .

- possesses core human values that reflect tolerance, compassion, and a sense of community responsibility
- communicates reciprocally, articulates effectively both orally and in writing, listens thoughtfully, listens to and hears multiple perspectives, and enjoys an expansive vocabulary that promotes creative expression
- exhibits intellectual curiosity and critical thinking by seeking deeper levels of meaning, asking good questions, quantifying and analyzing, and discerning relevant information
- is motivated by a passion for learning to accept challenges, to take risks, and to learn from mistakes
- is a change agent who possesses the confidence and self-esteem to lead, to collaborate, and to follow.

### **Accreditation**

Los Encinos School is fully accredited by the California Association of Independent Schools (CAIS), National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

## **Los Encinos School Anthem**

**Nothing is bigger than childhood. This is precisely why Los Encinos is a smaller school than most. We know life never gets more magnificent than this magical window of time, so we are committed to helping young children experience it fully. This means keeping our school small enough to deliver a vast education.**

**Big thinking, big opportunities, big fun – all made possible by staying exceptionally small.**

**Los Encinos is a close-knit learning community where everyone knows each other; where we honor diverse perspectives, cultures, and experiences, and value equity, inclusion, and justice; where cooperation and friendship span all grades; where students feel both safe and excited to take risks and try new things.**

**Around here we're always open to creative and unconventional lessons, and we're agile enough to adapt our learning strategies without bureaucratic delay. We work and play together like family. Unrestricted by rigid programmatic mandates, we have the freedom to transform education into a thrilling journey of personal experiences.**

**This is how the curiosity of children becomes a deep and lasting engagement with learning. Yes, it takes determination and bold vision to remain small in a world that instinctively praises “bigger” and “more.” But this is exactly our promise to you: the wondrous advantages of a small, keenly focused elementary school.**

**Los Encinos School. *Think Big. Start Small.***

### **Admissions Policy and Procedures:**

Los Encinos School seeks diversity in its student body as part of the educational experience of all children. We welcome applicants of all backgrounds and accept students with varying learning styles and academic abilities.

### **Notice of Non-Discriminatory Policy as to Students**

Los Encinos School admits students of any race, color, religion, sex, gender identity or gender expression, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the School. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national or ethnic origin, or sexual orientation or identity in administration of its educational policies, financial aid programs, and athletic or other school-administered programs.

Admission to Los Encinos School is based on the following criteria:

1. Applicants must be academically and developmentally ready for their grade level as assessed by Los Encinos School.
2. Los Encinos strives to achieve a balance at each grade level.
3. Siblings are given priority provided they have met the above criteria and the family has demonstrated a level of support, commitment, and involvement within the Los Encinos community.

Applications for admission are accepted prior to the student's enrollment. Applications can be mailed out by request, found online, or obtained through the school office. Weekly tours and Open Houses, held in the fall, provide opportunities for prospective families to visit the school and to learn more about our program. When the school cannot receive visitors on campus, all opportunities for prospective students will be available by Zoom or another virtual program.

The deadline for kindergarten applications is the 15<sup>th</sup> of January. An applicant is placed in the applicant pool once the completed application is returned to the school, along with a \$100 non-refundable application fee. A child must be five years of age by September 1 of the year of kindergarten entrance.

Once an application is on file, individual parent meetings are conducted with the Head of School. Morning school visits are scheduled in January and February for kindergarten applicants. Students applying for Grades 1-6 are scheduled for school visits. Teacher recommendation forms, report cards, and test scores (if available) are required for all applicants.

Admission decisions are based on information from the child's current school, from student observations, and from the parent interview. The needs of each child are carefully considered in order to ensure that the School can serve the child. Applicants are notified of admission decisions in March on a date coordinated with other independent schools in the area.

A student with a qualified disability, who desires a reasonable accommodation in order to access

the goods, services, or operations of Los Encinos School, or their parents, should make a request in writing to the Head of School. The request must identify: a) the goods, services, or operations to which the student requests full and equal access; and b) the desired accommodation(s).

Following receipt of the request, the Head of School may require additional information, such as reasonable documentation from a medical provider demonstrating the existence of a disability. Such documentation should not identify the disability, but only indicate that: (1) the student has a disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities; and (2) the manner in which the disability limits major life activities relevant to a student's participation in the School's education program (i.e., what are the functional limitations of the student with regard to their participation in the School's educational program).

Documentation of a disability will be kept confidential and will be shared only with School personnel involved with the coordination and facilitation of services and accommodations, except as is otherwise required by law or emergency health services. Since insufficient information may jeopardize the accommodations process, the School reserves the right to request additional documentation considered necessary to the formulation of a reasonable and appropriate accommodation plan. The School also reserves the right to request an independent evaluation by a professional of its choosing.

After receipt of reasonable documentation of a qualified disability, the School will arrange for a discussion with the student and the student's parents. The discussion may include other individuals that may be helpful for the School to better understand the student's disability or limitations or the need for accommodations. The purpose of the discussion is to work in good faith to fully discuss all feasibly potential reasonable accommodations.

Following the interactive process discussion, Los Encinos School will determine, in its sole discretion, whether reasonable accommodation(s) can be made, and the type of accommodation(s) to provide. Los Encinos School will not provide accommodation(s) that would pose an undue hardship upon Los Encinos School finances or operations, or that would endanger the health or safety of the student or others, or that would fundamentally alter the nature of the School or its goods, services, or operations, or that would cause undue burden to the School. Accommodations must also permit the school to meet its legal obligations. The School will inform the student's family of its decision as to reasonable accommodation(s) in writing.

### **3 Modes of Learning**

With safety and health as our #1 priority, Los Encinos School provides three (3) modes of learning to be able to respond to community, local, state, national emergency, or viral outbreak or pandemic. These three (3) modes are On-Campus, Blended, and At-Home Learning formats. This Handbook provides you with Los Encinos School's philosophy, policies, and regulations that encompass all three (3) learning formats. The schedule and general practices listed in this Handbook are in reference to the On-Campus Learning format. There will be separate documents provided that describe policies and procedures for the Blended and At-Home Learning formats when instituted. All three formats will continue to provide a comprehensive educational program

of whole child learning while staying true to the Los Encinos School philosophy, mission statement, and fundamentals.

The At-Home (online) Learning format can be provided to families under certain circumstances. A request must be submitted to the Head of School two (2) weeks prior for approval. At-Home (online) Learning will not be provided to families taking a vacation during the regular school schedule or for a short illness. An unforeseen illness or injury where a student is capable of school, please send in your request as soon as possible to the Head of School, and arrangements will be made for At-Home Learning within two (2) weeks of your request.

**The School reserves the right to choose the delivery mode of instruction.**

## **Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees is the policy making body of Los Encinos School, a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation. The Board of Trustees includes parents of students (past and present), the Head of School, and involved members of the community at large. In addition to establishing School policies, the Board has the fiduciary responsibility for the continued financial stability and long-term viability of the School. This includes responsibility for the School's operating budget, capital assets, and fundraising efforts. In addition, the Board hires, supports, and evaluates the Head of School, but is not involved in the day-to-day running of the School. The role of the Board is to ensure adherence to the School's mission, to safeguard the integrity of the School, and to provide for the future of the School.

The Board has the primary fiduciary responsibility for guarding and advancing the continued financial stability and long-term viability of Los Encinos School.

Each spring, the Board of Trustees elects members and officers for the upcoming school year. Members serve for an initial one-year term and then renewable two-year terms. Because of mandated Board size limitations, there may be years in which no new seats are available. All School parents are encouraged to serve on Board committees. Board committees include: Strategic Planning, Development/Fundraising, Facilities, Marketing, and ad hoc committees as needed. Memberships on these committees or involvement with the Parent Association are excellent ways of participating, supporting the School.

## **Development Programs**

Los Encinos School, similar to most nonprofit independent schools, relies on the generous gifts from our community to supplement tuition for its annual program (LES Fund), major capital improvements (Capital/Building Campaign), and endowment.

We ask that every Los Encinos Family participate in the annual LES Fund at a level that is personally meaningful. The LES Fund helps fill the gap between the tuition income and the

actual cost for a Los Encinos student. Los Encinos School has a powerful tradition of 100% participation by our school families. Every gift to the LES Fund is significant and will be recognized by the school and are tax deductible to the fullest extent permitted under applicable tax codes.

Los Encinos also sponsors a social fundraising event each year. It includes live and silent auctions, as well as an entertaining evening for Los Encinos parents and friends. Again, we strive for 100% participation, a lot of fun, and fundraising.

Participation by all Los Encinos School families in our fundraising efforts guarantees the future success and academic excellence of our School. You will receive more information during the year regarding fundraising activities.

## **SCHOOL POLICIES**

### **Daily Schedule for On-Campus Learning**

7:45-8:05	Early drop-off, Library
7:45-8:15	Students arrive on campus and go straight to class
10:00-10:20	Morning recess
11:45	School lunch begins with kindergarten and first grade
12:10-12:30	Lunch recess
12:30	End of lunch bell-Afternoon classes begin
3:15	School day ends and Carpool begins in the tunnel
3:45-5:00	Extended care and enrichment classes (when applicable) (4:30pm on Fridays)

### **Extended Care, Homework Club, and Supervision**

Extended Care is available after school. As of the 2021-22 school year the extended care procedures are as follows:

- Extended Care begins at 3:45 p.m. and ends at 5:00 p.m. (4:30pm on Fridays)
- Daily charge is \$15.00, flat rate
- For families who use extended care regularly, an annual extended care plan is available at a rate of \$1,200 per child, which is discount, payable in advance to the Business Office
- A \$25.00 charge every fifteen (15) minutes, or portion thereof, for any child not picked up by 5:00 p.m.
- Children playing on the yard or in homework club after 3:45 p.m. are still under the supervision of LES employees and an extended care charge of \$15.00 will be applied whether or not parent and/or guardian is present
- After conclusion of an enrichment class, students must be promptly picked up or they will be checked into extended care.
- If your child is being picked-up by another family, and the ride is late, a charge will be applied to your account

- On early dismissal days there is no extended care, unless specified

Homework club:

- 3:15 p.m. to 4:15 p.m., Monday through Thursday in the library
- Regular extended care fees will be charged for homework club

Please make sure you sign your child out when you leave extended care or homework club.

## Daily Attendance

The goal of the School attendance policy is to help children have a successful experience at school; therefore, it is important to have regular and punctual attendance each day. We appreciate your partnership in adhering to the attendance policy as consistent attendance is the basic requirement of a quality education. Parents will be responsible for the arrangement of the make-up for missed work when there is an extended absence. The learning experience is much more than simply reading, doing homework, writing papers, or taking tests. The classroom interactions between students and with the teacher(s) are of inestimable value. Thus, students who are absent are unable to participate in meaningful classroom discussions and miss important class experiences.

## Tardiness

Getting to class on time is an essential component in maintaining a learning environment that is free from interruptions. Students are expected to arrive on time. Children are considered tardy if they arrive after 8:15 a.m. If a child is tardy, they must report to the school office **with a parent or guardian** to be signed in and given a pass to enter class. **If there are more than five (5) tardies in a trimester, a conference will be set with the administration.** Non-emergency appointments with doctors and dentists should be planned during vacation periods, after school hours, or on weekends. If a child has to leave school early, the office must be notified in **writing** prior to noon of that same day. This assures that all the teachers can be informed of the child's absence and plan the child's work accordingly.

## Absences

An absence is recorded as **excused** only when it is due to illness, family emergency, or religious holidays. It is the parents' responsibility to call or email the school by **10:00 a.m.** if your child is absent **for any reason.** A sick child should be kept home. **Your child must be 24 hours (one day) fever free before returning to school (see Communicable Diseases).**

An absence is recorded as **unexcused** when it is due to reasons other than the child's illness, family emergency, or religious holiday. Family travel, non-emergency doctor or dentist appointments, and extended vacations are examples of unexcused absences. We believe that every day at school is important and urge parents to help communicate this to children by avoiding unexcused absences. **Excessive excused or unexcused absences can jeopardize your child's matriculation to the next grade level or continued placement at the School.** Missing as much as 10 percent of the school year is considered chronic absences excused or unexcused. Parents should notify the school office and the classroom teacher one week prior to any unexcused absences.

Note: There has been a significant amount of research which shows students with high rates of absenteeism are less likely to be able to read at grade level by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and continue to struggle academically if the habit persists.

Whether an absence is excused or unexcused, when a child is absent, it is the child's responsibility to make up missed work. **Homework requests should only be made for students who have been absent for more than two (2) days.** These requests for homework assignments are to be made by 11:00 a.m. through the office. Once a request is made, the office will notify the teacher. Assignments may be picked up in the school office **after 2:30 p.m.**

A sign-out book is kept in the office, and an authorized signature is required for a child to be released early or admitted late.

When both parents plan to be out of town during the school week, it is extremely important that the School be notified so the school can provide the necessary support to the child. A written note containing the names of those individuals in charge at home, as well as the telephone number where parents may be reached must be on file in the school office before parents leave.

## **Parking**

Safety in the parking lot is our number one priority. Therefore, PLEASE BE AWARE THAT OUR PARKING LOT AND CAMPUS ARE CELL PHONE FREE ZONES. PLEASE REFRAIN FROM USING YOUR CELL PHONE WHILE DRIVING IN AND AROUND THE PARKING LOT.

Parking is limited, and it is essential that everyone work together to make sure that the parking spaces are used efficiently and safely. At the beginning of the year, each family is issued two (2) parking placards. Place the placard **in the lower corner of the driver's side window.** The placards have numbers on them that correspond to a master family list. When you park in the parking lot you must pull all the way into the space allowing room for another car to park behind. Every car must display a parking placard that allows us to identify the parked cars so that if they are parked behind another car and/or need to be moved, the driver can be easily located. If you find a car parked behind your vehicle, you can check with the security guard or the office to identify the driver. Please notify the front office if you require additional placards.

For increased security and safety (see Parent Visits), access to the church and school **parking lots will be closed between 8:20 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.**, street parking only. There will be one main entrance during school hours. Please enter the campus from the street through the entry gate leading up to the red gates. All visitors including parents, will sign in with the security officer and receive a pass in exchange for a government form of identification. Parents and visitors will exit in the same manner, retrieving their identification and returning the pass.

*The owner, driver, and passengers of any vehicle entering, exiting, parking, or otherwise located on the school or church property assume all risk of loss and injury that may result while such vehicle is entering, exiting, or located on such property. Neither Los Encinos School*

*nor its landlord, St. Nicholas Episcopal Church, shall have any liability or responsibility for damage or injury resulting from the use of the school's or church's driveways or parking facilities.*

### **Morning drop-off and Carpool**

There will be two carpool drop-offs. The carpool drop-off from 7:45 a.m. to 8:15 a.m. is located off Oak Park and through the alley in the breezeway on the east side of the 17100 Ventura Blvd. building. Cars should pull up to the door where a faculty member will meet them and unload the students. **All students must exit from the driver's side of the vehicle.** It is essential that children are ready to exit the car as soon as a faculty member meets them. They will then be sent to the Library until 8:05. The second carpool drop off in the church parking lot will open at 7:45 a.m. and will **close promptly at 8:15 a.m.** If your child arrives after **8:15 a.m.**, please take them directly to the office. Students will be issued a tardy slip, and the parent/driver will have to sign the child into school.

**The church parking lot is closed in the morning for parking.** We urge the community to use the two drop-off lanes in the morning (see Carpool).

- Right turn only when exiting the carpool lanes
- Please be aware of all pedestrians as you enter and exit Ventura Blvd
- Please do not block sidewalk when waiting for traffic to enter or exit school
- If you choose to walk your child in to school, please use neighborhood parking
- If you are crossing Ventura Blvd., please do so at a crosswalk
- Front parking lot closes promptly at 8:15 a.m.
- Do not leave sibling children unattended in the front parking lot
- If you arrive after 8:15 a.m. you need to walk your child to the office (see Tardiness)
- On Friday mornings, Parent Association meetings, and on days with other morning meetings, the lot is open until 8:20 a.m. for parking, cars must be cleared out of the lot by 9:30 a.m. for physical education instruction
- West lot serves as staff parking, if you choose to park on the west lot, be aware that you may not be able to move your car until after 8:30 a.m.

### **Dismissal and Carpool**

This year, we will continue to have carpool pick-up after school. Pick-up will be in the breezeway on the east side of the 17100 Ventura Boulevard building. The pick-up lane will close promptly at 3:45 p.m. Please be sure your child(ren) know they are being picked up and are waiting in the courtyard outside the Library, so we can quickly load them into your car.

Following dismissal, children not using carpool pick-up will wait in a supervised area for their parent/authorized individual to arrive and sign them out. Children are allowed to go home only with the people designated on the Parent Pick-up Authorization and Carpool Form.

- Front parking lot is available for pick-up only, lot must be cleared by 3:30 p.m. Monday-Friday
- If using the front lot, please pull all the way forward so that others can stack park

- behind you
- It is critical that children are escorted by an adult out of the red gates to their cars. The parking lot is busy at dismissal, and children are often hard to see as they walk among cars
- Students from K-6 are instructed never to go beyond the red gates without an adult
- Right turn only when exiting the school

### **Changes in Pick-Up**

Arrangements for after school activities and other changes in pick-up schedules must be made by 12:00 p.m. Changes regarding pick-up must be in writing and handed in, emailed, or faxed to the office. Children are not permitted to make their own last-minute changes, and school telephones are NOT to be used for this purpose.

### **Walking or Riding Bikes Home Alone**

For those older children who wish to leave school alone, parents must sign a release form (available in the office) that authorizes them to leave school unescorted at the end of the day. The releases must be renewed at the beginning of each new school year.

### **Physical Education**

Physical Education is an important part of the school program, and all children are expected to participate, subject to any applicable limitations. Any child who is to be excused for reasons of health, from physical education or any other normal school activity, must bring written notice of such excuse to the school office. This note will be passed on to the appropriate teachers. **Children to be excused from P.E. for more than 2 days will need a doctor's note.** Strenuous activities will be curtailed in the event of smog alerts or extremely hot weather.

**CHILDREN MUST WEAR ATHLETIC SHOES AT ALL TIMES.** Dressy shoes, boots (including UGG and Converse), sandals, etc. are unsafe and inappropriate for school. Other clothing requests may be made by the P.E. teacher.

### **Lost or Damaged Book Policy**

If a child loses or damages a school book, payment for a replacement will be required. Students should label all personal belongings.

### **Library Book Policy**

Children in kindergarten may check out one book for one week at a time. Once their book is returned, they may check out a new book. Grades 1- 6 may check out more than one book at a time at the discretion of the Library specialist. Books may be renewed for a longer period as needed. More than one book at a time may be checked out to students for projects or research reports.

Reminders will be sent home after the renewal period (two weeks for kindergarten, three

weeks for grades 1-6) and are considered lost at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> week. At that time, parents will be billed for lost book replacement and processing. Damaged books may also incur a fee for replacement and processing.

## **Dress Code**

Student dress codes should support equitable educational access and should not reinforce gender stereotypes. Student dress codes and administrative enforcement should not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, gender identity or cultural observance.

With the above taken into consideration, Los Encinos School (LES) has found that there is a correlation between a student's behavior and attitude and their manner of dress. There is a wide range of available clothing styles that reflect a positive attitude and appearance. We ask students attending Los Encinos School to wear clothing that is comfortable, safe, clean, and appropriate for an elementary school. Because our instructional program includes active play, students must wear clothing that allows them to run and jump, including closed-toed athletic shoes. Clothing and other items our students wear must not disrupt the educational process, create safety concerns, nor create any distraction. Please consider the School's anthem, "Nothing is bigger than childhood." **All popular fashions may not be appropriate for an elementary school.**

With the support and cooperation of our students, parents/guardians, and faculty, LES will be a positive and productive learning environment for all. The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and parents/ guardians. Below are the guidelines for elementary school dress:

- Allow students to wear clothing of their choice that is comfortable and safe
- Allow students to wear clothing that expresses their self-identified gender
- Prevent students from wearing clothing with logos, slogans, words, or pictures promoting or depicting alcohol, tobacco, drugs, vandalism, bigotry, violence, sexual connotations, or profanity; this includes clothing with phrases or pictures that have double meanings
- Clothing that is revealing or immodest or tops that expose bare midriff or undergarments, examples include halter tops, bathing suits, sports bras, tube tops, razor back tops, spaghetti straps, and low cut tops are inappropriate for the elementary school campus
- Please restrict earrings, chains, jewelry that dangles and could be dangerous when playing; LES reserves the right to ask a student to remove jewelry if it is deemed to be inappropriate for our learning environment
- Any make-up or adornment that causes a distraction in the classroom or on the playground is not appropriate in the elementary school setting
- Athletic shoes only
- Hats may be worn in the correct manner only

LES is responsible for seeing that student's attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, and that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student. Therefore, School personnel reserve the right to determine the appropriateness of

dress, hair, clothing, hats, and make-up.

Students are required to wear Los Encinos School field trip t-shirts when going on field trips or other off campus activities. The first field trip shirt is a gift from the school. All additional shirts can be purchased in the office for \$10.00. If a student does not wear a Los Encinos field trip t-shirt on the day of the trip, a field trip t-shirt will be provided and the \$10 charge will be added to your account.

## Cell Phones

**Student cell phones are not allowed at school.** Our School is a **cell phone free zone for children.** At the elementary school level, it is important for an adult at school to know when a child needs something. Whether not feeling well or forgetting a lunch, it is necessary for the students to have the office personnel help them. If a student requires a cell phone for after- school use, it must be approved by the administration and stored in the front office while the student is on campus and/or under School supervision (field trips). Parent or adult guardian must pick-up stored cell phone or any other electronic device from the school office. Cell phone and/or electronic device will not be released to student. Students will not have access to the School's network on their personal cell phones. Please refer to the Technology Acceptable Use Policy.

## Email

Most of our communication is done through email. In order for this to continue to be successful, we have a few rules in place.

1. When emailing a teacher or specialist, please understand that they are busy in the classroom teaching your children. Please give them the courtesy of waiting for a response within a 48 hour period.
2. Never use email to communicate a message you would not deliver in person.
3. In email communications, readers do not hear the tone of your voice when they read your messages. A message you believe to be efficient and clear could be interpreted as curt and brusque.
4. Do not use email when you should use the telephone. Email provides an efficient means for having brief exchanges of information. Please keep in mind that a short conversation will generally be more efficient than exchanging several email messages.
5. Do not type in capitals, as this is considered "shouting."
6. Please do not include faculty or other parents in "chain" emails. Also, **please do not use the school's all class emails for non-school related activities, announcements, and invitations.**

## Social Media

The School recognizes that social media and digital communication—which includes any form of online publication or presence that allows interactive communication, including social networks, blogs, photo sharing platforms, Internet websites, Internet forums, and wikis—are important parts of our world today. Nevertheless, because most commonly used social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, are intended solely for users 13 years old

and over, the School does not permit the use of social media by students while utilizing the School's technological resources, nor does the School condone or encourage such use using non-School resources. Parents who choose to allow their child(ren) to participate in social media (potentially in violation of the social media platform's terms of service) do so at their own risk. Additionally, the School strongly suggests that parents do not request current faculty to be your friend on any social media platform. Our faculty has been instructed in the same manner. (See specific grade level policies for more information.)

### **Dogs and Other Animals**

**Dogs and other animals are not allowed at school** without express prior permission from the Head of School. Any circumstances where a service animal may be part of a reasonable accommodation for a student with a disability will be handled on a case-by-case basis according to the Title III policy in this Handbook.

### **Sibling Supervision**

In order to ensure the safety of our enrolled students, we are asking parents to supervise younger siblings closely in the play area and around campus.

### **Snacks**

All students have a morning recess, during which time they may eat fruit, crackers, or other acceptable healthy snacks brought from home.

#### **Suggested healthy snacks/lunch items:**

- Chopped raw vegetables & dip (ranch dressing)
- Whole wheat pretzels
- Popcorn (air popped or Pirate's Booty)
- Potato Flyers ("potato chips")
- Baked tortilla chips and salsa
- Cheerios or naturally sweetened granola & low-fat milk
- Graham crackers (dipped in applesauce)
- Applesauce (assorted flavors)
- Rice cakes topped with cottage cheese & fruit spread
- Fresh fruit (apples, grapes, Clementines, bananas) or fruit cups
- Dried fruit (small single serving boxes of raisins or 100% fruit roll-ups)
- Low fat yogurt (drinkable, Go-gurts)
- Mini muffins
- Pasta (shells, wheels) with butter & grated cheese
- Animal crackers
- Mini bagels & low fat or flavored cream cheese
- String cheese
- Low fat granola bars

## **Lunch**

The school urges parental care in providing **healthy, well-balanced** meals for their children. Poor eating habits can affect a child's performance at school. Individual families may differ on the role of sugar and its effect on children, but all would agree that the consumption of sweets should be limited. Therefore, children are **not to bring candy or soda** in their lunches. Glass bottles are also not permitted. Gum is never allowed at school.

If you forget to send lunch with your child one day, your child will be provided with school hot lunch, and you will be charged by Freshlunches. Parents should have a credit card on file with Freshlunches for hot lunch emergencies. Freshlunches provides our hot lunch service. If you have any questions about the hot lunch program, please contact them directly, or Jill Lasker. **Parents may not bring children a lunch at lunch time. All lunches should be sent to school with your child in the morning.**

## **Home/School Communication**

As we believe that educating children must be a partnership between home and school, home/school communication is essential. It is very important that parents know what is going on in the classroom as well as school-wide. School-wide communication will be sent via email or will be posted on the LES Central section of the School website. The Monday Newsletter and Thursday Room Parent Letter are must reads.

## **Assemblies**

The School has assemblies on many occasions throughout the year, and parents are always welcome. Our regular school assembly is held on Friday mornings at 8:15 a.m. Our assembly includes birthday recognitions, class presentations, and any reminders for the week to come. Be sure to check the Monday letter posted on the School website each week for special assemblies and programs. We encourage our students and families to dress in spirit wear on Fridays.

## **Care Families**

Los Encinos School is committed to fostering student leadership. Empowering students to take on leadership roles within our School community will not only help to increase their desire for service, but also teach them the importance of making a difference in the lives of others.

Students will develop and participate in Care Families made up of their peers, classroom teachers, and the Assistant Head of School. Together we will brainstorm and implement ideas that emphasize the needs of our School, local, and global communities. Students will work in a multi-grade setting both as a whole group and in smaller committees.

## **After-School Classes**

Various enrichment classes are available during the course of the year, taught by our staff and outside agencies. Some of the classes include art, science, and chorus, but classes change according to student interests and availability of instructors. The classes run for six to eleven

weeks at a time. Sign-up forms are sent via email and linked in the newsletter two to four weeks prior to the beginning of each new session.

## Field Trips

Field trips help supplement and enrich the classroom curriculum. Each class participates in several off-campus field trips during the course of the school year. Our 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> graders take one or two extended overnight trips during the school year, which relate to their science and/or social studies curricula. The benefits of such experiences are invaluable. The costs of the overnight trips are included in regular tuition fees.

Prior to a field trip, notes are sent home detailing the trip. A Consent to Participate in Off-Campus Activity Permission/Release Form must be filled out and returned to school for each trip before a child will be allowed to participate.

Some field trips allow for parent chaperones. If you are interested in chaperoning a class field trip, please inform your room parent. Parents who do chaperone a field trip should adhere to the following guidelines:

1. At the start of the trip, and throughout the day, take a head count of your group.
2. Please do not leave the group. Your role as a chaperone is to be with the children.
3. Be sure your group keeps up with the other groups. Adhere to meeting times and places.
4. Be sure your group is attentive and polite at all times. Students should listen carefully to any speakers and should not chat when a leader or teacher is speaking. It is the job of the adults to model appropriate behavior. Please do not talk with other chaperones when lessons are being presented or while speakers or instructors are speaking.
5. Please DO NOT use your cell phone during any part of the field trip experience.
6. Please DO NOT allow your group special privileges (i.e. candy, gifts, etc.)
7. An adult must accompany students to the restroom.
8. Younger siblings are not allowed on field trips. Your role is as a chaperone and your full attention must be devoted to the students.
9. We expect all members of the Los Encinos School community to be ambassadors of the School when they are on a trip. Please encourage excitement for the experience and understanding of the purpose.

For reasons of safety and group management, Los Encinos students **must** wear a field trip t-shirt (no tank tops allowed) when leaving campus on field trips. Transportation will be provided by chartered school buses or there may be trips that will require parent drivers.

**Only those parents who have a current Authorization of Volunteer Driver Agreement, appropriate insurance coverage, and approved Department of Motor Vehicles driving report on file in the school office may drive students. All this information must be updated annually, and the forms are available on the School website.** Seatbelts must be worn by each student in the car, and children under twelve years of age may not sit in the front passenger seat if the car contains a passenger airbag. Students who are eight years of age and younger and who are under 4 feet 9 inches tall must use a booster in the back seat of the vehicle. As cellular phones can be distracting, in compliance with California law, drivers must not use their phones while transporting children. No unscheduled stops are permitted.

## **Birthday Celebrations and Other Parties/Events**

It is important that all outside-of-school parties and events to which any Los Encinos students are invited are handled responsibly, with the utmost concern for the feelings of others. In many cases, the best way to ensure this is to invite every student in the class. If a smaller gathering is preferred, it is important to carefully consider the total number of children in the class before determining how many/which children to invite. If you choose not to invite everyone, it usually works to invite **1 to 3 children only, depending on the specific make-up of your child's class.**

Please do not allow your child to exclude someone just because they would prefer to; children need adults to model appropriate and kind social decision-making. Please also make sure that invitations are sent by U.S. mail or email and are not handed out at school. **It is also important that pick-ups for such events do not happen directly from school unless every student in your child's class is included.** Please refrain, and ask your child to refrain, from talking about these events at school or at school functions. **If you have any questions about an event you are planning for children, please ask the Head of School.** Thank you for helping us maintain a caring and close-knit community.

All school birthday celebrations will be organized by the school. The celebration will be once a month. A treat will be shared with the class, which will be provided by the school. Decorations and party favors are not allowed on campus. Children can have their own favorite treats and decorations at their off-campus, personal celebrations.

## **Property of Students**

All property, including clothing worn to school, **must be clearly marked** with the student's name. A lost and found box is located outside the music room on the church property. Efforts are made to return marked clothing on a timely basis. Unclaimed items are donated to homeless shelters on a regular basis.

The School cannot accept responsibility for the personal belongings of students. Students are not to bring valuables, electronic equipment (such as handheld videogames, iPods, iPads, smartphones, etc.), computer games, comic books, magazines, trading cards, toys, or money to school. In addition, baseballs, bats, basketballs, handballs, Frisbees, and other play equipment should not be brought to school. The School will provide all needed recess equipment.

Any inappropriate personal belonging that is brought to school will be confiscated by the teacher until the end of the day, at which time it will be returned to the student/parent to be taken home. If the item is brought back to school, it may be permanently confiscated.

## **Supplies**

All supplies and technical supplies necessary for school will be provided to students by the School, except for a personal flash drive. Students may bring in their own supplies if they choose, but the student is responsible for these items. Laptops and iPads are available for student use during class time. Students will be issued laptops for school use only, see Technology Acceptable Use Policy. In the event of damage to any school

technology due to a student's negligence, parents will be charged accordingly for repair or replacement. Students are allowed to bring in their own laptops or reading devices (without Internet) with permission from the Head of School. The School is not responsible for the care or security of personal laptops, electronic devices, or any personal reading devices.

## **Parent Participation**

The Parent Association (PA) plays an active role in the Los Encinos School community. The purpose of the PA is to promote and support the school community through a variety of activities. Full parent participation is encouraged in the many activities sponsored by the PA. Parents can participate by accompanying field trips (class specific, usually kindergarten and first), by visiting a classroom to share expertise or interests, by volunteering as a Room Parent to assist teachers in arranging special events, or by serving hot lunch. Parents may also help in the school Library.

All parents, as members of the PA, are urged to help plan and participate in its various meetings and events throughout the year. Parent Association Meetings are held once a month. The PA is the primary voice of the parents in the Los Encinos community. The support and commitment of every parent is vital to maintain the spirit and heart of the School. Every parent who intends to volunteer on campus or at a field trip must grant permission for the School to run a background check via LiveScan at the School's sole discretion.

## **Parent Visits**

Our policy has always been to encourage parent involvement and interest in the School. Parents are welcome to visit classrooms, but are asked always to schedule a suitable time with the class teacher and the office. Visits should be limited to approximately 30 minutes. Please avoid interrupting the teaching during instructional time. **All visitors must check in at the office after receiving a visitor pass from security and providing a form of government identification. The visitor's pass must be worn and visible at all times when on campus.** At the end of your visit, please return your pass to the security officer. Prospective Parents Wednesday mornings are designated for prospective parent tours (October through January). The tours, conducted by the Head of School, begin at 9:15 a.m. and last approximately 90 minutes. In addition, the School invites prospective parents to a Prospective Parent Open House.

If Los Encinos School has shifted to an At-Home Learning or Blended Learning format due to a local health emergency or pandemic, on campus tours and Prospective Parent Open House will be cancelled. These activities will be provided through Zoom.

## **School/Church Relationships**

There is evident self-interest in maintaining good relations with St. Nicholas Church, our landlord and close neighbor. We must stress the need for parent cooperation in the observance of church parking signs restricting school use to the front area of the parking lot. Access to the church offices must never be blocked, even temporarily. **Do not park in the fire lanes at any time.** Your help in observance of these requests will do much to maintain the present mutually respectful climate essential for the daily operation of the School. Please

do not park in the designated church parking spots.

### **Student Responsibility**

All children must share in helping to make the Los Encinos climate friendly and supportive, so that everyone enjoys self-respect and the respect of others. Each child has a responsibility to make this happen by showing appreciation for effort and accomplishments, by respecting individual differences, and by accepting responsibility for one's own work and behavior. A child's increasing ability to shoulder responsibility and thereby merit the trust of the community is one of the most gratifying steps along the road to maturity. We believe that learning occurs best in an environment where students feel safe and accepted. We recognize that children will make mistakes and that when addressed appropriately they become wonderful learning opportunities. It is part of our mission to work with children to develop responsibility for their actions and decisions. When a child has persistent or serious problems meeting these expectations, the School will confer with the parents and ask their support in establishing clear expectations and consistent consequences for the child.

In certain situations, it may become necessary for a student to be removed from the classroom or the School. On those occasions, the Head of School has the authority and responsibility to suspend or dismiss a student from school. Suspensions may be imposed both in school or out of school and for isolated or chronic behaviors. Chronic or extreme misbehavior may also result in a student being denied enrollment for the subsequent year or being asked to leave during the school year.

### **Virtues and Values**

Los Encinos School has a Virtues and Values Program to help our students learn to problem solve and to be thoughtful citizens through a common language. This updated character education program highlights many life-skills that are necessary for our students to develop into effective problem solvers, strong critical thinkers, and ethical human beings. We ask our school families to incorporate the Virtues and Values in their everyday lives. This consistency will provide our students with opportunities to see the virtues and values in action. Any role modeling we do reinforces the importance of these 16 themes.

Listed below are some examples of the Virtues and Values (in no specific order):  
Integrity, Enthusiasm, Sense of Humor, Flexibility, Cooperation, Effort,  
Perseverance, Initiative, Service, Respect, Kindness, Reflection, Responsibility,  
Organization, Friendship, and Patience.

### **Parent Responsibility**

As parents of Los Encinos School, you have a responsibility to support the School community. Together we must all be positive role models for our children by making a commitment to uphold the same virtues and values we are teaching our children. Remember your children are always listening and they learn by example.

Open and on-going communication is essential. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers directly if they have a question or concern relating to their child or a school-related situation.

Parents are also encouraged to speak with the Head of School if they have questions, comments, or concerns related to the School.

Giving the classroom teacher the first opportunity to address parental concerns assures parents a constructive, accurate response from the outset and allows parents the opportunity to deal directly with those who have the first-hand information.

By enrolling at Los Encinos School, a student and the student's parents agree for the benefit of the School and the School community to observe the rules and responsibilities of the School and to support the philosophy of the School.

### **Student/Parent Behavior Policy**

Los Encinos School reserves the right to discontinue a student's enrollment based upon that student's uncooperative, disruptive, or other unacceptable behavior and/or poor levels of academic achievement, as determined at the sole discretion of the Head of School.

Furthermore, a positive and constructive working relationship between Los Encinos School and a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) is essential to the fulfillment of Los Encinos School's educational purpose. Los Encinos School reserves the right to dismiss a student if the Head of School, if it is determined that the actions of a parent(s)/guardian(s) impair the positive and constructive relationship with Los Encinos School. Los Encinos School's expectations about the behavior and actions of its students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) include both on- and off-campus behavior and actions.

### **Use of the School Roster/School Directory**

Los Encinos School does not allow the use of our community's personal information, including telephone numbers, addresses, and email addresses, for non-school related purposes. Our directory and website clearly state that our families' information is confidential and cannot be distributed or copied. If there are changes in personal information, please contact the School immediately to update our records. Respect for our community and for individual privacy is of paramount importance; we thank everyone for honoring these codes.

## **ON-CAMPUS SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

### **Back to School Night**

Back to School Night is designed to inform parents about class curriculum, expectations, and activities. Specialist teachers are also on hand to describe their respective programs. This evening is for parents only.

### **Grade-Specific Social Dinners**

Some classes will have grade-specific dinners. At these dinners, we will have the opportunity to socialize and share happenings around campus. It is a great way to begin new or rekindle friendships.

## **Halloween**

Children are encouraged to come to school dressed in costume. All costumes must comply with a set of guidelines that the School will send home with students prior to the holiday. Our Halloween Carnival (no rides) is from 10:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. with dismissal at 12:30 p.m. This half day provides students and families a respite prior to the evening's festivities. November 1<sup>st</sup> is a pupil-free day at school. The teachers participate in professional development activities.

## **Thanksgiving**

Each classroom prepares traditional Thanksgiving food from cornbread to pumpkin pie. The children are divided into their "families," which include children from various grades. In their "families" the students talk about what they are thankful for at Thanksgiving time. Parents are invited to share in the afternoon festivities as the entire school dances the Virginia Reel.

## **Winter Program**

Usually held the Wednesday or Thursday prior to Winter Break, each class performs in a musical program.

## **Cultural Celebrations**

Within the classrooms the students learn about various cultures and their customs.

## **Open House/Art Show**

In May, Open House is held to offer parents the opportunity to visit their children's classrooms and see much of what has been done during the course of the year. The evening also includes an art show and other opportunities where children share the knowledge gained throughout the year. The children take great pride in "showing off" their work to their parents at this time.

## **Grandparents'/Special Friends' Day**

Grandparents and Special Friends are invited to visit the school and spend a morning with the children in May. The grandparents and special friends participate with the children in various classroom activities and share in refreshments. We are also offering a morning of love and friendship where grandparents and special friends will be invited to join their student virtually.

## **Service Learning**

At Los Encinos School, we believe it is important for children to understand that they are part of a larger community. From counting coins to purchase necessities for homeless to feeding the homeless at the LA Family Housing, students participate throughout the year in developmentally appropriate programs in which they interact with members of the greater community.

Mark your calendars for the JDRF One Walk on Sunday, November 7, 2021 at the Rose Bowl.

We walk together as a community to raise awareness for Type I Juvenile Diabetes.

### **Multi-Age Program**

A goal of this program is the importance of social interactions across grade levels. Students from different grade levels will meet throughout the year in different workshops led by teachers and administrators. Our buddy program is also a component of our multi-age experience. Sixth graders partner with our kindergarten students and our first graders have fifth grade buddies. Together these buddy programs allow our older students to take active roles as leaders in our community. Our younger students enjoy their newfound friendships with the older children on campus.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES**

Please note: During On-Campus Learning the front office serves as the LES nurse's office. We make great effort in keeping all treatment and/or emotional support private for the concern and respect to the student and family. If you happen to be in the office while a student is being treated or waiting, please refrain from asking, "What is wrong?" or "Why are you here?"

#### **Accidents**

Every effort is made to safeguard children in school and on field trips, but the school cannot assume responsibility for accidents or other unforeseen occurrences. Immediate first aid will be given and parents and/or family doctor will be notified at once. If we are unable to reach the family or doctor, the child will be treated at the Providence Tarzana Medical Center Emergency Room (or other medical facility depending upon the location of the accident or other occurrence). The School has student accident insurance, which covers costs not reimbursable through the parents' own health insurance. Crutches, boots, braces, etc. may only be used at school with doctor's note.

#### **Allergies**

Los Encinos School is not a peanut free school; however, we are trying to create a safe place for students with specific food allergies. When a severe or life-threatening allergy is present, we will notify the parents of classmates of the specific food allergy present. We are asking for the cooperation of the Los Encinos School community in addressing this concern. We cannot, however, guarantee this action will take place on the part of the other parents. Therefore, persons with severe food allergies must carefully monitor their food in these situations. Los Encinos School cannot guarantee that a student will never experience an allergy-related event at School, but we are committed to student safety, and have created this policy to reduce the risk that children with food allergies will have an allergy-related event.

#### **Immunization Records**

Each student must have an up-to-date immunization record or waiver on file. Please be sure that this information is kept current in case of an emergency. No student will be allowed to start School without completed emergency and health forms.

The School immunization guidelines are designed to prevent the spread of illness and preventable diseases in our community. Unless a student's parent or legal guardian provides the School with an acceptable signed waiver (see Exemptions section, below), a student must be immunized against certain communicable diseases, as provided in Health and Safety Code, section 120335. A student is prohibited from attending school unless, prior to admission to the school, the student has been fully immunized. Immunization documentation is required for our entire student body. Parents must show their child's immunization record as proof of immunization.

The School will no longer accept personal belief exemptions unless otherwise required by law. A student with a personal belief affidavit filed at any public or private **elementary** school (i.e., kindergarten through 6th grade) prior to January 1, 2016, will be allowed to enroll in or remain in the School without being fully immunized. Personal belief affidavits filed prior to January 1, 2016, at a daycare, toddler center or preschool are not valid for new students to the School. (Health and Safety Code § 120335(g).)

The School will continue to accept medical exemptions under the following conditions: (1) a parent or guardian files a written statement by a licensed physician that the student's physical condition is such, or medical circumstances relating to the student are such, that immunization is not considered safe; and (2) the physician's statement indicates the specific nature and probable duration of the medical condition or circumstances, including family medical history, for which the physician does not recommend the student be immunized. If the foregoing conditions are met the student will be exempted from vaccination to the extent recommended by the physician.

If the School reasonably believes that a student has been exposed to a disease listed in subdivision (b) of Health and Safety Code Section 120335 and their documentary proof of immunization status does not show proof of immunization against that disease, that student may be temporarily excluded from the school until the local health officer is satisfied that the student is no longer at risk of developing or transmitting the disease. (Health and Safety Code, § 120370(b).)

The School will not deny admission or enrollment solely based on vaccination status of a student, if a medical exemption applies as specifically provided above.

### **Communicable Diseases**

In consideration of a community viral outbreak, LES will follow, and if deemed necessary, make more restrictive any guidelines as prescribed by Federal, state, and local health officials. LES reserves the right to change the mode of learning (see 3 Modes of Learning) at any time to reduce the transmission of a contagion and/or for reasons of the safety and health of students, faculty, and staff. If the School is permitted to have campus open to students during a viral outbreak and/or pandemic, or other health and environmental issues the school will provide a separate document to parents and community stating guidelines and protocols for on campus learning which will be updated regularly to match changes in the outbreak and/or pandemic.

Parents are required to notify the school office immediately if their child contracts a

communicable disease or condition, including lice. Children with a communicable disease or condition which requires medical attention must have a note from their physician before being readmitted to school. Some of these communicable diseases include strep throat, chicken pox, impetigo, lice, conjunctivitis, etc. Children who show signs of a cold or any illness should remain at home for their own protection and that of other children. Children who arrive at school with a fever or develop a fever during the day will be sent home. Children may return to school 24 hours after the fever subsides without the use of fever reducing medication. Children with a contagious condition must remain at home until the condition has been treated and no chance of contagion exists. Parents must provide the front office with medical clearance or proof of treatment before returning to the classroom. It is the family's responsibility to notify the school of any contagious illness or condition to the front office.

After every break (longer than 10 days), we will conduct lice checks when the students return to school. If evidence of lice is found, students are not allowed back to school without treatment. If you have questions about this subject, please consult your physician to prevent the spread of a disease.

### **Medications**

We require all medications to be stored in the office and administered only when the physician's and parent's signed permissions are on file. Children are not allowed to have any type of medication in their possession at school, including cough drops/lozenges and antacids. You must provide medication to the School in the container in which it was purchased, with the prescription label attached. It must be prescribed to the student to whom it will be administered. You can request from your pharmacist a second prescription container and ask that a duplicate label be attached for home use. The prescription label on the container is not acceptable as a physician's statement. **NO MEDICATION WILL BE GIVEN TO A STUDENT WITHOUT A COMPLETED MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION FORM, SIGNED BY BOTH THE PHYSICIAN AND THE PARENT(S), ON FILE IN THE SCHOOL OFFICE.**

When medications are to be given for prolonged periods of time, it is the parents' responsibility to maintain an adequate supply of medication and to inform the school office personnel in writing of changes in dosage, frequency of administration, or discontinuance of medication.

### **Personal Family Emergencies**

If a family problem arises that may affect your child's attitude, performance, or emotional state in school, such as death or illness in the family, parents on trips, or parental separation or divorce, please notify the Head of School. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

### **Earthquake, Fire Precautions, and Lock-Down Drills**

We hold regular fire and earthquake drills for all children so they will know what to do in the event of an emergency. While no one can fully prepare for the impact of a major earthquake, we do have emergency food, water, and first aid supplies on hand and are prepared to care for the children at school until their families arrive or arrangements can be made for their safety, however long that may be. Our lock-down procedure includes a specific bell sound. This bell signals to faculty and children to get to the safest place, lock the doors, and cover the windows.

The Emergency/Carpool Authorization Form included with the first mailing provides crucial information for the safe release of your child. Please make certain to complete and return it to the office.

Each year the School develops an emergency phone tree to notify faculty and parents in the event of an emergency. The phone tree will be put in place to provide parents with information regarding emergency changes in school hours or emergency situations.

### **Earthquake Supplies**

For the protection of your children, Los Encinos will be following the American Red Cross "Safety and Survival in an Earthquake" plan. The Red Cross recommends that schools have supplies on hand to care for children for up to 72 hours in the event of a disaster. Los Encinos will provide most of these supplies. At the beginning of the year, your child will need a large (2 or 3 gal.) Ziploc bag that is to be filled with the items listed below. 5 x 8 card (provided) with the following information written in ink:

Child's name in large capital letters with grade, home phone number, office number of working parents, and cellular phone numbers, and an out of state contact with name and phone number.

Place this card facing out so it can be easily read

1. A change of clothing with sweatshirt or jacket
2. A small sealed snack (i.e. granola bar, beef jerky, fruit roll-up)
3. Regularly used prescription drugs and/or inhalers with SPECIFIC instructions
4. An extra pair of eyeglasses (if used) or any needed contact lens equipment
5. A small stuffed animal or favorite book
6. A small family photo

### **Sexual Harassment Policy**

Los Encinos School prohibits unlawful sexual harassment of or by any student, by anyone in or from the School. Conduct which constitutes sexual harassment of students impairs the ability of students to make full and effective use of the School's instructional programs. Sexual harassment can cause embarrassment, feelings of powerlessness, reduced ability to perform schoolwork, and increased absenteeism and tardiness. California Education Code section 212.5 defines sexual harassment as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or a condition of an individual's employment, academic status, or progress.
2. Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of employment, academic status, or progress.
3. The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the individual's work or academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment.

4. Submission to, or rejection of the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through the School.

Sexually harassing conduct can occur between students. Students who engage in sexual harassment are subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion from the School.

Any student of Los Encinos School who believes that they have been the victim of sexual harassment is urged to bring the problem to the attention of the Head of School or Assistant Head of School so that appropriate action may be taken to resolve the problem. The School will investigate all reports of possible sexual harassment.

While such reports should ordinarily be brought to the attention of the Head of School or Assistant Head of School because they are responsible for maintaining a suitable learning environment, are trained to investigate misconduct, and are authorized to impose appropriate disciplinary action, the School recognizes that, due to the possibly embarrassing nature of sexual harassment conduct, individual students may instead choose to make a report to another trusted adult employee. Los Encinos School employees who receive such reports are expected to take appropriate action to ensure that students are not subjected to sexual harassment.

Additionally, should the sexual harassment constitute child abuse, reporting shall be made in the manner provided in the Employee Handbook.

All Los Encinos School staff involved in the receipt of, or investigation of allegations of sexual harassment are to hold such information in appropriate confidence to the extent possible so as to ensure the privacy of the individuals concerned.

### **Anti-Harassment/Discrimination Policy**

Discriminatory harassment is a particular form of personal disrespect that Los Encinos School DOES NOT TOLERATE among students, among employees, or between employees and students. Los Encinos School is committed to providing an educational environment free of discriminatory harassment. This policy defines discriminatory harassment.

Discriminatory harassment of a student includes harassment based on actual or perceived sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, religious creed, sex, national origin, ancestry, disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Discriminatory harassment violates this policy and will not be tolerated. It is also improper to retaliate against any individual for making a complaint of discriminatory harassment or for participating in a harassment investigation. Retaliation constitutes a violation of this policy.

Discriminatory harassment can consist of virtually any form or combination of verbal, physical, visual or environmental conduct. It need not be explicit or even specifically directed at the victim. Discriminatory harassing conduct can occur between students of the same or different

protected classifications. Examples of the types of discriminatory harassment prohibited by this policy include, but are not limited to, the following behavior:

- a. Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted sexual advances, invitations or comments;
- b. Visual conduct such as derogatory and/or sexually-oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings or gestures;
- c. Physical conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, blocking normal movement or interfering with work because of sex, race or any other protected basis;
- d. Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests as a condition to avoid loss and/or offers of other benefits in return for sexual favors; and retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.

All of the above guidelines also apply to online and electronic communication.

Students who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. Harassment can consist of virtually any form or combination of verbal, physical, visual, and/or environmental conduct. It need not be explicit or even specifically directed at the victim.

No student shall create a hostile or offensive environment for any other person by engaging in any discriminatory harassment or by tolerating it on the part of any student.

No student shall assist any individual in doing any act that constitutes discriminatory harassment against any student.

All students shall report any conduct, which fits the definition of discriminatory harassment, to the Head of School or Assistant Head of School or other appropriate authority figure.

All complaints or allegations of discrimination or harassment will be kept confidential during any informal and/or formal complaint procedures except when disclosure is necessary during the course of an investigation, in order to take subsequent remedial action and to conduct ongoing monitoring.

The School will investigate all reports of possible discriminatory harassment and/or retaliation. All students shall cooperate with any investigation authorized or conducted by Los Encinos School into any alleged act of discriminatory harassment.

### **Bullying Prevention**

Los Encinos School believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. The School and community have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance.

The School will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student. A student shall not intimidate or harass another student through words or actions. Examples of the type of behavior prohibited by this policy include:

- direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving;
- verbal assaults, such as teasing or name-calling;
- social isolation or manipulation.

Any student who engages in bullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

The School expects both students and staff to immediately report incidents of bullying to the Head of School. Staff members are expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident occur. Each complaint of bullying should be promptly investigated in a thorough and confidential (to the extent possible) manner. This policy applies to students on School grounds, while traveling to and from school or a School sponsored activity, during the lunch period, and during a School sponsored activity.

To ensure bullying does not occur on campus, the School will provide staff development training in bullying prevention and cultivate acceptance and understanding in all students and staff to build the School's capacity to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment. Teachers should discuss this policy with their students in age-appropriate ways and should assure them that they need not endure any form of bullying.

If the complainant student or the parent of the student feels that appropriate resolution of the investigation or complaint has not been reached, the student or the parent of the student should contact the Head of School. The School prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant or any participant in the complaint process.

### **Weapons Policy**

Brining or using weapons of any kind, including knives and toy weapons of any kind is prohibited on LES campus and School field trips. Any demonstrations of such items must be approved in writing by the Head of School or Assistant Head of School 48 hours prior to demonstration.

### **Protection of Children**

Any school employee, who reasonably suspects child abuse or neglect has occurred, or is occurring, is required by law to file a child abuse report. These reports are filed with the appropriate child protective services agency. Complaints filed against a school employee of an alleged act of child abuse will also be reported to the appropriate agency. In those situations, Los Encinos School will take any necessary and appropriate action, including but not limited to an internal investigation.

All employees review the law and sign a statement of understanding that is kept on file stating they have reviewed the law and understand their responsibilities and rights under the law.

In addition, each new employee is required to participate in LiveScan, which then forwards them to the State of California Department of Justice and the FBI. Appropriate agencies review the results and inform the School of any information that, under the Education Code, would prohibit further employment of the person by the School.

## ACADEMIC POLICIES

### Homework

Homework is directly related to classroom work and is used to reinforce, to extend, and to strengthen skills. Regularly assigned homework begins in kindergarten and is assigned Tuesday and Thursday. All other grades will have homework Monday-Thursday. Grades 1 and 2 have approximately twenty minutes per night, Grades 3 and 4 average thirty to forty-five minutes per night, and by Grades 5 and 6 the assignments average one hour. No homework is assigned on weekends or over school holidays. However, long-term projects may need some attention during these times. If a student regularly spends more than the allotted time on homework, the parent may wish to discuss this with the classroom teacher. Nightly reading is required and review of math facts is recommended.

Unless special arrangements are made with a child's teacher, we request that a parent not participate in the homework itself. However, we do ask parents to ensure that their child has a suitable place for study, away from such distractions as television, Internet, and the telephone, and that they keep to a regular homework schedule. Parents can also help us by reporting any unusual difficulties or problems a child may have. Teachers will adjust assignments to the level they deem appropriate for individual children, but parental input can be very useful in determining the proper amount. Our purpose is to help children develop responsible and independent work habits, not to create an overwhelming nightly burden. Part of the lesson of homework is the responsibility (Virtues & Values) of bringing it to and from school. For this reason, homework will not be faxed to students at home, **nor should it be brought in by parent/guardian physically, faxed, or emailed.** No calls will be made from the front office to parent that homework was forgotten or left in the car. There is no better place for a student to learn the consequences of "forgotten" homework than under the umbrella of elementary school.

This homework policy is subject to change during Blended and At-Home Learning formats.

### Conferences, Reports, and Testing

The school year is divided into two semester (September through January, January through June). We will have "Get to Know You" conferences. These virtual twenty-minute conferences, prior to the start of school, will give you the opportunity to share with your child's teacher your perspective on your child's strengths and vulnerabilities. In addition to the Get to Know conferences, there will be two mid-semester conferences scheduled for all parents. These conferences are designed to share your child's progress and to set mutual goals for the remainder of the semester.

Additional conferences may be arranged at the request of either parents or teachers. The reports provide an accounting of the child's progress in all areas both from the classroom teacher and

specialists. Written evaluations of each child's progress are completed and shared with the parents at each semester. Conferences can be done virtually as well as in person.

Students in Grades 3-6 participate in standardized testing. The Educational Records Bureau and Educational Testing Service (ERBs) prepare and score the tests. The test is a battery of assessments in the key areas of school achievement: reading comprehension, listening, vocabulary, writing, and mathematics. It also includes two tests to measure verbal and quantitative reasoning. Students in Grades 3-6 will take the ERB Writing Assessment Program. These tests provide a written program for each child. They are used as an internal tool for planning and assessment. Parents are encouraged to contact the Head of School to make an appointment to review their child's individual scores.

### **Educational Therapy, Tutoring, and Baby-Sitting Services**

To avoid possible conflicts of interest and to maintain professional integrity of the faculty, teachers and staff members are not permitted to tutor any Los Encinos School student. It is Los Encinos School policy that no employee may accept any employment (babysitting, house sitting, driving students, etc.) in the household or business of any person or family who has a child currently enrolled at Los Encinos School.

Parents of students requiring additional support during the school year in the way of tutoring, educational testing/therapy, or counseling are encouraged to contact the Head of School for suggested names of specialists in the area.

### **Reporting Results of Outside Testing**

We believe that educating children is a partnership between the home and school. Open and honest communication is a critical element that must be established and maintained between all parties. When a child receives outside psychological and/or academic evaluations, the **test results must be reported to the School**. It is important that the School receives this information in a timely manner so that we can work with and provide a supportive program for your child. Without this information the program may not fully meet the student's educational, social, or emotional needs.

Parents must sign a release to allow the School to provide information and to receive a copy of the test results. Parents must also sign a release for administration and teachers to speak with outside resources. These results are used for internal evaluation only and have no impact on a child's scholastic standing at the school. The School holds them in strict confidence.

### **Student Success and Progress**

Los Encinos School remains committed to academic excellence and the personal growth of each of its students. However, Parents understand and agree that School cannot guarantee the academic success or social readiness of any individual student and that School does not guarantee that Student will succeed in meeting School's minimum performance standards.

## **Technology Acceptable Use Policy for Students**

Los Encinos School has expanded its computer program to include access to the Internet and other resources that support the School's educational objectives. The Back-to-School link emailed to all families in August will contain the Technology Acceptable Use Policy. All parents must read and discuss the policy with the student and each parent must sign the policy acknowledging that they understand and agree to abide by the rules and conditions of the agreement and that they understand that any violations of the rules may result in revocation of computer privileges or other disciplinary action.

## **EXPECTATIONS FOR PARENT/TEACHER RELATIONS**

An optimal educational experience for our children requires an interactive partnership among parents, educators, and children. Both educators and parents hope that every school day is filled with learning and joy. In acknowledgement of the collaborative relationship between parents and educators, the School recognizes these fundamental principles of communication:

- Mutually respectful approach
- Ongoing and effective communication
- Resolution to gather information/data from appropriate sources prior to forming an opinion and making a judgment
- Recognition of the power of words and avoidance of harmful speech
- Effective listening, acknowledging the legitimacy of differing opinions
- Clearly defined lines of responsibility
- An agreed upon process for solving problems
- Recognition of specific roles in the process
- Mutual trust that the process is just and fair
- Well defined, clear boundaries
- Shared commitment to work together toward a solution

In an effort to realize these principles in our daily interactions as a school community, we agree upon the following expectations:

### **Reasonable Expectations of Parents**

Recognition that:

1. *Educators are trained professionals*
2. *Educators and parental perspectives may justifiably differ*
3. *Educators have multiple time commitments*
  - a. Be ready to be heard by educators
  - b. Be ready to listen to educators
  - c. Hold discussion with educators at a time and place that permits full and confidential exploration of the issues
4. *Direct concerns to educators*

5. *Be prepared to clearly articulate the issues*
6. *Provide an opportunity for educators to work toward a solution*
7. *Remember that comprehensive solutions may require time*

### **Reasonable Expectations of Educators**

Recognition that:

1. *Parents have a depth of experience with the student*
2. *Parental and educator's perspective may justifiably differ*
3. *Parents have multiple time commitments*
  - a. Be ready to be heard by the parents
  - b. Be ready to listen to parents
  - c. Provide appropriate time and place for full and confidential discussion
  - d. Ensure the concerns are well understood
  - e. Identify the issue
  - f. Establish reasonable expectations for solving the problem
  - g. Construct a written "action plan"
  - h. Confer to evaluate the effectiveness of the "plan"
  - i. Provide an opportunity for the parent to work toward a solution
  - j. Provide an opportunity for every student to shine