

PLACENTIA-YORBA LINDA
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK
2016-2017

3232 Topaz Lane
Fullerton, CA 92831
(714) 993-9977 FAX (714) 993-1284
www.topazschool.org

Principal
Christa Borgese

TOPAZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Principal's Message:

Our vision at Topaz is to provide an exemplary education for all of our students. Our goal is to provide each student with a challenging and rigorous curriculum appropriate to his or her academic level. We believe every child can achieve academic success. To this end, every child will be provided with quality instructional experiences that recognize, support, and maintain high expectations for all students. Parent involvement has always been important at Topaz Elementary School. Students benefit from parents who play an active role in their child's education. Through teamwork, open communication and a dedication to continuous improvement, we will continue to be a school where each child is challenged, nurtured and provided with a safe and stimulating learning experience.

The elementary years are critical for development of strong, positive attitudes, habits, capabilities, and academic skills. With this in mind, our curriculum is challenging, exciting, and creative. Learning is supported through standards-based instruction, direct explicit lessons, technology, enrichment opportunities, independent thinking, problem solving and inquiry. We are integrating common core standards into our daily learning.

In this handbook you will find important information concerning procedures, policies, and behavior management. We believe that the first step for students to excel at school begins with respect for themselves and others, and pride in their school. Please read and discuss the handbook with your child so the expectations for Topaz are clear. We will provide opportunities for every child to reach their highest potential. As always, feel free to contact the office if you should have any questions. It is my pleasure to serve this community and be a part of a team who is committed to excellence!

Sincerely,

Christa Borgese, Principal

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

The major function of school is to provide for the diverse physical, social and academic needs of all students. This will best be accomplished when there is a clear understanding of responsibilities and expectations. The following is a list of student responsibilities that should be clearly defined to them and consistently enforced by staff and parents.

Consistency cannot be emphasized enough for it helps to establish an environment in which children function in a positive way. We want students to feel good about themselves, respect their peers and adults, accept differences in others, and demonstrate PRIDE in their school. By following these school guidelines this goal can be achieved.

Topaz has rigorous but realistic academic (and behavioral) standards and expectations. Students are required to make every effort to achieve their potential. Failure to make reasonable effort will result in lower grades. As a staff we realize student abilities differ and, at times, mitigating conditions may prevent a child from doing his or her best work during a brief period of time. Our teachers make adjustments to accommodate individual needs. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's progress, please call the school to schedule an appointment with your child's teacher or the principal.

HOMework

Regular homework, which is an integral part of the teaching learning process, extends learning time and challenges the student to apply what has been learned.

The advantages of homework:

1. Keeps parents informed of the school program
2. Develops responsibility and self-discipline for students
3. Helps reinforce and/or enrich the learning experience
4. Provides practice time so more content can be presented in class

Homework assignments will usually be made Monday through Thursday. Weekend assignments might include projects, special reports, oral reading with an adult, or makeup work due to absence. General guidelines include:

Kindergarten:	10-15 minutes daily
Grade 1:	10-15 minutes daily

Grade 2:	20 minutes daily
Grade 3:	30 minutes daily
Grade 4:	40 minutes daily
Grade 5:	50 minutes daily

Students are encouraged to read (or be read to) at home in addition to completing homework assignments. Students in grades 3-6 are required to write homework assignments in their planners. Parents are encouraged to check planners and homework daily to reinforce the importance of constant homework completion.

Work completed at home can be of two kinds:

- a. Class work not completed during the regular allotted time period.
- b. Specifically assigned additional work that reinforces concepts previously taught.

For special projects, students will be given guidelines, due dates, expectations and suggested timeline for completion.

If there are any questions or problems about an assignment, or if homework is taking your child an excessive amount of time, please contact the teacher by voicemail or email as soon as possible.

Children need to establish a nightly routine Monday – Thursday for home study. This will promote good study habits that will benefit them throughout their school years. Select a place and time that will be conducive to concentration and free from distractions (T.V., video games, texting, radio, friends, etc.).

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

1. Upon arrival, students should report to the lunch area for breakfast or directly to their class line. Parents should drop their children at the front gate.
2. Students should be in line, ready to enter their classrooms at **7:47 am**. Instruction starts promptly at **7:50 am**.
3. All students may enter school between **7:20 a.m. and 7:50 a. m.** **Students may not arrive before 7:20 a.m. as there is no adult supervision.**
4. When arriving late to school (after 7:50 a.m.), students must report directly to the office for a pass to class. Tardies that are excused include: illness or a doctor/dentist appointment.

5. Students will stay on the sidewalk when walking to and from school, always crossing streets carefully at corners or crosswalks, and obeying the crossing guard's instructions at all times. Parents should encourage children to take the safest route. Please do not cross between the cars.
6. Students in **grades 4-6** only may ride bikes to school as long as safety and courtesy rules are followed. Students may park their bikes in the bike rack **at their own risk**. Bikes must have individual locks. They may not be ridden on campus, in the parking lot, on school walkways, or across the crosswalk. The bike area is locked at the start of school and unlocked at the end of the school day. California law requires that all children under the age of 16 must wear a helmet.
7. **Skateboards or scooters are not allowed at school** as they cannot be locked to the bike rack and there is no storage area available.
8. Following dismissal, students must go directly home unless enrolled in an after-school program.
9. Student Drop off and Pick Up guidelines:
 - All students must enter and exit through the lunch area gate off the main parking lot.
 - All students or parents arriving after 7:50 a.m. will need to check in at the main office.
 - If you would like to speak to your child's teacher before school, please call for an appointment at a mutually convenient time, email or leave a voicemail. Teachers are unable to discuss individual student needs while classes wait to enter classrooms.
 - All students must meet siblings at the front gate after school. Students will not be allowed to go to another classroom to pick up or meet others.

If it is necessary for your child to leave school during school hours, you are required to stop in the office to sign out your child and show proper identification. Established policy protects your child by allowing him/her to leave only when signed out by an adult whom you have listed on your child's Emergency Card and has proper identification to present to school personnel. If someone other than you will be taking your child, please notify the office immediately in writing.

For the safety of our students, **all parents and visitors must stop in the office when coming to campus to sign in and receive an office pass.**

PARKING LOT GUIDELINES

- Vehicles will enter the loading/unloading zone (lane closest to sidewalk) at the beginning of the driveway only. Please follow our established valet directions for easy drop off and pick up procedures.
- Vehicles will stop long enough to load or unload students at the MAIN GATE only.
- Traffic must then exit after loading/unloading children and continue onto Topaz Lane.
- Cars may not be left unattended for any reason.
- Parking is available in the parking lot or on the street when allowed. There is no parking in the loading/unloading lane. Please do not park in marked spaces.

DRESS STANDARDS

Children should come to school dressed appropriately for the task of learning, demonstrating their awareness of the importance of education. Children's attire should promote an environment of respect. All clothing should be in good repair and of appropriate size. Girls should wear shorts or opaque tights under dresses or skirts. This is especially important on P.E. days.

For the safety of the children, the following are not allowed:

- Thongs, sandals, open-toed or backless shoes, jellies, skateboard soaps, roller tennis shoes, cowboy boots, high heels, or other shoes which might interfere with safe footing.
- Jewelry or accessories that constitute a distraction or safety hazard, e.g. large hoop dangling earrings, or chains.
- Apparel, jewelry or accessories which display words or pictures relating to alcohol, drugs, tobacco, guns, gangs, violence, obscenity, or vulgarity.
- Apparel, jewelry, or accessories which promote racial, ethnic, or religious prejudice.
- Shirts or tops that are too tight or revealing, which do not reach below the waist, or which allow underclothing to show, e.g., open mesh tops, spaghetti straps, low-cut necklines, oversized sleeve openings, off the shoulder tops, midriff tops, backless tops, short tops, or sheer garments.
- Extremes in style (no mohawks) or color or hair, including colored gel, or makeup.

Appropriate Dress Standards

Topwear: All tops should be long enough to be tucked in.

Outerwear: Sweatshirts and jackets are considered to be outerwear. Appropriate topwear must be worn under them.

Bottomwear: All pants, shorts, skirts and skorts must fit properly at the waist and not be worn lower than the top of the hip. They should not be unhemmed or frayed and should be appropriate length. Shorts, skirts and skorts may not be shorter than mid-thigh. Bottomwear must be appropriately belted/secure at the waist. All belts must be of appropriate length.

Headwear: Must be worn with the bill in front. Must be marked with the student's name to avoid loss. Headwear is to be worn outdoors only. Students must store headwear in backpacks while they are in the classrooms. In the interest of hygiene students must not wear other students headwear.

As an added precaution it is recommended that students apply a sunscreen daily before coming to school (SPF 15 or higher).

A STUDENT COMING TO SCHOOL WITH INAPPROPRIATE DRESS WILL BE REQUIRED TO CALL HIS/HER PARENTS TO BRING A CHANGE OF CLOTHES. REPEATED VIOLATIONS WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES, TARDIES

When a child is late, the teacher must stop instruction, change his attendance and lunch count, and review instruction missed. Punctuality sets a positive method for student responsibility and success in the classroom. Absences and tardies will be closely monitored to provide each student with maximum learning time. Consequences will be given to those in excess of 6 tardies.

All absences must be verified. This can be done by:

1. Calling our 24 hour Attendance Line (dial 993-9977)
2. Sending a note with your child explaining the reason for the absence on the following day, if not contacted by phone.

Tardiness can be a serious concern at school. When a child is late, it creates a disruption to the learning process. Punctuality sets a good tone for student responsibility. Excessive tardiness (more than 5 days in a year) may result in recess detentions and/or referral to the district Attendance Review Board.

LUNCH PROGRAM

In keeping with **District Board Policy on Student Wellness and Nutrition**, Topaz staff recognizes the important connection between a healthy diet and a student's ability to effectively learn. We also recognize the school's role in creating an environment that fosters healthy nutrition and quality physical activity. You are encouraged to reference the Board Wellness Policy online at www.schoolnutritionandfitness.com

In keeping with the **District Wellness Policy**, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- If your child forgets to bring a lunch to school, you may drop off a sack lunch in the school office and place it on the Lunch Cart. Students will be instructed to check the Lunch Cart during their lunch period. To ensure quality instructional time, children will not be called out of class to pick up lunch.
- **Fast food lunches (ie; McDonald's, Burger King etc.) for students are highly discouraged.**
- **Carbonated beverages** of any kind **are prohibited** on campus for children.
- Large bags of chips (such as Flaming Hot Cheetos, Takis, Doritos, etc,) or candy are not allowed during lunch or break.
- Classroom celebrations are permitted only with the teacher's approval and treats are to be eaten outside during the recess break as directed by the classroom teacher. Classroom celebrations are **not** allowed during the lunch hour at lunch tables. Please call the classroom teacher to make arrangements at least one day in advance if you plan to bring birthday treats.
- For student safety (potential allergic reactions), students **may not** share their lunch or bring food to share with other students during the lunch hour.

LUNCH COST

1. Hot lunch, including milk, may be purchased for \$2.75. Your child will be provided with a menu at the beginning of each school month.
2. Students bringing lunch may purchase milk for \$.50 or juice for \$.75.
3. Please see the front office for an application for free or reduced lunch if needed. The application must be submitted each year.

LUNCH TABLE RULES

1. All food must be eaten at the lunch tables.
2. Proper table manners are to be used.
3. Shouting is not permitted.
4. Students are to be seated in their assigned area.
5. Students will place refuse in trash containers carefully, leaving the eating area clean.
6. Students may not leave lunch tables until all trash is disposed of and their table is dismissed to walk to the yard by the person in charge.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERING & VISITATION

You are cordially invited to volunteer and visit in your child's class. If you are volunteering you must make arrangements with the teacher to sign up for a specific and regular volunteering time. District policy does not permit non-school age children (siblings) in classrooms while volunteering. Confidentiality is of utmost importance when volunteering.

If you would like to visit or observe the class, the school principal will be more than happy to accompany you during your visit. To avoid disruption to the learning time for all students, classroom observations are limited to 20 minutes at one given time and must be prearranged with the secretary and principal. Your child benefits when the home and the teacher work together. These suggestions will make your visit more valuable.

1. As a planning courtesy for the teacher, please call or send a note to request a visitation **at least 24 hours prior** to your requested date and call the office to set up a time when the principal can accompany you. The principal and teacher will coordinate a date and time for your visit.
2. **All visitors (including ALL volunteers) are required to stop at the school office to pick up Visitor's pass prior to going to classrooms. Visitors must also check through the office before leaving.**
3. The teacher will be unable to confer with you during class hours. Topaz teachers are happy to schedule a conference meeting at another mutually agreed upon time, email or call.

4. Try to visit at a time when your child is engaged in an activity in which he/she is successful. Having the parent observe him/her succeeding at school will improve his/her attitude toward studies as well as his/her self-esteem.
5. While volunteering or visiting in the classroom, please remember that confidentiality regarding all students is important.

HEALTH, EMERGENCY AND MEDICATION PROCEDURES

Other than minor scratches, bumps, etc., you will be notified promptly if your child becomes ill or is injured at school. The school will follow the directions you give on the Emergency Card concerning your physician and others who are to be notified if you are unavailable. Please keep the Emergency Card **up to date** by notifying the office immediately of any change.

Some children require medication during school hours. Should this be the case, the following procedures must be followed:

1. **Long-term or daily medications:** Parent and Physician Medication Request forms must be signed and brought to the office. The medication must be in the original prescription container and the pharmacist's label must indicate name of student, date, name of doctor, and name and specified dosage of medication, and method of administration.
2. **Short-term medication** such as cough medicine and antibiotics, **not to exceed 10 days**. Parent and Physician Permission form is required. The medication must be brought to school in the prescription container. The pharmacist's label must indicate name of student, date, name of doctor, name and specified dosage of medication, and method of administration.
3. **"Over-the-counter" medication**, i.e., aspirin, **cannot and will not be dispensed** without physician's authorization.

All medication is kept in the health office in a locked area designated by the principal.

RELEASING CHILDREN DURING SCHOOL HOURS

If it is necessary to pick up your child during school hours, you must do so at the office. Those not listed on the emergency card **must have authorization from the child's parent/guardian before the child will be released to them**. No child will be released during school hours to any adult that is not properly identified. These procedures are for the protection of your child. No child is permitted to leave the school grounds

without permission from the principal. **We encourage you to make every attempt to allow your child to benefit from a full school day.**

In order to minimize classroom interruptions, students will not be called out of class ***between 2:00 – 2:15 or 1:00 - 1:15 (on Wednesdays) unless there is an emergency.*** This is a critical time since the teacher is assigning homework and giving reminders for the next day.

WEEKENDS

The school is not responsible for injuries that occur on the campus when authorized supervision is not present. Please do not send children to play at school unattended before/after school or on weekends. There is no skateboarding, rollerblading, bicycle riding, or riding razors on campus during or after hours. **If you see anyone vandalizing or destroying school property, please call the Fullerton Police Department at 738-6800, or the District hotline at 996-6060 immediately.**

COOPERATIVE BEHAVIOR PLAN

Please refer to the Cooperative Behavior Plan booklet that was sent home with your child(ren) for a detailed explanation of the rules, expectations, incentives, and consequences for our Topaz Tigers.

SCHOOL WEBSITE

Please visit www.topazschool.org to find important information including:

- School and District Calendar
- Staff Contact List
- Schedules
- Parent Handbook
- Cooperative Behavior Plan
- Home School Compact
- Title I Parental Involvement Policy
- School Accountability Report Card (link to website)

Hard copies of these documents may also be found in the school office.

TOPAZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
2016-2017

Principal	Christa Borgese
Office Manager	Erin Paunovich
Bilingual Clerk	Katia Leon Murillo
Clerk	
Health Clerk	Susan Medellin
Instructional Coach	Blanca Gibbons
Library and Media Tech	Maria Lumby
Computer Instruction Specialist	Roberto Perez Mendoza
Psychologist	Greg Vander Kooy
Speech	Katie Lee
OT/PT	Jennifer Katz/Jennifer Godown
Plant Manager	Pedro Fregoso
Night Custodian	Faustino Hernandez
Music	Carey Mottershead Jeff Evans

John Rush

PE

Scott Sundstrom

<u>Preschool</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Third Grade</u>	<u>Room</u>
Alicia Brown	200	Meghan Bautista/Lindsey Clark	305
		Erin Pon	206
		Katherine Visconti	225
<u>Preppy K</u>	<u>Room</u>		
Lisette Garcia	K-2		
<u>Kindergarten</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Fourth Grade</u>	<u>Room</u>
Heather Christman	207	Michael Hedderig	226
Ticiana Doty	202	Salvador McBenttez	224
Shannon Gibson	K-1	<u>Fifth Grade</u>	<u>Room</u>
Norma Perez-Rocha	205	Elvira Bermudez	222
		Carol Purga	220
<u>First Grade</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Sixth Grade</u>	<u>Room</u>
Lisa Macdonald	203	Andrea Cronin	221
Sara Partida	201	Rossana Hamilton	223
Stacy Stevens	204	Traci Eseltine (Math)	
<u>Second Grade</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>RSP</u>	<u>Room</u>
Gayle Helman	300	Robin Yi	227
Leanne Olson	306		
Minerva Pena	301		

