

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Principal's Message</b>	<b>page 2</b>
<b>School Calendar</b>	<b>page 3</b>
<b>General Information</b>	<b>pages 4-9</b>
<b>Code of Conduct</b>	<b>page 10</b>
<b>Awards</b>	<b>page 11</b>
<b>Expectations for Behavior</b>	<b>page 12</b>
<b>Specific Rules &amp; Regulations</b>	<b>pages 13-15</b>
<b>Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior</b>	<b>page 16-17</b>
<b>Homework Guidelines</b>	<b>page 18</b>
<b>Legal Reasons for Suspension &amp; Expulsion</b>	<b>page 19</b>
<b>Staff List</b>	<b>page 20</b>
<b>Parent Club</b>	<b>page 21</b>
<b>School Site Council</b>	<b>page 21</b>
<b>Board Policies &amp; CVUSD Non-Discrimination Policies</b>	<b>Addendum</b>

# **INDEPENDENT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**August 2006**

Dear Parents:

The Independent Elementary School Handbook was produced to help you become familiar with school and district policies that affect your child. I would ask that you sit down with your child at home and discuss the relevant sections. Please return the slip accompanying this handbook, which acknowledges that you and your child understand our Code of Conduct. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to call, send a note, or stop by at any time.

We look forward to another positive year of achievement and growth here at Independent School. We plan to engage your child's interest in becoming a well-organized active learner who takes responsibility for his or her own behavior. We hope that your schedule will allow you to play an active role in your child's education. By keeping informed, you too can be a part of the Independent experience!

Jim Kentris  
Principal

## **School Calendar Quick Reference**

2006-2007

### **Holiday Schedule (No students at school)**

September 4	Labor Day
September 29	Staff Development Day
October 20	Parent/Teacher Conferences
November 10	Veterans Day
November 20-24	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 22-January 5	Winter Break
January 15	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
February 9	Staff Development Day
February 19	Presidents Day
April 9-13	Spring Break
May 28	Memorial Day

### **Early Release Days (Students go home at 1:45)**

Every Friday	Teacher Prep Time
September 28	Staff Development
October 19	Parent/Teacher Conferences
November 9	Veterans Day Holiday
December 21	Winter Break
February 8	Staff Development Day
April 2-6	Parent/Teacher Conferences
June 14	Last Day of School

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## Daily Schedule

<b>Kindergarten</b>	AM	8:10 AM – 11:40 AM
	PM (M-Th)	11:45 AM – 3:15PM
	PM (F)	8:10 AM – 11:45
<b>Grades 1-5</b>	M-TH	8:20 AM – 2:50 PM
	F	8:20 AM – 1:45 PM

## Campus Hours

Supervision is provided on campus between 8:05 AM and 3:00 PM daily. Students are expected to go home immediately after school, unless they are under the supervision and care of Adventure Time. Kindergarten students should be picked up promptly after dismissal in the kindergarten area.

## Office Information

Office hours are 7:30 – 3:30 daily. Our school number is 510-537-9558. Messages also may be left in our voice mailboxes (please see staff list on page 20 for mailbox extensions).

Student phone calls are limited to medical emergencies and school-related business. ***This policy is strictly enforced.*** In addition, we ask that you leave messages for your child only in case of emergency. Have a back-up plan arranged with your child for times when you are unavoidably detained. Should no one pick up your child after a reasonable wait, he/she should come to the office. After 15 minutes, we or the child will call. After 30 minutes the Alameda County Sherriff may be called.

## **Reporting Absences**

School attendance is compulsory under state law. Regular attendance is essential to a child's learning. Please call our absence voice mail on the first day of a child's absence (537-9558, push "1"). If you have not already contacted us by phone, you need to send us a note explaining the absence on the day your child returns to school. We are funded by the state on the basis of each child's attendance and only accrue funding on the day s/he is here. Students are **only** excused for the following reasons: illness, medical/dental appointment, or death or funeral of an immediate family member. All other reasons are denoted as unexcused. Please avoid absences as much as possible. Contact your child's teacher, in advance, for an independent study contract (for five (5) consecutive days or more) in case of unavoidable absences.

## **Tardiness**

Tardy students must report to the office for a tardy slip before reporting to class. Parents will be contacted in the case of excessive tardies. With our youngest children, we find that tardiness is often the fault of the parent, not the child. We urge all parents to strive for promptness so that each child may start off his/her day at school on a positive note.

## **Visitors**

Any person coming onto campus **must** report to the Main Office, sign in, and get a Visitor's Pass. People on campus without a Visitor's Pass will be asked to report to the Main Office in order to obtain one.

## **School Dress**

Students are expected to dress cleanly, neatly, and in good taste – a manner not disruptive to the school program. Hats may not be worn indoors. Shoes/sandals without backs may not be worn to school. Clothing which is appropriate for a young child to wear may be inappropriate for an older student. The wearing of t-shirts with slogans in poor taste, such as those with drugs, alcohol, tobacco, suggestive comments, and/or obscene words, is not permitted. If clothing is deemed inappropriate by the teacher or principal, parents will be contacted to provide proper clothing.

## **Animals or Pets at School**

Only under unusual circumstances are pets or animals allowed at school. The classroom teacher will contact parents directly to give prior consent when pets or animals are welcome.

## **School Cafeteria**

Cafeteria lunches are offered to first through fifth graders. The cost is \$2.00 which includes milk. Reduced price and free meals are available to children whose families meet federal guidelines. Applications are provided to all families in August and are then available in the office throughout the year. Reduced price meals are 40 cents. Lunch tickets are only sold in strips of ten (10). Lunches paid for in advance may be used anytime and carried over to the following week. Students may **not** charge lunches.

## **Leaving School Grounds**

Independent School has a **closed campus**. This means that students are not allowed to leave campus without specific permission from the office. Further, students are not free to leave without written permission from parents/guardians. If parents/guardians wish to take students out of school, please comply with the following procedure.

1. Any adult picking up a child must report to the office and present proper identification.
2. The school will only release children to adults listed on the emergency card. No students will be allowed to leave with any adult until proper permission has been obtained.

## **Items Prohibited from School**

Firearms, explosives (including firecrackers and caps), knives (including small pocket knives), and other objects deemed dangerous by school personnel may not be brought to school. These are cause for suspension or expulsion by state law. Other items are prohibited as well unless approved specifically by the teacher: gum, sunflower seeds in shells, radios, tape recorders, cd players, small computer games or devices, trading cards of any type, toys or personal play equipment. The school cannot accept liability for the loss of students' personal property and therefore, discourages it from being brought to school.

## **Tobacco-Free Schools**

The Castro Valley Unified School District adopted a policy on June 30, 1994, that went into effect on January 1, 1995, to provide for tobacco-free schools. The Governing Board prohibits the use of tobacco products on school property, including any school or school-sponsored activity or athletic event.

## Cell Phone Policy

The District does not encourage the use of signaling devices such as cell phones, pagers, walkie-talkies, or remote controls on school campuses. Cell phones are not permitted at any time during the school day unless the cell phone is needed for health reasons. A doctor's note must be on file in the office for this purpose. Students may not use cell phones in any school buildings.

Disruption of an orderly classroom or school environment shall result in disciplinary action, up to and including, confiscation and/or loss of cell phone privileges. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

## Traffic and the Parking Lots

When you drop your child off at school, please do so in a safe and courteous manner. You might consider arranging a drop-off/pick-up point a short distance from school to help avoid congestion. Cars must **not be parked** where children are being dropped off or picked up. Please drive into our lots very slowly – **5 MPH**. small children may be walking across the lot to the playground. Please have your children ready to be dropped off; don't stop to open the trunk for backpacks, or delay for any other reason.

Remember that only cars with a handicapped license may park in the spaces painted blue. Never park where it says "fire lane" or "no parking". **School buses and fire engines cannot negotiate the turn when cars are improperly parked.** Always pull to the curb before loading or unloading students. Keep circling the parking lot until you can pull to a curb, and pull all the way forward before stopping. **Be patient!**

Please keep student safety foremost in your mind whenever you are on school grounds. **Do not** park in the teacher's parking lot, and if dropping off at Adventure Time, please park behind the A.T. portable to avoid congestion.

## Bus Transportation

Bus transportation is provided for students in certain areas. Passes may be purchased at the Castro Valley Adult School (call 886-1000 for information). You

may also call 537-3000 x1363 with transportation questions which cannot be answered by our office.

## **Medication at School**

**If your child requires medication at school, an *Authorization to Administer Prescribed Medication* form must be completed by the physician. All medication must be labeled and kept in the office. Call for details before sending medication to school.**

## **Label Outer Clothing**

We strongly suggest the parents **label students' outer clothing**. Please take the time to put your child's name in coats, sweaters, sweatshirts, backpacks, and lunch boxes, and encourage your child to look for lost items immediately. Lost and found is located in our Multi-purpose room and is regularly displayed. Periodically we donate unclaimed items to charity and you will be notified of those times through our Gazette newsletter.

## **Non-Students on Campus**

Any non-student who comes on our campus **must** come through the office and register before going to a classroom or playground. Upon approval, you will be given a visitor sticker to wear on campus. We do this to ensure the **safety** of our students. Please help us abide by this important rule.

## **Home/School Communication – Independent GAZETTE**

Monday is the official day for notices to go home from school. The newsletter is distributed to all students the first Monday of the month. If you do not receive it, please contact the office. **Parents who faithfully read the newsletter know what activities are occurring and are best able to support their child's educational program.**

# **CODE OF CONDUCT**

## **Guidelines and Rules for Positive Interaction**

During the summer of 1992, representative parents and staff members developed a mission statement for our school district:

**The mission of the Castro Valley Unified School District (CVUSD), a public pre-school through adult education organization, is to provide all students programs of excellence while preparing them for the challenges of tomorrow. The CVUSD will enhance students self-esteem, help them discover and maximize their individual potential, and guide each to dignify, appreciate, respect and accept human diversity.**

Our school's Code of Conduct reflects this mission. Our staff is committed to providing an environment conducive to maximum learning and guiding students in the following areas:

- developing self-discipline;
- reaching their intellectual potential;
- becoming responsible members of the Independent community;
- developing self-respect and respect for others; and
- working cooperatively.

Students who follow our guidelines for positive interaction receive recognition for a job well done. It is our belief that children deserve positive reinforcement when they are able to achieve their expectations. At the same time, we are aware that children may need reminders along the way. At Independent, we use a system which both reminds students and keeps parents informed. Barring severe infractions, the staff would like parents to react to problems as an opportunity for growth and a challenge for the students to become more responsible citizens.

# **AWARDS**

## **Recognition and Positive Reinforcement**

The Independent staff is generous in offering informal recognition and positive reinforcement to students. Young children will frequently come home with stickers, stamps and notes in recognition of their accomplishments. More formal recognition is also offered:

### **Eagle Wings**

An “Eagle Wing” is given to students in recognition of special kindness or assistance to others. Examples include the following: picking up litter on the playground, assisting a classmate, being sensitive to someone’s feelings. A good slip is not given to a child at the child’s request; the behavior must be observed by an adult! Students receiving these slips will have their names in a drawing for prizes every Friday. Staff members strive to be alert to catch kids being good!

### **Sneaker Awards**

These awards are presented by the PE teacher to encourage students to do their best during physical education class. The emphasis is not on outstanding athletic ability but on effort, enthusiasm, and citizenship. Students receiving these slips will have their names in a drawing for prizes every Friday.

### **Classroom Recognition Programs**

Each classroom has a student recognition program appropriate to the age level of the students. Your child’s teacher will provide you with information about this.

# EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

## General Behavior

At Independent School, we have three guiding principles:

1. Do your best;
2. Do the right thing;
3. Treat others the way you want to be treated.

Our behavior is guided by each of these principles. Insults or hurtful personal comments including those referring to racial or cultural backgrounds *will not be tolerated*.

## Classroom Behavior

**\*\*Each student shall have the opportunity to learn.\*\***

**\*\*Each teacher shall have the opportunity to teach.\*\***

Students who interfere with these rights will be subject to the consequences outlined by each teacher and by this code. Class rules and expectations will be provided to students and parents in writing and discussed with them. A teacher may suspend a student from class for up to two days. The student may not return to class prior to a parent conference.

# **SPECIFIC RULES AND REGULATIONS**

Common sense, safety, and consideration for others are the basis for our rules.

## **Bathroom and Drinking Fountain Behavior**

1. Students will be in the bathrooms only to use toilets or sinks.
2. Students will respect the privacy of others.
3. Students will use appropriate hygiene habits (flush toilets, wash hands).
4. Drinking fountains will be used appropriately.

## **Cafeteria Behavior**

1. Students will walk in an orderly manner to the cafeteria, wait in line quietly, go to a table and remain seated until excused by an adult.
2. Students will use acceptable table manners and talk in **soft voices**.
3. Students will follow directions and show respect to supervisors.
4. Students will clean up after themselves and recycle when appropriate.
5. Students will not throw food or pop cartons/bags.

## **School Office Behavior**

1. Students shall enter quietly and treat office personnel with respect.
2. Students who are tardy shall report to the office for a late slip.
3. Students' use of the telephone shall be permitted only with the written or personal permission of the classroom teacher or when a child's transportation is over 15 minutes late.

## Assembly Behavior

1. Students shall enter and leave an assembly in an orderly fashion.
2. Students shall show appreciation by applause only, no stamping of feet.
3. Students shall be attentive and respectful during presentations.
4. Booing is a sign of rudeness and is unacceptable at Independent.

## Playground Behavior

1. Students will respect the authority of adults in supervisory roles on campus.
2. Good sportsmanship will be emphasized by staff.
3. Games will not be locked (excluding others from playing) unless the supervisor has declared grade-level games.
4. The paved area is for specific games only – four square, hand-soccer, basketball, etc.
5. Student play must stop at the bell, followed immediately by line up.
6. Students will stay on blacktop areas when the grounds are muddy.
7. Students must report any injury to the adult on supervision duty.
8. Personal play equipment, other than baseball gloves and tennis balls, may not be brought to school except with the permission of the teacher.
9. Students will not climb the basketball standards.
10. Students will not climb fences or go on the roof. If balls go onto the roof, students will notify the office. The custodian will retrieve the balls.
11. The following shall **NOT** be tolerated:
  - a. fighting
  - b. rude, hurtful or profane language
  - c. defacing school property
  - d. tackling, wrestling, kicking or excessively rough play
  - e. throwing tanbark, rocks, grass or sticks
  - f. littering
  - g. spitting
  - h. leaving the school grounds without parental and staff permission
  - i. chewing gum on campus
  - j. leaving playground boundaries at recess or noon

## Use of Bicycles, Skateboards, Skates & Motorized Vehicles

1. Bicycles must be walked on ramps and in hallways.
2. Bicycle riders **must** wear helmets.
3. Bicycles must be **locked** at the bicycle rack and left.
4. Skateboards and rollerblades are prohibited at Independent.
5. Skating or riding of wheeled vehicles is prohibited in the halls and ramps on school days and during any school-sponsored activity. Riding is permitted on blacktop areas when school is not in session.
6. Motorized vehicles are not allowed on school grounds.

# CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Our staff recognizes two very different types of behavior problems:

Irresponsible behavior – when students ignore important rules and need to learn or be reminded about them such as running in the halls, being tardy to class, littering, chewing gum, rudeness, bad language, etc.

and

Serious acts which require parental intervention as well as the school's – aggressive, disruptive, defiant, abusive, or dangerous behavior such as fighting, severe classroom disruptions, racial/ethnic/personal slurs, etc.

## **Bench Ticket**

If a child breaks an important rule, he/she will be given a bench ticket. During that recess or the following recess, the child will be assigned to a bench on the playground where he/she will sit without talking to friends for ten minutes. Yard supervisors will initial the slip to verify the time served. On the Spot slips *may be* sent home by the teacher at the end of the week or with the next report card. There is no expectation of parent follow-up unless infractions become excessive. The number of these slips will affect your child's citizenship grades on his/her report card.

## **White Slip Offenses**

For serious offenses, students will receive a white slip. Parents will be notified about white slips by telephone. Students receiving a white slip will be assigned an appropriate consequence. All infractions listed on the white slip are grounds for suspension under Education Code 48900. Parental assistance in correcting the child's behavior is strongly requested.

The Independent staff is confident that with the parental support and consistency here at school, each of our students can develop self-discipline and become a responsible, caring member of our community.

# **HOMEWORK GUIDELINES**

Homework serves an important purpose in your child's school life. It is a means of reviewing and reinforcing the lessons taught in the classroom. Homework is also a way to help your child to develop work and study habits which will assist him or her throughout life.

You can help your child develop some routines that will be of assistance in successfully completing homework assignments. The following suggestions are offered for this purpose:

Be aware that homework is assigned on a regular basis. Ask your child if he/she has homework that day. Check with the teacher for specific homework schedules. By asking your child about homework, you are helping him/her remember that there is an assignment to be completed.

Be interested in your child's homework. Sharing your child's work with him/her reinforces the importance of homework and helps the child to understand that you are interested in his/her progress. Looking at homework also keeps you informed about your child's progress.

Please keep in mind that homework is your child's work – not yours. You should not do the work for him/her. Rather, you should be concerned with whether or not your child did the work. If your child has trouble with a homework assignment and cannot complete it, write a note telling the teacher about the problem. It is the teacher's responsibility to make the homework assignment clearly understood by each student.

Help your child set a regular homework time each day and be consistent with that commitment. Provide your child with a quiet, well-lit place to work and study where he/she is free from distractions.

## LEGAL REASONS FOR SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Offenses that are cause for suspension or expulsion when they occur on school grounds or off school grounds during an activity related to school attendance (Ed. Code Section 48900) are as follows:

1. Stealing or damaging or attempting to steal or damage school or private property.
2. Causing, attempting, or threatening physical injury to another person.
3. Possession, sale or furnishing any firearm, knife, explosive, or dangerous object.
4. Possession, use, selling or furnishing a controlled substance such as drugs, alcohol, or other intoxicants.
5. Possession or use of tobacco.
6. Committing an obscene act or engaging in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
7. Disrupting school activities or willfully defying the valid authority of supervisors, teachers or administrators.

A.B. 805 has added to laws governing expulsion. It is not *mandatory* that school principals *recommend expulsion* for these specific offenses, though the authority to expel a student remains with the Board of Education:

1. Causing serious injury to another person except in self-defense.
2. Possession of any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object of no reasonable use at school or at a school activity off school grounds.\*
3. Unlawful sale of any controlled substance, defined in Section 11007 of the Health and Safety Code.
4. Robbery or extortion.

**\*This mandate includes pocket knives! They must be kept at home!!**

## STAFF LIST

To contact staff and faculty members, please leave a voice mail message at 537-9558. Extensions are listed below. To report absences, please call 537-9558, push “1”.

Jim Kentris, Principal	4861
Ingrid Conn, Secretary	4800
Linda Lustig, Attendance and Computer Lab	4860
Debbie Cucchiara, Lead Cafeteria,	4853
Dan Curry, Custodian	
Linda Block, 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade, Rm.2	4802
Eileen Weed, 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Rm. 2	4802
Vince Ballasone, 4 <sup>th</sup> /5 <sup>th</sup> Grade, Rm.3	4803
Rm. 4	4804
Margie Porter, 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade, Rm. 5	4805
Stephanie Keller, 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade, Rm. 6	4806
Deborah Aracic, 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade, Rm. 7	4807
Judy Meirovitz, Kindergarten, Rm. 8	4808
Anne Marie Strange, Kindergarten, Rm.8	4808
Kelly Pietro, Kindergarten, Rm. 9	4809
Cindy Chung, Kindergarten, Rm. 9	4809
Sarah Jawed, 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade, Rm. 10	4810
Nancy Jacobson, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade, Rm. 11	4811
Rm. 13	4813
Diana Saliba, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade, Rm. 14	4814
Maressa McDonald, 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade, Rm. 15	4815
Anna Slader, 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade, Rm. 16	4816
Lisa Breault, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade, Rm. 18	4818
Judy Cline, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade, Rm. 19	4819
Trish Brand, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade, Rm. 20	4820
Amy Lindroth, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade, Rm. 21	4821
Nikki Cox, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade, Rm. 22	4822
Ginny Winblad, Kindergarten, Rm.23	TBD
Teresa Hanson, Kindergarten, Rm.23	TBD
Carol Mahar, 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade, Rm. 24	TBD
Amy Carroll, 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade, Rm. 25	TBD
Kellee Louderback, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade, Rm.26	TBD
Cynthia Roscoe, RSP	TBD

# **SCHOOL SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

## **Independent PTA**

The Independent School PTA serves as the main line of communication and action among the staff, parents, and students of Independent School. As stated in its bylaws, the main purposes are: to enrich and enhance the educational program and opportunities for Independent School students; to foster communication among students, parents, teachers, and staff of Independent School and the community; and to promote activities and raise funds for the benefit of Independent School, students, and staff. Specific projects include coordinating room mothers for each classroom as well as parent volunteers to serve as classroom, library, or computer room aides. PTA also allocates money from a variety of fundraising activities to purchase instructional supplies such as computers and software, to promote assemblies and field trips, and to improve school grounds. Meetings will be held once a month of the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

## **School Site Council**

The School Site Council (SSC) has the ongoing responsibility to review with the principal, teachers, other school personnel, and pupils the implementation of the School Improvement Program and to periodically assess the effectiveness of the program. Last year, Independent's SSC appropriated approximately \$35,000 of state and local funds to continue to improve the instructional program at Independent. The council is composed of an equal number of parents, teachers, staff and the principal. You may attend SSC meetings, held the third Thursday of the month at 3:10 p.m.

## TEAR OFF AND RETURN THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name \_\_\_\_\_

My child and I have read the Student handbook and understand all the procedures, rules and information that are listed.

We agree to abide by the school and classroom rules.

---

(Student Signature)

(Date)

---

(Parent Signature)

(Date)

### REMEMBER

**\*Do Your Best\***

**\*Do the Right Thing\***

**\*Treat Others the Way You Want to be Treated\***