

## SUNSET RIDGE SCHOOL HANDBOOK



**Our Sunset Ridge School Handbook provides guidelines to help parents, staff, and students work together to maintain a welcoming and academically challenging learning community for all members of our school. Guidelines are reviewed annually. Please let us know if you need additional information.**

### **ENROLLMENT**

#### **RESIDENCY**

**CONDITIONS:** The right to attend school tuition-free at Sunset Ridge School District 29 is extended only to residents who live within District 29 boundaries. The Illinois School Code provides that a student's residence generally is deemed to be the residence of a person who has legal custody of the student. Legal custody typically exists in the following manner:

- ✚ The student resides with a birth or adoptive parent who has custody;
- ✚ The student resides with a person other than a parent for reasons other than to attend School District 29 schools and that person has been granted custody by a court of competent jurisdiction; or
- ✚ The student resides with an adult other than a parent for reasons other than to attend School District 29 schools, and that adult has demonstrated that he/she has assumed and exercises legal responsibility for the student and provides the student with a regular fixed night-time abode.

**CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE:** Foster children who are wards of the State and are placed with a foster parent or in another type of child care facility within the District will be permitted to attend school on a tuition-free basis. Foster parents must establish residency within the District, like any other parent, and shall be deemed the Surrogate Parent for purposes of educational decision-making.

**PROOF OF RESIDENCY:** Residency must be proved at the time of the student's enrollment or registration, in accordance with District policy. Information regarding the documents acceptable for verifying residency is provided during the District's registration process and available at the District's offices. Any student suspected of being a non-resident may be required to pay tuition and/or leave the District following opportunity for a hearing before the School Board. Fraudulent enrollment is a criminal offense.

**STUDENT PLACEMENT:** The placement process considers each child’s academic, social, and personal needs and is designed to create balanced classrooms. The instructional staff at each child’s current grade level including support staff, the Director of Student Services, and the Principal work together as a team to place students into instructional groups.

Parents may provide information concerning a child’s social, emotional, and/or academic development. This information is also considered in creating class assignments. Parents are asked to refrain from making requests that children be assigned to specific teachers. If parents have unique and special information, they may forward written comments to the classroom teacher and the Principal on or before the last Friday in April of each school year.

**RESIDENCY CHANGE AFTER SCHOOL YEAR BEGINS:** If a family changes residency after the first official day of school, they may finish the school year provided they are able to have a plan in place to have their child on time for school and picked up at dismissal time. To continue beyond that school year, parents would have to petition the School Board and notify the principal. Tuition fees are set if a request from a family living out of district is accepted.

## ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** Students enrolled in Sunset Ridge School are required by State law to attend each day school is in session. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure compliance with this law.

**ENTRANCE/DISMISSAL TIMES:**

Grade 4	8:35-3:20
Grades 5,6,7,8	8:18-3:30

**ABSENCES:** It is the belief of the Sunset Ridge faculty and administration that any absence hinders a student's education. Nevertheless, the District recognizes that circumstances may arise necessitating a student's absence. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school in advance of the absence, or at a time of a valid school absence. Valid cause for absence shall be illness, observance of a religious holiday or attendance at religious instruction, death in the immediate family, family emergency, or other circumstances beyond the control of the student. Students absent from school due to illness or any unexcused absence will not be allowed to participate in or attend after-school activities or any other school-sponsored programs on that day. This includes athletic events, dances, or any other school-sponsored programs.

**REPORTING AN ABSENCE:** When your child is absent from school, please notify the school on our Attendance Line - 847-881-9400, press 6 between 6:00-8:00 a.m. If we do not hear from you, we will make reasonable efforts to call and verify the absence. To better ensure you are aware of your child's attendance habits, it is necessary, and required by law, that the District has at least one current telephone number at which you can be contacted.

- ❖ **Extended Absences and Excuse from Physical Education:** If a student is absent three or more days due to injury or illness, he/she should have a note from the physical indicating the student may return to school. Similarly, if a student needs to be excused from physical education for more than two days, a physician's note is required. A student may be excused from physical education for up to two days provided a parental note stating the medical reason for the excuse.
- ❖ **Anticipated Absences/Vacations:** Anticipated absences of more than one day require notification to the child's Homeroom or Advisory teacher as well as notification to the School Attendance Line. All make-up work must be completed and handed in on the day of the student's return. Other arrangements may be made at the teacher's discretion. Absences from school taken to accommodate family vacation plans are regarded as contrary to the interests of the student and school. Whenever possible, parents are requested to plan vacation trips at times corresponding to the school's scheduled vacation periods.

- ❖ **Absence due to Communicable Disease:** If your child has, or is suspected of having a communicable disease, the school nurse should be notified immediately. She can assist you in determining if your child's disease is designated "communicable" by the State of Illinois, as needed. No person at Sunset Ridge School shall be discriminated against on any basis, including having a communicable disease. District staff will meet with the parent(s) of a student with a communicable disease to determine how best to address his/her ongoing needs in light of the nature, anticipated duration, and seriousness of the disease.
- ❖ **Parent Unavailability:** Parents are asked to inform the school, in writing, if they will be out of town. The classroom teacher and the office (847-881-9400, press 6) need to know of parental absences in case of emergencies. The staff also needs the name of the person caring for the child. If the child is not staying at home, please include the address and telephone number of where the child or his/her temporary caregiver can be reached and the length of time the parent will be absent. Parents should also include how they can be contacted in case of emergency.

**EARLY DISMISSAL:** Students will not be dismissed before the end of the school day for a reason other than illness, medical appointments, or to attend religious instruction for which the District had prior notice. Exceptions may be made only if a parent/guardian sends a note to the office stating the reason for the early dismissal and the time the student should be dismissed. Upon receipt of the parental notice, the student will be listed on the attendance sheet for an early dismissal. If there is an emergency that necessitates your son/daughter being removed from class, please notify the office. Personnel in the office will assist you in locating your child.

Students leaving early must be signed out in the "early dismissal" book and be picked up in the office. Should the student return to school, he/she is required to sign back in and obtain a pass. Under no circumstances will a student be permitted to leave the building unattended during school hours.

**TARDINESS:** All students who are late for school should report to the main office with a parental note, sign in, and obtain a pass to proceed to class. Students who are tardy more than two times in a quarter will be referred to the Principal and the parents will be notified.

**TRUANCY:** The primary purpose of the Sunset Ridge School District is to provide all students with access to an outstanding education. Achieving this goal is the mutual responsibility of school staff, parents, and students. The District will make every reasonable effort to prevent truancy. The District will also take the appropriate steps to keep chronically truant students in school. No punitive action shall be taken against a chronic truant unless supportive services addressing the chronic truancy have been provided or offered to the student and refused.

**DEFINITIONS:**

- A “truant” is a student who is subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for a school day or portion thereof.
- A “chronic or habitual truant” is a student who is absent without valid cause for ten percent or more of the previous 180 regular attendance days.
- A “truant minor” is a chronic truant to whom supportive services including prevention, diagnostic intervention, and remedial services, alternative programs, and other school and community resources have been provided and have failed to result in the cessation of chronic truancy or have been offered and refused.
- A “dropout” is any child enrolled in grades one through eight whose name has been removed from the District enrollment roster for any reason other than his/her death, extended illness, graduation or completion of a program of studies, and who has not transferred to another public or private school.

Interviews may be conducted with the student, his/her parents/guardians, and/or school personnel or other parties who may have information concerning the student’s attendance problem.

Supportive Services may include the following:

- ✚ Conferences with school personnel
- ✚ Counseling services by a social worker and/or psychologist
- ✚ Tests administered by District psychologist
- ✚ Schedule or program changes
- ✚ Placement in alternative educational program
- ✚ Special Education assessment and placement
- ✚ Referral to appropriate community agencies

## **EMERGENCY/DISASTER INFORMATION**

**EMERGENCY FORM:** The Emergency Form, required by the school, serves as a source of information in case parents or guardians cannot be reached. School personnel, friends, or neighbors cannot authorize treatment of a child except in an emergency where consent is not reasonably feasible under the circumstance, and failure to immediately respond would adversely affect the condition of the minor's health. Please see that your form is current and on file with the school nurse. Immediately notify the school office of any changes.

**EMERGENCY CLOSING:** The Superintendent of Schools or a designee is authorized to close schools for emergencies. In the event of a school closing or a delayed start, the Superintendent will issue a media statement and initiate notification to parents via e-mail or a phone message. If the announcement of the closing is not received by a parent, children will be able to enter the building and remain until arrangements to return home are made by school personnel. Emergency closing of school during the regular school day shall be at the Superintendent's discretion. Parents will be notified through channels available to the Superintendent.

**DELAYED START:** In order to avoid closing school in all but the most severe weather conditions, a "delayed start" may be utilized. Sunset Ridge classes will be held from 9:50 a.m. to 3:20 p.m., and Middlefork classes will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Specific information would be communicated via our phone tree system and e-mail.

**FIRE/DISASTER DRILLS:** Sunset Ridge conducts fire/disaster drills regularly to acquaint students with the nearest exits, instructions for evacuation, and assigned places in the building to take cover during pending disasters. An informational guide titled "Sunset Ridge School District Emergency Procedure and Crisis Response Manual" is available for inspection in the office and in classrooms.

## **STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES**

**ACCIDENTS:** In the event of an accident, the school nurse shall be contacted. If the nurse is not immediately available, the injured student generally shall not be moved until examined by an adult trained in first aid. It shall be the school nurse's responsibility to determine, upon consultation with the Superintendent or a designee, the need for further medical assistance. If possible, the parent shall be consulted prior to any decision that requires further medical assistance. An accident report shall be completed and placed on file with the school nurse.

**ACCIDENT INSURANCE:** School District 29 has purchased **Student Accident Insurance Coverage** on your child's behalf. This program provides coverage for your child for injuries incurred while participating in any school-sponsored and/or supervised activity, including athletics. Aside from the school-sponsored coverage that the District has provided on your student's behalf, the program administrator may offer to parents at cost, a 24-hour unlimited Dental Accident coverage and also 24-hour coverage providing protection during vacations and weekends. Brochures and applications outlining these programs are available in the school office.

**MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION:** Parents have the primary responsibility for the administration of medication to their children. If it is necessary for a student to receive medication during school hours, the District policy requires that the following conditions be met:

### **General Administration**

- All medications given in school, including non-prescription drugs, shall be prescribed by a licensed prescriber/physician on an individual basis as determined by the student's health status.
- All medications given in school require the completion of an "**AUTHORIZATION AND PERMISSION FOR ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION**" form. This form must be completed by the licensed prescriber/physical and signed by both the prescriber/physical and parent. Forms must be renewed annually at the beginning of the school year and are available in the office.
- Medication must be provided in the pharmacy-labeled container, or with over-the-counter medication, in the original packaging, labeled with the student's name. All medication must be kept in a locked cabinet in the nurse's office and dispensed by authorized personnel only. Parents are responsible for delivering and picking up medication from school.

### **Self-Administration of Asthma Medication**

Students shall be permitted to self-administer asthma medication and epi-pens provided that parents:

- Provide to the school nurse written authorization for the self-administration of medication; and
- Provide a written statement from the student's physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse containing the following information:
  - The name and purpose of the medication;
  - The prescribed dosage; and
  - The time or times at which, or the special circumstances under which, the medication is to be administered.
- Sign a statement acknowledging that the School District will incur no liability as a result of any injury arising from the self-administration of medication by the student and that the parents indemnify and hold the School District harmless for a claim based on willful and wanton misconduct.

The information provided shall be kept on file in the school nurse's office. If you have any questions, please contact the school nurse at 847-881-9455.

## **PHYSICAL EXAMS AND IMMUNIZATIONS:**

### **Physical Exams**

Students entering 5<sup>th</sup> grade, as well as students who are new to the District, must have a new Illinois State Physical Examination Form on file at the time of enrollment or registration. (A dental exam is recommended, but not required). Children in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades who participate in inter-scholastic sports must have an **annual** physical examination form on file.

### **Immunizations**

The State of Illinois also requires that each child enrolled in the District show evidence of immunity to several childhood diseases. State law requires the **exact** month, day, and year of the immunization be shown along with physician and parent signatures. Proof of immunization must be presented at the time of enrollment or registration, but in no event later than October 15<sup>th</sup> of the current school year. The school nurse can assist parents in obtaining immunizations by providing referrals, as necessary.

### **Exemptions**

Parents who object to health examinations or immunizations on religious grounds are not required to submit their children to the examinations or immunizations. The parent must present to the District a signed statement detailing the grounds for the objection. If a student is exempted from the health examination or immunization on medical grounds, the examining physical shall provide written documentation regarding the exemption. Similarly, a schedule for immunization shall be presented if the student needs to receive required immunizations after October 15 for medical reasons.

### **Record Maintenance**

The District maintains student health records in the school nurse's office.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS & CODE OF CONDUCT**

Students have a basic right to receive an education in an environment that promotes learning and growth, and is free from unnecessary disruptions and distractions. Assuring students of this right is the responsibility of both the community and school personnel. Moreover, parents have the right to be informed about the educational program, their child's progress, and any serious or recurring problems. The following document outlines further the rights SRS students have as well as our school's Code of Conduct.

### **SUNSET RIDGE SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT**

*District 29 Mission Statement: To cultivate a learning community that engages the hearts and minds of students, one child at a time.*

The goal of the Sunset Ridge School District 29 Code of Conduct is to promote ethical behavior and good citizenship as the foundation of an effective learning community. In practice, this means providing a learning environment that encourages students, staff, and parents to be courteous to others, responsible for their actions, active participants in the learning process, and respectful to all members of our community. The Code of Conduct consists of Student Rights and Behavior Expectations. In addition, the Sunset Ridge Staff works together in teaching the expectations, recognizing positive behaviors, and setting consequences when actions are inappropriate for a learning community.

### **STUDENTS' RIGHTS**

#### **Responsibility**

Students have the right to:

- ❖ an orderly educational environment
- ❖ take ownership and be an active participant of their learning

#### **Respect**

Students have the right to:

- ❖ learn in an educational environment where people and property are respected
- ❖ be treated with courtesy and respect
- ❖ share thoughts and ideas appropriately

#### **Safety**

Students have the right to:

- ❖ feel emotionally safe
- ❖ be physically safe and learn in an environment free from harmful behaviors and influences
- ❖ learn in a secure environment where building access is monitored and safety procedures are in place

## **Honesty**

Students have the right to:

- ❖ learn in an educational environment that fosters an atmosphere of honor, integrity, and trust

## **BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS, STAFF, AND PARENTS**

The Behavior Expectations are based upon the values of Responsibility, Respect, Safety, and Honesty. These are formally taught and modeled through the District's social-emotional learning and character education programs, as well as informally addressed throughout the school day in all classrooms. Within the framework of these core concepts, the Behavior Expectations delineate behavioral expectations and examples. All children attending Sunset Ridge School and all groups and/or agencies using the school facility are expected to comply with the Behavior Expectations. Poor choices will result in appropriate and consistent consequences. These consequences have been developed to help students learn from their experiences in a meaningful manner and make better choices in the future.

A team of Sunset Ridge School District 29 staff and administrators developed the Behavior Expectations with input from parents, students, and other staff members. It is expected that all members of the school community will make themselves familiar with and support these rules. Ongoing professional dialogue to support student learning in the social-emotional domain will continue in order to maintain a strong and safe learning community.

Parents and students are asked to acknowledge their commitment in writing on the Behavior Expectations Acknowledgement form.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

*Responsibility is about being accountable for one's actions. Students are expected to accept responsibility for their behavior and the consequences received. Responsibility promotes citizenship and ethical behavior.*

### **ACCEPTING RULES**

- ❖ Instructions and directions from school personnel will be followed in a timely, respectful manner.
- ❖ Food, gum, snacks, and drinks are only allowed in the classrooms when approved by the teacher.
- ❖ Technology and school tools are to be used wisely and appropriately in accordance with the AUP.

### **TAKING OWNERSHIP FOR ONE'S LEARNING**

- ❖ Students are to arrive at school and to each class on time. Tardiness compromises the learning environment. If tardy, a pass is required.

- ❖ All necessary materials, including completed homework, should be brought to each class.
- ❖ Attention and appropriate participation are expected.
- ❖ Students are expected to self-advocate by making appointments with teachers when help, support, or clarification is needed.
- ❖ Students are expected to obtain proper forms for planned extended absences and communicate with all their teachers regarding the absence and homework expectations. Makeup work must be turned in according to the schedule provided by each teacher.

## **RESPECT**

*Respect is showing high regard for authority, other people, self, and property. Respect is treating others with the understanding that all people have value as human beings.*

### **RESPECT FOR THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

- ❖ Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off, and all personal possessions must be stored in a locker throughout the school day, unless personal items are part of a planned activity.
- ❖ The school grounds, hallways, and classrooms should be clutter-free, with each person cleaning up after himself or herself.
- ❖ Rules for each class and all common areas, both inside and outside of school, will be followed. This includes behavior during assemblies, field trips, sporting events, and co-curricular activities.
- ❖ Students are expected to remain attentive and on task to maximize learning and avoid distracting others.
- ❖ Students must not engage in public and/or inappropriate physical affection.
- ❖ Students must dress appropriately at school and at all school related/sponsored functions. Student dress and appearance must conform to the SRS Dress Code.
- ❖ Students must obtain a staff member's permission to make an audio or video recording while on school grounds and during school-sponsored events.

### **RESPECT FOR OTHERS**

- ❖ Student interactions with fellow students, staff, and community members must reflect courtesy and civility.
- ❖ Students must use appropriate language.

- ❖ Students must keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
- ❖ Party invitations may not be distributed at school and the exterior of lockers may not be decorated. Birthday celebrations may only occur in homeroom/advisory with advance notification.
- ❖ Students must have permission to use one another's possessions or to go into another student's locker or desk. All forms of stealing are unacceptable.
- ❖ Harassment on the basis of race, national origin, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability is not allowed. Bullying, threats, intimidation (either physical, verbal, nonverbal, or via electronic devices) will not be tolerated.
- ❖ Cyber bullying or use of the Internet to intimidate or harass others is not allowed. (See AUP)
- ❖ Fighting will not be tolerated.

## **RESPECT FOR PROPERTY**

- ❖ Students are expected to treat school property and the property of others with care.
- ❖ Students are expected to maintain lockers properly, and 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students are expected to keep them locked.
- ❖ Students are expected to return borrowed materials on time and in the same condition in which they were borrowed.

## **SAFETY**

*Safety is maintaining a physically and emotionally safe environment in our schools and is one of the highest priorities of the District. Students, parents, and staff all play an important role in ensuring the safety of everyone.*

- ❖ Students are expected to follow safety instructions of teachers, staff, crossing guards, and bus drivers. This includes, but is not limited to: bike traffic on bike paths and walking bikes in congested areas; carrying skateboards, roller blades, & scooters on school property; using designated crossing areas and pedestrian paths adjacent to school property; proper use of playground equipment; playing fairly and safely; and, keeping snow on the ground.
- ❖ Students may leave the building during school hours only with a parent or guardian unless other arrangements have been made in writing before dismissal.
- ❖ Students attending evening activities, such as dances, are expected to remain at school for the entirety of the activity unless other arrangements have been communicated to the school.
- ❖ Students may not open outside doors to allow any visitor, parent, other student, delivery person, etc. into the building at any time. All visitors must sign in at the office.

- ❖ Students are not allowed to provoke, dare, or encourage others to partake in unsafe activities or behaviors.
- ❖ Students are expected to behave in a manner that does not interfere with the health and wellbeing of other students.
- ❖ Hallway and stairwell courtesy are expected; walk on the right side, do not stand in groups, and be considerate of others by not running, shoving, or pushing.
- ❖ Students are expected to report unsafe conditions/behaviors to an adult immediately.
- ❖ Students are expected to report to an adult any student who appears to be in emotional distress (e.g., appears upset, crying, etc.) or physical distress (e.g., is injured, has difficulty breathing, or is having an allergic reaction, etc.).
- ❖ Student involvement in gangs or gang-related activities, including the display of gang symbols and paraphernalia, is not allowed.
- ❖ Students must not use, possess, distribute, or sell drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug-related paraphernalia. All required prescription or OTC medications should be registered with the school nurse.
- ❖ Items that are harmful or resemble harmful objects are not allowed at school. Prohibited items include, but are not limited to weapons, look-alike weapons, lighters, and explosive/flammable materials.

## **HONESTY**

*Honesty is characterized by beliefs and actions supporting an atmosphere that fosters honor, integrity, and truthful behaviors.*

- ❖ Students are expected to tell the truth in its entirety at all times. It is expected that students will not fabricate information or intentionally mislead by omission or silence.
- ❖ Students are expected to admit ownership for all actions, intentional or accidental.
- ❖ Students are expected to allow others the opportunity to tell the truth as they know or witnessed it.
- ❖ Students are expected to use their own identity when operating electronic devices and programs.
- ❖ Students must not copy or allow others to copy their class work, assignments, tests, and quizzes. The representation of others' work as their own is considered plagiarism and will not be tolerated.
- ❖ Students must not discuss quiz or exam questions or answers with or near anyone who has not taken that exam.

## **Code of Conduct** **Levels**

Consequences are set to help students learn from their mistakes. It is important that students understand the behavior expectations for a school setting. Parents provide a support network to

team with the school staff when a student's behavioral data indicate a need for more support in order to participate responsibly, respectfully, safely, and honestly in school.

**Level 1** behaviors: Teachers work to address the behavior with the student and, as needed, contact parents or work with professional colleagues to support the student in making more appropriate choices for a learning community. **Consequences at Level 1 are set up between the student and teacher(s) and may include one or more of the following:**

- ✚ provide a re-direction or cue to let a student know a behavior is inappropriate
- ✚ set up time during lunch/recess or before/after school to work with the student & re-teach expectations
- ✚ have the student complete a Reflection Form or a related reflection essay/activity to help the student address his/her behavior, and to use the reflection work as a discussion tool for teacher/student

If a behavior becomes chronic or compromises the learning or safety of anyone, an Office Discipline Referral Form is used to document the behavior, and a plan is put in place to help the student make better choices. All Level 2 & 3 forms are maintained in the School Office. If it is an initial Level 2 behavior, teachers may choose to work with the student to re-teach the expectations and help the student reflect seriously on his/her behavior. Consequences for Levels 2 & 3 infractions also include contact with the parent(s)/guardian(s). Additional consequences may be determined based on meeting the individual needs of the student and/or the severity and frequency of infractions. Detentions are assigned when a student needs additional time working with the Principal or teachers to address behavior concerns. Suspensions are issued when behavior significantly compromises the learning or safety of members of the school community. Egregious actions which violate School Board policies may result in expulsion and/or legal action. Behavior data for each student are confidential.

**INFRACTION LEVELS**

**LEVEL 1**

Tardiness	Disrespectful Behavior
Failure to Follow Directions	Disturbing the Learning Environment
Inappropriate Dress	Inappropriate use of Technology
Unprepared for Class	Inappropriate Physical Contact
Inattentive/Off-Task	Unsafe Behavior
Gum/Candy Consumption	Use of Cell Phones/Electronic Devices w/out Permission

**LEVEL 2**

**Escalated Level 1 Behaviors**

Plus - Cheating/Copying Work

**LEVEL 3**

**Chronic or escalated Level 2 behaviors that pose a threat to the physical, emotional, or academic well-being of self or others are included in this category. Violations of Illinois School Code, Board Policy, or the law may be categorized in this level.**

**In addition to escalated Level 2 behaviors, we include the following for Level 3:**

Physical/Emotional Aggression; Fighting	Theft
Harassment	Disrespect for School Authority
Damaging School Property	Possession or Use of Weapons
Bullying/Cyberbullying	Possession, Distribution, Use of Drugs/Alcohol

**\* LEVELS 1, 2, 3 --- Other Infractions Not Specifically Indicated**

**SUNSET RIDGE SCHOOL  
DRESS CODE - GENERAL**

<b>DO'S</b>	<b>DON'Ts</b>
Dress appropriately for the weather and/or event	Can't wear hoods up inside
Tie shoelaces	No hats inside
Dress for a learning community environment	No inappropriate writing or images on clothing
Costumes only allowed as part of curriculum activities with teacher permission	No sunglasses inside
	No revealing holes in clothing
	No drawing on self or others
	No clothing that distracts others in the learning environment.
	No altering of clothing upon arrival at school.

**DRESS CODE - GIRLS'**

<b>DON'Ts</b>
No spaghetti straps or halter tops
No strapless/bare shoulder/bare midriff
No visible underwear
No SHORT shorts
No lightweight tights with short tops
No inappropriate exposure

**DRESS CODE - BOYS'**

<b>DON'TS</b>
No visible underwear
No inappropriate exposure

**CONSEQUENCE:**

**Change into appropriate clothes first thing in the morning or put on clothing we provide. Students will be expected to keep a change of clothing in their lockers for emergency use as well as to change into if they are not dressed appropriately for school.**

**A Level 2 Office Discipline Referral will be given for documentation purposes if dress continues to be inappropriate for school. Parents are notified any time a Referral is completed.**

**SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING/CHARACTER EDUCATION:** Lessons are developed to help students learn ways to meet the school's expectations. Character education programs are developed through collaboration of parents, faculty, students, administration, and community members. The components of these programs focus on teaching students ways to be Responsible, Respectful, Honest, and Safe. The ultimate goal of social emotional learning/character education programs is to help students develop into ethical, responsible, contributing members of society. The curriculum moves through topics related to various aspects of social relationships, focusing on the impact of behaviors associated with bullying, teasing, and cliques. We recognize that parents are their children's primary teachers in these areas, so continued collaboration without parents is essential to the success of these programs. The components of our SRS SEL/Character Education Programs include:

- ✚ **School Relationships and Overall School Climate:** Children learn by observing adults; therefore, all adults in a school community need to model respectful and virtuous behavior.
- ✚ **Curriculum Integration:** Teachers continually investigate ways to highlight character education throughout the existing curriculum in all subject areas.
- ✚ **Special Activities/Projects;** Projects including Middlefork's quit project, lunches for the homeless, and the district-wide Northwestern Settlement House program increase student awareness of those in need and promote the importance of service to others.
- ✚ **Structured Curriculum for Character Education:** Members of the Sunset Ridge Student Services staff have created units and lessons used in class meetings. These regular sessions are co-led by Student Services and classroom teachers at all grade levels focusing on topics including team-building, friendship, and respecting similarities and differences among ourselves and others.
- ✚ **Communities:** At SRS, students are a part of a "Community" comprised of students from grades 4-8 and led by 3-4 teachers. Communities meet throughout the year to work together on a project or special activity. Middlefork School has a multi-grade program called "Play Pods" to help younger children learn ways to play safely and fairly together.
- ✚ **Parent Involvement and Awareness:** The program emphasizes the importance of collaboration among all members of the school community, with special attention on the interchange between home and school in the implementation of the program at school, and in planning for related parent meetings and activities.

## **ADDITIONAL CONDUCT NOTES:**

**Corporal Punishment:** Corporal punishment is not permitted. Corporal punishment is defined as slapping, paddling, or prolonged maintenance of students in a physically painful positions, or intentional infliction of bodily harm. Corporal punishment does not include incidents where certified personnel must use reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for other students, school personnel or persons, or for the purpose of self defense or the defense of property.

Physical restraint or time out in an isolated room shall not be used. Physical restraint does not include temporary contact with a student. Parents will be notified when physical restraint of their child was necessary.

At no time, shall a student be disciplined solely or in part because of a parent's refusal to place the student on psychotropic or psychostimulant medication. At all times, student discipline shall be related to student misconduct.

**Behavior at School Events/Activities:** School-sponsored field trips, athletic events or other activities are considered an integral part of the total school program. All school rules and student behavior codes apply to student participants and student spectators at these events. Parents similarly are expected to model appropriate behaviors at school events and activities. Parents whose behavior repeatedly is disruptive to the school environment may be limited in their opportunity to participate in and attend school programs.

**Bullying/Harassment:** It is the intent of Sunset Ridge School District No. 29 to provide an educational environment devoid of any bullying and/or harassment. Bullying is defined as any aggressive, negative physical or verbal conduct by a student toward another student who perceives the conduct to be intimidating. Such behavior may include pushing, hitting, threatening, name-calling, and other physical or verbal conduct of a belittling nature.

Harassment is defined as any unwelcome verbal or physical conduct, contact, or communication that is motivated by or related to individual characteristics that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Some examples of harassment include, name calling, derogatory jokes, derogatory gestures, posting or distributing of derogatory pictures, graffiti, and any form of physical aggression such as pushing and hitting.

Any student who feels she/he has been harassed or bullied is strongly encouraged to report this behavior to a teacher or the administration immediately. Teachers who are aware of such behavior through direct observation or report of a student, shall promptly notify the administration. The administration will ensure all complaints are investigated and seek prompt corrective action. Investigations will be confidential to the extent possible. Parents will be immediately notified if their son/daughter has been a victim of or accused of bullying or harassment.

Early intervention efforts available to assist students identified as being at risk for aggressive behaviors include, but may not be limited to: student conferences; parent,

teacher and student conferences; participation in social skills or conflict resolution groups; assessment of eligibility for specialized programming; counseling; referrals to outside professionals. Targets of aggressive behaviors may be offered supportive services as deemed appropriate by the administration.

**Gangs:** Membership in gangs or imitation of gang related behavior is prohibited. This prohibition includes wearing clothing (colors) or manifesting any other type of paraphernalia associated with gang activity.

**Hall Behavior:** During passing time, students are expected to proceed from class to class quietly and courteously so that classes in session are not disturbed. Students are expected to be in their assigned classrooms at the start of each class period. Tardies issued between class periods may result in school detention.

**Inappropriate Language:** Language that is obscene, offensive, insulting, harassing disrespectful, discourteous or degrading towards others is unacceptable.

**Insubordination:** Insubordination involves the willful failure to respond to reasonable requests of school personnel, responding to requests in a disrespectful or derogatory manner, and/or failure to follow through on directions given in matters involving safety concerns.

**Smoking:** Smoking includes the possession, use, or distribution of any legal tobacco product and is not permitted on school district premises, on any mode of school sponsored transportation, or at school sponsored events at any time.

**Substance Abuse:** Substance abuse includes possession, use, or distribution of any controlled or illegal substance including alcohol on school premises, on school buses, or at school-sponsored events or activities. The District strives to maintain a drug free environment, in accordance with State and federal law.

**Substitute Teachers:** When the regular classroom teacher is absent and a substitute teacher is responsible for the class, students are expected to behave courteously and complete assignments as requested.

**Suspension/Expulsion:** Suspension and expulsion are legal actions administered by the Superintendent or his/her designee and/or the Board of Education for violation of the District's discipline code. Parents are provided with written notice of all out of school suspension or proposed expulsions, and should submit any request for reconsideration or appeal to the Superintendent. Student's due process rights when suspended or expelled are explained more fully in the School Board Policy Manual.

**Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities may be suspended for up to ten school days per act of misconduct, provided such suspensions do not constitute a

change in placement and students without disabilities would be subject to discipline for the same behavior. To determine whether a change in placement would occur, the District shall consider the frequency, duration, and nature of prior disciplinary events. Additionally, students with disabilities may be expelled only if the student's IEP Team has completed a manifestation determination review and decided the student's misconduct is unrelated to his or her disability. Educational services must continue to be provided to a student with disabilities after 10 aggregate school days of suspension have been issued within a school year. In addition, a functional assessment of behavior shall be completed or an existing behavior intervention plan shall be reviewed when the student receives his or her 11th notice of suspension. The amount of services to be provided during periods of suspension shall be determined by the school administrator, in consultation with the student's special education teacher. Students who have been expelled, however, shall have an alternate placement timely determined by the IEP Team that will allow the student to continue to progress on his or her educational curriculum and IEP goals in a timely fashion.

**Credit for School Work While Suspended:** Suspension from school will result in a grade loss percentage.

Note: All work and assignments must be made up. All missed tests must be taken on the day of return to class. In the case of an in-school suspension, tests will be taken on the day they are given.

**Theft:** Theft is the taking of another's property without permission. The safe return of a stolen item may be considered as a mitigating factor but, it is not grounds for ignoring that the theft occurred in the first instance.

**Use of Gum, Candy, and Food:** Gum is not allowed in school unless it is for a special activity or an accommodation determined to meet a student's individualized plan. Foods/beverages may only be eaten in the lunchroom or during parties in individual classrooms as permitted by a teacher.

**Vandalism:** Parents and students will be held responsible for damage to school property or property of another individual on school premises. Students and their parents are responsible for making amends by replacing or paying for lost or damaged property, equipment, books, and buildings.

**Wagering:** Wagering occurs when the property of one student is risked for the gain of another, irrespective of the financial value of the property, and is prohibited on District premises, school transportation, or any school sponsored activities.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION GUIDELINES**

**GENDER EQUITY:** It is the policy of the District that its educational and extracurricular programs, activities, services, and benefits will be provided to students without discrimination on the basis of gender, and that no student shall, on the basis of gender, be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage or opportunity. The District does not discriminate on the basis of actual or potential marital or parental status, and no student in the District shall be subjected to sexual intimidation or sexual harassment by any school employee, by other students, or by the effect of any school employee, by other students, or by the effect of any school policy or practice.

**NON-DISCRIMINATION:** Sunset Ridge School District 29 shall treat all persons equally without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or actual or perceived disabilities unrelated to the function to be performed. This commitment relates to employment practices, the education of children, and relations with the community at large.

**Specifically, Sunset Ridge School District 29 shall:**

- Employ and promote individuals solely on the basis of their qualifications and without regard to the characteristics outlined above;
- Examine the curriculum to make sure that it emphasizes positive human relationships; assign and educate each child without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or real or perceived disability unrelated to the function to be performed, recognizing that children may be grouped for special educational purposes in order to meet special educational needs that children may have; and
- Maintain an atmosphere in which all persons can develop attitudes and skills for effective cooperative living, including:
  - respect for the individual regardless of economic status, intellectual ability, race, creed, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age or actual or perceived disabilities;
  - respect for cultural differences;
  - respect for the right of others to seek and maintain their own identities;
  - respect for economic, political and social rights of others.

Complaints of discrimination may be reported in the same manner as complaints of sexual harassment and will be investigated following the same procedures.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

**Prohibition of Sexual Harassment:** The Board of Education has determined that sexual harassment in the educational environment creates an intimidating and hostile learning environment, diminishes the respect and dignity of the school, its faculty, staff, and students, and may interfere with a student's performance. Accordingly, it is the policy of the Board of Education that sexual harassment of students of Sunset Ridge School shall not be tolerated.

**Prohibited Conduct:** Sexual harassment may be committed by students, teachers or other District personnel or agents of the District, and generally is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's education;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis of educational decisions affecting such individual's education; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effects of substantially interfering with an individual's educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

Sexual harassment can occur inside or outside of the classroom, e.g., lunchroom, field trip, school bus, or any school sponsored off-premises activities.

**Complaint Process:** Students who are victims of conduct that is or may be sexual harassment are encouraged to immediately notify the Principal or the Assistant Superintendent for investigation. Students also may report the conduct to any teacher or employee. It is the responsibility of the faculty member or employee to immediately report the incident(s) to the Principal or Assistant Superintendent for investigation. If the Principal or Assistant Superintendent is alleged to have committed the act(s), the reports may be made directly to the Superintendent. If the Superintendent is alleged to have committed the act(s), reports may be made directly to the Assistant Superintendent or the President of the School Board. Students who witness any conduct that may be deemed sexual harassment are encouraged to immediately notify the School District in the same manner. Students may choose to report to a person of the student's same sex.

**Written Report:** Students are strongly encouraged to verbally report allegations of sexual harassment immediately, and/or to provide a written report specifying the allegations. The Investigator shall document verbal reports, and the student will be asked to verify the allegations and sign the statement. The written complaint must be submitted to the Investigator within a reasonable time after the incident. The identity of the parties and the events complained of shall remain confidential to the extent feasible. The Superintendent may ask that the District's legal counsel assist in the investigation at the request of the Investigator.

**Reporting Findings/Recommendations:** The Investigator shall report his/her findings and recommendations for action in writing to the Superintendent, who shall apprise the Board. In the event the Superintendent is the alleged harasser, the findings and recommendations shall be made directly to the Board President. When there is sufficient evidence of sexual harassment the Superintendent or his/her designee shall take appropriate action. Such action may include a warning, suspension, recommendation for expulsion, and/or other disciplinary action against the harasser and arrangement for the provision of supportive school services to the victim or referral to

appropriate outside agencies. If the harasser is a District employee, termination may be considered along with other appropriate disciplinary consequences. In the event the recommendation is for expulsion or for suspension beyond ten (10) days, the Board of Education shall take appropriate action in accordance with the School Code.

**False Reports/Retaliation Prohibited:** The reporting of sexual harassment is a serious allegation. Students knowingly reporting false allegations of sexual harassment will be subject to discipline including warning, suspension, recommendation for expulsion or other disciplinary actions as deemed warranted. Good faith reports of sexual harassment, however, shall not be subject to discipline even if the investigation leads to a conclusion that sexual harassment has not occurred.

Retaliation by staff or students against individuals reporting sexual harassment shall not be tolerated. Individuals engaging in retaliation shall be disciplined in accordance with the discipline policies and procedures relevant to that individual.

## ACADEMIC POLICIES

### **DISHONESTY**

**Academic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty occurs when a student obtains or assists others in obtaining credit for work which is not his/her own. Students must conduct themselves according to the highest standard of academic integrity and must follow rules prohibiting dishonest academic behavior or be subject to discipline. Students who are accused of academic dishonesty, including cheating or plagiarism shall also have their parents notified of the charge. Examples of academic dishonesty may include, but not be limited to the following:

- communicating with another student during an examination or quiz;
- copying material during an examination or quiz;
- allowing a student to copy one's examination or quiz;
- using unauthorized notes or devices;
- submitting falsified information for grading purposes;
- obtaining a copy of and/or information about an examination or quiz without the knowledge and consent of the teacher;
- submitting a paper or project which is not the student's work;
- copying another person's assignments;
- allowing another student to copy one's assignment;
- removing examinations or parts of examinations without the knowledge and consent of the teacher;
- impersonating a student to assist the student academically;
- stealing or accepting stolen copies of tests or answer keys;
- changing answers and seeking credit on an assignment or examination after the work has been graded and returned;
- altering a teacher's grade book;
- using computers or programmable calculators in violation of teacher guidelines; or
- using professional help such as a tutor or expert in violation of teacher guidelines.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism arises most often when doing research and writing a paper or report. Whenever information written by another person is used, credit must be given to that individual. Plagiarism can be word for word copying or paraphrasing without giving appropriate credit. Examples of plagiarism include, but may not be limited to, the following;

- failing to cite with quotation marks the written words or symbols of another author;
- failing to footnote the author and sources of materials used in a composition;
- failing to cite research materials in a bibliography;
- failing to name a person quoted in an oral report;
- failing to cite an author whose works are paraphrased or summarized; and/or
- presenting another person's creative work of ideas as one's own.

**Animals at School:** Animals may be brought into the classroom or Learning Center for educational purposes; however, **prior permission** from the child’s teacher is required. Individuals with disabilities who rely on animals for vision or hearing assistance also shall be allowed in the building. Students relying on such animals shall have an appropriate 504 plan or IEP verifying the need for the use of the animal during the school day.

**Curriculum:** If parents have questions about the curriculum, they should contact their child’s teacher(s). Additional information is available by contacting the principal or superintendent.

**Homework Policies:** Sunset Ridge School District believes that homework is an integral part of the educational program, extending learning beyond the classroom. These homework guidelines apply to grades four through eight, and are based on general principles specific to each grade level. We believe in the benefits of purposeful, carefully constructed homework assignments. Overall, we want to build a student’s capacity to become independent thinkers, engaged learners, and to understand that learning is a lifelong process. It continues to be our mission to improve the quality, purpose, and pertinence of assignments that directly relate to classroom lessons.

We value the discipline that comes when we work hard at something in order to master a skill or expand our knowledge about a subject. Dr. Urban, a character education specialist, provides this idea that helps us think about the opportunities homework provides to our young learners: the difficult question has already been answered – homework has value because it develops students who become confident in their emerging capability, responsibility, and reliability. Homework helps develop students of whom parents and teachers can be justifiably proud.

In the case of an excused student absence, the school will provide appropriate materials for the child to complete the assignments at home. Parents should follow these procedures when making a request for homework assignments:

- Notify the school office of the request for homework assignments when reporting your child’s absence.
- Pick up assignments from the carousel in the main lobby after 3:30 p.m.
- Leave a voicemail message for the teacher if you wish to communicate with her/him.
- Alternatively, you or your child may e-mail the teacher to set up time before or after school for extra help, if needed.

The staff is also sensitive to the occurrence of special events and holidays that may impact a student’s ability to complete homework on a given day. For those circumstances, we encourage a strong home-school dialogue that supports both individual circumstances and the overall school mission.

**TYPE, PURPOSE AND AMOUNT:** There are many types of and purposes for homework; they all contribute to the holistic process of learning. Students and parents should expect the amount of homework to increase with the grade level, with a maximum daily average of up to

140 minutes per night by eighth grade. It is acknowledged that there will be times when exceptions need to be made, or homework assignments need to be differentiated, as appropriate for individual students. If your child is not able to do his/her work with relative independence, contact your child's teacher(s). Parents do play an important role in encouraging their children to do their very best on their work, but ultimately, homework is the responsibility of the student.

- 1) **Practice homework** helps students on the road to mastery, sharpens skills, and promotes responsibility.
- 2) **Extension homework** helps teachers gauge a student's mastery of a particular topic, and allows students to solidify and apply what they have learned.
- 3) **Integrative homework** asks students to convey their emerging skill level with a variety of projects at the culmination of a unit; these projects assess a student's depth of knowledge.
- 4) **Preparation homework** is designed to motivate or prepare students for upcoming curricular topics that may require them to gather information from outside resources.

The Homework Expectation Chart below is a general guide for the amount of time the average student may spend on homework on an average day. The actual amount of time will vary depending on many factors.

#### HOMEWORK EXPECTATION CHART

4 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE*	5 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE*	6 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE*	7 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE*	8 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE*
30-60 min/day	40-70 min/day	60-90 min/day	90-120 min/day	90-140 min/day
* Band/orchestra students are expected to maintain a practice log with at least 10 minutes per day / six days per week.				
4 <sup>th</sup> - Independent reading is assigned every night, accompanied by a weekly reading log. No weekend homework is given.				
5 <sup>th</sup> - Math and independent reading are assigned every night. Spelling homework is assigned 3-4 nights per week.				
6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> - Rubrics with due dates are given. It is expected that independent reading will be done every night. Workload adjustments are made on an as-needed basis. Homework may be assigned over the weekend.				

**COMMUNICATION:** Communication regarding homework is a dynamic process that can be initiated by and among students, parents and teachers. Self-advocacy is encouraged for all assignments including when an absence occurs. If homework is taking an inordinate amount of time, or a personal situation hampers assignment completion, parents are encouraged to contact the teacher. Several vehicles are in place for home-school communication:

- Open House - Parents get information that parallels class explanations to students
  - Philosophy and expectations regarding homework
  - Preferred methods for communicating concerns and anticipated response time

- Procedures for obtaining before and after school help
- The daily use of the student assignment notebook
- Daily homework written on white boards in classrooms, student services' rooms, and/or hallways
- Test/project alerts – optional for individual teachers/subjects – these might include test objectives and a parent signature portion
- Teacher or grade level web pages and grade level homework calendars

## **Technology**

The purpose of the Sunset Ridge School District 29 Technology System is to advance and promote educational opportunities, innovation and excellence and provide students access to a worldwide array of academic resources consistent with the goals of our District. These resources are being provided to enrich educational activities as well as improve communications between the District and community.

The District 29 Technology System consists of but is not limited to network servers, services and systems, email, computers, tablets, and/or mobile devices, software and other applications, web-based resources, hardware, printers, scanners, Promethean boards and other digital, video and handheld devices not yet adopted or implemented. It is required that all network systems and resources be used for school-related activities only in a responsible, efficient, ethical and legal manner. The rules and conditions of this AUP apply to all above stated District technology resources wherever and whenever they are being accessed, as well as personal devices being used in the school environment.

The District 29 Technology System was established to comprise part of the school curriculum, and is intended by the Board of Education to function in support of the curriculum and of students' mastery of the curriculum. The System does not constitute a public forum. The District reserves and retains the right to regulate the content of and links to the System. The District also has the right to and does monitor use of its System. Except as provided by federal and state statutes protecting the confidentiality of students' education records, no user of the System has an expectation of privacy in connection with such use.

With respect to any of its computers, tablets, mobile or handheld devices with Internet access, the District will use technology protection measures in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) to protect minors and all users against access through such computers to visual depictions that are obscene, constitute child pornography or are otherwise harmful to minors.

The Board of Education further recognizes that the effective operation of the System depends upon the existence and enforcement of guidelines rules for the efficient, ethical and legal use of its resources. The Administration will adopt and enforce rules that limit the acceptable and ethical use of the System to educational purposes. Such rules shall be distributed to District employees, students and other members of the District 29 community who are afforded access to the system.

Violation of the AUP Rules shall be subject to consequences including but not limited to loss of system access privileges and referral to law enforcement authorities or other legal action as deemed appropriate.

The rules shall, among other points, address:

1. Expectations for responsible use of the District Technology System as well as personal devices used in the educational environment;
2. Measures designed to restrict access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and Web;
3. The safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, group chats, and other forms of digital communication resources and devices;
4. Unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities by minors and other users online;
5. Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors or other persons;
6. Consequences for violation of rules.

**We have a one-to-one laptop program.** Students from grades 4-8 have access to their laptop throughout the academic school day. Students in 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade have the option to take their laptops home. Student laptops and their components are checked quarterly. If property is lost or damaged, fees are assessed. Students are expected to take care of their laptop, the charger, and their laptop case.

**For more information regarding the Student AUP Rules and Agreement, and the School Laptop Guidelines, please refer to the Sunset Ridge Laptop Program posted on the Sunset Ridge School Website. <http://www.sunsetridge29.net/laptops>**

**Learning Center:** The Learning Center provides an atmosphere for the growth of each student. The mission of the Sunset Ridge Learning Center is to ensure that all SRS students become effective users of ideas and information so that they become independent, lifelong learners and to foster in all students a love of reading and literature. The program focuses on helping students acquire literacy skills, information literacy skills, technology skills, and critical thinking skills. Students utilize the Learning Center for skill instruction, individual or small group research, enrichment programs, book selection, and leisure reading. The Learning Center also serves as a forum for discussions and presentations.

All Learning Center resources, including computer usage, are available before and after school. Students may enter the Learning Center no earlier than 8 a.m. and must arrive before 8:10 a.m. After school the Learning Center is open until 4:00 p.m.

**Physical Education:** All students at Sunset Ridge participate in physical education classes daily unless excused by a physician or due to a decision of the IEP team based upon the student's disability. Students are expected to wear a Sunset Ridge uniform consisting of a SRS athletic jersey top, white socks and athletic footwear. Students in grades 6-8 also change into

gym shorts. Uniforms may be purchased from Soccer & More, Northfield. If purchase of the uniform would cause an undue financial hardship, please contact the Superintendent.

**School District Report Card:** The District's Report Card is posted annually on its website and can be accessed at <http://www.sunsetridge29.net/Page/51>. The Report Card describes the performance of District students within the State, by attendance center, and reflects the District's use of financial resources. Parents may request a printed copy of the Report Card by contacting the District office at (847) 881-9400 or by contacting the Regional Office of Education.

## STUDENT SERVICES

**Student Services:** The Student Services Department develops and administers all special services offered by District 29. A student's eligibility for assistance through the Student Services Department is determined by an evaluation of his/her needs with input from parents, teachers, administrators and the student. According to the District's Response to Intervention (RtI) Service Delivery Model, information regarding the student's need for assistance is gathered using a variety of means and procedures which may include, but not limited to, the following types of assessment: consultation with parents, classroom observation, social developmental history, vision and hearing screening, an evaluation by the school psychologist, academic and achievement assessment by teachers. All information obtained in this process will be reviewed by a team whose participants may include: the student, parents, teachers and administration. This team may recommend the development of several school-based assistance plans including: an Intervention Plan, an Individual Educational Plan, a 504 Plan and/or a Program Plan to address areas of strength and weakness within the school setting. Student Services may include the following educational personnel:

**Learning Disability/Behavior Disability Teachers:** LD/BD teachers, commonly known as student services teachers, serve students who have significant difficulties in the areas of learning, behavior and/or social-emotional development. Instruction is provided to meet remedial and compensatory needs both within and outside of the classroom in one-to-one or small-group settings. Students receiving help may have been diagnosed according to state and federal law through the case study evaluation process resulting in development of an Individual Education Plan.

**Speech/Language Pathologist:** The Speech/Language pathologist works with students who demonstrate impairments in the areas of articulation, oral motor, language, and/or fluency that interfere with their education. The SLP works closely with both general education teachers and student services teachers to promote the development of effective instruction, and improve student speech and language skills.

**Occupational Therapist/Physical Therapist:** District 29 contracts occupational and physical therapy services through Northern Suburban Special Education District on an as-needed basis. Therapists provide both direct and consultative services to students evaluated through the NSED process and diagnosed with motor and/or sensory impairments.

**English as a Second Language Program (ESL) Teacher:** The ESL teacher offers services to students whose first language is other than English. These services provide support to help the student in understanding and completing learning objectives for academic areas within the schools.

**Gifted/Enrichment Teachers:** The gifted/enrichment teachers provide support for students in their areas of strength. A student's needs for gifted/enrichment programming may be met

through any or all of the following types of support: differentiation of curriculum in the classroom, special projects in the classroom, small group and/or one-to-one instruction out of the classroom. Topics for out-of-the-classroom support are usually designed to extend areas of study in the regular grade-level curricula. Gifted/enrichment instruction is implemented in a fluid manner with students rotating in and out of groups and one-to-one work both in and out of the classroom, based on the match between an area of study in the classroom and a student's particular areas of strength. Staff involved in these types of instruction include: all classroom teachers, the gifted resource teacher, and the enrichment projects teacher.

**School Psychologist:** The school psychologist serves both Middlefork and Sunset Ridge schools. Primary responsibilities fall within three broad categories: consultation with staff and parents, individual and group counseling, and assessment of academic, behavioral and behavioral difficulties. The school psychologist works collaboratively with school staff to define problems and design interventions within the District's Flexible Service Delivery Model. The school psychologist may function as the problem solving team facilitator structuring and guiding meetings.

**Social Worker:** The social worker is available for students and parents in the District on an as-needed basis. These include: individual and group counseling, problem-solving, consultation with parents, and staff, and crisis intervention. The social worker facilitates parent education and/or networking meetings and serves as a liaison for families wishing to access community resources. The social worker is available to students and families in times of crisis.

**Testing:** In addition to regular classroom testing, students may experience other types of formal testing such as the Illinois Standards Achievement Tests (ISAT) and **Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)**. Eighth graders must also take the annual placement tests for New Trier or the high school they will attend in the fall.

Over the years, Sunset Ridge students have performed very well on these formal assessments. We feel that testing alone does not determine intellectual growth or achievement, however, we encourage all students to do their very best as these results may be factored into determining placements for classes and levels in high school and impact whether the schools have made adequate yearly progress under the No Child Left Behind Act.

## STUDENT RECORDS AND REPORTING

**Reporting System:** Report cards are issued at the end of each quarter; however, fourth grade students receive non-graded reports for the first two quarters. Parents and students at the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade levels have access to view grades on-line by using our grading portal. Teachers and parents remain in contact if there is a sudden change in grades in order to work together to help students meet their academic goals. In addition to report cards, Parent/Teacher Conferences are held in November and in February.

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's progress throughout the year, please do not hesitate to call your child's teacher or advisor as we encourage frequent communication.

**Student Records:** All school records, including permanent and temporary records, shall be available for inspection and duplication according to the provisions of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, the Illinois School Student Records Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Act, the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Confidentiality Act, and all other laws protecting the confidentiality of information that may be contained in the student's school records.

**Permanent Record:** Includes student's and parents' names and addresses, birth date and place, and gender of student; academic transcript (grades, class, graduation date, grade level achieved); attendance records, health record, and record of release of permanent record information.

**Temporary Record:** Includes a record of release of temporary record information and all information not required in the student's permanent record. The District shall maintain the student's temporary record during the period of usefulness to the school and the student, but in no case longer than five years after the student has transferred, graduated or permanently withdrawn from the District. The District may maintain anonymous information indefinitely for authorized research and planning.

**Directory Information:** Includes parents' names and addresses, the student's name, address, gender, grade level, birth date and place; academic awards and degrees; and period of attendance in the school. Directory information may be released to the general public, unless a parent requests in writing that any or all such information not be released. Until such written notification is received from the parent requesting the directory information not be released, the school has the authority to release such information to the general public.

**Parent Rights:** Parents may copy any school record which is proposed to be destroyed, transferred or deleted. Student records are reviewed for deletion of unnecessary information when a student changes attendance centers, upon graduation or transfer, or permanent

withdrawal from school. Parents will be notified of a proposed destruction or transfer schedule with the right to request copies of such records.

No person may condition the granting or withholding of any right, privilege or benefit or make as a condition of employment, credit or insurance the securing by any individual of any information from a student's temporary record when such individual may obtain the information through exercise of any right provided by the regulations under the Student Records Act.

Parents have a right to inspect, challenge, and copy the information contained in a student record at any time and prior to transfer or destruction of the record.

A parent's request to review records must be made in writing to the Principal. The review shall occur within three school days during normal business hours and will be in the presence of the Records Custodian or designee.

Parents have a right to challenge records (exclusive of grades) on the basis of accuracy, relevance, or propriety. A written request stating the material to be challenged shall be filed with the Principal and an information conference held within fifteen school days after receipt of the same. If the challenge is not resolved thereby, a hearing officer will be appointed who shall conduct a hearing within the time and place and in accordance with the provisions of the appropriate regulations. A written decision shall be issued and either party may challenge the same by appealing the decision to the Superintendent of our Educational Service Region who shall make a decision on the appeal.

Parents have a right to control access and release of student records, except for persons in the school sector having a current demonstrable educational or administrative interest in the student and the records are in furtherance of such interest, for research and planning under certain circumstances, and/or pursuant to a court order. Release to others requires specific parental approval following notification from the school to the parent of the proposed release. The parent may at any time authorize inspection of the records by a third party and release of information in records to a third party. Release forms are available in the school office. In addition, information in the student record may be released in an emergency to protect the health and safety of the student or other persons in accordance with controlling regulations.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this Student Records Policy, please contact the Principal.

**Upon graduation, school records are forwarded to the high school.**

## **FINAL A-Z School Procedures and Policies**

**Asbestos Hazard:** The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires our school to undergo a three-year inspection for all forms of asbestos containing building materials. In addition, the law requires that the District conduct surveillance to determine “any change of condition” of asbestos containing material at six-month intervals. As a result of the inspection and new regulations, certain parts of the school building have been found to contain minor quantities of asbestos which the District has been advised present a low risk to students and staff and can be best, and safely, managed in place.

A management plan identifies all asbestos material in the school including a strategy for managing the material. The plan is available for public review by contacting the District’s Director of Business and Finance.

**Bicycles, Scooters, Longboards, Skateboards, Skates, Etc.:** In conjunction with the Northfield Police Department and the PTO, a detailed on bicycle safety is taught to all third and fourth graders during physical education classes. Parents please encourage your child to adhere to the rules of bicycle safety.

Bicycles are to be placed in the racks provided and once students arrive at school, bicycles should be walked to the rack area. It is strongly recommended that students lock their bike to the rack. Inline skates are to be removed before entering the building. Scooters, longboards/skateboards, and skates may not be used on school property. Storage of these items needs to be arranged with staff. Students may not put any of these items in their regular lockers as they cause damage to the metal and use up too much space. The school assumes no responsibility for your personal property that may be lost, stolen, or damaged.

**Communication:** When concerns arise, parents should make every effort to communicate them to their child’s teacher. At the junior high level, we encourage your child to consult his/her advisor. Every effort will be made to find fair and equitable solutions to all problems.

**Crossing Guard:** A crossing guard is located at the corner of Sunset Ridge and Willow Road and Wagner and Willow Road during the following school hours:

7:50 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

3:10 p.m. - 3:40 p.m.

**All students must cross these streets only at these corners.**

**Detention:** Reasonable detention at the close of the school day may be used, as long as a teacher considers factors such as transportation, safety of walking routes, weather and any other extenuating circumstances.

The age of the pupil will be considered in determining the length of time he/she may be detained after school. The minimum detention will be ten minutes. If a student is detained more than twenty minutes after the normal closing, an effort will be made to notify the parent/guardian.

**Drop-off Cubicle Area:** Cubicles are located outside the Learning Center for students to pick up forgotten items such as lunches, athletic uniforms, instruments, etc.

**Invitations:** Party invitations are not to be distributed at school as this can lead to hurt feelings and distract classroom activities.

**Limitations on Accepting Gifts:** In accordance with State law, District employees and Board members are prohibited from accepting a gift that he or she has reason to believe is offered in an effort to influence his or her official position or employment. This ban applies to spouses of, and immediate family members living with, a Board member or employee. The following are examples of **acceptable** gifts:

- gifts from relatives or personal friends;
- gifts from an employee or Board member to an employee or Board member;
- gifts from students to teachers that have nominal value;
- Food, lodging transportation, or other benefits;
  - resulting from outside business or employment activities, or
  - customarily provided by a prospective employer;
- information or communication materials, such as books, articles, periodicals, audio tapes or videotapes;
- training (including food and refreshments);
- personal hospitality;
- free attendance at a widely attended forum, dinner, reception or similar event if attendance is related to the individual's office or job;
- commemorative items;
- golf or tennis, food or refreshments of nominal value, and catered food or refreshments;
- meals or beverages consumed on the premises from which they were purchased; and
- items of nominal value (such as T-shirts, mugs, candy, crafts or greeting cards).

The State Gift Ban Act has capped the value of nominal items to \$100 for the calendar year, from any one person.

Anyone believing that this policy is or was violated is encouraged to file a complaint with the Legislative Ethics Commission. The Commission will follow the procedures for handling complaints given in the State Gift Ban Act.

**Lost and Found:** Lost and Found boxes are located outside the physical education office. Parent and students are encouraged to check this area as soon as they note an item is missing. Periodically, lost and found articles are displayed on a table in the hall, giving everyone an opportunity to claim their lost items. **Valuable articles** are filed with the school secretary. At the end of each quarter, any unclaimed items will be donated to a worthy cause.

**Lunch Program:** The PTO sponsors a hot lunch program at both schools. Milk and other beverages are available for children who bring lunch from home. Menus are posted in each homeroom, the lunchroom, and are published in the monthly PTO Bulletin. Lunches can be purchased with cash or with an accu-scan card that is available through the PTO.

At both schools, **free** and **reduced-price** lunches are available to those children whose families qualify under the guidelines established for the National School Lunch Program. These arrangements can be made with the Superintendent and are strictly confidential. Forms are included annually in the back-to-school mailing. If you have any questions regarding the lunch program, please contact the Superintendent.

**Cafeteria Rules:**

- Show respect for the cafeteria space and each other, it is a mark of your maturity.
- Pay for every item you take from any food or beverage stations.
- Respect cafeteria supervisors and parent volunteers by following directions as given.
- Clean up your leftovers. Discard cartons and trash in appropriate waste bins.
- Return trays and silverware to the dishwasher window.
- No shouting or yelling in the lunchroom.
- No food is to leave the cafeteria or to go outdoors.
- Be prepared to go outside daily.
- Get a pass from a teacher if you are working in a classroom area during recess and/or lunch. (**NOTE:** Grades 7 & 8 have space available daily during their recess block to do homework, work quietly with others on a group project, or read).
- Stay in the designated playground area during recess. Going on to private property is trespassing.
- Misuse of another student's accu-scan card will not be tolerated.

**Non-Custodial Parents:** Unless prohibited by a court order, the school district will, upon the request of either parent of a student whose parents are separated or divorced, provide the requesting parent with copies of any documents relating to: the student's academic progress; the student's emotional and/or physical health; notices of school-initiated parent-teacher conferences; notices of major school-sponsored events which involve student-parent interaction; and the school calendar.

In the event that the right of one parent to visit or have other contact with a child has been prohibited by court order, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school Principal with a copy of the court order. This is required to provide school personnel with a legal basis for restricting such contacts in the school setting. If a court order has expired, and another order prohibiting contact has been entered, the custodial parent should provide the Principal with a copy of that order.

**Phone Calls:** A phone is available in the nurse's office. Students must have a pass to use a telephone during school hours. Students are allowed to use the office phone only with permission. Cell phones may not be used during school hours, except for emergencies, with permission. Use of cell phones is permitted before and after school.

**School Hours:** School hours are 8:24 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (Grades 6-8) with the entrance bell ringing at 8:18 a.m. and 8:40 a.m.-3:20 p.m. (Grades 4-5) with the entrance bell ringing at 8:35 a.m. Students are welcome before and after school; however, they must have set up a

plan with a teacher. Unless arrangements have been made, all students should be out of the building by 3:45 p.m. Students are allowed in the learning center until 4:00 p.m.

**Early Arrival Plan:** Students who are coming to school early for a prearranged time with a teacher to receive academic support or to participate in an extracurricular program or music lesson are to go directly to the designated area. The teacher and/or sponsor must be present.

**During rain or extreme weather conditions,** students will be allowed in before the bell at the discretion of the administration and morning supervisors and will be supervised by a designated staff member or administrator.

**Search and Seizure:** School authorities (certified employees and school administrators) may search a student and/or his or her personal effects (purses, wallets, backpacks, book bags, lunch boxes, etc.) when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will produce evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or District rules. School authorities are authorized to conduct area-wide inspections of school property including but not limited to student lockers and desks without notice to or consent of the student and without a search warrant.

**Search Procedures:** School searches will be conducted in a manner which is reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student. Searches will be conducted outside the view of others when feasible, including students; in the presence of a school administrator or adult witness; and by a certified employee or administrator of the same sex.

**Search Results:** If a search produces evidence that the student had violated or is violating the law or District rules, such evidence may be seized and impounded by school officials and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, such evidence may be transferred to law enforcement officials.

**Reporting requirements: following a search, the school authority that conducted the search will make a written report.** The written report will be submitted to the Principal/Superintendent.

**Parental Notice:** Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of a student searched in accordance with District policy will be notified of the search as soon as possible and of any referral to law enforcement.

**Lockers and Desks:** Lockers and desks are owned and maintained by the District. The student is granted a limited use of a locker and desk, subject to the right of the school administration to have access thereto at any time:

- for cleaning the lockers or desks;
- when, in the opinion of the school administration, a clear danger to health or safety exists; or
- when the school administration has reason to believe that the locker or desk contains materials which a student would not be legally entitled to have in his/her possession or which violates this policy.

**Appropriate Items for Storage:** The only items that may be placed in a locker or desk are articles of clothing, school books or supplies relating to school use, lunches, and personal items which the student is legally entitled to have in his/her possession.

**Safety Precautions:** All sixth, seventh and eighth grade students are assigned lockers with locks. **Lockers are to remain locked when not in use.** Gym lockers are assigned by the physical education teachers and are equipped with locks for all children in grades four through eight. The District will not accept responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged items stored in an unlocked locker.

**Standards for Extra-Curricular Activities:** We at Sunset Ridge are proud of our school and care about our students. Everyone works to provide students with excellent educational opportunities by putting time and thought into each learning experience. It is important that the students spend time and effort taking advantage of the educational opportunities provided by the school. This is the student's primary responsibility. If a student is having difficulty succeeding in school, we should work as a team to solve the problem. The student must be free to work alone or with a member of the school staff so that sufficient time can be devoted to improving the student's skills. Participating in extra-curricular activities often takes a significant amount of time during and after school. Therefore, the student who is having difficulty should stop participating in extra-curricular activities for a period of time, giving everyone the opportunity to focus on and solve the problem.

Extra-Curricular activities are very important in a student's personal growth and development. Participation in these activities is a privilege, not a right. Students who are succeeding academically and are honoring the behavior guidelines outlined in the SRS Code of Conduct have earned that privilege. We will work to help every student experience success in school because it promotes happiness and self-confidence.

**Standards:** There are two types of standards for all students: academic and behavioral.

A. Academic: **Students participating in extra-curricular activities must be passing all subjects.**

1. A grade check will be taken four times per quarter
2. Any student receiving a failing grade will be suspended from the activity until the next grade check. A student suspended from an activity will meet with his/her teacher/advisor to devise a plan for remediation.
3. The advisor will check on the progress of his/her advisee.

B. Behavioral: **Students are expected to follow the SRS Code of Conduct Expectations**

1. Any student found in serious violation of the philosophy will be suspended from the activity for a length of time deemed appropriate by the administration.
2. A student suspended for such violation will meet with his/her teacher/advisor to develop a plan for remediation.

**Activities:** The activities included under this plan are after-school athletics, cheerleading, musical productions, Student Council, and any other activity involving a lengthy time commitment.

**Student Dress:** The establishment of acceptable dress standards for school is a parental responsibility. We provide guidelines for appropriate dress for school in our Code of Conduct. We encourage all students to wear clothes, which will not disrupt or diminish the learning environment. Situations involving inappropriate clothing will be resolved on an individual basis. It is the hope and intent of this policy that appropriate dress will enhance the working environment for students and teachers and aid the overall aesthetic appeal of our school. The following is a brief list of items that illustrate our current dress code guidelines:

- Clothing must not bring undue attention to the individual and must not disrupt the educational environment (e.g. clothing that is tight fitting);
- Clothing must not display words or images that may be judged to be offensive, obscene, derogatory, symbolic of gangs, or advertisements for tobacco, alcohol or other illicit drugs or activities; and
- Clothing must not be revealing. This would include but is not limited to bare midriffs, low-cut or see-through tops, short shorts or micro miniskirts, bare backs, spaghetti straps, muscle shirts or any other clothing that exposes undergarments.

The above guidelines apply to both males and females. If, in the judgment of the Sunset Ridge staff, a student's dress is deemed inappropriate, distracting, or disruptive to the educational environment, the student will be required to change the clothing in question before attending classes, and his or her parents will be notified.

**Student Safety:** The District will take all appropriate measures to assure student safety including providing safety education to students and providing medical care for students in case of illness or accident. Teachers will instruct students not to accept gifts or car rides from strangers. Students will be instructed to immediately report any suspicious strangers to their teachers, parents/guardians and/or police.

District supervision of students does not extend to places or times when they are travelling to or from school except in District authorized and provided transportation, nor while they are in the school building engaged in activities sponsored by agencies other than the District. The District reserves the right, however, to discipline students for behavior off school grounds and outside of school-sponsored activities which significantly interferes with the functioning of the school district. We strongly encourage parents/guardians to discuss safety measures with their children.

**Transportation:** There is no bus service for transporting Sunset Ridge students to and from school unless such transportation is necessary to meet the needs of a student with disabilities, as determined by the IEP team. Buses are provided for field trips and after-school athletic

activities. Pupils are encouraged to walk and ride their bicycles in good weather. Car pools are also encouraged and can be arranged through the PTO's Health and Safety Chairperson. (See the PTO School Directory for the current name and phone number.)

When picking up or dropping off students, please assist us in creating an atmosphere of safety by adhering to the following:

- ❖ Have children enter school only through the designated grade-level entrances;
- ❖ Do not drop off students in the areas indicated as "No Parking or Stopping Zones"; and
- ❖ Remind your children to use the safety walkways.
- ❖ **DO NOT STOP IN THE DRIVEWAY AREA**

**Visitor Procedures:** We welcome and encourage visits to Sunset Ridge School. The following suggestions are provided:

- ❖ The teacher must be notified in advance of the day and time you wish to visit;
- ❖ All visitors must sign in at the Main Office, obtain a Visitor's Pass and sign out upon departure;
- ❖ We discourage students from bringing friends to class; however, in certain circumstances such visits are permitted with prior permission from the Principal or an administrative designee, at least **two** days in advance of such a visit.

### **School Activities and Organizations**

**After-School Athletics:** Numerous after-school programs are offered to students at Sunset Ridge School. The sixth, seventh and eighth grade programs include field hockey, soccer, track, volleyball, and basketball. Spirit Squad is available if there is sufficient interest. The Northfield Park District sponsors other athletic programs.

Students involved in any after-school activities must take their books, coats and other necessities to their activity, since the classroom area may be locked after 3:30 p.m.

**Awards:** Year-end assemblies are held to present Achievement Awards, Sports Awards, and Fine Arts Awards. "Soar with the Eagles" Awards are presented weekly for outstanding service, effort or achievement.

**Academic/Athletic Contests:** Sunset Ridge School participates in selected local, regional or national contests, only on authorization of the Board of Education and/or the Superintendent of Schools. Individuals may participate on their own. If an individual participates, he/she does not represent the District or the School.

**Dances:** The Student Council sponsors a series of dances for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. Listed below are rules that we will enforce to make each dance a safe and enjoyable experience.

- All students are to be brought to the dance and picked up by a parent.
- No students are allowed to come on bicycle or any other means of transportation by themselves. All dances will be from **7:00 - 9:00 p.m.**

- All students **must be picked up by 9:15 p.m.**
- Once a student enters the dance he/she is not allowed to go outside for any reason. Students leaving the building before the end of the dance will have their parents notified immediately.
- Any student absent from school on the day of a dance is not allowed to attend the dance.
- Any student desiring to bring a guest to the dance must provide name, address and phone number of the guest's parent **at least two days prior** to the dance. This must be cleared with the Principal or a designee.
- Violation of any of these rules will result in being excluded from the next Student Council sponsored dance.

**Field Trips:** Throughout the school years opportunities are presented for enrichment excursions away from the school campus. Permission forms are sent home before trips to provide parents with specific details.

**Fundraising:** A limited number of solicitations by community organizations may be authorized in order to educate students about the role of social agencies in the community and to develop an appreciation for community services.

In the conduct of the campaign for funds or goods, no form of competition among individuals, classes or schools shall be encouraged. No quota shall be set for students and all contributions will be strictly on a voluntary basis. In addition, no agency shall be allowed to solicit funds or other services from students unless approved by the Superintendent and/or the Board of Education.

**Hourglass:** The Hourglass is the school yearbook. Junior High students participate in its preparation.

**Kaleidoscope:** The Kaleidoscope is an annual publication sponsored in conjunction with the PTO containing selected writings of Middlefork and Sunset Ridge students.

**Math Club:** Math Club is an after school program for students in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade who want to work on math challenges with other students. Students in the program compete with students from other area schools.

### **Music**

**SRS Musical:** Sixth, seventh and eighth grade students are encouraged to participate in an annual musical held in the spring of each year. It is open for attendance by and enjoyment of the entire school and neighborhood community.

**Instrumental Music:** The Sunset Ridge Instrumental Music Department welcomes interested and dedicated students to develop their musical potential by joining our performing groups. The program allows students an opportunity to participate individually, in small groups, and as an entire band or orchestra.

Instruments are provided by the family and should be kept in good working condition. Students are also responsible for home practice and must see that their instruments return to school on the proper days for all lessons, rehearsals and performances. Members are required to perform in all evening concerts.

Band and Orchestra are offered to students in grades 4-8.

**Chorus:** Chorus is open to students in grades 4-8 with performances planned throughout the school year.

**Bucket Band:** Bucket Band is another music program option for students who want to develop their percussion skills and interests using a unique “instrument”.

**National Geographic Society Geography Bee:** Students in grades 4-8 are invited to sign up to compete in an annual Geography Bee. This program is designed to challenge students who have a strong background in global studies. Students study for this January competition.

**P.T.O. (Sunset Ridge-Middlefork P.T.O.):** Our PTO is an active, not-for-profit organization dedicated to supporting the educational process in our schools. We achieve this by offering numerous volunteer opportunities to parents ranging from fund-raising events such as Sally Foster Wrapping Paper or the Spring Family Fair, to coordinating parent-teacher conferences, Fine Arts Day or assemblies for the schools. Interested parents can join the 60 person volunteer board or simply help by working a regular “shift” in the library or lunchroom.

Dues are collected at the Open Houses and help to defray the costs of two PTO projects: the School Directory and the Bulletin. The annual Directory provides a comprehensive list of students, parents, classes, faculty and pertinent contact information. The Bulletin is a booklet mailed monthly containing current news, messages from the administration, minutes from the PTO meetings and lunch menus.

The PTO is proud to be the only parent-teacher organization in Illinois which supervises its own hot lunch program. We work with a food service, and are responsible for the collection of all lunch monies and the training and scheduling of our volunteers.

Each year, proceeds from our fund-raising efforts are applied to our PTO budget. In addition, we are able to provide extra funding through our Ways & Means program. Faculty, parents and students alike are encouraged to submit proposals for special programs, equipment and other school activities.

PTO meetings are the second Tuesday of every month in the Sunset Ridge Learning Center and are a great source for all things school-related: event dates, program changes, and administration updates. All are invited to attend.

**Spelling Bee:** An annual spelling bee is held at Sunset Ridge School for students in grades 4-8. Students have the option to participate and are responsible to prepare for our local challenge. One finalist moves on to the regional competition level. Winners at the regional level compete in Springfield with state finalists competing at Washington, DC.

**Student Council:** Any student may participate in student government. The President and Vice President are junior high students, the Secretary and Treasurer are sixth, seventh or eighth

grade students. The President is elected by the student body and serves one semester. Students from each homeroom/advisory volunteer to serve as Student Council Representatives. Other officers are chosen by the Student Council from this group.