

St. Helena Elementary School
Parent and Student Handbook
2024-2025

Home of the



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About this document . . .

This **Parent-Student Handbook** is designed to house our school's protocols, rules, and organization procedures that impact students and might be of interest to our families. The aim is to provide easy, and on-going access to this information. It is, however, a work-in-progress – *under construction* if you will – and not exhaustive. **You** (students and families) **are part of this Learning Community**, and as such, we invite you to provide us feedback on items that should be added, revised, or improved upon as we proceed through the school year. Feel free to contact the principal or our front office personnel with your input. We plan to update this document and keep it as current as possible linked from our website and shared through Parent Square.

SHUSD's Mission Statement:

SHUSD provides academic rigor within a safe and supportive learning environment where students can explore their creativity, collaboratively problem solve, and fully develop as resilient, caring and responsible individuals, learners, and citizens.

SHUSD's Vision Statement:

Our vision is to provide an engaging and dynamic learning environment that inspires a passion for learning and prepares every student to adapt and thrive as a responsible citizen in a rapidly changing world.

Your Principal Welcomes You

Welcome to the 2024-2025 School Year at St. Helena Elementary School (SHES). We are glad you are part of our school family. ***My personal goal is that you always feel welcomed and valued here.*** You know your children best and only when we team up can we really ensure that every student gets the very best education possible. Research shows repeatedly that students do better in school when their parents stay involved and engaged in what happens at school. You are a vital part of your children's lives and one way they know that you value their time at school is when they see you on campus interacting with us.

I encourage you to attend our coffees, PTG, SSC, and ELAC meetings whenever possible. Mark your calendars for our fun ***Fiesta de Octubre*** and ***Día del Niño*** family events. We also have several educational and informative family evenings planned for you this year. Let us know if you are not receiving my **Weekly Parent Update** and **check our calendar** on **Parent Square** often.

Always feel free to stop by my office or stop me as I am walking around campus to say hello and inquire about anything that may be on your mind. Feel free to schedule an appointment either directly with me or through our front office for a more formal conversation. *You are in for a wonderful school year!*

Parent Communication & Engagement

Stay informed and involved!!!

Parent Square is our main mode of communication. Families receive messages from the principal, classroom teachers, and the school district via **ParentSquare**. Parents are asked to **download the ParentSquare app** to facilitate this communication. We will gladly assist you in this task our front office.



School Website: <https://www.sthelenaunified.org/shes>

Principal's Weekly Update ~ reminds families of the week's highlights and informs you of the main upcoming events. The **Update** is sent out via **ParentSquare** on Saturdays at 11 o'clock. The script/message is saved and accessible from the District's website: www.sthelenaunified.org by selecting the school: **St. Helena Elementary School**, then clicking **About Us**, **Principal's Page**, and finally, **Weekly Message**.

Parent Groups & Meetings

*Year-long meeting calendars (when & where) are developed and posted at the start of each new school year.

Principals' Coffee Chats – both the Primary and Elementary School principals host a morning coffee together once per month on selected Tuesdays at alternating schools. You are invited to attend them each month regardless of the campus as most of our topics apply to both school sites.

Spanish-speaking Zoom meetings for Hispanic parents that cannot attend coffees. This forum also provides a mode for ELAC information to be disseminated. These meetings are conducted by both school principals and parents from all our school sites are invited.

English-Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) is a parent group required by the State to provide council in the development and implementation of school plans such as the **English Learner Program** and the **School Site Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA)**. Parent volunteers are elected by their peers and receive training and education on their roles and responsibilities, identifying and assessing school needs, and general school protocols and functions.

School Site Council (SSC) is a school governance group made up of equal parts parents and site staff, each elected by their peer groups to serve as their representatives. This group is responsible for the development, revision, and progress monitoring of the **School Site Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA)** each school year. The SSC meets approximately 4 to 5 times a year as determined by the council itself once it is established each year.

Parent-Teacher Group (PTG) monthly evening meetings held at SHES. Every parent is invited and encouraged to attend and participate. Childcare is provided for children 2 and above, not in diapers. Translation into Spanish can be provided when requested. Simply let the principal know so translation can be planned for.

Volunteers

We invite you to become part of the team at St. Helena Elementary School. Volunteers are welcome to share their time on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis in a variety of ways. Our volunteers are parents or family members of our students and community members that work through UpValley Family Center.

Prior to any volunteer activity, prospective volunteers must have a volunteer packet on file at the school. This includes 1) record of a current, approved TB test result, 2) Livescan finger printing clearance for SHUSD (a one-time requirement), 3) the Volunteer Application Form – ***filled out and turned into our front office each year.***

Stop by our front office to make sure you are all cleared for this year!

Volunteers must sign in at the main office upon arrival at the school and receive a Visitors Pass.

Staff Contact List

| Last Name | First Name | Position | Grade | Location | email |
|--------------|------------|------------------------|-------|------------|--|
| Bass | Mike | Teacher | 5 | 22 | mbass@ |
| Baxter | Angela | FS Director | NA | Cafeteria | abaxter@ |
| Bond | Angie | Teacher | 3 | 13 | abond@ |
| Buchanan | Terilynn | Teacher | 4 | 3 | tbuchanan@ |
| Emery | Carmen | Principal | NA | Office | cemery@ |
| Imrie | Jaclyn | Teacher | 5 | 17 | jimrie@ |
| Leon | Susana | Secretary | NA | Office | sleon@ |
| O'Connor | Cathy | Teacher - Intervention | All | 31 | coconner@ |
| Ortega-Vidal | Rita | Office Team Leader | NA | Office | rortega-vidal@ |
| Parriott | Michelle | Teacher | 4 | 2 | mparriott@ |
| Prichett | Missy | Teacher | 3 | 15 | mprichett@ |
| Rinker | Janelle | Teacher | 4 | 1 | jrinker@ |
| Roberts | Debra | Resource Teacher | NA | 35 | droberts@ |
| Rodriguez | Erika | Teacher | 3 | 16 | erodriguez@ |
| Sabin | Dana | Behavior Specialist | NA | Counseling | dsabin@ |
| Scudero | Kate | School Nurse | NA | Conf. West | kscudero@ |
| Torres | Nadia | Teacher | 5 | 21 | ntorres@ |
| Tucker | Dana | Teacher - Intervention | All | 36 | dtucker@ |
| Vidal | Jen | Teacher | 4 | 4 | jvidal@ |
| Waters | Hannah | Teacher | 3 | 14 | hwaters@ |
| Wright | Ashley | Teacher | 5 | 19 | awright@ |

*To email a staff member please add sthelenaunified.org to the staff members email starter above.

For example cemery@sthelenaunified.org

Bell Schedule

School Begins at 8:35 AM

Students may arrive at school for breakfast in the cafeteria beginning at 8:05 AM

Dismissal is at 3:10 PM on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, & Fridays

Dismissal is at 1:45 PM every Wednesday

*Dismissal at 12:25 PM on (9) Minimum Days

Min. Days: Oct. 28-29, and 31 Nov. 1st Dec. 20th March 10-11 April 4 June 5

Healthy Snack & Recess Times

3rd, 4th, & 5th Grades: 10:25-10:45 AM

3rd Grade: 1:45-2 PM (most days)

Lunch & Lunchtime Recess

3rd Grade: 12:10-12:55 eat, then play

4th Grade: 12:15-1:00 eat, then play

5th Grade: 12:15-1:00 play, then eat

No School on: 9/02/24, 10/14/24, 11/11/24, 01/20/25, 2/14 & 17/25, 5/26/25

Thanksgiving Week: 11/25-29

Winter Break: 12/23/24 - 01/03/25

Spring Break: 04/7 - 4/11

Report all absences to: shes.attendance@sthelenaunified.org

Excused Absences

If your child is not able to attend school for any reason, please report the absence through to shes.attendance@sthelenaunified.org You may also call the school at **(707)967-2712**.

It is the **parents' responsibility** to notify the school secretary when their child will miss school. District policy states that absences must be cleared within 24 hours otherwise the absence goes on record as unexcused.

Excused Absences include:

1. Illness or injury of the student. If more than 3 consecutive sick days, we require a doctor's note for the absences to be excused
2. Student attendance at a medical, optometric or chiropractic appointment
3. Student attendance at the funeral service of an immediate family member (Up to two days)
4. A quarantine imposed by a city or county health official
5. Student service on a jury
6. Exclusion from school due to head lice, lack of immunization, or physical examination
7. Observance of a holiday or ceremony of his/her *religion*

Unexcused (Truant) Absences

Unexcused absences include:

8. Out of town
9. Family vacations and extended weekend trips.
10. Oversleeping (Unexcused or tardy)
11. Car trouble/traffic
12. Absences that were not cleared within 24 hours

Tardiness

Promptness is an important "life skill" for our students to develop and for adults to model. Students who arrive at school after **8:35 AM** are considered tardy and must go to the office before going to class. Parents may be referred to have a meeting with the principal for frequent tardiness.

It is important to plan accordingly to ensure that your child arrives at school on time. Late arrivals interrupt instruction and disrupt the entire class.

Short-Term Independent Study

If it is necessary for your child to be absent 5 or more days for a reason other than illness, “**Short-term Independent Study**” is an alternative to the regular classroom instruction during that time period. It must be understood that this does not replicate the educational program occurring during the child's absence. If you wish to use this option, please notify the office at least 5 school days prior to the first date of the planned absence to apply for **Short-term Independent Study**.

Only the principal may approve a Short-term Independent Study contract. The principal may grant Short-term Independent Study longer than ten (10) days annually in extraordinary circumstances; however, in no event shall Short-term independent study exceed twenty (20) consecutive school days. Once you have been approved, the parent, teacher, and administration will sign contracts and agree to complete the assigned work within a specific timeline.

Note: Short-term Independent Study contracts do not apply for the months of December and January. Short-term Independent Study is valid only once a school year.

Early Dismissals

IF students must be picked up before school dismissal time, the parent or guardian must sign the student out in person.

If not a parent or guardian, we must have a written explanation from a parent or guardian on the morning of the early dismissal. A telephone number must accompany the request so the dismissal can be confirmed.

Telephone requests for early dismissal of a student are not honored. Students will not be called out of class until the parent is in the office and has signed the student out.

Upon return from an early dismissal (same day), the parent must enter the school to deliver the student back to the school's custody.

Visitor Passes: We have many visitors on our school grounds each day, including parents, volunteers, and workers. Every visitor to St Helena Elementary School must sign in and get a visitor sticker from the front office before going on the school grounds or to a classroom. This helps to keep our campus safe!

Arrival Procedures



Please note that there is no recess or playtime before classes begin at SHES.

Students may arrive as early as **8:05 AM** to the cafeteria for breakfast.

Students not having breakfast at school can begin arriving at **8:15 AM** to the **blacktop quad** area. Students mingle there until line-up time.

At **8:30**, students begin to line-up at their classroom symbols on the blacktop.

Mondays and Fridays, students move into the auditorium for the Morning Assembly.

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, students remain on blacktop for Morning Rally.

Whole-school flag salute takes place daily at **8:35 AM**.

Dismissal Procedures

At dismissal, students leave school from various areas around campus.

- **walk home** ~ students may walk out from any of our exits
- **parent pick-up** ~ on **Adams St.**
 - students walk to north lawn area – front of the main building
 - students may exit through either exits at sides of the main building
- **bus pick-up** ~ on **Oak Ave.**
 - students walk to northeast area between SHOP and 4th grade
- **Boys & Girls Club** ~ on **Tainter St.**
 - students walk to B & G Club – enter through front entrance

Yellow & White curbs are for 5-minute loading only. Never leave your car unattended.

Please **DO NOT** park or stop your car for loading on a yellow curb on **Oak Ave.** This curb is reserved for bus loading and unloading only.

- Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, students are dismissed at **3:10 PM**
- Wednesdays Dismissal is always at **1:45 PM**
- Minimum Days (9 days) dismissal is at **12:25 PM**

Dress Code & Code of Conduct

Dress For Success

Students should wear clothing that **does not distract** from the school's equitable and age-appropriate learning environment. Student clothing should **allow for safe and comfortable** participation in Physical Education and outside play everyday.

Clothing, books, notebooks, lunch bags/sacks, and backpacks shall be **free from** images or language that advertise or advocate the use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, violence, hate, obscenity, or suggestiveness.



Cosmetics are not allowed. **Jewelry**, if worn at all, should be minimal. Dangling items are not safe and not allowed.

Tops and dresses should not be "low-cut". Students may not wear clothes that expose midriff.

Shorts need to be long enough to cover the torso well while playing, sitting, climbing, swinging, and participating in PE. If shorts are too short, student will be sent to office.

Pants: Holes in pants may not expose areas expected to be covered according to the expectations for shorts & tops above.

Sandals or open toe shoes are not safe on the playground or during P. E. We ask that students not wear them to school. Tennis shoes with built-in wheels are not allowed.

Hats, hoodies, and baseball caps are NOT to be worn indoors unless required by student's religion or faith.

***Parents will be contacted and asked to provide a change of clothing if apparel worn by their child is inappropriate for school.

St. Helena Elementary School strives to provide a positive learning and playing environment for your children. We appreciate your support in keeping our school a safe and welcoming place for all our students.

Healthy Eating and Celebrating

- ❖ **We do NOT allow food sharing or trading.** Students may have reactions to certain foods or be on restricted diets for medical reasons or family choice.
- ❖ Please only send food that is **healthy** and in **individual portion sizes** or packages.
- ❖ Any birthday celebratory activities should be
 - previously planned and approved by the classroom teacher,
 - happen towards the end of the school day (after lunchtimes),
 - any giveaways should be healthy and preferably non-food items.



School Rules

We have 3 Overarching Rules:

1) Be Kind



2) Be Safe



3) Be Responsible



Welcome Back Assemblies review these expectations in general upon the return from each school break.

Teachers review specific school & classroom rules that belong under each of these overarching rules with their individual classroom students within the first few days of school and after every school break. All students participate in **Morning Assemblies** on Mondays & Fridays to hear about up-coming events, celebrate student accomplishments, and reenforce school-wide expectations.

The following rules are examples of some of the most common rules under each overarching rule.

Be KIND:

- ❖ **Be welcoming.** This is *yourschool*. Say “*Good Morning*”, “*How are you?*”, and *SMILE*.
- ❖ **Encourage others** to be KIND and Welcoming to everyone. **Be the role-model.**
- ❖ Bullying is prohibited. This includes teasing, ignoring, or deliberately excluding someone.
- ❖ Include everyone, exclude no one. We all have a right to be here and ***we are all DRAGONS!***
- ❖ **Be Considerate** and Kind. Wait your turn at games, in lines, and all school events.
- ❖ **Walk** quietly through corridors, walk-ways, and around campus. Do not disturb other classrooms. Monitor yourself – ***be responsible.***
- ❖ **Be courteous** when games are in process. Walk around, outside of courts or field boundaries when they are in use.
- ❖ Treat others, and their property, with kindness and respect. Practice the **GOLDEN RULE:** Treat others the way you would like to be treated.
- ❖ **Do your part** to keep our school a safe and happy place for everyone.

Be Responsible:

- Report problems or dangerous situations to the nearest, or your trusted adult at school.
- **No electronic or digital equipment.** Smart phones should not be seen or heard. Smart phones may only be on school-mode. **No toys** should be brought to school. *This rule does not apply when a teacher is making an exception and is monitoring the activities outside of regular recesses.
- Balls are to be carried to and from designated play areas. Do not bounce balls while walking to or from classrooms or the cafeteria. Return all play equipment to container. Keep our equipment in good shape so it lasts.
- No gum, candy, or “junk” food should be brought to school.
- For safety and health considerations, we **do not share food with peers.** Only bring single serving portions to eat yourself.
- Help keep our school clean. Pick up trash when you see it – *even if it is are not yours.* Do not litter. **We compost,** sort our trash and clean-up our areas after every meal.

Be Safe:

- Students may arrive as early as **8:05 AM for breakfast in the cafeteria.** Otherwise, students may arrive after 8:15 for an 8:35 start time. There is no play-time at school until morning recess.
- **Walk,** do not run to all destinations on campus, especially around corners and on uneven surfaces.
- Use the play equipment properly. Follow the use or game rules. Do Not make up rules.
- **Freeze and Listen** when whistle or siren is blown. Follow directions.
- Remember to ask for a restroom pass. Students should have hall passes unless they are with their class.
- Only enter a room when an adult is present. Please wait outside if no one is inside.
- Kickballs, basketballs, tetherballs, and soccer balls are to be used only in designated areas. Footballs, baseballs, and baseball bats are not allowed on campus unless under the direct supervision and direction of a teacher during PE instruction.
- No TAG or other chasing contact games are allowed. Always make sure you stay “Hands-Off”

Phones and/or Smart Watches at School

They are not to be seen or



heard



once school begins.

If they are seen or heard, meaning the student is using it or it rings, the adult supervisor may give the student an opportunity to correct the situation (turn it off & put it away) once, but if that device reappears, it will be confiscated and turned into the office to be given to the principal.

The principal will not be returning the personal device to the student. The device will have to be picked up by a parent or guardian.

This procedure is clearly explained to students at the start of every school year, is included in the Parent-Student Handbook (herein) and is mentioned during Back to School Night.



Behavior & Discipline

We all understand that our students come here not only to learn academically but also to develop and practice essential social skills during play and other collaborative activities.

To support this, our students engage in daily social and emotional learning opportunities that focus on self-regulation, conflict management, and positive play. Our **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)** clearly outline rules and expectations for behavior throughout the school day. Additionally, our **Restorative Practices** and **Peaceful Playgrounds** offer effective protocols, strategies, and playground activities for this learning in real-time.

We use **Green Tickets** to recognize individual students for exceptional behavior and **Golden Dragon Tickets** for whole-class recognition of exemplary group dynamics.

When kids misbehave? Teachers will intervene and support students in understanding the impact of their actions, resolving conflicts, and / or restoring peace.

We ask 3 questions – don't ask **why**, ask **what** first

- 1) **What** happened?
 - a. What were you thinking at the time?
 - b. What have you thought about since then?
- 2) **Who** was negatively affected by what happened?
- 3) **How** can you repair or make up for that damage/hurt/problem?

Teachers and /or the principal will contact parents both to keep them informed and for support when behavior continues to interrupt learning and / or other school activities.

Important Dates – *mark your calendars*

Trimester 1:

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| August 16 | Friday 2:30-3 | 3 rd Grade Sneak-A-Peak |
| August 19 | Mon. 8:35 AM | First Day of School Year 2024-2025 |
| August 29 | Thursday 5:30 P | Back-To-School Night |
| Sept. 2 | Monday | Labor Day Holiday – No School |
| Sept. 26 | Thursday 5:30 P | ELAC Parent Meeting @ Primary School |
| Oct. 14 | Monday | No School - teacher work day |
| Oct. 17 | Thursday 5:30 P | <i>Fiesta De Octubre</i> – Family Night |
| Oct. 24 | Thursday 5 PM | 5 th Grade Concert |
| Oct. 28- 31 Nov. 1 | Mon, Tues, Thurs, & Friday | Parent-Teacher Conferences Minimum day dismissal at 12:25 PM |
| Nov. 1-8 | Mon-Fri. | Red Ribbon Week |
| Nov 7 | 5:30 PM | ELAC Parent Meeting @ Elementary School |
| Nov. 11 | Monday | Veteran's Day Holiday – No School |
| Nov. 15 | Friday | Trimester 1 – Report Cards are sent home |

Trimester 2:

| | | |
|-----------|-----------------|--|
| Nov.25-29 | Mon.-Friday | Thanksgiving Holiday Week – No School |
| Dec. 20 | Friday | Minimum Day Dismissal at 12:25 PM |
| 12/23-1/3 | 2 weeks | Winter Break – No School |
| Jan. 6 | Monday | School Resumes |
| 1/10-28 | 3 weeks | Heart Heroes Challenge Campaign |
| Jan. 20 | Monday | Martin Luther King Jr. – No School |
| Jan. 23 | Thursday 5:30 P | ELAC Parent Meeting at RLS |
| 2/10-13 | 1 week | Kindness Challenge Week |
| Feb.14-17 | Fri. & Mon. | Presidents’ Weekend Holiday – No School |
| March 7 | Friday | Trimester II Report Cards are sent home |

Trimester 3:

| | | |
|---------------------|------------------|--|
| Mar. 10-11 | Monday & Tuesday | Parent-Teacher Conferences Minimum Day dismissal at 12:25 PM |
| March 27 | Thursday | 3 rd Grd. Concert at 5 PM 4 th Grd. Concert at 6 PM |
| April 4 | Friday | Minimum Day dismissal at 12:25 PM |
| April 7-11 | 1 week | Spring Break – No School |
| April 21- May 16 | 4 weeks | Cal State Testing weeks Detailed schedule will go out later |
| May 1 | Thursday | <i>Día del Niño</i> – Family Night |
| May 21 | Wednesday | SHES Open House 5:30 PM |
| May 26 | Monday | Memorial Day Holiday – No School |
| May 27- 30 | Tues-Friday | 5 th Grade Camp week |
| June 5 | Friday | Last Day of 24-25 School Year Minimum day dismissal at 12:25 PM |

Please be sure to continually check our **ParentSquare Calendar** and **website** for additional events and activity updates.

