

**MORNING CREEK ELEMENTARY**  
**STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK**  
**2021-2022**



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## **PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE**

Dear Morning Creek Students and Parents:

Welcome to the 2021-22 school year! I am looking forward to a wonderful year of learning and working together. Morning Creek is a No Excuses University school. As an NEU school, we are committed to our focus on college readiness, collaborating with one another for the success of each child and character development. Good character is doing the right thing, even when no one is watching. We pride ourselves on continually learning and striving to improve all we do for students.

Please review this important handbook that we have especially prepared for Morning Creek students and parents. It contains pertinent information about Morning Creek as well as our expectations for students and parents that are part of our school. Please take time to review and discuss the contents of this handbook with your children.

The Student Responsibilities section of this handbook addresses the behavioral expectations that we have for all of our students. Each year these expectations are reviewed with all students at the beginning of the year. This too, is important information to reinforce with your children. To support the Character Pillars at home, ask your child, "How did you make character count at school today?" We strive to reward students for good choices and at the same time, help them learn from their mistakes.

We focus on college-readiness throughout the year. College readiness is the idea that every student deserves the opportunity to be educated in a way that prepares them for college if they so choose to attend. As an NEU school, each classroom has adopted a college and we wear college shirts each Friday.

I know this will be an exciting year for our students, staff and families at Morning Creek. Remember, we welcome volunteers on our campus as they assist us in a number of very important endeavors. Parent volunteers **MUST** sign in at the front office before entering campus. I encourage you to join our PTA and support our Morning Creek Foundation. Your involvement makes a difference in your child's educational success. Together, we can achieve great things for our students.

Sincerely,

Rhonda Taylor, Principal  
Morning Creek Elementary

## **MORNING CREEK VISION**

Elementary education is the foundation for a lifetime of learning. We share the district vision that we have a moral imperative to have each student graduate "college ready" in order for them to successfully pursue a full range of post secondary options. We will support their academic and personal achievements by giving them the necessary tools needed to become productive members of society through high expectations, rigorous learning, goal setting and ongoing celebrations of their successes. Through positive and caring relationships, we will foster the love of learning within each student and ownership of learning along with a powerful belief in themselves that they are capable. Their future begins today.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

At Morning Creek Elementary School, we share a collective responsibility to create the cultures and conditions that provide our students with the skills necessary to prepare them for college, career, and success in a global society. We will. We can. We must!

## **OUR PLEDGE**

Today is a new day.  
I will improve myself.  
There are no limits to my personal success.  
I will! I can! I must!

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### DAILY SCHEDULE:

Grades K – 5<sup>th</sup>

8:45 – 3:05

Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri

**8:45 – 1:25**

**Thursday**

**SCHOOL HOURS:** The office is open M,T,W,F from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30p.m. and 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 on Th. The playground opens for students at 8:25 a.m. There is no playground supervision for students after school. Students are expected to go home when school is released unless they attend ESS (Extended Student Services). For more information about ESS, contact the ESS Office at (858) 748-1497.

**ABSENCES:** Regular attendance is essential for students to make optimum academic growth. Home and school must work together to instill the importance of school attendance. If a student is unable to attend school, **notify the Absence Hotline (available 24 hours) (858) 748-1396** and report the reason for the absence. Leave the student's name, grade, teacher's name, reason for absence, and name of the person leaving the message. Students absent due to contagious diseases may be required to have a note from their physician or the public health department before returning to school. Student attendance is important and is also compulsory according to state law. There are some occasions (e.g. religious holidays, a death in the family, or other family emergencies) when students must be absent from school. Again, notify the office and, if the absence will be for a period of five *consecutive school days* or more, an Off Campus Independent Study Contract (OCIS) will be issued. The OCIS contract allows the student to make up the work missed during the absence without academic penalty. Regardless of the length of any absence, it is important to check with you child's teacher about finishing any missed work.

**TARDIES:** Like absences, tardies affect classroom learning time and should be avoided. Students who are late to school must check in through the office. Medical appointments are considered excused tardies. All other tardies are unexcused. Please call the Absence Hotline if your child will be later than 9:00 a.m.

**PERFECT ATTENDANCE:** Students who attend school every day and are not tardy will receive a *Perfect Attendance Award* at the end of the school year.

**APPOINTMENTS:** A student who needs to leave school during the day for an appointment must be checked out in the office by the parent or legal guardian. If they return during the same day, they must also check back in with the office. To reduce loss of class time it is helpful to schedule appointments before or after school or on our minimum day, Thursday afternoon. Please send a note with your child, for the teacher, stating the time they will be checked out. If someone, other than parent or legal guardian are picking up your child, please call the office ahead of time to let them know.

**BICYCLES and SCOOTERS:** Students in grades 3-5 may ride their bicycles, or scooters, to school. Each rider must have a bicycle permit signed by their parents on file in the office. These are to be renewed yearly. Students are reminded that all traffic laws relating to automobiles also pertain to riders. In addition, by law, all students must wear helmets when riding their bikes, or scooters. No helmet, no ride! Helmets can be stored in the classroom during the day. Bicycles and scooters should not be ridden on the sidewalks, playground, or in hallways. A bike rack near the lunch area is provided for storing the bike, or scooter, during the day. Students should bring their own locks to secure them. The school is not responsible for damage or loss of bicycles and scooters. Skateboards and roller blades are not allowed.

**BUS SERVICE:** Elementary bus service has been eliminated in PUSD with the exception of the route from the Stonebridge Development to Morning Creek Elementary as well as Special Education bus routes. Information regarding transportation services for students who live in the Morning Creek attendance area is available in the office. There is a fee for bus service for those students who qualify. Bus riding is a privilege, not a right. Parents are encouraged to review with their children the rules for bus riders provided by the Transportation Department. The phone number for the Transportation Department is 858-679-2635.

**CARS/CAR POOLS:** Traffic is very congested at Morning Creek during arrival and dismissal times. Our staff members are present to make this as easy as possible. Parents are encouraged to carpool whenever possible. Parents should drop off their children along the red curb of the traffic circle only, pulling as far forward to ensure other cars can pull up behind them. Do not double park, or leave your car at the drop off curb! As Kindergarten parents need to walk their children to the classroom, it is important park in the neighborhood. The parking lot is closed until 8:45am each morning and until 3:25 in the afternoon. This allows our busses and staff to get in and out of the parking lot safely and efficiently. Also, do not leave any cars unattended along the red curb or outside marked parking stalls. There is absolutely NO parking on the red curb at any time! The safety of our children depends on your support during arrival and dismissal times.

**EMERGENCY DRILLS:** Once a month students participate in a fire, duck and cover and/or lock down drill. Procedures and practices are taught to all students and reviewed regularly in order to ensure their safety should a disaster occur. Should it become necessary to release students from school, only the persons whose names are listed on the Emergency Contact Form as “authorized for pickup” are allowed to take students. Please be sure your child’s form is current.

**LIBRARY:** The school library is open Monday through Friday for students and parents. Students may check out a maximum of two books at a time. One book choice must be a “just right” (lexiled) and the second choice may be a “free-read.” Parents are invited to attend library meetings and utilize the schools’ vast

inventory of books for their home use. All books must be renewed or returned before new books can be checked out.

**LOST AND FOUND:** Parents should clearly mark students' names on clothing, lunches, backpacks, and other items. If an item of clothing is lost, students or parents should check the lost and found rack near the multipurpose room. Smaller, personal items are kept in the office. Unclaimed items without any identifying information are periodically donated to a local charity. Please remember, the loss or damage to anything brought to school, including bicycles, remains the responsibility of students and parents.

### **GATE SECURITY**

Because we are concerned about the safety and security of all the students on campus, all gates to the campus will be closed during school hours. All visitors to the campus must come through the front office to sign in and obtain a visitor's badge. Gates reopen at dismissal.

**SCHOOL LUNCHES:** Students may bring a lunch from home or buy at the school. If your child brings lunch, please be sure to include healthy food choices and please do **not** send soda or candy to school.

For hot lunch, each student will be assigned a student number to access a personal account. Deposits for the lunch accounts may be delivered to the office. Please write the child's name and his/her room number on the envelope. Checks may be payable to PUSD Food and Nutrition. You may also enroll your child online at [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com) and make payments online for a nominal fee. Parents are notified when they are out of prepaid lunches. However, it is the parents' responsibility to keep track of the balance. Lunch menus are sent home at the beginning of each month. Free or reduced price lunches are available to qualifying families. To be eligible, you must complete an application form available at the school office. Applications are accepted throughout the school year and must be completed every school year for qualified students. The phone number for the Food and Nutrition Dept. is 858-668-2570.

### **Prices are as follows:**

School Lunch (includes milk*)	<b>\$3.25</b>
Milk	<b>.75</b>
Water or Juice – Orange or Apple –	<b>4oz. - .75 8 oz. - \$1.00</b>

\* If your child is allergic to milk, juice can be substituted only on the presentation of a note from the child's doctor.

**TELEPHONE USE:** Students are allowed to use the office telephone in *emergency* situations only. Personal phone calls for forgotten items or after school arrangements will not be permitted.

## **CLASSROOM INFORMATION**

**HOMEWORK:** All students, grades K-5, have homework during the year. Homework assignments are an extension of the skills and activities learned in the classroom. Assignments are given on a daily or weekly basis. Teachers review homework policies with parents at Back-To School Night.

**BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHT:** Each fall, teachers meet with parents to describe the materials, texts, teaching methods, and classroom procedures they use. They also discuss their expectations for student progress both academically and behaviorally. Since this is an informational meeting, we ask that children not attend.

**STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS:** Student Progress Reports are sent home at the end of each reporting period in November, March, and June. The fall conference at the end of the first reporting period explains the grading and format used on the student progress.

**ACADEMIC STANDARDS:** The California State Department of Education has determined the academic standards that students should meet at each of the grade levels in language arts, science, history/social science, and mathematics. The standards are posted on the Poway Unified School District website. This site can be accessed at [www.powayusd.com](http://www.powayusd.com).

**FALL CONFERENCES:** During Parent Conferences at the end of the first reporting period, teachers meet individually with parents to discuss their child's progress and explain the report card. Results of any standardized testing done the previous year are also shared. If students are having difficulty, strategies are discussed and a plan developed to help them be more successful.

**INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES:** Parents are encouraged to contact the teacher whenever they have questions or concerns to arrange a conference.

**FRIDAY FLAG:** Friday Flag assemblies are held on the first and third Friday of the month at 8:45. The purpose of this assembly is to gather together as a school community to salute our flag and our country, to discuss school-wide issues, and to honor various students for some of their accomplishments. In addition, we also spend time talking about one of the Character Pillars. We wear our college shirts each Friday and each class is recognized by their college cheer. This event is open to all.

**PETS:** Pets are not allowed on campus during morning drop off, during school hours, and/or at dismissal.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**THE COLT WAY**-“Do the right thing, even when no one is watching.”

### **Trustworthiness:**

Always tell the truth \* Admit your mistakes \* Do your own work \* Be reliable – do what you say you’ll do \* Have the courage to do the right thing \* Build a good reputation \* Be loyal – stand by your family, friends, and country

### **Respect:**

Use only kind words and action \* Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself \* Obey all adults \* Follow the Golden Rule \* Be tolerant of difference \* Be considerate of the feelings of others \* Don’t threaten, hit or hurt anyone \* Deal peacefully with anger, insults, and disagreements

### **Responsibility:**

Always do your best \* Use self control; be self-disciplined \* Think before you act – consider the consequences \* Be accountable for your choices \* Stay in assigned areas \* Be prepared \* Be on time

### **Fairness:**

Play by the rules \* Take turns and share \* Be open-minded; listen to others \* Don’t blame others carelessly

### **Caring:**

Be kind \* Be compassionate and show you care \* Express gratitude \* Forgive others \* Help people in need

### **Citizenship:**

Do your share to make your school and community better \* Cooperate \* Obey laws and rules \* Respect authority \* Protect the environment

## **CELL PHONE POLICY**

Students may bring personal cell phones/watches with cellphone policies to school, however the school and/or District assume no liability for the loss or damage of the device or its misuse by another person. Phones/Watches must be on silent, or turned off and remain in the students’ backpack while on campus. This includes all areas of the campus and the playground both before and after school. (Students are allowed to use their phone/watch after school to call or text parent.) Students may not use any device, cell phone/watch or iPad, to take pictures/video on campus unless they have permission from their teacher and it is part of a school project or has academic value. Students who use their cell phone/watch without teacher permission during the school day will have it confiscated by the office and held until picked up by a parent.

**STUDENT DRESS STANDARDS:** Students may not dress in a manner that creates a safety hazard or that interferes with or distracts from the learning process. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

- ✓ Straps narrower than 1 1/2" and halter-tops will not be allowed.
- ✓ Shirts and pants must meet when sitting or standing.
- ✓ "Sagging" is not allowed.
- ✓ Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be an appropriate length for school. When standing with arms at your sides, shorts must reach to where the fingers meet the palm of your hand. Skirts and dresses must reach to the end of the fingertips.
- ✓ Sunglasses and hats may not be worn indoors.
- ✓ Knit caps and heavy overcoats are allowed only during appropriate weather conditions.
- ✓ Clothing, jewelry, and accessories that may be a safety hazard to the wearer or others are not permitted.
- ✓ Appropriate shoes must be worn at all times. Beach shoes/flip-flops and platform shoes over 1½" high are not to be worn at school.

Additional items may be added to this list during the school year. Parents will be notified of any changes through a bulletin, phone call out, or the Colt Chronicle Newsletter.

**CODE OF CONDUCT:** At Morning Creek all students and adults subscribe to what we call: **"THE COLT WAY"**

- Be Trustworthy
- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Fair
- Be Caring
- Be Excellent Citizens

**REWARDS FOR POSITIVE BEHAVIOR:** Students are regularly recognized for positive behavior at school. Special assemblies, Friday Flag acknowledgements, notes or phone calls home, and certificates of achievement are all ways of rewarding positive academic or social behavior.

**CONSEQUENCES FOR NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR:** While it is hoped that Morning Creek students exemplify the traits described in the Code of Conduct, occasionally negative behavior does occur. Written consequences for negative behavior are posted in each classroom. These consequences are consistent and incremental. Referral to the principal by the classroom teacher is used as a final resort. Students may bring home a "Student Rethinking Sheet" if they have violated school rules. Please review the form with your child and return it to school the next day with your signature.

### **THINGS TO KEEP AT HOME**

1. Do not bring gum to school.
2. All Toys, iPods, computer games, roller blades, skates, skateboards, and similar items are not allowed at school.

3. Weapons, or simulated weapons, may **NEVER** be brought to school. These include, but are not limited to, squirt guns, air powered guns, knives, explosives, and all other dangerous objects.

**POWAY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT RULES OF STUDENT DISCIPLINE:**

Each year a copy of the District policy and consequences regarding weapons, controlled substances, alcohol, harassment, theft, vandalism, hate crimes, willful disobedience, and other matters is available on our website. Parents are to read the rules and acknowledge receipt of them by signing and returning the signature sheet to the school.

**DANGEROUS OBJECTS AND LOOK-ALIKE WEAPONS:**

Poway Unified School District Policies and California State Laws prohibit the possession by students of dangerous objects or look-alike weapons while on school grounds or while at school related activities. **These objects include, but are not limited to, any type of knife, firearm, or imitation firearms such as bb guns, pellet guns, paintball guns, air soft pellet guns, or any other object that closely resembles a knife, gun, or rifle.** Possession of these objects will result in serious consequences that may include but are not limited to suspension from school or expulsion from the Poway Unified School District. It is critical that parents speak to their children about these items and reinforce the fact that no one should ever have these dangerous objects at school or at school related events. Backpacks and other similar bags or purses that are used for non-school related activities should always be examined to make sure these items are not inadvertently brought to school. Anytime a student discovers an inappropriate object at school, or mistakenly brings a prohibited item to school or a school related activity, immediately inform a teacher, administrator, or a staff member so that a reasonable approach may be considered.

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE:** The use or possession of tobacco, alcohol, or other controlled substances by students or parents on the Morning Creek School campus is strictly prohibited. If students are involved with the use, possession, or sale of any controlled substance, legal reports will be filed, parents will be notified, and a minimum five-day suspension will be invoked.

**HARASSMENT:** We believe that every student has the right to attend school and learn...

- ✓ Without being called names.
- ✓ Without being threatened, harassed, or bullied for any reason.

Harassment is unwanted and unwelcome behavior from another person that interferes with an individual's life and well-being. When this behavior is sexual in nature, it is "sexual harassment." When the behavior is motivated by a prejudice against another person's race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, or gender, it is discrimination and could be described as "hate behavior" in some cases. This type of intimidation and harassment will not be tolerated in our school and is also inappropriate in our society. It is our intent to promote the rights of equality and human dignity basic to our American ideals.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

**BAND AND ORCHESTRA:** A credentialed music teacher instructs interested fifth grade students in beginning music lessons. The lessons are given during school hours and are free to students. Students do need to provide their own instruments. Instruction begins in September and registration is required and handled through the classroom teacher.

**COMPUTERS:** Morning Creek is fortunate to provide computers for student use. The Morning Creek Elementary Foundation and PTA, combined with school funds, will continue to increase our technology resources.

**ESS (Extended Student Services):** ESS is a daycare program offered on a fee basis to Morning Creek students. Hours are 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily. Call (858) 748-1497 for more information.

**GATE (Gifted and Talented Education):** This is a program for identified students in grades 3-5. Students are nominated by their teachers and/or parents and are required to take a test to determine if they qualify for the program. Testing is done once a year for students in grades 2 and above. Qualifying students may then begin participation in the program the following school year. Any questions should be directed to your child's teacher.

**SAFETY PATROL:** The Safety Patrol is a group of fifth graders selected yearly to help students crossing Morning Creek Drive before and after school. They are trained by the San Diego Police Department. Please respect these students and follow their direction as you enter and exit campus.

**STUDENT COUNCIL:** The Student Council is comprised of students grades 3-5 and classroom representatives. They plan and organize student events such as dress-up days, special events, and community projects. They also assist in the monthly awards assembly and lead the school in the daily Pledge of Allegiance.

## **PTA and FOUNDATION**

**PTA:** The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) sponsors numerous activities and events throughout the year, including Family Nights, and fundraisers. For further information, contact the PTA President.

**ELEMENTARY FOUNDATION:** The Foundation is an organization that oversees fundraising efforts that support many programs on our campus. In light of our current state budget, it is important that we seek funding from other sources in order to provide our students with an optimal educational experience. The Foundation has generously provided our school with support staff such as a counselor, supplemental curriculum materials and technology.

They also supply funding for school events. It is the mission of this organization to provide Morning Creek with the additional funding necessary to offer all core and enrichment programs that are deemed necessary by the principal and faculty.

## **VOLUNTEERING**

**VISITATIONS AND VOLUNTEERS:** Parents are always welcome and are encouraged to help in the classroom. Appointments should be scheduled with the teacher 24 hours in advance. If you want to talk to the teacher about your child, please make an appointment outside of school time. Teachers understandably need to be with their students immediately before, during and after class time.

**IMPORTANT: All visitors to Morning Creek must sign in at the Office and wear a Visitor or Volunteer badge while on campus**

Parents and members of the community are encouraged to become involved and volunteer at Morning Creek. Anyone working with students, in a classroom, must have a current, negative TB Test and Megan's Law Background Clearance Check on file in the office. A school volunteer may:

- Prepare materials for classroom use
- Listen to children read
- Play learning games
- Assist students and direct traffic during student arrival
- Assist in the library
- Assist with motor skills development
- Help students to complete math and reading assignments
- Assist on field trips, classroom cooking, music, and science projects
- Serve on PTA

To become a volunteer, contact your child's teacher and let her/him know what your interests are.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

**STUDENT HEALTH:** Morning Creek has a Health Attendant to take care of first aid and emergencies. In case of student illness at school, the health attendant will notify parents or the emergency contact listed on the enrollment form. No registered nursing services are provided at the school on a daily basis.

**MEDICATION:** Any student who is required to take medication, whether doctor prescribed or over the counter, during the regular school day must file an "Authorization To Administer Medication" form in the office.

The health attendant or other designated school personnel will then assist the student in receiving the medication **if** the school receives the Authorization form. Forms are available from the Health Attendant, Rebecca London. She can be reached by calling her at 858-748-4334 x2201.

## **TRAFFIC FLOW**

Throughout the day it is important that our children be safe. This is no difference during morning drop off and afternoon pick up time. I would like to thank all of you in advance for your support and cooperation. Safety is indeed an important consideration for all of us here at Morning Creek.

The **parking lot will be closed between 3:00-3:25 and 1:20-1:45 on Thursdays**. Please park off campus and walk in during these times. The parking lot is closed so that we can have a continual flow of cars in the traffic circle and ensure buses have access to the loading zone.

### **A.M.**

In the morning we are asking for parents to drop off their children in the traffic loop that is supervised by both staff and parents. In order for traffic to move smoothly, continue to move up as far as possible before stopping to drop your child along the yellow curb. Please have your child sit on the right side of the car with their material ready to go. For all 5<sup>th</sup> grade students on their band day, please have their instrument in the car with the student. Traffic must move in a single lane in order to flow smoothly. Most importantly, please be patient.

### **P.M.**

In the afternoon, we instituted the same situation as in the morning, utilizing a pick up loop. Follow the flow of traffic in the parking lot. Cars must stay in a single lane. Be prepared to pick up your child at this driveway. Teachers will have the students in that area ready to go. Your child will be told to meet you at the curb when the vehicle comes to a complete stop. Please, do not get out of your car at any time as these impacts everyone else. This is not a good time for conversation with other parents in the lot, or with teachers. The goal is to move traffic smoothly and safely. Please move your car to the numbered bay as far forward as possible before stopping, even if you see your child on the curb. Again, your child will be directed to your car. Most importantly, please be patient.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR 2021-22

<b>School Hours:</b>	<b>Grades K – 5<sup>th</sup></b>	8:45 – 3:05 <b>8:45 – 1:25</b>	(Mon, Tues, Wed, and Fri) <b>(every Thursday)</b>
August 18	School Begins		8:45-3:05 (Kinder dismiss 12:45)
August 27th	Back-To-School Night		5:30-6:20 (Grades TK-2) 6:30-7:20 (Grades 3-5)
September 6	Labor Day		NO SCHOOL ~ <b><u>ESS CLOSED</u></b>
September 27	Professional Growth Day		NO SCHOOL
October 4	Full Day Kindergarten Begins		
November 11	Veterans Day Observance		NO SCHOOL ~ <b><u>ESS CLOSED</u></b>
November 15-19	Parent Conferences Monday- Normal School Day Tuesday & Wednesday Early Dismissal 12:45 Thursday- Regular Thursday Dismissal at 1:20 Friday- Non-Student Day		
November 22-26	Thanksgiving Break		NO SCHOOL ~ <b><u>ESS CLOSED</u></b>
December 20-30	Winter Break		NO SCHOOL
January 17	Martin Luther King Day Observance		NO SCHOOL ~ <b><u>ESS CLOSED</u></b>
January 31	Professional Growth Day		NO SCHOOL
February 21-25	President's Week Observance		NO SCHOOL
April 11-15	Spring Break		NO SCHOOL
May 30	Memorial Day		NO SCHOOL ~ <b><u>ESS CLOSED</u></b>
June 8	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion		
<b>June 9</b>	<b>Last day of school</b>		<b><u>Dismissal at 1:25</u></b>

\*Note: Two Professional Growth Days with a 12:45pm early release TBD