

**QUEST ACADEMY**



**QUEST ACADEMY  
STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK**

Welcome to Quest Academy! The purpose of this handbook is to give you a better understanding of the procedures, rules, policies, and responsibilities of Quest Academy.

### **What is Quest Academy?**

Quest Academy is the name of the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District's Community Day School for students in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. The primary goal of Quest Academy is to provide supports to students exhibiting difficulty adjusting to a comprehensive middle/elementary school campus, attendance issues, or students who are disengaged from the school community. The expected outcome for students attending Quest Academy is to learn the appropriate skills in order to return to the comprehensive middle school campus.

### **What is the purpose of Quest Academy?**

The purpose of Quest Academy is to help students who are having difficulty adjusting to the traditional middle school program. Quest Academy provides a program that better meets these students' academic and attendance needs, while supporting their social-emotional development. The primary goal of the school is to assist students in learning the core academic standards as well as developing appropriate standards of conduct in the classroom and society. Quest Academy provides supports to enhance the likelihood of success for its students and to help them return to a traditional middle or high school.

### **What are the academic standards of Quest Academy?**

The curriculum of Quest Academy includes the Common Core Standards of the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. Students also have opportunities for community service projects. Technology is a major component of the instructional program and opportunities for computer-based learning coexist with traditional instructional approaches and the use of intervention curricular materials.

### **What supports are provided for students?**

Each student has a Student Success Plan developed for him or her specific to his or her unique needs. The teachers provide instructional activities to make sure that each student has a successful learning experience. A school counselor and the District probation officer provides additional support services to the program.

### **Where is Quest Academy located?**

Quest Academy is located on the campus of Bancroft Elementary School. Three classrooms (Rooms 18, 19 and 20) are designated for Quest Academy, and they are separated from the elementary campus by a fence. Quest students enter through a separate gate and have no contact with the younger students except when working on a community service project. Bancroft and Quest students share a main office and health office. A restroom is located in Room 20 for the exclusive use of Quest students.

## **Can a student leave the Quest Academy program?**

When a student joins Quest Academy, he/she makes a six-month commitment. When a student is ready to be exited from the program, he/she completes an Exit Portfolio and presents it to the Quest Academy Staff.

## **School Operations**

### **School Hours**

8:45 AM-3:45 PM

Students should arrive at school no earlier than 8:30. Breakfast is served from 8:30 – 8:45. They should leave school no later than 4:00 each day. Quest Academy does NOT have a modified (shortened) day during the week.

### **Closed Campus**

ALL parents, visitors, volunteers, etc., MUST check in with the main Bancroft Elementary School office staff. These campus guests will be required to sign in and will receive an ID badge to wear while on school grounds. Parents may visit Quest Academy by making an appointment for the visitation in advance with the school principal. Quest Academy students are not allowed on the Bancroft campus unless escorted by a member of the school staff.

### **Breakfast & Lunch Information**

Breakfasts and lunches may be purchased ahead of time by bringing cash or a check to the Quest Academy staff. Applications for free and reduced-price breakfast and lunch are available in the main office.

### **Private Vehicles**

Students transported to and from school by a private vehicle should be aware of all traffic laws and safety rules applying to them.

Parents should not double park to wait for their children. Plan the route so children do not have to cross the street to leave or enter the car. Please do not block entry and exit lanes from the parking areas. Please do not park at the red curb or bus areas.

## **School Services**

### **Health Services**

Students who become ill at school are provided with support from the health office adjacent to the Bancroft front office. In most instances, care consists of first aid, temperature assessment, and a phone call home to make a decision as to the student's ability to remain in school. If no one is at home and emergency contacts cannot be reached, the student will remain at school until a parent or guardian has been

contacted. Parents are required to keep the office informed of changes to emergency information and contacts.

### **Library Usage**

Students are responsible for any library book checked out. Checking out a book is a contract, which means you promise to return the book on or before the due date. Using the library is a privilege.

### **Internet Usage**

With written parental consent, students may access the internet within parameters of the district's acceptable use policy in class.

### **Counseling**

The Quest Academy counselor is available to assist students and parents in working out academic or personal problems. The counselor's main job is helping students. Students may request a meeting with the counselor, the teacher(s), or the principal at any time. Parents should call for an appointment to set up a mutually convenient time meet with the counselor, teacher, or principal.

### **Restrooms**

A private restroom is located in Room 20 at Quest Academy.

## **Parent Information**

### **Parents are Partners**

The staff at Quest Academy encourages parents/guardians to be actively engaged in their child's education. Parents are strongly encouraged to communicate regularly with teachers and to assure regular and timely attendance.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Teachers are always glad to talk with parents regarding their child's progress. All parents should feel free to call the school for an appointment.

### **Student Insurance**

The La Mesa-Spring Valley School District maintains no insurance coverage for individual students. Thus, all parents are urged to take out low-cost student insurance for the entire school year. Insurance information is distributed at the beginning of the school year. Parents should read the information carefully and contact the insurance company directly for additional information and enrollment.

## **School Emergencies**

If an emergency, such as an earthquake, occurs while students are in class, we will hold the students, along with their teachers, here at the school until a parent or a designated guardian listed on the student information card, picks them up. School personnel stay at the school site to assist the children in case of an emergency.

## **Messages to Students**

Please notify the teacher in writing or by phone in advance to make special arrangements for changes in transportation, visiting friend's houses, etc.

## **Medications**

La Mesa-Spring Valley School District recognizes some children need to take medication at school. To encourage school attendance, school personnel will assist in carrying out a physician's recommendations. However, the following precautions must be observed for the safety of your child and others and to comply with the law.

1. All medication must be brought to school by an adult and accompanied by "Authorization for Medication Administration," Form 09562, signed by the parent and physician. A new medical authorization is needed at the beginning of a new school year.
2. Medication must be brought in its prescription bottle labeled with student's name, physician's name, amount of medication, and time to be given.
3. Over-the-counter medication must be in its original container labeled with student's name and accompanied by written physician instructions.
4. Any special instructions for storage or likely side effects, i.e., drowsiness, should be noted.
5. Students will be assisted with medication by a health technician.
6. Under no circumstances will school personnel provide aspirin or any other medication without written authorization signed by parent and physician. Students observed by school personnel administering unauthorized medications to themselves or to others will be reported to the principal and parent/guardian.
7. Any medications not picked up at the end of the school year will be destroyed. They will not be kept at the school from one year to another.

## **Change of Address**

It is important that you keep the school office informed of any telephone or address change to assure contact during emergencies, delivery of report cards, and other important notices from the school.

## **Uniform Policy and Dress Code**

See Dress Code document.

## **Attendance**

### **Policy**

Regular attendance at school supports academic achievement and prepares students for future success in the adult workplace. Excessive absences or tardiness will also affect the student's permanent record. (Ed. Code Sec. 48200 states that all children between the ages of 6 and 16 are subject to compulsory full-time education.) Chronic absences and/or tardies will be reported to the School Attendance Review Board for action. Good attendance is a requirement of the Quest Academy Contract.

### **Independent Study Agreement**

Independent Study Agreements are available for students who are ill or are absent due to travel or family necessity for five days or more. Contact the main office a minimum of two days prior to the absence to allow time for preparation of the assignments.

### **Absences**

When a student is absent, the parent should contact the school office at 619-668-5890.

### **Leaving During School Hours**

If a student needs to leave school early, the parent or guardian must come into the Bancroft office to sign for the student's release. The person picking up the student must be listed on the registration form for that student. After signing out the student, a school staff member will escort the student to the office.

### **Tardy Policy**

All students are expected to be in their seats in the classroom with the necessary instructional materials, prepared to work, exactly on time. This gives all students in the class an opportunity to take full advantage of the learning time provided.

Excessive tardiness may result in referral to the School Attendance Review Team (SART). Under the provisions of the California State Education Code:

*“Any child absent or tardy in excess of 30 minutes without a valid excuse on three or more days may be reported truant. If reported truant and again absent one or more days, the child may be reported truant a second time. He/She is deemed a habitual truant if reported three or more times.”*

### **Truancies**

Under provisions of the California State Education Code:

*“Any pupil subject to compulsory full-time education or to compulsory continuation education who is absent from school without valid excuse more than three days or tardy in excess of 30 minutes on each of more than three days in one school year is a truant . . .”*

The habitual truant may be referred to the District School Attendance Review Team for a hearing, which may result in referral to the juvenile court system.

### **Homework During Absences**

After being absent three days or more because of illness, parents may request homework assignments from the teacher. We require twenty-four hour notice before coming to pick up requested homework.

## **Academic Success**

Our goal at Quest Academy is to have ALL students achieve and be successful in school. Our creed is "Failure is NOT an option." We pledge to work with each student at his/her own ability level and to move him/her forward to high levels of achievement and academic excellence.

### **Grades**

Report cards are mailed home at the end of each grading period. Letter grades of A, B, C, D, or F are given. Parents are also encouraged to discuss their child's academic progress with Quest Academy Staff throughout the year.

## **Criteria for Middle School Academic Achievement**

### **Grades**

#### **A**

A pupil who earns an "A" grade is one who in most instances:

- Demonstrates outstanding scholarship and grasp of the designated subject area.
- Meets and regularly exceeds course and/or state/district content standards in every respect.
- Completes assigned work thoroughly and accurately.
- Independently applies knowledge and skills to new situations.
- Expresses self clearly and effectively.
- May show unique perception and depth of study in the field.

#### **B**

A pupil who earns a "B" grade is one who in most instances:

- Demonstrates strong scholarship and achievement in the designated area.
- Meets and often exceeds course and/or state/district content standards in every respect.
- Completes assigned work with above-average quality and few errors.
- Is able to retain facts and principles independently.
- Expresses self clearly and effectively.

## C

A pupil who earns a “C” grade is one who in most instances:

- Demonstrates satisfactory scholarship and achievement in the designated area.
- Meets most course and/or state/district standards.
- Needs some individual direction and reteaching to complete assigned work.
- With help, applies knowledge and skills to new situations.

## D

A pupil who earns a “D” grade is one who in most instances:

- Demonstrates less than satisfactory scholarship and achievement in the designated area. Meets few course and/or state/district content standards.
- Seldom completes assigned work without individual direction from the teacher and ongoing supervision.
- Rarely applies knowledge and skills to new situations.
- May have difficulty expressing self adequately.

## F

A pupil who earns an “F” grade is one who in most instances:

- Fails to comprehend the subject matter or fails to demonstrate achievement in the designated area.
- Does not meet course and/or state/district standards; does not fulfill requirements of the class.
- Seldom or never completes assigned work; may reject teacher assistance.
- Does not or cannot apply knowledge and skills to new situations.
- May not express self adequately.
- May not be capable of progressing without extensive remediation.

## **Criteria for Citizenship Grade**

Every effort shall be made to distinguish between the academic grade and the citizenship grade. However, it is recognized pupil effort may affect the academic grade. The following marks shall be used to indicate a pupil’s citizenship: O—Outstanding, G—Good, S—Satisfactory, N—Needs Improvement, U—Unsatisfactory. Teachers shall consider the following characteristics when determining citizenship grades:

Courtesy

Helpfulness

Responsibility

Work habits

Attitude

Attendance

Preparation

Self-control

Participation

Organization

## **Student Responsibilities**

### **Cell Phone Policy**

State Law allows students to have cell phones on campus in case of emergency. However, students are not allowed to have the cell phone on their person during class time. Cell phones are to be turned in to a Quest staff member at the beginning of the school day. The cell phones are locked in a cabinet in the classroom and returned to the students at the end of the day.

Cell phones will be confiscated and returned only to the parent if a violation occurs. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones.

### **Nuisance Items**

Students are not allowed to bring any items from home without prior approval from the Quest Staff. Backpacks and purses are NOT allowed at school.

### **Physical Education**

The State Board of Education requires that every student take physical education, unless excused by a licensed physician.

### **Bicycles**

Students may ride bicycles to school. Students who violate proper bicycle traffic or safety rules coming to or going from school will have their bicycle privileges suspended. The school does not assume responsibility for the safety or security of bicycles.

- By law, helmets must be worn.
- All bicycles are to be parked in the enclosed Quest Academy area and must be locked.
- Locks are not to be shared.
- Bicycles may not be ridden on school grounds. Students must walk their bicycles to and from the street.
- Skateboards, skates, scooters, or rollerblades may not be used to get to or from school.

## **Student Activities**

### **Eighth Grade Promotional Activities**

Promotional activities are awarded on the basis of satisfactory achievement, behavior, and attendance.

### **Promotional Dress**

Eighth graders should **wear appropriate clothes for this event**. Students should either wear his/her promotion clothes to school in the morning or bring them to make a change

just before the promotion ceremony.

- Ladies: No spaghetti straps, strapless, or halters unless a wrap or sweater is worn to cover bare shoulders. No long, formal dresses; flat shoes or nice sandals; clothing may not be too tight or revealing. Pants are acceptable.
- Gentlemen: Nice pants (jeans are acceptable if they are in good condition); nice shirt; ties are optional; no hats; no tuxedos.

### **Academic Honesty—Policies regarding Cheating**

Academic honesty means doing your own work. Academic dishonesty, or cheating, is using someone else's work and submitting it as your own. Some examples of academic dishonesty are copying another student's answers on homework, class work, or a test; using notes or "cheat sheets" during an examination (unless permitted by the teacher); taking an essay or report from a magazine or web site and passing it off as your own; or lifting well-phrased sentences from a source without crediting the author and using quotation marks.

Occurrences of academic dishonesty may result in lowered academic and/or citizenship grades. Administrative action may be taken in severe cases.

### **Student Conduct/Behavior**

Students and parents will be informed of classroom/school rules. Through a discipline presentation, students will be informed of the academic/behavioral expectations and consequences at Quest Academy. They will also be aware of the positive consequences of exhibiting good behavior at school. Students are expected to obey school rules at all times. The California Education Code allows schools the authority to monitor student conduct on the way to and from school.

### **Behavior Toward Guest Teachers**

Guest teachers are provided to continue the academic program of students during the absence of their regular teacher. They have the same authority as the regular teachers. Guest teachers will be treated with the same respect afforded the regular teachers.

### **Social Behavior and Conduct**

Any excessive display of affection is inappropriate on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a safe and orderly manner. Pushing, shoving, horseplay, chasing, throwing objects, etc., are considered unsafe behaviors.

### **In-School Suspension**

ISS is used when an administrator or teacher feels a student would benefit from a controlled environment and as an alternative to home suspension. Students will be assigned ISS for reasons such as: unacceptable behavior, tardies, or defiance of the teacher. The length of the time assigned will vary; however, if the student is not successful, he or she may be placed on out-of-school suspension.

