

Student Handbook

2009 – 2010



Las Sendas Elementary

Julia B. Kelly, Principal
Las Sendas Elementary School
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Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to Las Sendas Elementary School. It continues to be a pleasure and privilege to serve as principal of this terrific school. The staff and I look forward to another exciting year that provides students with positive educational experiences. We appreciate and value the support that this community gives our school and we remain committed to be worthy of that support.

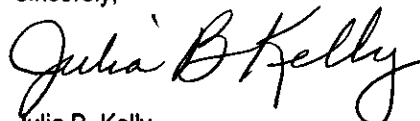
We want to have an open and honest communication with all of you – our clients. Please help us by participating in this kind of communication. As we begin this school year, remember that classroom assignments, bus routes and stops, and classroom schedules are all tentative. Oftentimes adjustments are required. We appreciate your cooperation in those cases where changes need to occur.

At Las Sendas we focus on mastery of basic skills in reading, math, and written and oral communication. In addition, we introduce students to a broad range of experiences in science, social studies, art, music and physical fitness. Further emphasis is placed on character education and development. For the enjoyment of our school community, these basic character traits are depicted on our rotunda which is located in our inner courtyard. We hope everyone enjoys the setting created there.

Some special features of our school include tile mosaic works, designed and installed by students; a beautiful kaleidoscope with a container filled weekly by different classrooms; a bronze sculpture triptych designed especially for our school with input from students, and murals painted by students. A large number of students are involved in music and participate in orchestra, band or chorus. The recent addition of a rock-climbing wall, compliments of our generous PTO, gives students opportunity to build physical strength and confidence.

Please feel free to contact your child's teacher or me anytime you have questions, comments or suggestions. Together, we will continue to enjoy our "excelling label" and we can make our school a fabulous school for your children.

Sincerely,



Julia B. Kelly
Principal

All About Las Sendas Elementary School

Campus Visitation

- Parents are welcome to visit their own child's classroom, but for the safety of all students, such visits must be arranged and approved in advance by the principal.
- **All parents, visitors and volunteers must check in through the office first before entering the campus.**
- Volunteers are welcome to assist in many aspects of the school's operation. Parents are discouraged from bringing preschool children or infants with them.
- Conferencing with a teacher, however brief, needs to be scheduled outside of class time.
- We do not allow children from other schools to visit Las Sendas during school hours.
- Cell phones cannot be on "ring mode" while visiting or volunteering.
- Please keep our student dress code in mind while visiting or volunteering. Your good example is appreciated.

Class and Office Hours

Grades K - 6	7:45 a.m. - 2:15 p.m. (1:45 p.m. on Wednesdays)
Office	7:05 a.m. - 3:25 p.m.

Students who enter their classrooms after the 7:45 a.m. bell are tardy. For safety reasons, students are not to arrive on campus prior to 7:25 a.m. unless they are in a supervised activity or program. Upon dismissal, students are to go directly home unless they are, again, involved in a supervised activity or program.

Know Your School

Colors: Purple & Turquoise

Mascot: Coyote

Motto: Creating Pathways for the Future

School Parties

There are generally three school parties during the year:

- Halloween
- Christmas
- Valentine's Day

Parties are usually held in the individual classrooms during the last 15 - 45 minutes of the appropriate school day and consist of light refreshments and activities and/or games appropriate to the type of party and the age of the students.

The celebration, if any, of teachers' or students' birthdays is restricted to the sharing of small refreshments the last 5 minutes of the school day or, with the teacher's permission, can be incorporated into the lunch period. Commercially prepared and individually wrapped treats are encouraged. As another option, the Food & Nutrition Department can provide classroom treats with advance orders. **Please notify the teacher, in advance, of bringing any treats into the classroom.** In lieu of treats, please consider a "book donation" to our library. Our media specialist can provide details on this celebration idea.

Wednesday Envelope

Every Wednesday various items of information and interest will be compiled and sent home. Please empty the envelope and return it promptly so it will be available the following week.

School Newsletter

Every other Wednesday, a newsletter, the "Coyote Howler," will be posted on our website. A limited number of "paper" copies will be available in the office if you would prefer that method of communication. As this school year unfolds, we hope to also send the newsletter to families via e-mail. Please be patient as we use eco-friendly technology to communicate with you.

Parent Communication

At Las Sendas we believe it is important to keep parents informed of their child's progress more frequently than report cards allow. Therefore, teachers use a system between report cards to communicate to you, the parents. As a result of these interim reports, there should not be any negative surprises on report cards. In the primary grades these reports are set at 1 to 3 week intervals; in the intermediate grades these reports are set at 3 to 5 week intervals. In addition, teachers may communicate general class news through newsletters, class newspapers, etc. Your child's teacher will give you details on what to expect.

Student Communication

Messages: To help assure that end of the day messages are given to children with a minimum of interruption to a classroom, such messages must be received in the office at least 30 minutes before dismissal.

Forgotten Items: Students, as a general rule, will not be called to the office to pick up forgotten items. Instead, students may come to the office at recess or other break times to see if such items have been brought to school.

Early Sign-out: To sign your child out of school before dismissal, proper identification must be shown, if requested. Office personnel will call the classroom for your child. Teachers cannot release a child directly to a parent.

Homework

Homework is given at all grades at Las Sendas. It is given for the purposes of developing responsibility in our students and providing opportunity for students to practice skills. Homework also allows parents to see what a child is learning at school on a nightly basis. As a general rule, homework will be sent home Mondays through Thursdays, with Wednesdays being designated as "Math Night" schoolwide; but math homework will not be limited to that day only. In addition to specific homework assignments, students are encouraged to spend time on R.I.S.E. or QUEST reading, math facts, and spelling words. Our homework policy is in keeping with the district's policy. If at anytime your child is spending too much time on homework, please communicate with the teacher so the reasons can be explored and remedies can be found.

Make-up Work

When a child is absent from school **two or more consecutive days**, make-up work will be available upon request from the parent. Because of teachers' schedules and teaching responsibilities, it is not possible for assignments to be available on the first day of an absence. Upon the child's return to school, the student will receive missed assignments and will be expected to complete and return them within a reasonable amount of time.

Those students who know, in advance, of an extended absence, may request assignment information in advance; however, the teacher is not obligated to provide such assignments and may choose to have the child complete specific assignments upon his/her return to school.

Student Recognition

Recognition is given to students who meet certain criteria in academics and behavioral performances. A traditional **Honor Roll** for students in grades 4 through 6 provides such an opportunity. Students in those grades who earn all A's and B's in **all achievement areas** on their report card, and who have all 4's and 3's in **all effort areas** qualify for Honor Roll. In addition we have "**Leaders of the Pack**" for students in grades 5 and 6 only who make the Honor Roll with all A's and all 4's.

Throughout the year, students are also recognized on school-wide announcements and in classrooms for positive behaviors and achievements.

In addition, at the conclusion of each school year, certificates and awards are given to students for a wide variety of achievements and school involvement.

Lunch Procedures

Money for lunches may be deposited for any amount into a "lunch account" in your child's name. Funds may be deposited any morning through the teacher's attendance procedures or may be deposited on-line through myLunchMoney.com. Many parents select these methods of payment to avoid having children lose or forget money. Students may also purchase lunch each day with cash. A notice showing a low account balance will be sent home on Wednesdays. If a child loses or forgets lunch money, the cafeteria will provide a peanut butter sandwich and a carton of milk. We strongly discourage students from borrowing money from other students or staff, or from sharing lunches. If you desire to have your child come home for lunch, we must have a written note in the office. Children who have such permission must, however, return on time and sign in for afternoon instruction. Individual class lunch times are available from your child's teacher.

P. T. O.

It is our desire and intent to have a very active P.T.O. For that we need **your** help and involvement! P.T.O. membership is automatic to all parents and teachers at Las Sendas. By-laws are available in the office. Please join us for meetings and activities. Information is available in the office. P.T.O. officers may be contacted through their mailbox at the school.

School Improvement

Parent involvement and input is important at Las Sendas. In our effort to involve more parents, a School Improvement Advisory Council exists. By-laws are available in the office. Parents and staff are generally elected each spring to serve on this Council. The S.I.A.C. may be contacted through its mailbox at the school.

C.A.R.E. (Character and Responsibility Education)

Mesa Public Schools has developed a program called C.A.R.E. Character education is receiving an increasing amount of attention nationwide, both in schools and communities, as a possible means of turning around the apparent decline of good citizenship traits in our children. We have a responsibility as educators and parents to not only provide academic opportunities, but to emphasize a common set of social skills reflecting those inherent in the founding people of our country and community. This responsibility includes supporting the family and helping the students develop and form a healthy value system that leads to a responsible, ethical, and motivated citizenry -- citizens who make a caring difference in their world.

One of the elements of the C.A.R.E. program is to recognize and learn from historical and contemporary role models. The individuals studied are selected for any of the following reasons:

- contributing to their fields
- making a difference or having an impact on the lives of others
- overcoming hardships or adversity to achieve goals
- taking personal risks for the advancement of mankind
- using their influence/celebrity status to become an advocate for change or a particular cause
- making a great personal sacrifice to help others
- fulfilling lifelong dreams through courage and determination

In researching these individuals, students and teachers remember that these people are **human** first, and role models who made significant contributions to our world, second. All of their actions may not have been "perfect" throughout their lives. However, their contributions should be recognized and remembered.

Reminders of important characteristics are beautifully engraved on plaques in the rotunda area at the center of our campus. Each month we will feature a different theme, learning about the month's characteristic and choosing a student from each classroom who exemplifies that characteristic. Those students will be chosen **Student of the Month** for their classroom.

SEPTEMBER Cooperative (team-worker, helpful, encouraging, friendly, supportive)

OCTOBER Respectful (of self, others, the environment; confident, proud, capable, assured, appreciative, self-reliant)

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER Courteous/Caring (kind, polite, considerate, generous, giving, tolerant, compassionate, thoughtful, patient)

JANUARY Dedicated (persevering, diligent, conscientious, self-disciplined, hard working, self-directed, resilient, enthusiastic, industrious)

FEBRUARY Civic-minded (patriotic, respects legitimate authority, values learning, knowledgeable about U.S.A., appreciates education, courage of convictions, serves community)

MARCH Honest (trustworthy, fair, sincere, equitable, truthful)

APRIL Responsible (reliable, dependable, accountable)

MAY Appreciative (expresses gratitude, values others, acknowledges acts of kindness, encouraging)

BEHAVIORAL RULES, EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

For school to be safe and for students to be able to learn in the best atmosphere possible, our district, school and classrooms have guidelines for student behavior. At the beginning of each year your child's teacher sends home the **guidelines** for her/his **classroom** that will help learning occur with the least degree of effort spent on student discipline. The **District Guidelines** cover the legal rights and responsibilities of children attending public schools. In this handbook we focus on **School Guidelines** for students' behavior and what their responsibilities are within the school setting.

Guidelines for Acceptable Behavior

At Las Sendas, a safe and orderly learning environment is emphasized and expected. School and class rules and expected behavior are explained and taught to students. They are also posted in classrooms and shared with parents. Any child who does not follow the rules chooses to receive negative consequences. Teachers carry out classroom procedures in a fair and consistent manner. We maintain good discipline by recognizing and praising good behavior and taking corrective action when a child misbehaves. We make every effort to fully communicate with parents when problems arise, so we can work together to improve the child's behavior.

In general, students are to:

1. Obey instructions of all staff members promptly and courteously.
2. Always walk in a safe and orderly manner within each building and the inner campus. No running.
3. Use all school equipment and facilities in a safe and respectful manner.
4. Keep the school buildings and grounds free of litter, graffiti, and other defacing types of materials.
5. Eat food only in the cafeteria unless there is a special activity for the day.
6. Not bring or chew gum at school.
7. Remain on school grounds until dismissal or when given specific permission from the office. Before regular dismissal time, parents must go to the office for early release of a child.
8. Settle disagreements peacefully without fighting, threats, name calling, put-downs or insults.
9. Use appropriate language according to the district's guidelines.
10. Not use electronic devices, including cell phones, at school or during school activities.

Personal Property

1. Students should not bring personal items to school that can be damaged, that may cause interruption to learning, or that may create a safety problem.
2. Responsibility for all personal items rests with the student bringing them.
3. Personal stereo headsets are not allowed without special permission from a teacher; and specifically, must not be worn when walking or biking to or from school for safety reasons.
4. Hats may be worn only outside the buildings. Exceptions may be made for students with medical issues. Hats are to be worn facing forward.
5. A child, with parent permission and teacher approval, may donate playground recess equipment. Such items become the property of the school and may be used by all students.
6. Students are not to bring toys to school.

Critical Rules to Know and Follow

1. Do not fight, tackle, hit, push, shove, trip or hurt each other in any manner.
2. Do not throw rocks or any objects which could hurt a person or damage property.
3. Do not threaten or intimidate others.
4. Do not use profane language or gestures.
5. Do not spit or bite.
6. Do not bring any dangerous objects to school. Weapons of any kind, including pocket knives, are prohibited. (Toy guns and toy knives are also not permitted.)
7. Do not have any smoking materials of any kind. (This includes "poppers" or "fire crackers.")
8. Do not have incendiary devices of any kind.
9. Do not bring to school any object which causes disruption.
10. Do not sell or trade any item at school without prior approval of the principal.
11. Do not vandalize or deface school property or property which belongs to others. Parents/Guardians are financially responsible for loss or damage to school property, whether accidentally or deliberately damaged.

Serious consequences will be given for any infraction of the above rules

Consequences

Negative consequences will occur if a student chooses to break a rule. Also, students will be given opportunities to learn from their mistakes. Parents will be notified if serious or persistent problem behaviors exist. In more serious or repetitive cases, the Mesa Unified School District's Discipline Memo will be used. As much as possible, consequences will be chosen which relate to the infraction.

Students who demonstrate inappropriate behavior in the lunchroom or playground may be isolated from these areas at the time for the remainder of the period. Classroom teachers may take additional action following such periods. In addition, classroom teachers may use similar discipline techniques for classroom disruptions. Such actions might include, but are not limited to, a discussion of the problem and more appropriate ways to handle such situations, loss of upcoming privileges or recess periods, or isolation from classmates for a part of the day.

Students involved in severe or repetitive misbehavior will be referred to the principal. Students may be sent home from school or suspended in such cases. In-school suspension may also be used. As required by law, the police department will be notified in certain circumstances.

Rewards

Students who consistently follow school and class rules will be recognized by receiving positive consequences. Such recognition may include:

- participation in special activities.
- receipt of a citizenship award.
- receipt of a Happy Gram.
- participation in a special privilege.
- being selected as Student of the Month.
- other types of rewards as arranged between student and teacher.

Even more important than tangible rewards, it is our goal that students will enjoy behaving well and that they will feel personal satisfaction from their own positive behavior.

Cafeteria

1. Be quiet when entering and leaving the cafeteria, while lining up and during all lunch time conversations. Save loud voices for outside.
2. Be respectful in word and manner to the cafeteria staff.
3. Use appropriate table manners.
4. Keep the area clean; put wrappers into bags and utensils in trash cans.
5. Remain seated while eating and until dismissed.

Restrooms

1. Keep voices quiet.
2. Wash hands after using restrooms.
3. Keep restrooms neat, using paper towels or dryers as needed and placing towels in trash cans.
4. Return immediately to class or to the playground after using the restrooms.
5. Respect the privacy of others.

Drinking Fountains

1. Keep hands to yourselves.
2. Leave spaces between students and stand quietly.
3. If there are long lines waiting, take a short drink and give others a turn.

Assemblies

1. Follow teachers' instructions quietly.
2. Listen and act as a polite audience; clap when appropriate.
3. Appropriate school behavior is expected at all times on campus, including evening activities and performances.
4. Toddlers should sit with parents at performances.

Sidewalks and Crosswalks

1. Walkers have the right-of-way. Students should always walk on sidewalks when they are available.
2. Cross the street in the crosswalk only.
3. Don't walk in the driveway, parking lot, or the street unless accompanied by an adult.

Transportation

1. Students planning to go home together should meet by the flagpole.
2. Plans should be made **before** coming to school about going to friends' homes.
3. Remember, buses are for designated students only.
4. For the safety of all, parents in vehicles must follow traffic patterns.

Students Being Driven

1. Walk on sidewalks only.
2. Students should not be in the parking lot unless accompanied by an adult.
3. Parents, please do not ask your child to come into the parking lot or to cross the street without using the crosswalk.
4. In the fall of each year a traffic map will be distributed to parents; please check for changes from the previous year and follow the plan.
5. Wait until car comes to a complete stop before entering or exiting.
6. Stay behind the "yellow line" to be picked up.

Field Trips

1. Behavior on field trips is to mirror appropriate school behavior.
2. Parent chaperones must follow the directions of staff.

Bus Riders

1. Obey driver's instructions.
2. Keep aisle clear.
3. Remain seated until your stop.
4. Keep everything inside the bus.
5. Talk quietly; don't yell.
6. Keep your hands to yourself; be courteous.
7. No eating or drinking on the bus.
8. Don't throw anything.
9. Do not carry animals, weapons, tobacco, alcohol, drugs or dangerous objects onto the bus.
10. Do not play radios or tape recorders.
11. Buses are for designated students only.
12. **Use assigned bus stop only. Changes must have the approval of the principal given annually.**

At the Bus Stop

1. Help keep the bus on schedule by being on time at the designated bus stop.
2. Stay out of the street at all times while waiting for the bus. Be alert.
3. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before attempting to enter the bus.
4. Be respectful of the property around the bus stop.

Discipline policy concerning bus incidents is set by the district. Bus riding is a privilege. Inappropriate behavior at the bus stop, on the bus, or in the process of boarding or getting off the bus may result in the loss of bus privileges.

Bikes, Roller Blades, Skateboards

1. Bikes may not be ridden on school grounds after 7:00 a.m. or before 4:00 p.m., or in the inner campus at any time.
2. Cross only at the crosswalks, and walk bikes when in the crosswalk.
3. Bikes must be kept in the bike enclosure.
4. Obey all bicycle laws.
5. Wear a bike helmet when riding.
6. Roller blades, skateboards, scooters and other such items are prohibited at school.

Walkers

1. Obey all pedestrian laws.
2. Meet friends and siblings by the flagpole.
3. Cross the street only at the crosswalk.
4. Use sidewalks and paths whenever available.

Rainy Days

All of these rules become even more important on rainy days because visibility is reduced, sidewalks are slippery, and people are anxious to seek shelter. Please be especially mindful of safety on our occasional rainy days and, again, refer to the traffic map for directions.

After School

1. Students must be off school grounds by 2:45 p.m. unless they have authorized permission.
2. Students may not return to play on school grounds unless in an approved and authorized activity.
3. School coordinated after-school programs have priority use of fields.

Playground Rules and Playground Equipment

Students are to play in their assigned areas at the appropriate times, obeying the following rules.

Bars

1. Move carefully and give others room.
2. Count to 50 slowly out loud to let others who are waiting know you are counting; kindergartners say the alphabet slowly two times.
3. When skipping bars, only skip one at a time.

Swings

1. Swing straight, don't twist.
2. Sit, don't stand
3. One at a time.
4. Do not push others.
5. Get out of the swing after it has stopped; don't bail out.
6. Count to fifty slowly when others are waiting for a turn.
7. Don't run in front of swings.

Slides

1. Only go up the stairs.
2. Go down the slide sitting, with feet first.
3. Once at the bottom, get out of the way quickly.
4. Slide one at a time.
5. Keep the slides clean.

Climbing Apparatus

1. Move carefully and give others room.
2. Don't climb on top of anyone else.
3. Don't tie clothing to the climbing apparatus.

Sand and Rocks

1. Do not throw anything that may hurt others or play in a manner that may hurt others.
2. Respect those making sand castles or forts off to one side; do not damage their work.
3. Playing tag or chasing is not allowed in the sand areas.

Games

1. Everyone agrees on the rules at the beginning of the game.
2. Anyone may join the game if she/he follows the rules.
3. Throw balls and frisbees in a safe manner.
4. Official 4-square rules, as taught in P.E. class, must be followed.

Emergency Vehicles

If students see emergency vehicles on campus, common sense dictates that they should stay away. If there is a chance that you or someone else could get hurt, don't go near the action or become involved in it. Be ready to follow quick directions given by an adult.

Dress Code

As indicated by Mesa Public School guidelines, students are expected to dress appropriately for school. These expectations are as follows:

1. Do not wear clothing that promotes alcohol, tobacco or the use of illegal substances.
2. Do not wear clothing printed with inappropriate language.
3. Do not wear gang attire.
4. Do not wear excessively baggy or droopy pants or shorts.
5. Hats may be worn only outside the buildings. Exceptions may be made for students with medical issues. Hats are to be worn facing forward.
6. Underwear should not be showing.
7. Do not wear clothing that exposes the chest, abdomen, genital areas or buttocks.
8. Do not wear pajamas or other sleepwear to school.
9. No tube tops, halter tops or spaghetti straps may be worn (Straps must be wider than 1 ½ inches, armholes must be less than 2 inches from the armpit.).
10. Tops must cover the midriff all the way to the pants, even when a student raises a hand or writes on the board.
11. Dresses & skirts must extend at least 1" beyond the tip of the student's fingers.
12. Footwear must be worn at all times. Flip-flops are discouraged. Shoes such as "wheels in the heels," that pose safety hazards, are prohibited. For safety, appropriate shoes need to be worn for P.E.

For more specific dress code guidelines, please refer to MPS District "Dress & Grooming" standards.

MISSION STATEMENT

Las Sendas Elementary School

The mission of Las Sendas Elementary School is to promote a secure, safe environment for all students. We are committed to:

- high expectations for academic achievement.
- positive emphasis on character development.
- varied opportunities for enrichment in the arts.
- introduction and development of the scientific process through problem solving, exploration and discovery.
- cultivation of physical and emotional well-being.
- use of technology to support learning.

Through the cooperation of families, school and community, we encourage our students to enjoy the benefits of lifelong learning and to become positive, active members of our society.