

# Pony Express Elementary School

2011 - 2012 Parent and Student Handbook



Our Motto:

“I am here to learn.  
I will do my best.  
I will respect and care for others.  
I will be a responsible member of my learning community.  
What I do today will make a difference.”

School Colors: Red, White and Denim Blue

Mascot: We are the Riders

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## Quality Education Commitment The Student

As a Pony Express Elementary student it is my responsibility to:

1. Attend school every day and be on time to all classes.
2. Come to school prepared with books, paper, pencils, and any materials or assignments as directed by the teacher.
3. Maintain a positive attitude toward learning and believe in my ability to succeed.
5. Respect myself and the rights and property of others.

## The Faculty and Staff

The faculty and staff accepts the responsibility to:

1. Provide an appropriate instructional program for each student.
2. Provide an orderly classroom with a safe learning environment.
3. Develop programs and activities which respond to the academic, and developmental needs of each student.
4. Assist parents in helping their child develop self-discipline, self-respect, and self-confidence so that he/she may participate in school as a responsible member.
5. Engage in regular communication with parents regarding student progress.

## The Parent

As the parent, it is my responsibility to:

1. Send my child to school each day on time, prepared with all necessary materials, well rested, fed, and properly dressed.
2. Check my child's homework on a regular basis.
3. Provide my child with suitable study conditions at home such as a desk or table, books, and supplies.
4. Communicate with my child's teacher when I am concerned about my child's school work or health.
5. Read the monthly newsletter and notes sent home regularly so that I will know what is happening in the school.

## Policies and Procedures

### Accidents and Illness

An Emergency and Health Information Sheet should be filled out and returned to the office by each family. This information is critical in case of accident, injury, illness, or emergency and should be kept up-to-date. Every effort will be made to contact you or the person you designate to be called

on the health sheet. **Please call when changes occur.** We will not send a child home during the regular school hours unless he/she has been officially checked out. In extreme emergencies, if we are unable to contact you, the paramedics will be called.

### Alpine Foundation

Many of our patrons make donations to Pony Express Elementary School. If you would like to donate to the school or to a particular classroom, you may make a contribution through the Alpine Foundation. The Foundation allows you to take a tax deduction for your donation and provides you with a receipt.

### Attendance

Utah Compulsory Attendance Law requires parents to have their children in school unless they are ill. Frequent absences or tardies from the day-to-day classroom experiences disrupt the learning process. The benefits of instruction, once lost, are often difficult to regain.

District policy states that students are not to arrive at school earlier than 10 minutes before class begins at 8:00 am and 9:20, since no formal supervision is provided prior to that time. If you leave for work early, we encourage you to make needed arrangements for your children with a neighbor or babysitter. Please don't drop off your children early.

**Tardy** - Arriving after the bell has rung. The most important instruction begins immediately after children arrive. Often children who are late miss important literacy instruction. Chronic tardiness will be referred to the principal.



**Truancy** - Deliberately being absent from school with or without parent's knowledge. Excused absences include: Verifiable illness and family emergencies such as hospitalization or death of a family member. Teachers and school personnel will make every effort to work with the student and parent to encourage attendance. After 3 consecutive unexcused absences the teacher will contact parents. After 5 consecutive unexcused absences the Principal will contact parents. Excessive absences will be referred to DCFS for educational neglect.

### **Student Check Out**

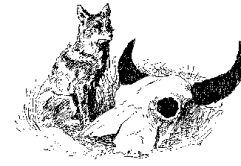
For safety and legal concerns, parents **MUST** come into the school to pick up their children if they need to check them out during school hours. Students will be turned over to their parents or guardians after parents or guardians have signed the check out log.

Please do not ask over the telephone to have your child sent home. Parents should not call to ask that their children meet them outside. Please plan ahead to allow time to check your children out of school. Your understanding of and cooperation with this policy is appreciated.

**Out of Area Students** - We are closed to out of area students due to growth and a Board of Education directive. Only children living in our school boundaries and who currently attend Pony Express Elementary on an Out of Area Request will be permitted to attend.

### **Transfer and Withdrawal of Students**

If you are moving and need to withdraw your child(ren) from school, please come to the office before 1:00 pm. The secretary will fill out the transfer form while you check out with teachers, the library, and the lunchroom. (The lunchroom staff leaves at 1:30.) Please note that your new school requires a transfer form when registering mid-year.



### **Behavior and Procedure Guidelines**

1. Follow directions the first time to a polite request
2. Keep hands, feet, and objects to self
3. No name-calling put downs, swearing, or teasing

Students are expected to be respectful to each other and to the adults in the building. We recognize that conflict may occur as children learn to get along and we actively teach behaviors that promote respect for all. Bullying situations are dealt with on an individual basis.

### **Classroom Discipline**

Each teacher follows the school's general rules in addition to their own rules posted in their room. An example of a teacher plan is as follows:

1. Warning/ discussion with child.
2. Stop and Think- 10 minutes - Behavior journal
3. Stop and Think- 15 minutes - Behavior journal/conf.
4. Removed to buddy room and call parent - teacher fills out behavior sheet.
5. Severe offense or third behavior sheet, student is sent to the principal.

Students start with a "clean slate" each day, except in cases of repeated inappropriate behavior. In this case, the teacher will start at the previous step the student was on. Severe offenses, such as fighting, vandalism, and defiance of authority, theft and offensive gestures or language are referred to the administration.

We discourage students from bringing things from home that are easily broken, lost or may be stolen, such as electronic devices and money.

Pets may be brought only with teacher permission and must be taken home immediately by an adult.



Gum is not allowed at school as it often ends up in the carpet or under desks, etc.

Safety - Please review with your child(ren) the importance of being safe on their way to and from school. Students should know which route you want them to take. There are crossing guards in front of our school and students should use these crossings. Students should obey crossing guards and traffic laws at all times. Students should never run in front of cars or buses. They should not talk to strangers nor accept rides from strangers.

Reviewing these rules every few weeks will make this school year much safer.

### **Bicycles/Scooters/Etc.**

Children may ride bicycles/scooters to school.



Students are expected to walk their bicycles and scooters once on school property. Bikes and scooters should be placed in the bike racks and **securely locked**. The school is not responsible for the security of these items. Students should not play near the bikes during recesses or play times. Bikes and scooters are not to be used during the school day. **Rollerblades, skateboards, and heales** should not be brought to school or used on school property.

### **Book Orders**

Many teachers distribute order forms to students allowing them to buy books through book companies at reduced prices. If you choose to participate, please write the checks to the specific book company for the exact amount. If you have questions you may contact your child's teacher.

### **Breakfast and Lunch**

Breakfast will be served from 7:40 to 7:55 am for A-track and 8:55 to 9:10 am for B-track in the lunchroom. A-track will not be allowed to eat during B-track time. Lunchtime varies from grade to grade. Schedules are available in the office.

Students may charge one meal in an emergency. The charge must be paid the following day. Remember, parents are responsible for keeping current lunch accounts current. You may pay online at [www.mealpay.com](http://www.mealpay.com) or call 866-800-8538.

### **Free and Reduced Meals**

Those wishing to apply for free or reduced price meals may obtain an application at the office or online at our website. To apply for free or reduced meals, households should complete an application and return it to the school or Alpine School District Office, 575 North 100 East, American Fork, Utah. Application forms are being sent to all homes with a letter to the parents or guardians in the summer mailing. This will ensure that students who qualify to receive benefits will receive them the first day of classes. Those who were on free or reduced lunches at the end of last year will remain on the program for 30 days. Reapplication must be made for the families to remain qualified. Even if you do not plan on using free or reduced lunches it is important that you apply, if you qualify.

### **Bus Rules and Procedures**

Our primary concern on the bus is safety. Students should show respect and act in a safe manner while riding the bus. They should sit with their back to the seat, facing forward, with their feet on the floor. They should not yell, scream, argue, etc. Rough housing is not permitted for the safety of all who ride the bus. If a student violates the bus rules, they may be denied the right to ride the bus.



## **Cell Phones**

Cell phones are strongly discouraged at school. They cause disruptions from incoming calls, games played during class, text messaging, inappropriate picture messages, etc. Phones should be turned off during the school day. Phones will be taken from students if they disrupt the class and returned after school.

## **Classroom Visitors**

Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time. However, for the safety of our students, All visitors must first check in and receive a visitor pass in the office. If you would like to visit a teacher's class, please call and make arrangements in advance. Please limit your visits to 30 minutes. While in the classroom, please do not interrupt the teacher or the students in the learning process.

## **Closed Campus**

For the safety and welfare of children, and in compliance with school board policies, we maintain a closed campus. Students should not leave the school grounds from the time school begins in the morning, until it ends in the afternoon. A parent or guardian must check students out if leaving early.

## **Communication**

To conserve paper, many newsletters, announcements, and information will be sent home with the youngest child attending Pony Express. Please check their backpack the first week of each month for the PTA newsletter, which will keep you updated about upcoming events happening at Pony Express Elementary. We send a Parentlink message home monthly to remind you of important dates. (Parentlink is a phone-generated message.) Visit our website frequently for information and links to the following programs:

- Skyward, which is a grade-reporting program
- On-line Scheduler, which helps you schedule time for parent teacher conference

## **Dress Code**

Clothing should be neat, clean and not distracting in appearance. Clothing, which contains slogans or insignia contrary to the educational purposes of the district are not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to vulgar words, profane or obscene slogans, pictures or advertisements for alcohol, tobacco, gangs, and drugs.

Shoes and socks must be worn both inside and outside of the school. Sandals that are strapped both to the toe and heels are permissible, but flip-flops, or other slip-on sandals are not allowed. Gym shoes should be worn for PE activities. When snow boots are worn, please send shoes to be worn in the building.

Dress for the Weather - Children should arrive at school dressed so they can play comfortably outside. All children are expected to go outside during recess unless the weather is bad. Bad weather means cold (20° or less) or wet. If you desire your child to stay in after lunch because of health, please send a note with him/her. These children read in a supervised classroom.

The following are NOT allowed:

- Short shorts or skirts - Should not be more than 2 inches above the top of the knee.
- Bike shorts or spandex or cutoffs
- Clothing containing vulgarities, profanity, or advertisements for alcohol, tobacco, and drugs
- Halter tops or Tank tops (shoulders should be covered and no large neck or arm openings)
- Bare midriffs (belly should not show)
- Head wear (i.e. bandanas and hats)
- Shoes that mark or damage floors
- Flip flops and slip on sandals
- Hairstyles that are distracting.
- Oversized clothing that exposes underwear inhibits movement, physical activity, and classroom involvement.



## Emergencies

### Sick Children

If a child is sick or injured while at school, we will call the parent or individual designated on the "Emergency and Health Information Form" to take the child home. Since we do not have the provisions to take care of sick children for long periods of time, please provide us with accurate information and names of people who may be available to get your child from school as needed.

### School Wide Emergencies

Our intent is to train students in safe emergency evacuation procedures, as well as earthquake and fire safety. In case of an evacuation where we are unable to return to the building, students will be taken to the church next to the school to await pick-up. If the neighborhood needs to be evacuated, we will transport our students to **a neighboring school and send a parent link or notify.**



## Exclusions From School

Children, staff, parents and/or volunteers will be excluded from the classroom if any of the following are noted:

- Fever over 100 degrees or above orally.
- Nausea, vomiting or abdominal pain
- Diarrhea -- Frequent, loose/watery stools
- Unusual drowsiness or tiredness
- Sore throat, acute cold or persistent cough
- Runny Nose (thick, green/yellow discharge)
- Red inflamed or discharging eyes (Pinkeye)
- Swollen glands around the jaw, ears or neck
- Any skin sore oozing of fluid
- Suspected head or body lice
- Earache
- Any unexplained rash

## Extended Day

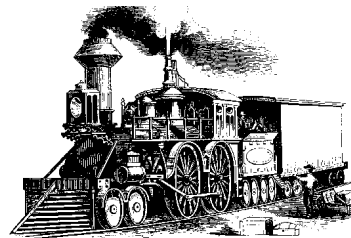
The extended Program has two tracks. Track A attends from 8:00 am to 2:15 pm. Track B attends from 9:15 - 3:30. Every class has both tracks. Each track has an hour and fifteen minutes daily where only half the class attends, which allows the students and teacher to focus on literacy.

## Fees

The Utah Constitution prohibits the charging of fees in the elementary schools. Students, kindergarten through sixth grade may not be charged for textbooks, classroom equipment, supplies, assemblies, field trips, snacks, or for anything else that takes place during the school day.

If your student loses or destroys school property, the cost of repair or replacement is not a fee and will not be waived. Schools may charge for meals served at school. (For information regarding free and reduced lunch, see the section on breakfast and lunch.)

School funds are limited, and your school may need help. They may ask you for a tax-deductible contribution of school equipment, supplies, or money. No child will be penalized for not making a donation.



## Field Trips

Often there are opportunities for learning that extend beyond the school and occasionally classes will go on field trips. Your child's teacher will send home information regarding each field trip and a permission slip. Due to limited funds, the school may request a donation to help finance the trip. All students and chaperones will purchase a



school lunch if the field trip extends into the lunch period, except in cases of allergies where the parent will provide an appropriate lunch. Special dress and grooming may be required for some trips. Sometimes parents are invited to help supervise trips. We appreciate this help, but respectfully ask that you arrange care for preschool age children.

### Fundraisers

We rely upon fundraisers to pay for many different kinds of things. Our school fundraisers pay for school repairs, copy equipment repairs, paper copies and supplies used by the staff (Pony Express has gone over our allotted budget every year by about \$1,500), student and teacher recognition, light bulbs for the projectors, etc.

The school will host 2 fundraisers a year to generate income and 1 charity drive a year (food drive, quarters for Christmas or to help a family in our community). In addition, the PTA sponsors the jog-a-thon.

We have ongoing activities to help meet the needs of the school, which we don't count as fundraisers because they really are donations. Please support these events:

- **Box Tops** are gathered and cashed in for money. It is very helpful if you will cut out each box top before you send it with your child.
- **Campbell Soup** labels may be brought in a deposited in a drawer in the office. We redeem them for educational materials and equipment from Campbell's.
- We also collect **Cream o' Weber** milk caps, **Capri Sun** drink pouches, used **cell phones**, empty **laser and inkjet printer cartridges**. These can also be deposited in the front office.
- **Smith's Food King** – Please sign up each year to help the school receive a donation.

### Grading

Students in K-3 are on a standard based reporting system. Students who have mastered concepts receive a Yes, Progressing or No.

Students 4-6 are on the following grading system:

Percents	Grades 3-6	Optional
93-100	A	P
90-92	A -	
87-89	B +	
83-86	B	
80-82	B -	
75-79	C +	
70-74	C	N
65-69	C -	
0-64	N	

### Home and Hospital Instruction

If your child has had an accident or illness and is unable to attend due to physical issues and will miss twenty or more days of school, he/she may be eligible to be taught at home by a district-appointed teacher. Please contact the school office for additional information.

### Homework

Homework should be an extension of class work. Assignments should be well planned by the teacher and fully understood by the students. Homework should rarely exceed 1/2 hour a night in K-3rd and 1 hour 4th-6th. Parents can help by giving their children a quiet place and time to work. Part of the homework assignment should be to read nightly.

### Lost and Found

To simplify the return of lost items, we ask that all caps, jackets, mittens, boots, etc. be labeled with your child's name. The lost and found is located in the lunchroom. Missing valuable or tiny articles are to be turned into the office. We encourage students to be responsible for their own personal items. Missing or lost items not claimed will be donated to the needy.

### Medication

School Personnel CANNOT give children medication (other than Tylenol) without a written





**MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION RELEASE FORM** completed by the physician. This form is available in the office. Tylenol will only be given if a parent gives permission over the phone.

## **PTA**

PTA is the Parent Teacher Association. The PTA adds strength to our school by donating many hours and funding to provide needed programs during the year. We encourage membership in the PTA by all parents. Please join at Back to School Night.

There are many ways you can be involved, such as supporting teachers, reading with children, helping with class parties and teacher appreciation. We can find something that you feel comfortable with. Studies have shown that children who see their parents involved at school take school more seriously and perform better.

## **Parent and Student Resources**

The Utah Education Network provides an excellent online resource for parents and students. Parents and students can have online access to Worldbook Encyclopedia, Wilson Biographies (110,000 biographies), Deseret News, EBSCO (journals, magazines, newspapers, encyclopedias), Culturegrams (articles about the 50 states and numerous countries), the Library of Congress, a dictionary, a thesaurus, and an almanac.

The website is: <http://pioneer.uen.org>  
The username is: pioneer  
The password is: time

## **Phone Use**

School phones are for school business and emergencies only. Please make arrangements with your child about daycare, homework, books, etc. before school. Try to avoid calling your child during the school day unless it is an emergency. We try to avoid interrupting class instruction as much as

possible. Students will be allowed to call for illness, lunch charges, etc. They will not be allowed to call for permission to go home with a friend, etc.

## **Programs**

- Awards Assembly is our end of year recognition for students who receive the following awards: Knowledge Bowl, Student Council, Presidential Academic fitness, and Hope of America. Each grade will also hold an awards presentation in front of their peers.
- Book Fairs are a program designed to promote reading by bringing books to the school for students to purchase.
- Chorus is an opportunity for 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade students to sing in a group. They put on programs during the holiday season.
- Field Day is an activity day to allow students to compete in physical activities.
- Knowledge Bowl is a district competition for 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade student teams.
- Maturation Program is a program on growing up held for 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in the spring.
- Mighty Authors Students may publish their own writing in book form at [mightyauthors.com](http://mightyauthors.com). Our school purchased a membership that anyone associated with our school may publish. To access, go to the home page and hit the sign-up button. Go to the pre-registered button. Then enter the code: 340-1-3508Ponyexr
- RAD Kids is a training that enhances the ability of children and parents to utilize knowledge, skills, and power to protect themselves from violence and harm.
- Special Education is a program designed to help students with specific learning or behavior problems.
- Student Council is comprised of representatives from each class (4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>). Student body officers are 6<sup>th</sup> graders.





## **Registration**

Utah State Law requires all children enrolled in a public school to complete immunizations and have the dates on file before admission to school or to fill out an exemption form. This is particularly relevant to kindergarten and new students. For a registration packet, please see our website. Also required is proof of residency (which may be a bill with a current address), an original, full-sized birth certificate

## **Safe Schools**

It is the policy of Alpine School District to maintain a school environment that is conducive to learning. It is the District's intent to maintain a safe and positive atmosphere by prohibiting acts of violence, aggressive behavior, intimidation, possession of weapons, criminal behavior, or gang activity on school property.

The Alpine School District Safe Schools Policy prohibits disruptive acts; dangerous weapons; hazing/harassment; abetting; and gangs, secret societies, and hate groups; and the other prohibited acts as defined and described in these rules and regulations.

## **Definitions**

Disruptive acts. Acts that disrupt the daily operation of the school include but are not limited to physical or sexual assault, intimidation, aggression, possessing, or displaying a dangerous weapon.

Dangerous Weapon. Any item capable of causing death or serious bodily injury, or a facsimile or representation of the item. Dangerous weapons, as deemed by these rules, shall include but not be limited to firearms, knives, metal knuckles, straight razors, explosives, and poisonous gases.

Hazing/Harassment. Intimidation of a student or staff member or any act that injures, degrades, or disgraces a student or staff member.

Abetting. The act of supporting, encouraging, and/or assisting activities that violate the Safe Schools policy.

Gang/Secret Societies/Hate Groups. A group of two or more people who form an allegiance and engage in a range of disruptive behaviors that may include violent or unlawful activity or which advocate hatred or discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex, national origin, or disability.

Sexual harassment. Alpine School District is committed to the maintenance of a learning environment which is free of any form of sexual harassment; an environment where students may attend school free of unwanted conduct or communication of a sexual nature; one which is in compliance with the state and Federal laws dealing with this form of discrimination.

Other prohibited acts. Students may not:

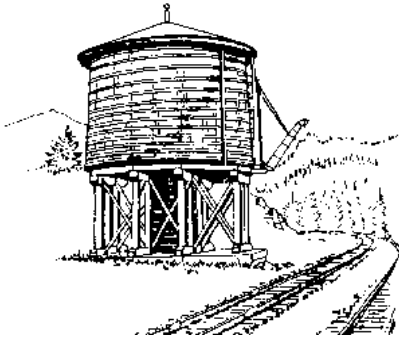
- a. Wear, possess, use, distribute, or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs, or other things which are evidence of membership or affiliation in any gangs, secret societies, or hate groups.
- b. Commit acts, or use speech, either verbal or non-verbal (gestures, handshakes, etc.) showing membership or affiliation in gangs, secret societies, or hate groups.
- c. Use speech or commit any acts or omissions in furtherance of the interests of the gang, group or society, including, but not limited to 1) soliciting others for membership, 2) requesting persons to pay for protection or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person, 3) committing other illegal acts or other violations of school district policies, 4) inciting other students to act with physical violence upon any other person, 5) defacing school property (i.e.: books, lockers, walls, etc.).

Students who participate in other prohibited activities described above shall be dealt with in accordance with the procedures outlined in Alpine School District' Rules and Regulations.



## **School Pictures**

School pictures are generally taken twice a year – once in the fall and once in the spring.



## **School Community Council**

This committee is made up of parents, teachers, and staff to address concerns and work on school improvement. This Council will look at school test results each year and participate in the School LAND Trust Grant application, which is a process that results in funding and the development of school learning goals. Parents are invited to attend. If you have any agenda items, please get them to the principal.

## **SEP Conferences**

SEP Conferences are held two times each year to set goals and celebrate successes while looking at your child's performance. They will be held in October and the end of January (watch for dates and times).

## **Skyward**

Parents have access to their child's grades at any time day or night. For a link to Skyward, please look on the school website at <http://ponyexpress.alpinedistrict.org> Your User ID and password are a randomly generated alphanumeric sequence. This information is included with each report card. Your ID and password will never change while at Pony Express.

## **Special Accommodations**

If you or your children have disabilities that require special accommodations, please contact the school Principal. 801-789-2600 or 801-610-8714.

## **Spirit Days**

Fridays are spirit days at Pony Express. On these days we encourage students to wear their Pony Express shirts or school colors (Red, and Denim Blue). Some spirit days may include hat days, western day, or a special theme. We want to encourage school spirit and pride. We hope that you can help them join in.

## **Student Insurance**

The school does not supply accident insurance for students while they are at school. The Board of Education encourages each elementary student to purchase school insurance unless they are covered by their parent's insurance plan. If you have your own insurance, you must sign the insurance waiver on the bottom of the student health sheet and return it to the office. If you have insurance questions please call 1-800-327-5400 or 1-800-328-2739.

## **Student Supplies**

All necessary supplies (pencil, paper, crayons, etc.) are furnished by the school. We encourage children to have a book bag or a backpack to carry materials to and from school.

## **Vision and Hearing Screening**

Vision screening will be done for all students in September. Students will also be screened for hearing problems periodically. Speech problems will be assessed as teachers or parents request it. You will be notified shortly thereafter if we find that there are any concerns.