

**Sierra Vista Elementary School  
2009-2010**



**10220 Paseo del Norte NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87114**

**NEW BELL SCHEDULE**

**Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday  
9:00A.M.-3:50 P.M.**

**Wednesday 9:00A.M-1:00 P.M.**

***\*Warning Bell will ring at 8:55***

***Vision Statement  
“Where Children Come First”***

***Mission Statement***

***“Sierra Vista Elementary School is a learning  
community where a child’s academic success, social  
well-being and physical safety are the basis for  
life-long learning***

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the new school year! This handbook explains our school policies and procedures. It can serve as a reference guide to help answer questions typically asked by parents each year. Please keep it in a handy location.

We hope that your experience at Sierra Vista is pleasant and look forward to a productive school year. We are looking forward to a great school year! Please feel free to contact me at 898-0272 or [tapia\\_m@aps.edu](mailto:tapia_m@aps.edu) with questions, comments or concerns.

Sincerely,  
Monica Garciasalas

## TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

Main Office .....	898-0272
Attendance Office .....	(call by 10:00 a.m.) ext. 5
Operator .....	ext. 0
Nurse .....	ext. 6
Counselor .....	ext. 7
Evaluation Specialist.....	ext. 8
Bulletin of Events .....	ext. 9
Cafeteria.....	898-2057
Campfire .....	842-8787
Transportation.....	880-3989
Bus Company.....	898-8301
Student Service Center.....	855-9040

## ATTENDANCE

Daily attendance is mandatory if students are to have the full benefit of the instructional program. The district recognizes, however, that there are situations that make absences necessary. Therefore, in accordance with district guidelines, absences may be excused for the following reasons:

- ◇ Doctor's appointments
- ◇ Illness
- ◇ Death in the family
- ◇ Family emergency
- ◇ Religious commitments
- ◇ Diagnostic testing

Please note that family vacations do not constitute excused absences.

When a student is absent for any reason, it is the responsibility of the parents to call the school attendance line at 898-0272 ext. 5 prior to 9:00 AM on the day of absence. If we do not receive a call prior to 9:00 AM you will be contacted by ParentLINK by phone. We offer this service as part of our Safe School Plan.

In accordance with district policy, students with excessive absences will be referred to the Health/Mental Health Team and an attendance contract will be developed. (See APS Student Behavior Handbook for details)

If your child is out for illness please provide us with a copy of a doctor's note for our records.

## BACKGROUND CHECKS

At Sierra Vista we welcome volunteers as partners in education. In order to keep children safe, APS requires that all volunteers have an APS approved background check. We will not make exceptions to this policy and will enforce it for all volunteers.

## **BICYCLES**

Bikes may be ridden to school provided the student has a lock. The bike must be walked on campus and must remain locked throughout the school day. The school cannot be responsible for damage or theft to student bicycles. We strongly encourage students to wear helmets and practice safe riding habits when riding bikes to school.

## **BUSES**

**Bus service is provided for students who live within the Sierra Vista boundaries but live one mile or more away from school grounds. Bus stop and routing information is available at registration or by calling the transportation office at 880-3989.**

Complaints about bus service should be addressed with the bus company or the transportation office at 880-3989.

Children should follow the school rules while waiting for the bus, boarding the bus and while being transported by the bus. Please remember that bus riding is a privilege that may be revoked if rules are violated. APS Transportation forbids children from riding buses other than those for which they are registered.

## **CAFETERIA**

Menus are given to students at the beginning of each month. Prices are as follows:

Breakfast	\$1.15
Reduced Breakfast	\$.30
Student Lunch Full price	\$1.75
Student Lunch Reduced	\$0.40
Milk	\$0.40

Lunches may be purchased daily, weekly, monthly or on a semester basis. Applications for free/reduced lunch are available from the cafeteria manager at registration or at any point during the school year. If students prefer, they may also bring sack lunches from home. Please note that sack lunches cannot be warmed by microwave or any other means.

We strongly encourage families to provide healthy lunches free of sodas or other sweet snacks as children learn best after eating healthy lunches.

Any questions regarding cafeteria issues should be directed to Jennifer Borkowski at 898-2057 or Food and Nutrition Services at 345-5561.

## **CELL PHONES**

Students may have cell phones at school provided that they are **kept in their backpacks in an off position** during the school day. Cell phones that are used during the school day will be confiscated and parents/guardians will have to pick them up in the office. Lost or stolen phones are not the schools responsibility and instructional time will not be used to look for a lost or stolen phone.

## COLLABORATION

All teachers are expected to attend grade-level collaboration as scheduled. This is an essential part of their professional development and a very valuable teaching tool. As a result, classrooms will have a substitute to cover classrooms while teachers attend. We do our best, during this time, to limit disruptions to the educational process. Therefore, it is important that students attend school as normal on these days.

## CURRICULUM

Sierra Vista uses the Albuquerque Public Schools and State of New Mexico Standards to guide instruction. The following is a list of specific curricula used at Sierra Vista to attain these standards. A list of these standards will be distributed to each student in the first week of school. References to the standards being taught will be made monthly through teacher newsletters.

### *Literacy*

Teachers at Sierra Vista use a Balanced Literacy framework to teaching reading and writing. This model is based on a research-based approach from New Zealand.

### *Math*

Students learn math through a research-based math program entitled *Everyday Mathematics*. This program is a spiraling program that is used by Sierra Vista students in Kindergarten through fifth grade.

### *Science*

Sierra Vista teachers teach science through the district science kits. This curriculum is directly tied to state and federal science standards and it is taught through a hands-on method.

## DISCIPLINE

An important part of a child's education is the development of socially acceptable behavior. We would appreciate your cooperation with helping us to enforce our school rules.

The rules are as follows:

### **Sierra Vista Scorpions...**

- ...Include Everyone
- ...Aren't Bullies
- ...Clean up After Themselves
- ...Aren't Bossy
- ...Play Safely
- ...Don't Use Cell Phones at School
- ...Don't wear make up
- ...Don't Gossip
- ...Respect the Property of Others
- ...Leave Toys and Other Valuables at Home
- ...Use Appropriate School Vocabulary not Curse Words
- ...Don't Jump off Equipment
- ...Stay within Playground Boundaries
- ...Don't Play Tag or Chase
- ...Only Throw Toys that are Appropriate for Throwing
- ...Use Playground Equipment Appropriately
- ...Use The Restrooms Appropriately
- ...Don't Go Under Portables
- ...Take Their Hats Off Inside
- ...Walk in the Halls
- ---...Walk Quickly to Class When the Bell Rings
- ...Are Quiet in the Halls
- ...Use Correct Doors when Going In and Out of the Building
- ...Show Character Counts!
- CITIZENSHIP, CARING, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, TRUSTWORTHINESS and FAIRNESS
- **...Sting with Self-esteem**

Students will receive discipline slips for violating rules. A copy of the discipline slip is available upon request. The minimum mandatory consequences listed on the matrix in the APS Handbook will be used in the event of severe behavioral infractions.

### **DRESS CODE**

Sierra Vista complies with the APS Dress Code which specifies:

- ◇ Students must wear appropriately fitting clothing. (No excessively tight or revealing clothing, no sagging or bagging permitted)
- ◇ Students may not wear clothing that advertises, displays or promotes drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sexual activity, violence, disrespect or bigotry
- ◇ Hats/caps/hoodies may not be worn in the building except when there are instructional, safety, religious or medical reasons.
- ◇ Students may not wear spiked jewelry, chains or belts with more than 2 inches excess.
- ◇ Gang-related apparel is prohibited

In addition, Sierra Vista Students:

- ◇ May not bring any form of make-up to school including glitter, lip-gloss and hair products.
- ◇ May not wear make-up or fake nails to school.
- ◇ Must wear shorts or skirts that are at least the length of their fingertips when hands are rested at their side.
- ◇ Must wear shirts that cover the midriff.
- ◇ May not wear tinted gel or hair spray.
- ◇ May not wear “Heeleys” or “Roller Blades” or any other shoes with heels.
- ◇ We **highly encourage** closed toed shoes in order to stay safe while on the playground.

If the dress code violation is correctable at school, the student will make the necessary changes. If the student needs a change of clothing, he/she will wait in the office until a parent or guardian provides appropriate clothing.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips provide an opportunity for teachers to expand on what is being taught in class or reward students for exemplary behavior. The APS district requires prior approval of field trips by the principal. Fees may be required in order for students to participate in field trips. If fees are a hardship for families please contact the office for assistance.

Please note that loss of field trip privileges may be assessed to children whose behavior on campus is unacceptable. Money paid for a field trip may be non-refundable if a child misses the activity for any reason.

**Students may not participate in field trips without official APS school field trip forms on file. Verbal permission or handwritten notes will not be accepted.**

Teachers will not release students from the field trip location. Parents must check students out in the office upon returning to school.

Finally, students siblings will not be permitted to attend field trips.

### **HOLIDAYS**

Sierra Vista complies with the APS “Religious Issues and Holidays Policy”. APS requires that educators make curricular decisions and guide discussions sensitive to varying beliefs, which neither inhibit nor advance a particular religious belief. Holiday activities (religious and/or cultural) must have a strong curricular tie.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework provides an opportunity for students to develop responsibility. Teachers at Sierra Vista will provide meaningful activities that reinforce skills introduced in the classroom. It is a tool for nurturing communications and interactions between the student, parent and school as well as a means of teaching study habits.

Homework is assigned on a regular basis daily, weekly or monthly. It is assigned to be consistent with district minimum and maximum time limits based on age and grade levels. Grades K-2 should have 20-30 minutes of homework per night. Grades 3-5 should have from 30-60 minutes of homework per night. Some homework may be assigned for extended periods. (i.e. Science fair projects)

Regarding make-up work, Sierra Vista follows APS policy of providing homework for students upon their return to school. When a student returns to school he/she will have the same number of days to make up the work missed as the number of days he/she was absent.

## **INSURANCE**

The laws in the state of New Mexico are such that school districts cannot assume liability for costs incurred through student accidents. Therefore, the Board of Education makes a student accident policy available to students in the Albuquerque Public Schools. A brochure sent home at the beginning of each new school year explains this optional policy.

## **LIBRARY BOOKS/TEXTBOOKS**

Library books and textbooks are very valuable. Please encourage your child to care for his/her books and return them as required. Lost books must be paid for so that we may replace them. Outstanding debts may impinge upon a student's registration status.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Please check the lost and found regularly. Lost clothing items and/or lunch pails are often placed in the lost and found. We strongly recommend marking your child's first and last name on clothing and lunch pails.

## **PARENT COMMUNICATION**

Teachers and staff communicate with parents in a variety of ways; several of them are described below:

### ***Progress Reports***

Standards-based Progress Reports are sent home every twelve weeks with interim reports going out at the six-week mark. The first and second progress reports are discussed during the parent-teacher conferences. The final progress report is sent home with students on the last day of school.

### ***Agendas***

Teachers in grades one through five use agenda books to communicate assignments and other information on a daily basis. Please check your child's agenda nightly to assure that you are receiving regular communication. Replacement agendas will cost \$5.00.

### ***Sierra Vista Vision***

A bi-weekly newsletter is sent out to all students on a regular basis. This newsletter has important event and announcement information. Please look for it on Fridays. It is available on the school webpage <http://sierravista.aps.edu> .

### ***Sierra Vista List Serve***

We have arranged for all school communication to be distributed via email. Please subscribe to the Sierra Vista List Serve for the most accurate and up to date school news. ***This method will be used as our primary source of communication in the event of an emergency. Sign up on the school webpage <http://sierravista.aps.edu> .***

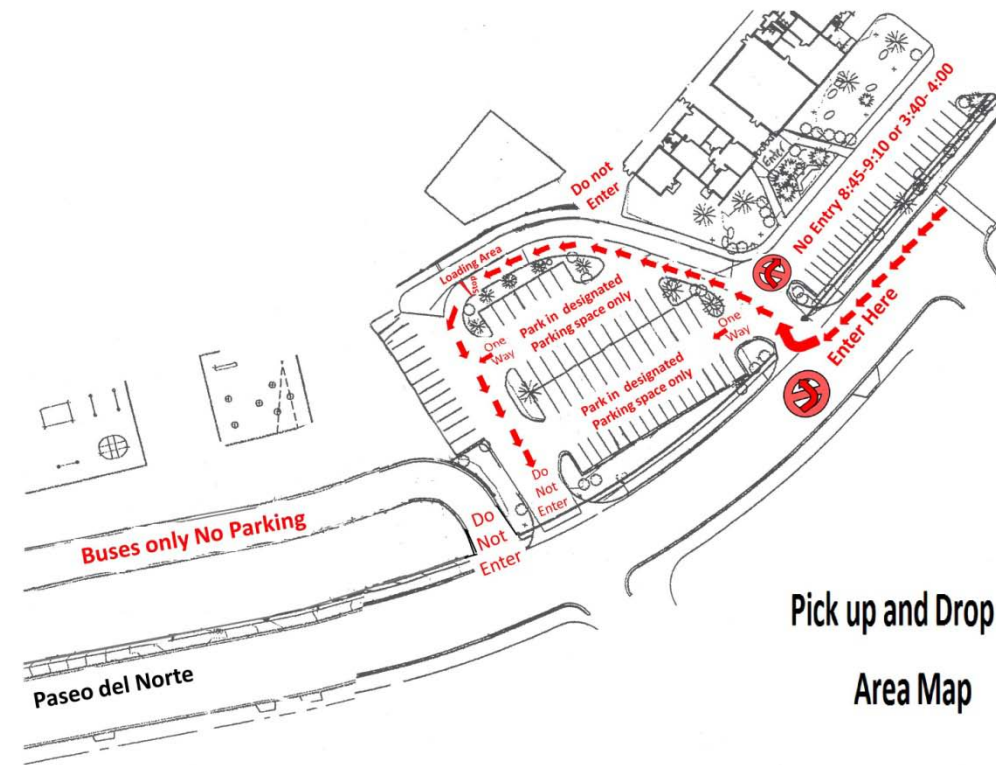
## PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Formal parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice annually. The purpose is to discuss academic performance. During conference week, students will attend school for the regular hours on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Students will not attend classes on the Thursday or Friday of conference week so that parents and teachers may meet for conferences during this time. These conferences are very important and teachers make every effort to accommodate parent schedules.

In addition, conferences may be scheduled outside of the formal conference schedule if parents or teachers have concerns about a student's academic progress. These conferences should be scheduled through the classroom teacher.

## PARKING LOT

Students should report to the playground as soon as they arrive at school. We have a drop-off and pick-up zone for cars. Families are encouraged to use the pick-up/drop off lane. If they prefer to park, they must use a designated parking space, get out of the car and escort their children to or from the playground. At no time should parents drive into the bus lane, onto the playground, or behind the school by the portables to pick up or drop off students. A map of appropriate drop off and pick up areas is enclosed in this handbook.



## PERSONAL ITEMS

Students should not bring personal items to school unless instructed to do so by their teachers. Students may not bring toys, electric items (IPods, electronic games, etc.), scooters and/or items that may be harmful to themselves or others. If brought to school, these items will be kept in the office until a parent or guardian comes to pick them up. We will not take instructional time to deal with the loss or damage of such items.

**Please note that toy weapons will be treated as look-a-likes and may result in a police report being filed.**

## **PETS**

**Pets are not allowed at school. Please do not bring pets on campus when picking up or dropping off students.**

## **PHONE MESSAGES**

For safety reasons, we will not relay phone messages to students under any circumstances. Please communicate pick-up arrangements to children before school.

## **PTA**

Sierra Vista has a very active PTA. Our PTA sponsors many school-wide initiatives including an art program, chorus and much more. On registration day, please stop by the PTA table to fill out a parent volunteer form and join the PTA.

## **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

A general list of supplies is at the end of this handbook. Copies will be distributed at the beginning of the school year. Individual teachers may request additional supplies. If purchasing supplies is a hardship, please contact the principal. Please remember that supplies may need replenishing throughout the school year. Supply lists are available on the webpage also.

## **SIERRA VISTA COUNCIL**

The Sierra Vista Council consists of the principal, staff, parents and other community members who meet to set goals for our school. Our emphasis is on providing programs and services that best serve student needs. If you are interested in serving on this council please contact the office.

## **STUDENT CHECK OUT**

If parents or guardians need to pick up students before the school day is over, they must stop by the office first. A picture ID is required to pick up a child early. **PLEASE NOTE THAT STUDENTS WILL NOT BE CALLED FROM CLASS DURING THE LAST 30 MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL DAY**

AS THIS CREATES DISRUPTIONS TO THE LEARNING PROCESS. Also, the individual picking up the student must be listed on the enrollment card. The student will be called to the office after ID is verified. Students must be signed out. We will not make any exceptions to ID verification for safety reasons. Please assist us in keeping our children safe.

## **STUDENT HEALTH**

The Health Room staff is committed to maintaining a healthy environment that will enhance the learning and well-being of all students at Sierra Vista. Forms and information is available on the webpage.

### ***Accidents***

Should a student be involved in a serious accident, the school will make every effort to contact a parent immediately. It is extremely important that the health room have current emergency contact information. Office personnel will call 911 only in a situation deemed appropriate by the health office or principal. Please stress the importance of reporting all school-related injuries to the health room.

### ***Illness***

In an effort to provide a healthy environment for all students, the health room staff treats all students who are ill by:

1. Taking their temperature
2. Checking symptoms
3. Administering appropriate care

If warranted, the health office will contact the parent to pick up the student.

Any student who has experienced a fever, persistent cough, vomiting and/or diarrhea within 24 hours of the school day needs to be carefully evaluated before coming to school. If your student is not fully recuperated from an injury or illness, please keep your student at home.

**IF A CHILD IS TOO ILL TO ATTEND RECESS HE/SHE IS TOO ILL TO ATTEND SCHOOL.**

### ***Immunizations***

All students entering an APS school for the first time must present a certificate showing up-to-date immunization. It is against New Mexico State Law for a student to attend class without current immunizations.

### ***Medication***

APS policy regarding medication states that no one on the school staff, except the nurse, may administer medication to students. In the absence of the nurse, the Health Assistant or other qualified staff member supervises the self-administration of medication by the student. Forms signed by the student's doctor are required for a student to receive any prescription medication, as well as, any over-the-counter medication taken for more than 5 school days. Students are allowed to have over-the-counter medication available in the health room on an as needed basis provided the parent completes the appropriate form and the medication comes to school in the original packaging. These forms are available in the health room. Students will be allowed to carry inhalers with them provided the appropriate forms have been signed by parent and doctor. Any medication brought to school by a student must be taken to the health room before the start of the school day. Students will not be allowed to keep medications with them on campus.

## **STUDENT PLACEMENT**

Students are placed in classrooms based on a variety of criteria. Due to the extensive process used to place children, changes in placement will not be honored without observation of the Cibola Cluster Placement Policy. Following the policy does not guarantee a change in placement.

### ***Cibola Cluster Placement Policy***

No changes in placement will be considered until the student has been in his/her assigned class for a minimum of two weeks. Should a change in placement ultimately be approved, the new

placement will be based, in part, on existing class sizes and compositions.

*The steps listed must be followed in order when seeking a change in placement.*

- 1. The parent makes an appointment through the office to observe in the classroom during instructional time and then observes for a period of thirty minutes or more.*
- 2. The parent makes an appointment with the teacher to discuss concerns and expectations after the observations.*
- 3. If this does not resolve the problem, then-  
The parent writes a letter to the principal with a copy for the teacher, stating the reason(s) for the requested change in placement. (The teacher has the option of seeking support in an effort to respond to the parent's concerns)*
- 4. The parent, teacher and principal will then meet to discuss the change request and attempt to come to consensus about approving or disapproving the change in placement. If the group is unable to reach consensus, the final decision is made by the principal.*
- 5. If the change in placement is approved, the new placement will be made considering existing class sizes and compositions.*

Due to the vast growth in this area it has become necessary to become more proactive in our planning for the school year, we have implemented the following system for dealing with growth issues. The following state mandates impact our decisions:

- Kindergarten classes are limited to 20 students per session.
- 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes must have an overall average of no more than 22 students.

- 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes must have an overall average of no more than 24 students.

As we exceed these averages it becomes necessary for us to open new classrooms. This means that new classes may open at any point throughout the school year. As a result, children may have to change classes at any point during the year.

If a new class should open, parents will have the option of volunteering to move to the new class. Those students whose parents volunteer to send them to the new class are the first to move. These students will be followed by students who have registered most recently. If additional movements are still necessary to relieve overcrowding, a lottery system will be used to determine who will be moved. Students who were preregistered prior to June 1, 2009 will likely not be moved. (Unless they do not attend Meet the Teacher day in August)

In the rare event that a classroom should be closed due to declining enrollment in a grade, students will be moved to new classrooms based on the composition of the classrooms in place. Parents will be notified approximately one week prior to such a move.

We understand that change is difficult for children and will do our best to minimize the impact of such changes. If your child is identified as one who will be moving, you will be notified in writing approximately one week prior to the move. Once a child has been identified to be moved, exceptions will not be made.

### **TARDIES**

School starts at 9:00 AM. A warning bell will ring at 8:55. Students who arrive in class after 9:00 are considered tardy. Students who are excessively tardy may be referred to the Children's Court Liaison.

### **VISITORS**

Visitors and volunteers are always welcome at Sierra Vista. APS policy requires that all visitors check in the office. We have a visitor sign-in system. Visitors must present identification and must be listed on a student's enrollment card. Visitors will receive a badge that helps to assure student safety. Staff and students are trained to report anyone without a badge to the office. As part of our Safe School Plan we will report unidentified visitors to APS police immediately. Please be sure to sign in whenever visiting campus between the hours of 9:00 and 3:50.

*Please note that, if you are signing in, the expectation is that you are volunteering somewhere in the school. Classroom observers and volunteers are not permitted without a scheduled appointment. In an effort to limit distractions, parents may not bring younger siblings with them if they are volunteering in classrooms or other instructional areas.*

In addition, APS requires that all volunteers must have a background check through APS Human Resources Department. Volunteer forms are available in the Principal's Office.

**Visitor** – Someone who visits the classroom for a specific reason for a brief period of time. Must be on the student's enrollment card and provide ID to visit the classroom.

**Volunteer** – Someone who is working/assisting the classroom teacher must have a background check and show ID.